

POLITICAL PERSUASION: POLITICIANS AND THE
ELECTORATE IN YORKSHIRE COUNTY ELECTIONS, 1708-42.

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In the early eighteenth century county elections were an important means by which the political stability and legitimacy of the Augustan and Hanoverian political structures could be ensured. However whilst the high politics of the era is well documented there has been little or no serious investigation of the electors. The significance of the county voters in the political system was recognised by contemporaries who saw the 'forty shilling freeholder' as the guardian of the nation's liberty. Furthermore, a successful county election campaign was important to the politicians who were forced by this into contact with the freeholders and with the political nation. To the historian, the importance of the voters hinges upon whether they had any measure of independent political action.

This thesis illuminates the role of the political nation and the relationship between the voters and the politicians in early eighteenth century Yorkshire. It does this in two ways; firstly, through an investigation of the developments made in party organisation and in the politicians' use of the canvass and petition; secondly, building upon this overview of the developing relationship between elector and politician, there follows a study of voting behaviour which looks at the shire in general and then at the clergy and specific voting communities.

There are three main points which are developed. Firstly, that political organisation showed clear lines of advance between the Augustan and Hanoverian periods and that the Whig party was

the catalyst for change. Secondly, that the voters' impressions of the canvass and petition had important implications for both parties, as their response indicated the nature of their relationship with the politicians. Thus, both mechanisms underlined the lack of awareness of the electors shown by the politicians, who antagonised rather than created links with the local community. Thirdly, that the deference-independence model of political action is too inflexible. Whilst the clergy were relatively deferential voters, a subset of the electorate had the socio-economic standing to show a great degree of political independence. Once the politicians drew up the battle lines they became involved in a wider nexus of responsibilities which gave the forty shilling freeholders a measure of political power. Thus, it was local factors tied into the importance of shire elections that allowed the voters to impact upon the politics of Hanoverian Yorkshire.

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Abbreviations

B.C.A.	Bradford City Archives.
B.I.H.R.	Borthwick Institute of Historical Research, York.
B.L.	British Library.
Bodl.	Bodleian Library, Oxford.
E.R.C.R.O.	East Riding of Yorkshire County Record Office, Beverley
<u>HC.</u>	<u>History and Computing.</u>
<u>HJ</u>	<u>Historical Journal.</u>
HMC	Historical Manuscripts Commission.
H.U.L.	Hull University Library.
L.C.A.	Leeds City Archives.
mic.	Microfilm (in footnotes).
<u>NH</u>	<u>Northern History.</u>
N.Y.C.R.O.	North Yorkshire County Record Office, Northallerton.
<u>PH</u>	<u>Parliamentary History.</u>
<u>PLPS</u>	<u>Proceedings of the Leeds Philosophical Society.</u>
S.C.A.	Sheffield City Archives
<u>TSM</u>	<u>Thoresby Society Miscellany</u>
W.A.	Wakefield Archives.
	Record Series.
<u>YAJ</u>	<u>Yorkshire Archaeological Journal.</u>
Y.A.S.	Yorkshire Archaeological Society.
<u>YASRS</u>	<u>Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series.</u>

A note on dates and quotations.

As is customary, all dates in the text and footnotes are given in the Old Style of the Julian Calendar, and the new year is taken to begin on 1 January and not 25 March. Hence, a letter written on 22 January 1707 is cited as 22 January 1708. All quotations are given in the form that they appear in the original documents, although certain expansions are given for purposes of clarity. In footnotes and bibliography, the place of publication is London unless stated.

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Introduction

'Elector, n. One who enjoys the sacred privilege of voting for the man of another man's choice.'

'Politics, n. A strife of interests masquerading as a contest of principles. The conduct of public affairs for private advantage.'

- Ambrose Bierce.¹

The role of the political nation in the eighteenth century has proven a profitable avenue of research in recent years, although the relative importance of, as well as the relationship between, different groups within that nation has been somewhat contentious.² Should one focus upon the politicians and local political elites alone?³ How important were the electors and the systems of electoral management employed at that time? What was the role of the people or the mob in early modern politics? In essence these questions seek to focus upon the nature of eighteenth century political involvement in order to divine whether the voters,⁴ or a wider caucus of opinion involving those

¹ A. Bierce, The Enlarged Devil's Dictionary (reprint, 1989), pp. 106, 248.

² For the purposes of this study I regard the 'political nation' as including all political actors. Hence, those who voted, or who deliberately did not vote are included, as is anyone who was politicised or took part in political ritual. Clearly, there are problems when dealing with the bulk of the population who could not vote. An issue may have mattered to cottagers, labourers, women or children, but the paucity of records pertaining to them means that the extent to which their views affected the votes of their neighbours is, unfortunately, unknown.

³ As a group, this thesis will view the politicians as all those engaged in the organisation of politics, as opposed to merely the candidates and their patrons. It can be argued that the phalanx of political operatives that included local organisers and agents was distinct from the electors.

⁴ Throughout this thesis the terms 'the voters' and 'the voterate' will be interchangeable. As Baskerville has suggested, those men who

without the vote, had any say in the legitimacy of Augustan and Hanoverian rule.

Historians such as J.C.D Clark and Linda Colley, expressing essentially Namierite predilections, have understandably regarded the role of the electorate as vastly over-stated by other recent investigators. Sir Lewis Namier had written that 'the possession of land in counties and boroughs...carried with it considerable influence in Parliamentary elections through the pressure which its owners were able to exert on their tenants.'⁵ Clark has gone beyond this to state that 'to a large extent the county turnout reflected the efforts and depth of pocket of warring magnates - as it had done under Anne, and as it was to do well into the nineteenth century.'⁶ Colley, likewise, holds the opinion that the electorate did not influence the outcome of elections in terms of party success at the governmental level. Her argument was that 'Augustan England's so-called volatile electorate was not in fact volatile at all: It was almost invariably Tory'; furthermore, this body 'came into being at the will of the landed elite'. Such views have grave Namierite overtones for any analysis of the voting public in this period,⁷ and tend to indicate that the politicians were fully aware of the caucus of opinion that they had to deal with.

actually polled were a subset of the electorate and as there was unlikely to be a 100 per cent turnout of all the possible voters, that fraction of the electorate that did poll is regarded as the voterate. See S.W. Baskerville, P. Adman & K.F. Beedham, 'The Dynamics of Landlord Influence in English County Elections: the Evidence of Cheshire', PH, 12, Part 2 (1993), 139.

⁵ L.B. Namier, The Structure of Politics at the Accession of George the Third, (1929), p. 85.

⁶ J.C.D. Clark, English Society, 1688-1832 (Cambridge, 1985), pp. 22-3.

⁷ L. Colley, In Defiance of Oligarchy (Cambridge, 1982), p. 17.

The beliefs of Namier, Clark and Colley, rested on the fact that there was no change in the party of government in the first half of the eighteenth century which was directly caused by a general election result - although the Junto's success at the 1708 poll strengthened their case for admission into office, which Queen Anne conceded before Parliament met. In general it was felt that the voters did not matter and that there was little room for independence within the electoral system. This was so even in the large county constituencies where some voters *were* regarded as having freedom of action. Colley added that, 'complete independence was enjoyed by a minority of voters'.⁸

This belief was fostered because in Hanoverian England the politicians ignored the desires of the electors and totally denied their influence. Following the passage of the Triennial Act in 1694 there were ten general elections in England and then Britain in the space of twenty-two years and this kept the political heat high and lead to intensive political activity. Although around 100 or so contests from a total of 359 constituencies in Great Britain was the norm for the period from 1694-1722, this number of contests was the bedrock for the growth of party organisation across the nation. In these years there was a growing interest in the importance of elections for legitimising the political structures of Britain.

After the Hanoverian succession the heat went out of party politics primarily because the Whig government passed the Septennial Act in 1716. With longer to wait between elections the Tories had no immediate recourse to the voters and in the long-term, on the national stage, they were reduced to a minority

⁸ Ibid..

status. The electorate was side-stepped as there were fewer elections, which was the undoubted purpose of this legislation which attacked the Triennial Act for causing 'more violent heats and animosities among the subjects of the realm, than were ever known'.⁹ The huge cost of a contested election and the time-gap between polls meant that local politicians looked to compromises or, in borough constituencies, attempted to buy-up votes within a town. The electorate were evaded.

In the political geography of Britain, the boroughs gave the Whigs the opportunity to clinch the control of government. After the passing of the Septennial Act and later the Last Determinations (Amendment) Act in 1729, this was what they managed to do. Thus, the arguments of Clark and Colley do have some weight in providing a general view of Hanoverian Britain. To an extent such views would have little regard for issues such as deference versus independence among the voters, for those same voters only had the opportunity to poll if their social superiors decided to contest an election.

The importance of the voters in the political system hinges upon the whether they had any independent political action or impact. Were they relatively free to vote as they wanted at the poll, or were they subservient to the needs of their social superiors? These issues depend upon the amount of pressure which could be placed upon an individual voter. Whereas Frank O'Gorman and Bill Speck have both argued the case for a community of interest at the polls, Clark has denied any such

⁹ E.N. Williams, The Eighteenth Century Constitution (Cambridge, 1960), p. 189.

level of involvement for the forty shilling freeholders.¹⁰ The basis of O'Gorman's thesis has been that the patronal classes had weak levels of control, whilst the influence of public opinion could prove crucial in shaping the actions of the voters from particular areas.¹¹ Speck concurs and has stated that 'the bulk of the electorate...were as firmly committed to the Tory or Whig side as were their Members of Parliament.'¹² In this model participation was a major force at the polls; thus, any community ties, obligations and rights that existed in a village were transferred to the hustings. In this way one can perceive a deeply embedded nexus between the politicians or their politicised local managers and the voters.

The counterpoint to such an argument denies the autonomy of the voters at the polls and stresses the freeholders' lack of political impact beyond that which was controlled by the local elites. In this model, power through land and wealth created influence. Thus, Norma Landau describes how 'the floating voter was buoyed upon the waves of governmental influence' in Augustan Kent.¹³ She goes on to make the case for a complexity of action, with deference and participation being shown simultaneously by the voters towards their local political superiors. J.G.A. Pocock adds to this notion when insisting that

¹⁰ W.A. Speck, W.A. Gray and R. Hopkinson, 'Computer analysis of pollbooks: A further report ', Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research, XLVII (1975), 86-7; O'Gorman, Voters, Patrons and Parties, pp. 384-93; Clark, English Society, pp. 22-3.

¹¹ F. O'Gorman, Voters, Patrons and Parties (Oxford, 1989) p. 385.

¹² W.A. Speck, Tory and Whig (1970), p. 114.

¹³ N. Landau, 'Independence, deference and voter participation: The behaviour of the electorate in Eighteenth century Kent', HJ, 22 (1979), 566.

deference was a voluntary act shown by free political actors.¹⁴ In Clark's thesis, which pushes the notion that England was a strong Ancien Regime state in the eighteenth century, even this implies too much of a democratic tendency.¹⁵

Whether either of these models retains any validity beyond the generalisations that have been made depends on understanding local contexts. Many of the voters were ductile and dependent, factors brought into sharper focus by the politics of their locale. However, the fact that such distinct contexts existed between townships indicates the complexity of pressures which impacted upon the electorate. In many areas local elites were not a separate group, they were tied into a deeper nexus of community obligation.

Other historians have come to see the deference-participation model as too superficial a view of politics in this era. The work begun by Speck, and now continued by Steve Baskerville, O'Gorman and John Phillips among others, has questioned the nature of both borough and shire electors, by relating them to their locale in an attempt to understand the influences acting upon them.¹⁶ In particular the debate has shifted to look at 'the identity and socio-economic standing of the "forty-shilling freeholder"'.¹⁷ Such investigations are useful from two standpoints: firstly, to rescue the voters and the unenfranchised

¹⁴ Ibid., pp. 579-80; J.G.A. Pocock, 'The classical theory of deference', American Historical Review, 81 (1976), 519.

¹⁵ Clark, English Society.

¹⁶ For example, see Speck, Gray and Hopkinson, Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research, XLVII, 64-90; Baskerville *et al*, PH, 12, Part 2, 126-42; O'Gorman, Voters, Patrons and Parties; J.A. Phillips, Electoral Behaviour in Unreformed England (Princeton, 1982).

¹⁷ Baskerville *et al*, PH, 12, Part 2, 127.

from an impotent limbo, to stress their importance in the political process; secondly, building from this, to emphasise the view held by many among the eighteenth century political nation that the 'forty-shilling freeholder' was the guardian of the nation's liberty.

The enfranchised freeholder was a man who voted by right of freehold property that was worth forty shillings clear of all taxes. This also encompassed the possession of a particular office, for example a clerical benefice, as well as annuities, leases for lives, or the control of a mortgage. Thus, these men were the bedrock of the county community precisely because of the eighteenth century elevation of property to a sublime position within society. Lord Halifax stated that 'those who send up their representatives to Westminster should take care they may be such as will do them right and their country honour.' The 'Forty-Shilling Freeholder' was entrusted with this, and the county-wide consensus was to be further fostered because 'the interest of the county is best placed in the hands of such as have some share in it.'¹⁸ A share in the land of the county would show a higher political consciousness and entail a recognition of the importance of property and liberty.

In itself this emphasises the importance associated with county elections. Swift maintained that 'the truest way of judging the dispositions of the people, in the choice of their representatives, is by computing the county elections.'¹⁹ Such contests were the weather vane of the nation and of crucial importance in Walpolean Britain, despite the fact that there were very few shire elections and consequently very few runs of

¹⁸ The Life and Letters of Sir George Saville, Bart., 1st Marquis of Halifax, ed. H.C. Foxcroft, II (1898), pp. 467, 479.

¹⁹ Swift, quoted in W.A. Speck, 'The General Election of 1715', English Historical Review, 90 (1975), 514.

pollbooks that can be analysed to explore the whims of the voters. Although the electorate was side-stepped after 1716, the importance of shire elections in giving property the opportunity to legitimise a political outlook meant that *any* shire elections became crucial to the political nation.

This was more so because the shire M.P.s were the lynch-pin between their counties and Westminster. In sponsoring relevant legislation - for example, in support of the cloth trade in Yorkshire - and in promoting particular interests they had a crucial role. Relating to a vast body of people which included outvoters as well as locals needed a high degree of commitment. Their support for particular local needs, such as river navigations, had a wider impact than upon the electorate alone and thus the Knight of the Shire was responsible to a large caucus of opinion.

Not only were these seats crucial to the locale, but they were important to the politicians. With the shire M.P.s being one of the most exulted local figures, the ability to have one's candidate selected to represent the county forced the politicians into contact with the freeholders and the political nation. Thus, such elections gave a vast body of men the opportunity to question the ideals of the party managers, to lord it over their notional social superiors, and to gain an importance within their local community. Moreover, elections also gave an opportunity for the Tory party and for a section of their supporters to express opposition to the ruling party. Thus, elections not only legitimised the role of opposition within the Hanoverian state, but also underpinned the Tories' survival as a party and provided a means of keeping a release valve in the body politic. They show a

dynamism about political life that is missed if one merely takes a high political view of Hanoverian England.

In this way, as O'Gorman has written, it has become necessary to rescue the electors from 'the Whig interpretation of modern British history.'²⁰ Whilst O'Gorman himself has sought to do this, his work has focused upon county elections in the years after 1768.²¹ Yorkshire, however, does provide a chance to explore the utilisation of county contests by the party managers at the local level, for there are extant pollbooks or printed copies for the polls of 1708, 1727, 1734 and 1742 alongside a major canvass of 1726. The survival of these lists allows one to look at the whole question of the local and national importance associated with shire elections in the Walpolean period.

Thus, beyond general issues of the importance of the electorate, more specific questions can be investigated in such a local study and these focus upon the models of deference and participation among the voters. Could these men exercise their own free will in determining who to vote for? Were they merely political cannon fodder? These issues tend to rest upon the nature of the organisation of elections and the make-up of those who voted. However, there are two clear problems with such an attempt to model the electorate; firstly, the models appear far too inflexible, allowing no room for manoeuvre; secondly, as Baskerville has noted, 'the principal contentions have rested on the interpretation of aggregate analyses, or else, at times, have

²⁰ O'Gorman, Voters, Patrons and Parties, p. 4.

²¹ Although O'Gorman provides some analysis of earlier contests, most of his organisational interpretation relies on later evidence. *Ibid.*, pp. 152, 369-70. There have been few longitudinal studies made of county electors in the first half of the eighteenth century - a gap that this thesis seeks to narrow.

seemed to stem from no substantial analysis at all.'²² Much of the commentary on the nature of the electorate and upon political control has missed any serious investigation of who the voters actually were.

The first point has been investigated, to an extent, by pointing to the importance of customary-right and the role of deference as a two-way process.²³ Landed estates and their owners represented a cohesive factor in both county society and at a lower community level. However, such landlords were not figures who divorced themselves from their social inferiors. For the wider benefit of the community there had to be a willingness for governors and governed to co-operate. As Beckett has noted, 'The landlord was there to bind the community together in order to preserve the spirit of social deference.'²⁴

To an extent this was a form of social control; however the needs of the community were paramount and conditioned the actions of their social and political superiors. Community ties had existed for a long time; for many on the land, village and estate history were coterminous and they were so interconnected that the fortunes of each were inextricably linked. The absence of exacerbating and inharmonious landlord privileges were equally important and meant that the landed interest was local and general - it was not sectional. The landlords did not enjoy substantial privileges denied to other freeholders, and they did not form a caste. However, they had to oil the cogs of local society, be that

²² Baskerville *et al*, PH, 12, Part 2, 142.

²³ See, for instance, J.V. Beckett, The Aristocracy in England, 1660-1914 (Oxford, 1986); J.M. Neeson, Commoners: Common Right, Enclosure and Social Change in England, 1700-1820 (Cambridge, 1996); J.V. Beckett, 'The English Aristocracy', PH, 5 (1986), 133-41.

²⁴ Beckett, The Aristocracy, p. 437.

through charitable donations or civil benefactions, such as the endowment of local schools and the rebuilding of churches; beyond these actions, provisions for the poor were common in rural society.²⁵

In terms of electoral control of the shire electorate this notion of a two-way deference within the local social structure requires more investigation and this feeds into Baskerville's point about a lack of understanding of who the electors actually were. To an extent any generalisations that are made are only natural because of the nature of the evidence available to historians of the eighteenth century, and especially so for those who wish to look at the county electors. As Phillips has noted, 'it is less the sheer number of county voters which deters the electoral researcher than the quality of the information about them.'²⁶ Who the county voters were and what their occupations were is not helped by the paucity of information contained within shire pollbooks. Despite this, it is possible to develop a methodology for dealing with a section of the voters and for expanding one's core knowledge about these individuals. This can be done by linking pollbook names to other, under-used estate sources, for example deeds, leases and rentals.

A problem arising from this is that political deference or independence is difficult to document. Even if one locates individual voters in their own context, it is only possible to pronounce on their socio-economic standing rather than whether

²⁵ For example, see, W. Page ed., The Victoria History of the North Riding, I (1914), 83, 213, 300; K.J. Allison ed., The Victoria History of the East Riding, III (Oxford, 1976), 188; K.J. Allison ed., The Victoria History of the East Riding, IV (Oxford, 1979), 130.

²⁶ J.A. Phillips, The Great Reform Bill in the Boroughs: English Electoral Behaviour, 1818-1841, (Oxford, 1992).

they had any independent impact. Without correspondence one cannot judge whether their actions were deferential or not, only that they had the economic standing to determine matters for themselves. However, one should be able to go beyond the generalised claims that have been made. For instance English has noted, for the East Riding, that 'All the great landowners had some control over their tenants' voting, and voters in their immediate neighbourhood.'²⁷ Such a pronouncement may be self-evident but it does not further our knowledge of the nature of this control.

This thesis will investigate the issues raised concerning the importance of managing shire elections in the first half of the eighteenth century in Yorkshire. It will focus upon three main factors that are interlinked. Firstly, the developments and means of control that inform the relationship between the electors and the politicians need to be understood. Did the early eighteenth century electorate have a stronger position than the historiography to-date has suggested? In fact, if the electors knew more about the politicians than the politicians did about the possible electors, did this mean that the electorate had the whip-hand in that relationship? Developing from this is the issue of how the electoral improvements that were made in Yorkshire between 1708 and 1742 inform this relationship. It is not only important to see precursors of the developments which O'Gorman describes taking place in Yorkshire in these years, but also to recognise that the politicians' lack of local knowledge, or their

²⁷ B. English, The Great Landowners of East Yorkshire, 1530-1910 (Exeter, 1991), p. 143.

lack of an ability to locate and recruit specific voters, required an overhaul of electoral machinery. This then feeds into the third factor, namely the need to overcome the neglect of the voters that has been shown in the past, to investigate their political autonomy. In a sense the easy option is to develop aggregate analyses of voting behaviour and then to describe what happened. However, the study of the shire electorate in these years needs more qualitative underpinning, in order to relate it to the wider structure of Hanoverian politics and to show the local dynamics of political stability.

In the final analysis it has to be recognised that if any constituency would provide a headache for the researcher of the unreformed electorate it is Yorkshire. The huge size of the county meant that from the time of the Norman Conquest it was divided into three Ridings, twenty-seven wapentakes and the City of York. The shire encompassed 3,870,038 acres of land in a country of 32,382,550 acres, which meant it was over 12 per cent of the area of England.²⁸ Furthermore, it would be difficult to imagine the extent to which, for example, a cottager in the Pennines could feel any empathy with an artisan in one of the coastal ports. Indeed, the variation in geography is another of the problems implicit in a study of Yorkshire. The county was and is a vast mixture; from the flat lowland vales of York and Pickering and the vast Humber and Tees estuaries, to the rolling hills of the chalk wolds in the East Riding and the dales of the North and West Ridings. These areas gave rise to differing urban environments; from the cloth-market towns of the West Riding such as Bradford, Halifax, Leeds, Sheffield and Wakefield, to the agrarian market towns of

²⁸ The Victoria History of Yorkshire, II (1974), 455.

Market Weighton and Pocklington in the East Riding, and Northallerton and Thirsk in the North. The sea-ports of Hull and Scarborough provided and reacted to different economic forces, as did the socially important centres of York and Beverley. These problems are crucial and need to be respected at every turn, especially when analysing local motivations for political action.

Aware of these problems, this thesis falls into two sections; the first investigates the means of political control and organisation. Chapter 1 utilises the extant materials left by the politicians, such as correspondence and memoranda, in order to divine what they thought of the electorate and how they sought to win it over. It will provide a context for the political developments of Yorkshire and will then feed into the next two chapters. These focus upon two specific means by which the politicians sought to control and cajole the electorate and the outcome of elections - the canvass and the petition. Using extant canvass returns and the sources generated for the 1734 petition, the measure of control that the politicians had will be examined. Did they alter the voters' perceptions of the politicians? How useful were these tools in generating support or giving offence?

Moving beyond these organisational structures, the second section focuses upon a more in-depth view of the voters. Chapter 4 opens up the possibilities for such a search by assessing voting behaviour in the years 1708-42. Utilising computer software with positive methodological advantages, an assessment will be made of longitudinal voting patterns. This will then feed into the final two chapters which look at the politics of the clergy and then of particular voting communities. These chapters will analyse the level of control and freedom, as well as the motivations and needs

of these bodies of voters, in an attempt to widen our perspective of the county electors.

Chapter 1

Meeting the Needs of 'A Sharpe Markett': Party Organisation and Conflict in Yorkshire Society

In the first half of the eighteenth century Yorkshire saw several heated political contests.²⁹ These impacted upon the consciousness of the shire electors, the forty shilling freeholders, and the wider population and forced the political parties to improve their organisational abilities. High political machinations in Yorkshire at this time are well documented and it is not the intention of this chapter merely to repeat the arguments of Quinn and Collier.³⁰ More important will be to ascertain the electoral developments and ideological influences that provide the background to the analysis of the state of politics that follows. How did the parties perceive both the electorate and wider public opinion in this populous county? How did their organisations attempt to control or harness the views of this vast body of opinion? Before any attempt is made to discover any wider trends or reasoning behind voting behaviour, it will be necessary to investigate the extant correspondence and contemporary literature, to gauge the motivations of both the party hierarchies and the electors whose moods affected them.

²⁹ For the election results of this period see Appendix I, pp. 367-8.

³⁰ For a more in-depth investigation of Yorkshire high-politics at this time see R. Hall, 'The Whigs and Yorkshire Elections, 1695-1715', M.A., University of Leeds, 1994; J.F. Quinn, 'The Parliamentary Constituencies of Yorkshire from the Accession of Anne until the Fall of Walpole', M.Litt., University of Lancaster, 1979; C. Collyer, 'The Yorkshire Election of 1734', PLPS, VII (1952), 53-82; C. Collyer, 'The Yorkshire Election of 1741', PLPS, VIII (1953), 137-52.

Political organisation in Augustan Yorkshire

Electoral organisation in Yorkshire prior to 1727 was minimal; at no time did either the Tory or Whig party forge a working organisation for treating, canvassing and polling. The Whigs had a more forceful electoral temperament, but they sought impetus from without, from major figures like the Earl of Wharton and the Duke of Newcastle who had some lands, and hence an interest, in the shire. Organisation was very much *ad hoc*, and the breakdown of the county into more manageable electoral units was not considered. The bulk of the electioneering was local and personal, and campaigns could be hamstrung by a lack of funds or individual apathy.

Funding came from the candidate's pocket or that of a favourable landlord and campaign leadership depended wholly upon the Junto for the Whigs and upon a few members of the gentry for the Tories. Individual landlords were still canvassed, but political success came more by luck than judgement. Despite the fact that ideology, such as that which surrounded the Sacheverell crisis, could dominate an election, there were never more than 10,000 electors at any poll prior to 1727.³¹ This reflected the fact that organisation and co-operation lacked cohesion; however, it still recognised the overall need to mollify and work with the electors. For instance, in 1706 Thomas Pulleine, the steward of the Duke of Bolton in the North Riding,

³¹ The 1708 pollbook has the votes of 9,289 men; at the 1710 election the final tallies were Viscount Downe 6,659, Sir Arthur Kaye 6,412 and Sir William Strickland 2,910 (see Bodl., MS Willis 9, f. 159). Therefore 15,981 votes were cast, but most of the Tory votes were probably doubles bringing the total number of voters to between 9,000 and 10,000.

had treated the freeholders of Wensleydale, Coverdale and Bishopdale over three days. He also met some freeholders at fairs in Leeds and Middleham but would only treat those who 'vote as I voted'. Pulleine was sure that 'they would not fayle to goe with me att the Election.'³²

There was a clear recognition of the need for the freeholders to be looked after and treated as if they were of great importance. Newcastle complained to Lord Somers in 1702 that the sheer number of freeholders meant that his influence at any Yorkshire poll was minimal.³³ The freeholders could not be pushed to the polling booths, but had to be lead there with a delicate touch. In 1702 the Whig hierarchy feared that the death of Lord Irwin would cost them votes from his neighbourhood near Leeds, as there would be no one to bring the voters to York; when the new Viscount, not yet of age, was persuaded into this role the Whigs were clearly relieved. Sir William Strickland wrote to him declaring that this was an 'opportunity of showing yourself a true inheritor.' After Irwin responded in kind Thomas Worsley wrote to Irwin's steward to 'thank you for, And Approve of my Lord Irwyns appearance att the Head of his Neighbours...'.³⁴

Management required a local gentleman to act as a linchpin between the candidates and the electors. Where the local stewardship was under threat, as it was on the death of Lord

³² Nottingham University Library, Portland (Holles) MSS., PW2.191, Tho. Pulleine to the Duke of Newcastle, 21 Oct. 1706; *ibid.*, PW2.192, same to same, 24 Oct. 1706.

³³ The Duke of Newcastle to Earl Somers, quoted in E.L. Ellis, 'The Whig Junto in Relation to the Development of Parliamentary Parties and Organisation to 1714', D.Phil., University of Oxford, 1962, p. 44.

³⁴ L.C.A., Temple Newsam MSS., TN/C/9a, Sir William Strickland to Viscount Irwin, 11 July 1702; *ibid.*, Tho. Worsley to John Rhodes, 14 July 1702 (hereafter cited as Temple Newsam MSS.).

Irwin, the party hierarchy had to act fast to get its men to the poll; they would not necessarily lose these men to the opposition, but they would lose the chance to poll some supporters. This underlines the fact that not all electors were political cannon-fodder, easily lead and controlled. In 1705 Lord Wharton was 'informed there are great Endeavours in the County made against Lord Hartington'. He told his estate steward in the North Riding, Matthew Smailes, 'I desire that you and all in whom I have any interest would be very diligent in making what votes they can for him singly.'³⁵ The greatest electioneer of the age was here ordering his agent to organise only single votes. The tone of the letter seems to recognise that this may not be possible, that the freeholders will not waste a vote by plumping, and that attempting to dictate to them would lead to intransigence.

The picture could appear different however; after the 1708 poll, one Tory declared that Sir Arthur Kaye had *given* 2,500 votes to Lord Downe 'wch he could have commanded singly for himself...'.³⁶ This does seem to be an exaggeration and reflected Tory incredulity at the number of cross-party votes for Downe alongside Sir William Strickland or Sir Thomas Watson Wentworth, rather than with his fellow Tory, Kaye. Despite this, the overall number of single votes at the poll of 1708 does indicate a cohesion of local opinion in many areas.³⁷ This is not to suggest that these were all deferent voters; during this period it was impossible for the parties to aim at control of much of the

³⁵ York Minster Library, Hailstone Collection, Box 4.32, the Earl of Wharton to Mr Smailes, 9 Feb. 1705.

³⁶ Bodl., Carte MS. 230, ff. 225-6, [John, Lord Camden] to [Dr Charlett], 7 Apr. 1710.

³⁷ See below, Chapter 4, pp. 182-4.

electorate. Electoral management was not strong enough for either party to be sure of winning a contest, but the fact that over 9,000 men polled in 1708, given the weakness of political control, was a testament to the importance of elections among a sizeable section of those who were enfranchised.

The paucity of political control at this time was reflected in the fact that after 1710 and the crushing Sacheverell election victory for the Tories in Yorkshire, the Whigs were moribund at the shire level. Although the Whig party dominated both national and local government after 1715, in spite of the internecine struggles that existed between government and opposition Whigs, the Tories held the two shire seats with no opposition from 1710 until 1727.

The Whigs controlled the Lieutenancies of all three Ridings throughout the period, with the influence of the Duke of Newcastle, the Earl of Burlington and Lord Irwin prominent before 1715, and Lord Irwin, the Earl of Malton, William Pulteney and Conyers Darcy after 1715. These major Whig personalities had no resident Tory figures to challenge them for these roles, except fleetingly for the Earl of Strafford and the Duke of Leeds in the West Riding. The influence of the whiggish Court made sure that the Lieutenancies remained in loyal hands.

Despite the fact that the Tories held positions on the Commissions and that 'the most influential Justices...[were] from those families which had traditionally exercised power',³⁸ the Whigs were the major force here as well. The list of names of the East Riding Justices included important Whigs like Gee, Hildyard,

³⁸ M.E.W. Maddison, 'The Justices of the Peace and the Administration of Local Government in the East and West Ridings of Yorkshire, between 1680 and 1750', Ph.D., University of Leeds, 1986, p. 47.

Hotham, Moyser, St Quintin, Strickland, alongside Tories such as Bethell, Constable and Warton. Similarly in the West Riding, Goodricke, Lowther, Stanhope and Wentworth sat alongside Calverley, Dawnay, Kaye and Lister. However, after 1714 the balance on the benches favoured the Whigs as sixty-seven Tories were dropped and twenty-three Whigs elevated. As the centre of politics grew more stable, this slant towards the Whig party in local government prevailed and they looked unassailable. Any political influence associated with the Justices reflected their position as social and economic actors in the various localities. Moreover, their county-wide organisation and financing, and their increasing professionalism, mirrored the electoral improvements being made.³⁹

Despite this Whig monopoly of the strings of local power, they found creating wider electoral control more difficult. Thomas has written that 'The existence of Tory factions in many constituencies [does not] prove that there was a national Tory party'.⁴⁰ However, Thomas points to the strength of the Tory party in certain localities, and indeed its position in Yorkshire meant that it would not be a simple matter for the Whigs to shake the Tory grip on the shire representation. An improved Whig electoral machine was required to try to gain at least one shire seat. In order to combat the power of the Tories, the Whigs would have to overcome their opposition's appeal to the freeholders at large, and attempt to control the relevant ideologies of the moment.

³⁹ Ibid., pp. 24-7, 42.

⁴⁰ P.D.G. Thomas, 'Party Politics in Eighteenth Century Britain: Some myths and a touch of reality', British Journal for Eighteenth Century Studies, 10, no. 2 (1987), 205.

Ideology and the nature of elections

The Tory M.P.s from 1710 until 1726, Lord Downe and Sir Arthur Kaye, were well respected as supporters of the shire's wider economic interests; this made them especially popular in the West Riding. In the political sphere party still mattered; and in a wider arena the ideology of party, in terms of economic improvements, government corruption, the standing army and war, was important. For instance before the 1722 general election an announcement was made in Leeds by the Tory candidates and sitting M.P.s that, 'it is hoped that all the honest Electors within this Corporation of Leeds, who have expressed their readiness to assist in any Thing that related to the Welfare of Trade, or any other Publick Good, will as readily concur in giving their Votes.'⁴¹ Support of local interests and a long-standing popularity favoured the Tory party.

Such support had a long precedence within the shire and especially in the West Riding. As far back as 1597 George Savile, an ancestor of Sir George Savile who sat for Yorkshire from 1728-34, was elected because he was 'a leading employer amongst the clothiers with a reputation for defending their interests.' Again in 1621 his reputation was enhanced when he fought against the Court candidates, because he was 'the patron of the clothiers.'⁴² A Savile was chosen as the Whig candidate in 1728 partly because of the influence he had from his estates in Morley wapentake, near

⁴¹ 'Extracts from the *Leeds Mercury*, 1721-29', ed. G.D. Lumb, *TSM*, XXII (Leeds, 1915), no. 39, 23-30 Jan. 1722, 188.

⁴² R. Cust, 'Politics and the Electorate in the 1620s', in R. Cust and A. Hughes eds, *Conflict in Early Stuart England* (1989), p. 145.

Dewsbury, Halifax and Lupset. Such a man could clearly give an extra dimension to any campaign.

It was also claimed that the 'Yorkshire electors responded quickly and sensitively to the broader sympathies of their candidates.' Those involved in the woollen trade had an interlinked view of national and local politics, and a congruent ideology. Moreover, Keen has argued that 'In the absence of overbearing aristocratic influence the Yorkshire gentry developed a certain independence of political thought and action.'⁴³ Indeed, as Roebuck has pointed out of Sir Arthur Kaye, 'the fact that he retained his seat at Westminster until his death emphasises the extent to which he reflected the hopes and aspirations of one section of the provincial squirearchy.'⁴⁴ To many sections of the West Riding populace Kaye was a popular and proficient representative.

Socio-economic factors had much to do with the development of electoral control in the West Riding. This notion rests upon the support of the expanding and increasingly urban manufacturing interests of the shire, which had a growing importance as the eighteenth century wore on. Large townships were burgeoning in the manufacturing districts of the shire, and more people faced a diverse social and economic lifestyle. Protection of the clothiers, described as self-reliant men 'of small capital', who lived within a 'tightly-knit web...which upheld the communality and reciprocity of the family and the community', was crucial to any party.⁴⁵

⁴³ Ibid., p. 151; C.M. Keen, 'Yorkshire Politics, 1658-1688', Ph.D., University of Sheffield, 1990, p. 384.

⁴⁴ P. Roebuck, 'The County Squirearchy and the Fight for Place', YAJ, 46 (1974), 109.

⁴⁵ R.G. Wilson, Gentlemen Merchants: the Merchant Community of Leeds, 1700-1830 (Manchester, 1971), p. 52; D. Gregory, Regional

Contiguous living did make the spread of ideas easier, and a large communal interest could strengthen a particular industry or economic base in a community. The importance of support for the cloth trade was noted in 1709 when Aldermen Arthington and Thoresby of Leeds went 'to speak to Sir William Strickland, Lord Downe and Mr. Lowther about the Cloth Bill.'⁴⁶ This was a bill designed to protect and police broad-cloth production and gained wider support from Huddersfield and Wakefield. The fact that the Leeds' Aldermen went to see three local West Riding M.P.s was crucial in understanding the nature of local politics. It was necessary for representatives of all persuasions to support local needs. Thus, a report in 1702 that the Knights of the Shire, the Junto Whig Lord Hartington and the Tory Sir John Kaye, 'are never on a side in any trying case', caused no little consternation.⁴⁷ Individual political convictions had to be put aside in gaining unity and balance. When Kaye died in 1706 Thoresby mourned the fact that 'useful men are taken away and useless cumber grounds left behind.'⁴⁸ This echoed the sentiments of all those who saw the representation of the shire as a trust; to many, party was anathema.

This idea of community fed into local concerns about welfare and paternalism based on the general good. Hence in the particularly bad winter of 1740-1 Viscount Irwin 'sent 300 carves of Coal to be distributed to the poor Housekeepers in this Town

Transformation and the Industrial Revolution: A Geography of the Yorkshire Woollen Industry (1982), p. 261.

⁴⁶ D.H. Atkinson, Ralph Thoresby the Topographer, his Town and Times, II (Leeds, 1887), 10 Jan. 1710, 93-4.

⁴⁷ Atkinson, Ralph Thoresby the Topographer, II, Mr Stretton to Ralph Thoresby (n.d.), 15.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 16 Aug. 1706, p. 21.

[Leeds], disabled from following their manual occupation by the severity of the Frost.'⁴⁹ This reflected Irwin's position as Lord of the Manor and his desire to alleviate distress and keep the local economy working. The idea that the smaller freeholders or residents of an area deserved decent treatment was crucial to contemporaries. John Cowper noted in 1732 that there were 'no set of men that toil and labour so hard as the smaller Farmers and Freeholders, none who are more industrious to encrease the Product of the Earth...and consequently none who better deserve Encouragement.'⁵⁰ In 1699 when a West Riding Tory referred two of a neighbour's tenants to the Sessions for the Peace, he was told to stop or 'I shall endeavour to pick some hole in your coat and make you smart severely for it.'⁵¹ It was only logical that local landlords should try to cure local grievances and work for the welfare of those within their sphere of influence.

This notion of the welfare of the community was reflected in local attitudes towards the quartering of soldiers in an area. In 1709 Thomas Pullein sent a copy of a petition from the inhabitants of Wensleydale, to the Dukes of Bolton and Newcastle, the latter of whom was Lord Lieutenant of the North Riding, complaining about the ill behaviour of some soldiers;⁵² this met with a favourable response. Similarly, in 1742 a leading Whig activist recognised that 'nothing can be more popular at this time than removing the soldiers out of the county.' The

⁴⁹ 'Extracts from the *Leeds Mercury*, 1737-42', ed. G.D. Lumb, *TSM*, XXVI (Leeds, 1924), no. 729, 22-29 Jan. 1741, 82.

⁵⁰ Cowper quoted in Neeson, *Commoners*, p. 21.

⁵¹ B.L. Add. (Hunter) 24475, f. 132, William Jessop to Richard Beaumont, 5 Apr. 1699.

⁵² HMC, *Portland*, 13th Report, II, Thos Pullein to the Duke of Bolton, 22 Feb. 1709, 206.

government's position in the shire had taken a knock at the elections of 1734 and 1741, and a failed petition calling for the removal of the soldiers from York in 1735 reflected badly upon it.⁵³

Other local developments could sway the voting public, but most were tied to local economics and manufacturing. In this way voting could become a kind of moral economy,⁵⁴ and it certainly forced electoral promises out of prospective candidates. As the woollen trade became more crucial its defence became an electoral battleground. Thus, it was no surprise that the standing M.P.s supported a petition from the West Riding in February 1742 that sought better regulation of the broad-cloth manufacture. This was designed to support the producers and prevent merchants or middle-men stamping the cloth with a false length. A petition of the 'Fraternity of Broad Clothiers of Leeds', signed by sixteen clothiers, called for a regulation to suit local conditions and needs.⁵⁵

However, representatives had to tread warily for what was needed in one area could adversely affect another. For instance, it was argued that in 1741 many 'Gentlemen who are so warm for the navigation [of the river Calder] from Wakefield to Ealand are prejudiced against Mr Turner because he did not favour their Bill the last Sessions [of Parliament].' This was not the case at

⁵³ N.Y.C.R.O., Fitzwilliam (Malton) MSS., addenda in Samuel Buck's handwriting (n.d., 1742), mic. 1446 (hereafter cited as Fitzwilliam (Malton) MSS.; there is only one microfilm reference for this MSS.); Journals of the House of Commons, XXII, 'Petition of the Alehouse-keepers and Innholders of the City of York', 3 Mar. 1735, 400.

⁵⁴ I endorse O'Gorman's view on this matter; see O'Gorman, Voters, Patrons and Parties, p. 249.

⁵⁵ Commons Journals, XXIII, 16 Feb. 1742, 691-2; Temple Newsam MSS., TN/LA/3/6, 'Petition of the Fraternity of Broad Clothiers of Leeds' (n.d.).

Halifax where many men feared that this navigation would hurt their cloth trade.⁵⁶ Clearly a balance was required. There was a growing impetus in the south of the Riding, near Sheffield, where there were petitions from the Master Cutlers in 1722, 1726, 1732 and 1739 for an improvement in the navigation of the river Don.⁵⁷ This area also had large numbers of potential voters whose needs could not be ignored. Thus at Sheffield in 1742 it was reported that,

...many freeholders of the neighbourhood (being market day) were introduced & several came of their own accord desiring to see Mr Turner, for they thought, it was either a sham, or that he was supannuated and not fit for business (for he did not go round the town) being afraid of bringing on the gout.⁵⁸

Not only did candidates have to balance rival claims on various issues, with their voting behaviour in the Commons often public knowledge, but they had to show due deference to the vanity of each and every locale, by constant canvassing. Thus in the run up to the 1742 by-election Lord Bruce was informed that Fox was 'young, active & much better able to endure fatigue than his Antagonist'.⁵⁹ Such factors could affect the prejudices of the constituents.

⁵⁶ Temple Newsam MSS., TN/PO/10/9/2, Tho. Nettleton to Irwin, 5 Sep. 1741; S.C.A., Spencer Stanhope MSS., SpSt 60524, Reverend Cavendish Nevile to Wm Spencer, 6 Sep. 1741.

⁵⁷ J.H. Hunter, South Yorkshire, I (reprint, 1974), xxvii.

⁵⁸ S.C.A., Wentworth Woodhouse Muniments, WWM, M1, Sam. Buck to the Earl of Malton, 14 Oct. 1741, mic. A66 (hereafter cited as Wentworth Woodhouse Muniments).

⁵⁹ Wiltshire Record Office, Savenake Forest MSS., the Earl of Gower to (the Earl of Bruce), (n.d., 1741-2).

It took more time and a rekindling of the fire of party before national issues could affect the political temperature in the county and cause an expansion of party activity. The heat of the 1710 battle over the Sacheverell election had flung the Whig M.P., Sir William Strickland, out of Parliament; however, it also stultified party organisation. The Tory victory at this poll ended Whig hopes in the shire for seventeen years. The lack of a major personality or group within the Yorkshire Whig party ensured that neither they nor the Tories developed any wider political organisation; the Tories did not need to do so and the Whigs did not have the ability. It took the death of Sir Arthur Kaye and the emergence of Sir Thomas Watson Wentworth to reignite competition for the shire seats at the by-election of February 1727. This new party vigour was continued almost as soon as that poll was over, for within a few months King George I was dead, and thus a general election was needed.

At the national level this gave the opponents of Walpole an opportunity to displace him from the head of the government. The opposition to him was most formidable from within the ranks of the Whig party itself, for the election showed that the Tories lacked any form of unity of purpose or leadership, or consistency of action. Walpole himself was to come through this particular test and was to find an ally in the future King and more especially his Queen. In Yorkshire the Whig party, bolstered by the drive of Watson Wentworth, was not riven with internal disputes over policy or personality and its political antithesis was still the Tory party, or at least that party's personnel. The Tories would not join with independent or opposition Whigs until the excise crisis in 1734 forged a new rivalry to the government Whigs in the shire.

In 1734 the question of the excise was a crucial one for the whole of Yorkshire's political society, from the noble landowners to the merest forty shilling freeholder. In Ripon it was feared that the excise would 'reduce the Trade of this Town to the lowest Extremity.'⁶⁰ The West Riding was the greatest ideological battleground, and both sides at this election had to look to popular views. Certainly in the larger townships there was a feeling that enough independent voters existed to make trouble for an unwary or careless party. Thus it would appear that any Whig gains to be made at the shire level in and after 1727 would require a still better fighting organisation.

The excise issue was particularly pertinent for the manufacturer or merchant who would suffer from increased duties on his or her products; thus it was of great import for the voters as consumers. As Newcastle was informed in September 1733, 'the common people have not Intirely escaped the general infection.'⁶¹ Indeed the brouhaha of a major issue could leave 'every freeholder looking upon himself as a sort of gentleman...and a man of very great consequence.'⁶² Collier and Quinn have both argued that this issue fused a wider, more broad-based rival to the government Whigs in Yorkshire.⁶³ They see the old opposition, made up primarily of Tories, transmogrified into an Opposition party or a

⁶⁰ *St. John's Evening Post*, 25-27 Jan. 1734, quoted in P. Langford, *The Excise Crisis* (1975), p. 56.

⁶¹ B.L. Add. 32688, ff. 351-2, John Hill to the Duke of Newcastle, 18 Sep. 1733.

⁶² T. Ball to Dr Maddox, 3 Oct. 1733, quoted in E.A. Smith, 'The Election Agent in English Politics, 1734-1832', *English Historical Review*, LXXXIV (1969), 13.

⁶³ See J.F. Quinn, 'Yorkshiremen go to the Polls: County Contests in the Early Eighteenth Century', *NH*, XXI (1985), 145; Collyer, *PLPS*, VII, 53-5. Whilst Quinn argues for a Government-Opposition dichotomy, Collyer sees a 'Country Interest' opposed to an administration party that he calls 'the Whigs'.

'Country Interest' of Tories and independent Whigs. It became akin to a country party that attacked the excesses of the government. Langford claimed that it was only in politically and economically advanced areas, like London and Yorkshire, that such an alliance of Tories and opposition Whigs could form.⁶⁴ These groups shared similar grievances against the government, but the catalyst of the excise forged a unity that was previously missing.

Not since the Sacheverell affair, almost twenty-five years before, had an important national issue forced its way onto the individual voter's consciousness in a way that could affect the trend of politics in the shire. However, many men within Yorkshire did not regard the 1734 poll as a court-country fight, but as 'a party cause.' William Lowther wrote to John Stanhope of 'the difficulties you have layd me under' by not declaring in the 'Whig interest.' He added that 'some who had promised me their votes for you...looked upon that obligation as cancell'd, for they say that...if you did not act for us [the Whig party], you acted against us.'⁶⁵ Similarly Andrew Wilkinson at Boroughbridge wrote to Newcastle declaring that 'the Tories are very busy and active and boast much of the strength of their Party.'⁶⁶

To an extent the issue of whether this was a Whig-Tory fight, or Government party versus Opposition party, or even Court against Country, hinged upon the ideology surrounding Cholmley Turner. Turner, a wealthy North Riding gentleman, had been the

⁶⁴ Langford, *The Excise Crisis*, pp. 114-5.

⁶⁵ B.C.A., Spencer Stanhope MSS., SpSt/11/5/3/11, [William] Lowther to [John Stanhope], 8 May 1734 (hereafter cited as Spencer Stanhope MSS.).

⁶⁶ B.L. Add. 32689, f. 185, Andrew Wilkinson to the Duke of Newcastle, 7 Apr. 1734.

Whigs' champion in the shire in 1727 and both sides sought his candidacy in 1733-4. A leading opposition Whig with an interest in Yorkshire, William Pulteney, stated that Turner was 'as good a man as can be chosen'.⁶⁷ Not only was he popular, but he was far from being a subservient government supporter. He followed Walpole into opposition in 1717 and later voted against Walpole's government on every major issue of foreign policy and over the excise in 1733. In fact Walpole was to decry the fact that 'he was so wrong-headed that there was no holding him.'⁶⁸ Thus, more than any other possible candidate Turner could be seen in the 'country' mould as the proponent of civic virtue.

Turner's refusal to stand alongside the Tory, Sir Miles Stapylton, tends to push the focus towards a Whig-Tory split and most of the election correspondence focuses on this. Sir Thomas Robinson, in December 1733, saw the forthcoming election as the 'great trial of the Whigg interest', although Sir John Lister Kaye spoke of a rival 'Countrey Interest'.⁶⁹ Certainly the Whigs, lead by Watson Wentworth, now the Earl of Malton, saw themselves in opposition to the Tories right up to the poll. The Tories, however, concentrated on a wider alliance; they were elated with their 'new allies viz the Duke of Somerset, Duke of Bolton, Duchess of Buckingham, Lord Thanet and Mr Wortley who were all against us before.'⁷⁰ With the Earl of Burlington refusing to declare, party

⁶⁷ N.Y.C.R.O., Jervaulx Archive, ZJX 7/12/9, William Pulteney to the Earl of Bruce, 16 Oct. 1733, mic. 1094 (hereafter cited as Jervaulx Archive).

⁶⁸ Walpole quoted in R. Sedgwick, The Commons, 1715-54, II (1970), 487.

⁶⁹ HMC, Carlisle, 15th Report, VI, Sir Thos Robinson to (the Earl of Carlisle), 8 Dec. 1733, 125; S.C.A., Spencer Stanhope MSS., SpSt 60526-2, Sir John Lister Kaye to William Spencer, 23 Oct. 1733.

⁷⁰ Spencer Stanhope MSS., SpSt/11/5/3/10, Sir John Lister Kaye to William Spencer, 14 Nov. 1733.

appearances were now muddled and the Tory hierarchy felt that 'we may be able to gain a member.'⁷¹ This self-belief was forged from a desire that 'instead of Courtiers' Yorkshire could 'send honest Country Gentlemen of both denominations' to Parliament.⁷² The declaration of Edward Wortley as a candidate, on the eve of the poll, gave this country coalition greater legitimacy, and boosted Stapylton's hopes of election.⁷³

There appears to have been a measured backlash by certain magnates against overbearing Whig government. A reaction to the excise, and its concomitant increase in excise officers, suggests a wider revulsion towards a party that had grown complacent in power and was threatening the balance of the constitution. Despite the fact that very few of the Whig gentry turned to the opposition, the Tories certainly talked of an altered political landscape. Although Lowther and Wilkinson thought that all loyal and true Whigs would never join the anti-excise party, Stanhope's apostasy was illustrative of divisions in the Whig party and the strength of ideology at elections. Thus, it is possible to talk of definite splits in the Whig party that fractured the Whig-Tory divide and recast it in a Government-Opposition mould.⁷⁴

⁷¹ Jervaulx Archive, ZJX 7/12/2, the Earl of Gower to Bruce, 9 Oct. 1733, mic. 1094.

⁷² Ibid., ZJX 7/12/3, the Earl of Winchilsea to Bruce, 9 Oct. 1733, mic. 1094.

⁷³ See below, Chapter 3, pp. 123-70, and Chapter 4, pp. 203-13, for the importance of Wortley's candidacy.

⁷⁴ The election correspondence of the resident Tories and Whigs never maintained that a Government-Opposition split had occurred. Equally, neither side appears to have called this a Court-Country dichotomy, either. Whilst some men maintained, until the eve of the poll and Wortley's candidacy, that this was a Tory-Whig contest clearly it was not. After the event opposition Whigs claimed that there had been an opposition in 1734, and even in 1741, that transcended the Tory party. Hence there is some justification for talking of a Government-Opposition split at this time.

The collaboration of Whigs and Tories in 1734 was over by 1742, and it was possible to refer to the two parties as Whig and Tory once again. This alteration back to the pre-1733 situation was exacerbated because many independent Whigs were not happy about the setting up of George Fox to oppose Turner, the government candidate, in 1741. The gentry who turned up to nominate Fox in that year, for example, Sir John Kaye, Sir George Cooke, Mr Dawnay, Mr Duncombe, Mr Fawkes and Mr Wrightson, were of traditional Tory hue.⁷⁵ Moreover, many men now saw a need to favour 'staunch old Whiggs'.⁷⁶

Old whiggery was seen as favouring a balance in the constitution and attacking government corruption. This was why the Opposition party in 1733-4 focused its attacks upon Sir Rowland Winn, who was put up alongside Turner. This reflected a wider reaction against Winn's associations through Lord Malton to the government. 'A New Ballad' told how:

The county assembled, Sir R-d appears
Attended indeed with some of his Peers,
Excisemen twice three, Esquires under a score
Three Bands, a Church Procter and not a soul more.

Moreover it declared that 'All that value their Country, Religion or Trade, for no bribe, drink, or money will sell him their aid.'⁷⁷ Winn's association with the excise probably cost him the election in 1734, and the subsequent failure of the petition to unseat Sir Miles Stapylton left the Whigs downcast enough to concede the

⁷⁵ Temple Newsam MSS., TN/PO/10/12, 'A List of the Gentlemen Meeting at Mr Gibsons...'.
⁷⁶ Ibid., TN/PO/10/9/21, Thos Lee to Irwin, 24 Feb. 1742.

⁷⁷ The Wentworth Papers, ed. J.J. Cartwright (1883), 'A New Ballad, or A Bob for Sir R-D', p. 469.

1741 general election to the Tories.⁷⁸ The London based opposition newspaper, *The Craftsman*, certainly believed that Yorkshire and London were 'proof to ye rest of ye Kingdom of their dislike to ye Ministry.'⁷⁹ Personalities and principles were always germane factors on the shire stage that required constant monitoring.

With this in mind, it is significant to note that at no time during this period were any of the Tories in Yorkshire attacked as Jacobites by the Whigs or government. Attracting the support of the electors through public loyalty to the throne could have proven a trump card. Earlier in the period there was marginally more vitriol from the Whigs concerning the Tories and the succession. In 1708 the threatened invasion by the Pretender lead to the arrests of Lord Langdale and a few minor Catholic gentlemen.⁸⁰ There was a report sent from London which noted that the Queen's speech on the Union with Scotland and the hopes for peace, should 'open the Eies of the money'd men as well as the Danger of Jacobitism should have done those of the landed.'⁸¹ Clearly there was some resentment that a section of the landed men who were usually equated with the Tories had not wholeheartedly supported the Queen.

Within Yorkshire however, there were few such allegations made, and the most serious, an accusation that the Corporation of Doncaster were 'all high flying Churchmen or Jacobites',⁸² was not

⁷⁸ The petition will be dealt with in Chapter 3, pp. 123-70.

⁷⁹ Fitzwilliam (Malton) MSS., Sam. Buck to Malton, 2 Dec. 1741.

⁸⁰ HMC, Portland, II, Edw. Wilbert to [Robert] Wenman, 20 Mar. 1708, 202-3.

⁸¹ L.C.A., Vyner MSS., VR 6004/13489, Metcalfe Robinson to his mother (n.d., Mar. 1708).

⁸² Nottingham University Library, Mellish Papers, MeC 14/35, G. Vicars, J. Thwaites and Mr Hudson to John Mellish, 10 Mar. 1708.

echoed elsewhere. The fear of invasion primarily exacerbated county-wide fears about the succession, although this did not affect the Tories' position in the shire as Lord Downe secured first place at the poll. To many of those who voted in that year the election of a Tory and a Whig would best suit their needs.

At the time of the Sacheverell poll it was reported that all the Whigs could manage to do was to trump up 'some lying story' to attempt to discredit the Tories as Jacobites.⁸³ However, the Whigs gained nothing from this, and in 1713 and 1715 the view of Peter Wentworth, brother of the Tory Earl of Strafford, that 'as we have no war, we don't care what Parliament we have, Whig or Tory',⁸⁴ may well have been an important county-wide opinion. On this basis the Tories were likely to hold onto their seats despite rumours that Lord Downe was harbouring a Popish Prince.⁸⁵

The Whigs did rattle the Tories to an extent in 1715. The question of the succession was again an emotive issue and if the Whigs could damn the Tories as Jacobites they would have a chance of success. The Earl of Carlisle hoped to pin the distribution of a Jacobite pamphlet on Kaye, in order 'to expel him the house'.⁸⁶ Sir William Robinson, M.P. for York, delineated between the Tories and Jacobites in April 1715 when he told his wife, 'wee had appearances in the sky again, the Tories and Jacobites make a fearful rout about it.'⁸⁷ Superstitious they may

⁸³ HMC, Portland, 15th Report, IV, Lord Downe to the Earl of Oxford (n.d.), 613.

⁸⁴ The Wentworth Papers, Peter Wentworth to the Earl of Strafford, 12 Oct. 1714, p. 43.

⁸⁵ B.L. Add. 24475, f. 139, Lord Downe to Sir Arthur Kaye, 14 Dec. 1714.

⁸⁶ HMC, Portland, 16th Report, V, the Earl of Carlisle to the Earl of Oxford, 20 Feb. 1715, 507-8.

⁸⁷ L.C.A., Vyner MSS., VR 6001/13934, Sir William Robinson to his wife, 5 Apr., 1715.

both have been, but there were divisions to be drawn between the two groups. However, only three months later, as the threat to the succession mounted, Robinson expressed the Whig opinion that 'the Tories in England are generally Jacobites.'⁸⁸ This attempted slur of Jacobitism by association did not affect the Tory position within Yorkshire. The Whigs could not force a contest even with the Hanoverian succession under threat, and despite Robinson's claim that 'There will be all over the whole Kingdom a mighty contest and a great expense' at the general election of 1715, Yorkshire was quiet.⁸⁹

In fact, support for King George was as forthcoming from the shire as it had been for King William in 1689 and 1696. A county interest based on Anglican Toryism and support for order was prevalent. Hence, Thoresby was aghast when it was suggested that Leeds had supported the Pretender, and that the West Riding 'should slink from King George'.⁹⁰ Most of the gentry were in accordance with Sir Walter Calverley, who 'was at the proclaiming of the King at Bradford',⁹¹ and his support for Hanover was indicative of the Tory approach to the question of the succession.

Given Walpole's tendency to utilise the fear of a Stuart restoration as his trump card in gaining Whig unity, the failure of the Yorkshire Whigs to taint their rivals probably indicated that the bulk of the Tories were loyal Hanoverians. Roman Catholics like Lord Langdale tended to keep quiet in this period and Tories like Downe, Fox and Stapylton remained loyal to the extent of

⁸⁸ Ibid., VR 6002/13832, same to same, 26 Jul., 1715.

⁸⁹ Ibid., VR 6001/13962, same to same, 23 Sep., 1714.

⁹⁰ Atkinson, Ralph Thoresby the Topographer, II, Rev. Nathaniel Hough to Ralph Thoresby, 1 Feb. 1716, 293-4.

⁹¹ 'The Notebook of Sir Walter de Calverley, Bart.', ed. S. Margerison, Surtees Society Publications, 77 (1883), 19 Aug. 1715, 139-40.

taking subscriptions in 1745. Only Sir Henry Slingsby, M.P. for Knaresbrough, was active for the Pretender in the 1740s. Butler's list of lords and gentlemen of 1743 commented that the Yorkshire nobility were in general favourable to the legitimate Stuart monarch. The 1745 revolt did not bear this out as Cruickshanks has shown; moreover, the lack of Whig antipathy and propaganda against the Tories is indicative of that parties' wider loyalties.⁹²

The use of the press for propaganda purposes, to focus and motivate the public on these issues, was limited in the elections of 1708, 1710 and 1727. In 1710 it was reported that 'Parson Docker' at Scarborough was receiving copies of Swift's *Examiner* from London via the local Tory M.P., John Hungerford; he was then reading excerpts 'to such of his parishioners who are weak in the faith.'⁹³ How common this practice was is unknown, but such activity may have been an outlet into the wider public arena for the press. For Yorkshire, little is known about its ability to shape opinion in the larger towns and their environs. The newspapers were not aimed at lower social groups, but could have importance in informing the electors of pressing matters.

This was more so due to the development of the press in Leeds and York, with rival papers, *The Courant* and *The Gazeteer* in the latter city by 1741.⁹⁴ The greatest furore was caused by the

⁹² E. Cruickshanks, Political Untouchables: The Tories and the '45 (1979); for Slingsby see pp. 47, 54, 78; for the Yorkshire gentry and Butler's List, see her Appendix I, pp. 122, 137-8. Had the Yorkshire Tories been in the least Jacobite, the anti-excite coalition of 1733-6 would have foundered.

⁹³ HMC, Portland, IV, John Durden to Robert Harley, 5 Dec. 1710, 640.

⁹⁴ For *The Courant* and *The Gazeteer*, see C. Collyer, 'Laurence Sterne and Yorkshire Politics: some New Evidence', PLPS, VII (1952), 83-7; also, L. Curtis, The Politicks of Laurence Sterne (Oxford, 1929).

clash between the Whig Laurence Sterne writing in *The Gazeteer*, and the writer 'J.S.', probably the Tory Vicar of Bardsey on Fox's interest, James Scott, in *The Courant*. These writers each vilified the opposing candidate whilst lauding their own champion. With Lord Irwin in contact with Sterne and Scott with Fox, the clash highlighted the party divide in the West Riding.

Beyond such disputes, most candidates utilised advertising space in the press to make announcements, and the newspapers also tended to report treats and entertainments made for the populace.⁹⁵ Moreover, these public announcements were made to the freeholders as a whole. The Whig candidate, Cholmley Turner, had a letter sent to *The Leeds Mercury* in January 1727, two weeks before the by-election, to counteract 'a report as false as malicious..., that Cholmley Turner Esq., one of the present Candidates for the County of York is an Enemy to our excellent established Church; and as insidious a design may not be seen through by many well-meaning freeholders.'⁹⁶ Turner was clearly worried about his public persona and the press was a useful way of extolling personal virtues.

The extent to which these newspapers informed the public remains unsure, but they must have fed into the overall wealth of publicity and slander that accompanied the election. Similarly, popular prints were issued alongside ballads to mobilise opinion; for instance, the Opposition published suitably edited versions of the memoirs of Sir John Reresby during the run up to the excise poll in order to account for the practices of the Tories since the

⁹⁵ See, for example, Lumb, *TSM*, XXII, no. 91, 17-24 Jan. 1727, 212; Lumb, *TSM*, XXVI, no. 818, 13 Oct. 1741, 96; also no. 825, 1 Dec. 1741, 97.

⁹⁶ Lumb, *TSM*, XXII, no. 91, 17-24 Jan. 1727, 212.

reign of Charles II. The Whigs countered with 'The Revolution in Politics', a cheap eight part publication intended for the poorer freeholders.⁹⁷ Together with the press, this indicates that all possible avenues of influencing voter awareness were being harnessed.

By the end of this period, when over 15,000 men were voting at York, the utilisation of the press alongside other traditional strategies, like the leasing of alehouses for voters, added to the tensions within York society. Although more than 9,000 men polled at the 1708 election, when party organisation was minimal, there is little evidence about the nature and emotions of the general population. Whether there was any violence or whether good-natured parading was the order of the day is unknown. The election was certainly a huge local event; Ralph Thoresby, the Leeds Antiquarian, noted that it was 'so crowded in the Inn' at York, that people had to sleep three to a bed.⁹⁸ There was a general excitement raised and both parties had worked relatively hard to elicit support; thus one would expect there to have been a level of popular, non-enfranchised involvement. However, despite the threat of a Jacobite invasion in 1708, there was no one issue that could engage the imagination of the 'mob', either independently or fed by either of the parties.

The utilisation of a popular outburst at election time was prevalent in 1710 when many saw the Whigs' impeachment of the Tory divine, Dr Sacheverell, as an attack on the established

⁹⁷ J.H. Plumb, 'The Electorate in England from 1600-1715', Past and Present, 45 (1969), 92 n. 6.

⁹⁸ Atkinson, Ralph Thoresby the Topographer, II, 20 May 1708, 27.

Church. Prior to the poll it was recorded that 'the Gentlemen met in a large plain and distributed fourteen hundred and twelve penny loaves to so many poor people, all marked thus - Sacheverell 1710.'⁹⁹ This was a recognition of the strength of a wider public opinion than that of the electorate alone, and was a factor that the managers and candidates on both sides could pander to.

At the poll Sir William Strickland faced 'much rudeness and unchristianlike methods' from the populace, who shouted 'no Rump, Rump, Whigg, Atheist, Hangdogg, Hairscutt.'¹⁰⁰ No doubt Tory party activists had made sure that the public were able to associate Strickland and the Whigs with the disorder of the Civil War, and the threat to the established order in Church and State. When a picture of Sacheverell was paraded at the hustings Strickland himself 'turned his backside on't', hardly a respectable act for a Knight of the Shire, but indicative of the strength of feeling on this issue. Worse still for Strickland, it was reported that he 'is shamefully distained. I'm told there were a company of damn'd priests that did him much evil.'¹⁰¹ Many of the clergy apparently vetoed all support for Strickland, and voted for the Tory candidates. The role of the clergy as strong Tory opinion leaders at this time was overcome in the Hanoverian period, but at the 1710 election, certain sections of the clergy forged links with the popular clamour. This clamour recognised a party ideology, or was manipulated by party managers who preyed on popular fears.

⁹⁹ Berkshire Record Office, Trumbull MSS., LIV, Ralph Bridges to Sir William Trumbull, 26th Apr. 1710.

¹⁰⁰ York City Archives, Hammond's Diary.

¹⁰¹ 'Letters and Papers of the Bankes Family of Reresby Abbey, 1704-60', ed. J.W.F. Hill, Lincolnshire Record Society Publications, vol.45 (Hereford, 1952), Reverend Steer to Joseph Banks, 23 Oct. 1710, 13.

At later elections, as political organisation improved, the parties looked to bolster their wider popularity by the use of popular imagery. A well-used Tory ploy in the early eighteenth century was the association of the Whigs with the allegedly corrupt Rump Parliament. For example, in 1734 Lady Malton was upset by a mob shouting 'Down with the Rump...';¹⁰² the populous appeared to have a long memory. Beyond this the utilisation of ballads to harness general discontent pointed to a recognition of the importance of popular opinion. The excise crisis provoked a deluge of popular literature aimed at the lower sections of society, including those who were politically conscious but not able to vote. Many ballads, however, were primarily aimed at the electorate. The 'Craven New Ballad' declared that:

Then Glorious Lord *Thanet*, brave *Lister* and *Drake*;
Your cause and our Own We will never forsake;
In huzzaing a *Stapylton* venture our throats,
As we march all to York to give *single* votes.¹⁰³

The italics in the original stressed the importance of the major Opposition party figures for the Craven voters - their local landlords and their candidate. The ballad also emphasised the need to give single votes, as Stapylton lacked a partner until the poll began. Although his canvassers had asked for singles, this kind of popular advertisement for the cause would reinforce that need. It may also have provided a means for the unenfranchised to put pressure on those with votes only to give singles. A similar ballad, 'A Dialogue betwixt a Great Man and his son', provided a

¹⁰² Wentworth Papers, George Phipps to Strafford, 11 Jun. 1734, p. 514.

¹⁰³ T. Lashley, York Miscellany (York, 1734), p. 13.

county-wide list of the clerical and gentry figures who backed the Opposition in 1734.¹⁰⁴ This comprehensive list was meant to impress on the voters the gravity of their situation and the strength of the campaign.

Ballads were a clear call to all of Yorkshire's society, to the electorate and below; they presupposed a political awareness among the various strata of the community, in pointing out that a misplaced vote could prove costly for the next seven years, the scheduled duration of Parliament. They may well have been aimed at the urban environment, as the towns would provide the best audience for such propaganda; nonetheless, the 'Craven New Ballad' also indicated the need for popular support in more rural areas.

Certainly the evidence for any manipulation of, or pandering to, the public by means of the press or ballads supports the view of O'Gorman on the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries that there was '[a] continuing political awareness on the part of the patronal and voter class alike, an awareness that is powerfully penetrated by party issues, party terms and party preoccupations.'¹⁰⁵ The candidates and their parties were aware of the need to harness all public opinion, with a focus on the freeholders as voters.

However, non-voters were also mobilised in an ideological manner. *The London Evening Post* of June 6th 1734 wrote of the great celebrations in Leeds that followed Sir Miles Stapylton's election. It also pointed out that the defeated government

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 15.

¹⁰⁵ O'Gorman, *Voters, Patrons and Parties*, p. 339.

candidate, Sir Rowland Winn, had called for soldiers to put out the fires and quell the general festivities.¹⁰⁶ In 1734, in the run up to the poll, it was reported that the 'Sheffield mob huzza'd Mr. Jessop out of the town last night, "Sir Miles for ever and no Excise".'¹⁰⁷ This mob certainly recognised the party ideology and the need to focus on the role of Stapylton. As rungs of popular influence existed from ballads to the press, support of local issues and local men was vital to any campaign.

Before the poll in 1742, the Whigs felt insecure about certain independent elements within York; more especially they felt that the issue of 'mobbing' by some Tory supporters would be an influence at the poll. Sir Rowland Winn went to the High Sheriff to demand that he order Fox and his men 'to keep all things quiet.'¹⁰⁸ On the first day of the poll Winn wrote that 'the mob seems very quiet', however a nervousness pervaded, and he added 'how long it will last I know not.' The following day, January 14th, Winn informed Malton that 'Lord Irwin's People were mobbed as they went round the [Castle] yard but some of our men rebelled and drove the mob into the Courts.'¹⁰⁹

There was widespread rioting during the by-election which indicates the independence of the collected community at this time. One John Flint, whose name does not appear on the list of voters, was arrested for being 'a notorious Rioter and Ringleader of the mob.' He had apparently dragged men away from Turner's polling tables and taken them to poll for Fox; this was as well as

¹⁰⁶ Lashley, *York Miscellany*, p. 67.

¹⁰⁷ *Wentworth Papers*, Phipps to Strafford, 6 May 1734, p. 506.

¹⁰⁸ Fitzwilliam (Malton) MSS., Sir Rowland Winn to Malton, 5 Jan. 1742.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., same to same, 13 Jan. 1742; *ibid.*, same to same, 14 Jan. 1742.

assaulting and insulting freeholders and leading a riot when the victorious Turner was chaired by his friends.¹¹⁰ Another witness wrote 'I hear that Mr Fox's party are insolent and abusive. They threw dirt upon Mr Turner's party abused them ill as they go to York.'¹¹¹

For many non-electors a county election may well have provided the only stage upon which they could attack, or show opposition to the government. Moreover, whilst they were part of a larger crowd they could reasonably expect to get away with lawless behaviour. However, many of the freeholders were none too pleased with this state of affairs, and it was reported that some were deterred from polling by the 'crowds that constantly press to the Tables', and that they 'have been prevented polling and even narrowly escaped with their lives.'¹¹² It would take more than a reasonable incentive for these men to travel to York in awful weather and to poll in what seems to have been a near riot in 1742.

Dickinson has noted that 'political riots depended on plebeian participants showing considerable initiative and independence.'¹¹³ Whether the bulk of the rioters were freeholders who supported Fox, or townsfolk using the opportunity to settle private grievances, or even paid troublemakers is not known. However, that the rioters focused their attention upon supporters

¹¹⁰ L.C.A., Battie Wrightson MSS., BW P/11, Box 26, an election petition (1742); Fitzwilliam (Malton) MSS., Wm Buck to Malton, 24 Jan. 1742.

¹¹¹ 'The Diary of Arthur Jessop', ed. C.E. Whiting, YASRS, 117 (Wakefield, 1951), 18 Jan. 1742, 69.

¹¹² L.C.A., Vyner MSS., VR 244/8, 'The Humble Petition of the Gentry, Clergy and Freeholders of the County of York to the Commons' (n.d.).

¹¹³ H.T. Dickinson, The Politics of the People in Eighteenth Century Britain (1994), p. 142.

of the Whig candidate suggests a level of ideological involvement and association amongst this 'mob'. An election would certainly give an opportunity for social inferiors to attack the social hierarchy, in defence of their beliefs. To an extent it also elevated the political self-esteem of the lower orders and forced the politicians into an awareness of popular wishes.

The Whigs felt that the Tories either supported the actions and the intimidations of the mob, or attracted it to their standard. In the eyes of the Whigs, the mob proved the worth of the Septennial Act as an attempt to calm the political scene. It would also support their self-belief that they were the true guardians of the interests of the nation. One dissentient view at the time that the Septennial Act was passed noted that it was the 'absolute subversion of the Third Estate of the Realm'; if this was recognised it was little wonder that feelings ran so high every seven years.¹¹⁴

A combination of alcohol and an 'inn culture', a popular event in a populous area like York, and the lack of an organised force for policing an election, made trouble inevitable. To an extent the elections were successfully managed by the local elites who controlled the symbolism of the polls and designed the strategies of each campaign. Each side recognised and attempted to utilise the mob, either by caricaturing their opponents as ringleaders of the dregs of society to the respectable freeholders, or by promoting the imagery of election ballads and promises. The interaction between the social hierarchy and the issues of the election added a wider, more general and occasionally levelling feel to the process of electioneering; a factor which was

¹¹⁴ B.L. Stowe 354, f. 174, 'The Bill on the Sittings of Parliament'.

exacerbated because the freeholders, election managers and candidates could not escape contact with the mob.

A final point of note is that shire elections gave both the Tories and the disenfranchised a unity and legitimacy. Certainly, without county polls, or contested elections of any sort, the Tories would have lacked a means of stating their own beliefs in a popular context. After their proscription as a group from local and national government following the Hanoverian succession, county polls and the preservation of the Tory representation in certain shires gave that party a justification for its own existence. As much as there was a wider distaste towards the government of the day, it was a bond generated through adversity that drew the unenfranchised and Tories together.

Maximising capabilities: political organisation and innovation

The roles of the various sections of informed public opinion, coupled with the fact that the Whig party had to create an electoral base out of nothing, meant that Whig electoral management was vastly improved in 1727, at the first shire election in the county for seventeen years. The development of the style of electioneering, and the energy of its organisation, points to an expansion in political development sooner rather than later in the century. This backs up the burgeoning electoral changes that O'Gorman noted for the period immediately prior to 1832, however, it pre-dates much of the evidence that he found for other counties.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁵ O'Gorman, Voters, Patrons and Parties, pp. 67-105.

The most important point that arises from the high politics of the early eighteenth century in Yorkshire was the huge increase in efficient man-hours put into electoral organisation. It was the growth of the Watson Wentworth interest, based in Strafford wapentake in the south of the West Riding that altered the complexion of electioneering at all levels. For the first time in many years a major landowner with strong political pretensions was resident in the county. Watson Wentworth, later Earl of Malton, had a desire to succeed at Westminster and in Yorkshire, and this provided an impulse for change. There was a landed strength behind the man that derived from the estates his father had inherited in the West Riding, but more than this he had personal drive. In contrast to him, the Dukes of Leeds, who held a significant power base near Wakefield, never figured as major players on the shire stage after the death of the 1st Duke.

Watson Wentworth had ambition and the connections he had at all levels of Yorkshire society allowed him to make inroads into the political strength of the Tories. He was a positive landlord, as the reported treat he threw for his tenants on the occasion of his son's birthday in January 1733 showed.¹¹⁶ This desire for popularity and success at all levels forced a greater pace into Whig electioneering. He was also driven on by a long-time feud that existed between his father, Thomas Watson Wentworth, and his relative, the Tory Earl of Strafford. This concerned lands that were left to Watson Wentworth and not his kinsman, who instead inherited the earldom. The latter was to complain in 1709 that 'I have almost as much land in Yorkshire as he has, and am sure I have a much better interest in that

¹¹⁶ The Wentworth Papers, Phipps to Strafford, 8 Jan. 1733, p. 477.

county'.¹¹⁷ This claim was to come to the fore in 1734 when the two men were diametrically opposed at the shire election.

The drive of Watson Wentworth was such that any attack on his electioneering was taken very seriously; he was fiercely proud of his role in Strafford wapentake. An allegation that the Whig cause was nearly lost in 1742 because this area had been lacklustre in its support, caused the Malton camp much grief. John Hill, whilst dining with the Dean of York Minster and a table of friends, took 'the opportunity to explain in a very full manner the case of Strafford and Tickill...'.¹¹⁸ Despite any claims that they were not fully active for the cause, Watson Wentworth and his network of adjutants had striven to become the Whigs' most adroit and energetic proponents; it was they who provided much of the impetus for electoral change in the shire.

The Whig party were especially well-organised in their zealous search for suitable men and the need to find manageable electoral units whatever the circumstances of the election. Thus, on the unexpected death of George I, and that of the incumbent M.P. Sir Arthur Kaye, as well as at the expected general election in 1734, the Whigs were prepared to work for a poll straight away. They were adept at getting a popular candidacy announced quickly, so that full canvassing could begin and this helped their organisation, especially in calling for double votes.

Speed and assurance were not the norm for the shire prior to 1727; in 1708 Conyers Darcy and Sir William Strickland had not announced a joint Whig campaign; even the Tories in 1710, riding

¹¹⁷ Ibid., Lord Raby to the Earl of Cadogan, 16 Feb. 1709, p. 22.

¹¹⁸ Fitzwilliam (Malton) MSS., John Hill to Malton, 18th Jan. 1742.

on the back of the Sacheverell affair, did not overtly join forces until late in the campaign. Lord Downe wrote in April 1710 that he would 'unite with Sir Arthur [Kaye] but not publicly.'¹¹⁹ This lack of cohesion hamstrung the intentions of the rival groups until 1727, and lessened the overall appeal of party.

Such were the problems of poor organisation; nevertheless, the choice of suitable men who could generate a positive aura in a particular neighbourhood was vital. In 1726, prior to the by-election, Watson Wentworth appeared determined to put up a strong fight and he arranged for the nomination of Cholmley Turner as the Whig candidate. Although at this election Turner was more or less foisted upon the gentry and electorate, at later elections in the period there was generally a meeting of the leading gentlemen in York to decide upon suitable candidates. Certainly these men would be able to gauge the likely levels of support at the grass-roots for a particular proposal.

Thus, before the 1734 and 1742 polls each party held a meeting to call for nominations prior to the issuing of writs for the elections. The Opposition party met as early as October 1733 to propose first Sir John Stapylton, who died on his way to the meeting, and then his son Miles for the expected poll to be held in the spring of 1734. The Tories were troubled by the lack of a second candidate until Edward Wortley joined Stapylton immediately before the ballot. As a result, much of Stapylton's work necessitated calling for singles, with a proviso that if another came forward to stand with him they would expect double votes.

¹¹⁹ B.L. Add. (Hunter) 24475, f. 138, John Stapylton to Sir Arthur Kaye, 17 Apr. 1710.

It was particularly important that the shire knew who had backed a particular man; thus, in 1742 the Tory George Fox was wary that although many important West Riding gentry supported him, there were 'but few Gentlemen of the other Ridings'. At the same time a staunch Tory, Sir James Armitage said he would 'not meddle unless they find Sir Miles a Better Partner.'¹²⁰ Stapylton also declared the inadequacy of Fox's candidature: 'Mr. Fox will not poll so many as were polled for me even out of his own riding [the West].'¹²¹ The appearance of the party to all strata of society and especially those who were politically active was crucial.

The Whig party noted that at their opponents' meeting to nominate Stapylton and Lord Morpeth for the 1741 general election, none 'of the nobility were present...except the Earl of Carlisle.'¹²² There was great store placed in announcing how many leading figures had supported a particular candidate or combination. The Tory party, or the Opposition in 1734, showed less unity than the Whigs or Government party; thus, despite the fact that sixty major and minor landowners and clergy attended the meeting in August 1741 to support George Fox's candidacy at the forthcoming by-election, the Whigs called this 'A small pack to hunt such a Fox.'¹²³ Lord Malton perhaps recognised this lack of unity among the opposition and hoped to split them. He was hoping for an uncontested election at this time and wrote to

¹²⁰ Jervaulx Archive, ZJX 7/15/5, George Fox to Bruce, 18 Sep. 1741, mic. 1094; Temple Newsam MSS., TN/C/15/201, R. Wilton to Irwin, 9 Sep. 1741.

¹²¹ Jervaulx Archive, ZJX 7/12/22, Sir Miles Stapylton to Bruce (n.d.), mic. 1094.

¹²² Wentworth Woodhouse Muniments, WWM, M3/72, Charles Zouch to Malton, 26 July 1740, mic. A14.

¹²³ Fitzwilliam (Malton) MSS., 'A list of the Gentlemen who met at York, the 30 August 1741'.

Newcastle to 'beg your Grace will speak to the Duke of Leeds, Duke of Bolton and the other Noblemen whose concurrence we may hope for...'.¹²⁴ The expense of the 1734 poll had probably enticed many men to look for a compromise in 1742 - Cholmley Turner could fit this bill if accepted by those who were in opposition in 1734, men like Leeds and Bolton. However, this tactic failed to gain widespread support from the nobility and gentry and both sides prepared for a contest.

The choice of the right candidate was crucial and the effort spent on promoting one or two particular men indicates that there was an ideological stance associated with them. The increasing strength of a party campaign and the primacy given to cohesive organisation by the political hierarchy indicates a shift in the nature of party itself, rather than in party ideology. Meetings were publicised in order to select candidates and both sides tried to support men with wide-ranging popularity in the shire; this echoed Lord Thanet's view that 'few men have interest in countrys where they live not.'¹²⁵ The feeling that a candidate had to be a popular local man was in part why Turner was contacted by both sides in 1734. The supporters of the government felt that a juncture between Turner and Sir George Savile 'could [not] possibly loose him [Turner] a Whigg vote.' For the Whigs this would have been an excellent joint-ticket - two popular, local

¹²⁴ B.L. Add. 32697, f. 420, the Earl of Malton to the Duke of Newcastle, 17 Aug. 1741.

¹²⁵ Temple Newsam MSS., TN/C/9/97, Lord Thanet to Irwin, 10 Sep. 1701.

Whigs. Moreover, they feared that Turner would join their rivals and place 'the Country back in the hands of the Torys.'¹²⁶

Both sides looked to impress the shire with their choice of men. Edward Wortley, a candidate for the Opposition in 1734, feared that the support for George Fox in 1742 would damage those who opposed the government, as Fox was 'Not called a Whig and therefore will want a great deal of those [votes] got by Sir Miles.'¹²⁷ This was a reference to the fact that Sir Miles Stapylton was a popular shire candidate who had gained widespread support for his candidacy in 1734 and 1741.

Moreover, Fox was an Irish landowner who had inherited the Yorkshire estates of Lord Bingley at Bramham Park by marriage to Bingley's widow. It was widely felt that his Irish interests ran counter to the woollen interests of Yorkshire, and also that he was a foreigner. *The York Courant*, a government organ, asked 'whether the setting up of a FOREIGNER to represent this large and rich County is not a plain proof that the [Opposition] PARTY was reduced to the last necessity.' A ballad from the election furthered this attack on the personality and standing of Fox; it highlighted the fact that the bulk of his lands were 'Irish Widdowers Jointure Land' which were 'Bound with Apron Strings together'. This attack on Fox's masculinity continued:

If he Catch us by these Fetches
And cajole us of our votes,
Make our wives then wear the breeches
And ourselves the Pettycoat.

¹²⁶ Wentworth Woodhouse Muniments, WWM, M1, Sir G. Savile to Malton, 26 Sep. 1733; same, Malton to Judge Jessop, 14 Oct. 1733, mic. A66.

¹²⁷ S.C.A., Wharnccliffe Muniments, Wh.M 108-28, Wortley's 'Observations'.

The ballad finished by acclaiming Turner as the candidate who would support 'our Native Right'.¹²⁸ The Whigs' appeal to a masculine, independent caucus of opinion indicates how they were convinced that the combination of a man who was at once a stranger to the shire and also tied by his wife's apron strings, was a boon to their cause. This contempt for Fox was summarised by a note on an election handbill; 'This day it was debated at [an] inconsiderable meeting at York, whether they should set up their old Fool or Irish Fague; Resolved for the latter, Fague, Fague, Fague.'¹²⁹ Who the 'old Fool' was is unclear, however the Whig supporters were clearly dismissive of the Tory candidate and felt that the ideological high-ground was theirs.

Both sides felt that support could be won or lost through the propaganda associated with their candidates, and this pointed up the fact that certain sections of the electorate were independently minded. The electorate had no overt control over candidacy, however, it was unwise for any party to look for men who would not receive widespread support at the shire level. Both sides forged a cohesive ideology that focused on the excesses or promises of the government, and hoped that the electorate recognised this as well. In this way party campaigns had to be based on coherent principles that their candidates would espouse.

Maximising the potential of each candidate needed an improved organisation, rather than the improvised one that existed

¹²⁸ Fitzwilliam (Malton) MSS., 'A New Song', [Jan.] 1742.

¹²⁹ York Minster Library, Hailstone Collection, Yorkshire Election Addresses, 1741, Box HH7.1. A note on the back of a printed address.

in the reign of Queen Anne. What the electoral activity of the year between August 1726 and August 1727 was to show was the positive inner strength of the Whig party when compared to the Tories. However, it was generally the fear of Tory strengths in the West Riding that forged greater Whig activity. During the 1727 by-election this involved a huge direction of energy into that region which would carry on for the next fifteen years. The Whigs, marshalled from Watson Wentworth's estate at Wentworth Woodhouse, began to invest more resources in local politics at all levels. The organisation that they developed was totally new to the county, and there was to be no sense of searching for a compromise or a share of the seats. The pivotal figure in the campaigning was Samuel Buck, Watson Wentworth's estate manager, who was an attorney-at-law in Rotherham. He acted as the major link between the localities and the Whig hierarchy and helped forge a more intricate network of county-wide control.

The survival of a canvass book for the 1727 by-election shows a new direction in local political proceedings. The canvass allowed Watson Wentworth to enlist men and develop a network of adjutants to work towards electoral dominance. The idea of having a good copy of electoral matters took a hold as the eighteenth century wore on. It was a useful means of recording how individuals, towns, wapentakes and even Ridings had voted, in order to see where more work was needed next time. In Yorkshire this methodical electioneering grew, so much so that local political behaviour kept up its vitality despite the demise of the Triennial Parliaments. After the Septennial Act the parties had seven years between elections during which they could tighten their electoral techniques. This relatively full canvass was the

first major indication that things were to change, however, local agents still needed the guidance and leadership given by resident magnates.

In August 1727, with the general election due in one month, Buck got hold of 'The Freehold Book kept for this Riding [the West] and all the Towns names'.¹³⁰ His aim was probably to break the organisation down to target particular townships in the Riding and sort the possible voters out from the pollbooks kept after the previous election. It is more than likely that this scenario was the considered plan for all three Ridings; indeed by 1733, the Opposition had learned the strength of this approach and had distributed 'copys of the Poll Books, which [they] had taken with a design to have printed them.'¹³¹

After 1727 the focus was to be the traditional divisions of the shire, the wapentakes;¹³² these were to provide the main loci of campaign strategy. In 1734 and 1742 the Whig effort was marshalled from the centre and mobilised by able lieutenants in each wapentake. In fact the defeat of Malton's nominee, Sir Rowland Winn, in 1734, and the failure to stand a contest in 1741 merely forced them to increase their organisation dramatically in readiness for the 1742 by-election. A meeting of the gentlemen of each Riding was called to ballot for, or agree upon, a committee to run the election. Each would have a treasurer and raise its own funds, but more importantly, 'this committee shall take the Account from another committee that shall be chose in each

¹³⁰ Fitzwilliam (Malton) MSS., Richard Cowper to Sam'l Buck, 3 Aug. 1727.

¹³¹ Wentworth Papers, Sir Henry Slingsby to Strafford, 4 Nov. 1733, p. 487.

¹³² See Figure 1.1, p.77.

division or wapentake who shall meet once a fortnight.' These committees were crucial for campaign management; as Fox noted in October 1741 'time is dayley lost [without a proper committee] and a lukewarm behaviour must have bad consequence.'¹³³

Reports were to be made and agents appointed in order to extract every last possible voter; it was crucial that this organisation worked 'towards making an interest where no Gentleman resides or will answer for.' Then there were to be Riding meetings one month before the poll was due to scrutinise the canvass returns for each division.¹³⁴ With 'the wapentakes...divided among friends,'¹³⁵ the Whig party wanted to see a return on electoral investments after the bitter taste of past defeats. After the Whig defeat in 1710, that party ceased its interest in contesting the shire representation, due to its lack of influential magnates and the paucity of its organisation which could not rally the rank and file. After the defeat in 1734 and failure to stand a contest in 1741, the Whigs had the capability to fight back in 1742.

This organised approach also recognised that elections could turn on 'the determination of absentees' from amongst the gentry. Those interests who fail in their duty to 'treat the Meaner Freeholders', were a burden to any unorganised party; for 'There are vast numbers of independent freeholders who have always expected the civility of a pot of ale.'¹³⁶ Committees on both sides

¹³³ Spencer Stanhope MSS., SpSt/11/5/3/21, George Fox to Stanhope, 22 Oct. 1741.

¹³⁴ Fitzwilliam (Malton) MSS., undated proposal concerning the 1742 by-election.

¹³⁵ S.C.A., Spencer Stanhope MSS., SpSt 60524, C. Nevile to Wm Spencer, 29 Oct. 1741.

¹³⁶ Wentworth Papers, Phipps to Strafford, 17 Dec. 1733, pp. 491-2.

compiled lists of available and willing gentry in each area; they also enquired about areas where no one was active. Thus, in the final days prior to the 1742 poll, it was reported that Lords Aylesbury and Thanet would help defray some charges in Staincross wapentake for the Tories.¹³⁷

There was also a need to secure the neutrality of certain minor and major landowners or to get permission to canvass their estate. As these people could be important local opinion leaders, it was imperative that those voters who were reliant in some form on a particular landowner were canvassed through him or her. At Holme-upon-Spalding Moor, it was reported that Mrs Cutler, 'a lady of a good Estate in this neighbourhood, has been very busy in this Town.' William Lee at Tadcaster had gone on a personal canvass of the town in 1727, but he recognised the influence of Mr Stanhope, the Lord of the Manor of Grimston, who was not engaged and would expect 'to be asked'. Other landlords gave orders straight away for action; Godfrey Copley gave 'orders...to send his tenants for Sir Thomas Wentworth' in July 1727.¹³⁸

Certain important local figures could find themselves canvassed by both sides for their interest. William Ingram of Wakefield had supplied Buck with information in 1727; then in 1734 he was apparently working for Strafford when he wrote:

I sent my clerk...to your tenants not to promise or ingage their votes till they heard from you; but my clerk tells mee that some of them had promised Sir Rowland (Winn) their vote that day, and indeed I had on Sir Rowland's application

¹³⁷ S.C.A., Spencer Stanhope MSS., SpSt 60511, Wm Marsden to Wm Spencer, 'Barnsley, Tuesday morning' (Jan. 1742).

¹³⁸ Wentworth Woodhouse Muniments, WWM, M1, S. Drake to Malton, 8 Dec., 1733, mic. A66; Fitzwilliam (Malton) MSS., Wm Lee to Sir Thomas Watson Wentworth, Saturday 2? Aug. 1727; *ibid.*, Mr Copley to Sam. Buck, 23 Aug. 1727.

to mee last week promist him my vote and intrest, which I could not tell how to deny him, since he is one of my best clients, and I am under great obligation to that family.

Moreover, he defended his split loyalties and dependency, for 'I cannot live as I do without businesse.'¹³⁹

Some electors appeared deferential or compliant in the extreme; Lady Goodricke of Ribston wrote to Mrs Fox, in September 1741, that 'I have sent to the Tenants that are Freeholders to vote for Mr Turner and goe along with This Family as they have always done.'¹⁴⁰ A clear indication of support or neutrality was needed so that more time could be spent on less easily controlled voters. Where a landlord countenanced the freedom of his tenants to poll as they wished little could be done. However, where there was no clear landlord lead it was necessary for the party to look to other potential opinion leaders. Malton was in constant touch with Dr Saunders, the Vicar of Sedbergh; at Halifax the campaigning and canvassing was undertaken by Dr Legh, a low-church clergyman. In the furthest reaches of the shire, for example high in the Pennines, or where few Whig 'lieutenants' existed, perhaps in a traditionally hostile area such as Halifax, Malton would need all the help he could get. Local clerics could often provide a good exemplar.¹⁴¹

Not all Whigs were as forthcoming and some needed a little more persuasion. The importance of any local opinion leader could not be neglected; the party relied on its scouts and friends in the localities for such information, and there was a need to court all

¹³⁹ Wentworth Papers, Wm Ingram to Strafford, 26 Oct. 1733, p. 485.

¹⁴⁰ Temple Newsam MSS., TN/C/15/209, Lady Goodricke to Mrs Fox, 12 Sep. 1741.

¹⁴¹ For the clergy in politics, see Chapter 5, pp. 248-308.

possible avenues of vote-winning. Thus, in 1741 the Whigs were pleased when Lord Burlington declared himself neutral, and that his steward, Mr Hawkswell, 'acquaints everyone as asked that my Lord gave leave for everyone to vote as they pleased, which is all we desired.' This gave new 'life to the cause' and damaged the hopes of the Tory party when they met at Doncaster Races.¹⁴² On such accepted overtures could elections be won and lost.

Upon standing down in August 1727, Viscount Downe was forced to acknowledge that 'a great many of his party have desisted; that he found his Interest as good as ever, and could have carried his election, though the Bishop and all the Lords of the county declare against him.' He blamed the gout but was deluding few people. Perhaps his later comment sheds more light on the matter, for it was said that he was 'not able to go through these methods of Courtship which are now too much insisted on by all Freeholder's all over England.'¹⁴³ In this was an implicit assumption that the Whigs had adapted to the electoral requirements of the age, namely energy and organisation. It was no longer the case as it had been for Downe in 1708, that a well-respected name would gain a vote. More and more the freeholders came to see themselves as important players in politics. Presumably certain men would have been determined to vote according to their ideology, despite any attempts at bribery; it would certainly be easier to overstate the strength of venality rather than personal belief in determining voting behaviour. Whichever was the strongest factor, as the Tory Lord Bruce

¹⁴² Fitzwilliam (Malton) MSS., Mr Curre to Malton, 10 Sep. 1741; *ibid.*, Winn to Malton, 19 Sep. 1741.

¹⁴³ Lumb, *TSM*, XXII, no. 121, 15-22 Aug. 1727, 217.

pointed out in January 1734, in 'Yorkshire it is necessary to deal with the third sort of people.'¹⁴⁴

With this in mind an undated parliamentary petition from the early part of the century made a case for the redress of some of the freeholders' grievances. It noted that

freeholders at the Extremity of it [Yorkshire], [are] very numerous and most of their freeholds small and haveing near fifty miles to travel to vote...are put to great charge and under the necessity to Bear many hardships and Inconveniences and to be absent from their Familyes and Business several days to their great detriment.¹⁴⁵

This gives a clear indication of the need for treating and the paying of election costs, especially as getting the independent freeholders to the poll was of huge importance - without inducements, too many voters would be deterred from going to York.

Not only were committees set up but the pivotal figures of the campaign met to sort out the way in which the voters were to be brought to York. On August 30th 1727, Henry Hitch, a Whig gentleman in London, received a missive from one of the managers in Yorkshire containing 'The Scheme for bringing in the County'.¹⁴⁶ Hitch was then meant to relay the information to the Whigs in the capital. This was a novel idea; in previous elections there was little in the way of monitoring the poll and much was left to chance or the whims of individual landowners. Indeed in

¹⁴⁴ HMC, Dartmouth, 15th Report, Appendix I, Lord Bruce to the Earl of Dartmouth, 1 Jan. 1734, 154.

¹⁴⁵ L.C.A., Vyner MSS., VR 244/8, 'The Humble Petition...'.
¹⁴⁶ Fitzwilliam (Malton) MSS., John Boulter to Henry Hitch, 30 Nov. 1727.

Anne's reign elections were occasionally called off due to lack of funds or a general feeling that the tide was against one's party. In the Hanoverian period the Whigs expected a poll at every election and organised as such; thus at the 1727 general election all the details of the campaign were assessed, so that if Lord Downe had not desisted he would have faced a Whig party machine in full swing.

Thus, in the final run up to the poll, the shire was broken down by wapentakes, and each day of the poll had different areas ascribed to it. At the general election of 1727, the Whigs designated the first day for Burdforth, Bulmer and Hallikeld of the North Riding; Ainsty, Barkston Ash and Claro of the West; Derwent and the Wilton Beacon area of Harthill wapentake - the most populous - in the East Riding. The second day was to poll Allerton, Rydall, Hang East and Gilling East in the North Riding; Skirack, Agbridge and Morley in the West; Holme Beacon division of Harthill, and Howdenshire in the East. The third day had Langbargh, Whitby Strand and Pickering in the North; Strafford, Osgoldcross and Staincross of the West. The fourth day was to see the North Riding wapentakes of Hang West, Gilling West, and the rest of the East Riding. After that on the fifth day 'if occasion' Staincliffe was to be brought in; this suggests that there were a number of riders and messengers within the overall infrastructure ready to deliver orders. It also suggests a ready organisation of local gentlemen willing to bring in a constant stream of voters and dependants to York. Moreover, the Whigs were ready to hold a populous area, Staincliffe, back 'in case' - this would cut the cost of the campaign if these voters were not needed, and act as a final damning blow to the Tory cause if they were.

The manuscript pollbooks for the election do not show whole townships coming in to poll *en bloc*, although they do indicate that the Whigs' intention to bring in different wapentakes each day could work.¹⁴⁷ Whilst there is a wapentake pattern to the books, they also indicate the difficulties of keeping such a large amorphous body together at the poll. The huge influx of people into York created its own logistical difficulties - especially when the influence of a night's drinking, and the inevitable brawling and quarreling, was taken into account. Whether men arrived and stayed for several days before polling and leaving is unknown, although the cost of this may have been prohibitive. Nevertheless, the strength of the Whigs' campaign strategy had got these people to York in the first place, in which order they voted was irrelevant.

The Opposition party also broke the shire down into manageable sections, however, in 1742 they seemed to rely on rousing interests rather than wapentakes. They gave orders for a particular interest or township to come in on a particular day, with a note as to who would lead particular groups. The major interests were covered in this way, however, where few party men existed, a wapentake as a whole was listed. Hence, the fourth day of the poll in 1742 was pencilled in for Sir John Bland's interest, the Duke of Somerset's interest, alongside the freeholders from Howden, and Ouse and Derwent wapentakes.¹⁴⁸

Both sides believed that most importantly of all, 'No votes [are] to be bought in but those who vote double'.¹⁴⁹ This was not

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 'A Bag of Pollbooks for the 1727 By-Election'.

¹⁴⁸ Spencer Stanhope MSS., SpSt/11/5/3/23, 1742 election material.

¹⁴⁹ Fitzwilliam (Malton) MSS., Boulter to Hitch, 30 Nov. 1727.

always possible, especially where voters were more independent in nature. Samuel Buck was informed in 1727, by an agent in Staincliffe wapentake, that many voters would not vote double for Watson Wentworth and Turner at the general election, but would give singles, and these 'ought not to be left behinde.'¹⁵⁰ Could the Whigs afford not to poll these supporters? The decision to give only one vote in a joint campaign was evidence of either a strong local influence on an elector, or of the strong personal opinions of that voter. Whilst electioneering was weak the number of plumpers was high - for example at the 1708 poll, over 30 per cent of the votes cast were singles. However, at the 1734 poll this was vastly reduced due to the strength of party campaigning. It was always possible that at a later date, or at the poll, voters who promised only singles could be persuaded to give two votes.

The idea behind this cohesive organisation was an attempt to overawe the opposition with a regular procession of double voters entering York, and to allow a staggered and manageable influx of people into the town. There were only a certain number of Inns that could accommodate the freeholders, and the parties would want as much control over them as possible, with loyalty to both candidates required. However, other problems became clear; for instance in certain districts 'proper persons...to get the people together' were not available. To make 'the numbers...appear handsome', as opposed to 'small straggling appearances', required local captains.¹⁵¹ One West Riding Whig noted that he was doing 'much scampering about to get captaines but how much they will expect for conduct money I cannot compute.' He acknowledged the

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., Wm Talham to Sam'l Buck, 17 Aug. 1727.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., R. Hopkinson to Sam'l Buck, 23 Aug. 1727.

necessity of finding some leaders of men, in order 'for the calling up and leading the forces to York'.¹⁵² Once a captain was found he had sole charge of the voters. A bill of expenses from a gentleman in Thirsk engaged in the Tory cause in 1742 noted how 'we have taken great care to keep the above men together and seen ym polled for Mr Fox.' This particular captain claimed to have brought seventy-one men to the poll and had spent £9.7s.8d.; he also provided a list of those left behind or who could be ordered in - the old, infirm or perhaps apathetic.¹⁵³

At the poll itself between seven and nine tables or booths were set up to record the votes;¹⁵⁴ there may have been two tables in each booth at a by-election, one for each candidate. It would be up to the captains to make sure that their men polled at the correct table, where there would be a clerk to record the poll, with two assistants, 'a sworn clerke' to take the oaths and possibly a representative of the candidates to check procedure. In this atmosphere the reliability of the voters and those who looked after them was crucial.¹⁵⁵

By 1742 the infrastructure had been developed to the extent that riders were ready to bring in 'ye votes that are left behind.' The meetings of the Riding committees and the gentry at York a month before the poll were meant to iron out any deficiencies and arrange election logistics. Thus, despite 'ye badness of ye weather

¹⁵² Ibid., same to same, 26 Aug. 1727.

¹⁵³ Spencer Stanhope MSS., SpSt/11/5/3/31, ? to Stanhope, 13 Jan. 1742.

¹⁵⁴ Nine booths are noted as having been used in the early part of the period, see L.C.A., Vyner MSS., VR 244/8, 'The Humble Petition...'. By 1727, officers were delegated by the High-Sheriff for seven tables; see York Minster Library, Hailstone Collection, Box 4.7/39, a list of the officers of the poll, 1727.

¹⁵⁵ York Minster Library, Hailstone Collection, Box 4.7/39, a list of the officers of the poll 1727.

[which] makes our list fall short", the Whigs were especially content with the outcome of their campaign. In fact the strength of feeling and political activism among the voters and patrons must have been strong given the awful weather. Many roads were flooded and the journey to York from the outer reaches, or outside, of the shire must have been a trial. For 15,000 men to vote indicates the effects of the overhaul in organisation and the wider commitments of the public, for whom attendance at York, if at all possible, was imperative.

To facilitate the overhaul in organisation, the Whigs not only called meetings in York, but appealed for financial support in London through their wider contacts. Winn told Malton in 1741, 'if the Government and the Placemen will not do something, how can it be expected that we can support so great a wait upon our backs.'¹⁵⁶ The question of funds was crucial; Lord Malton apparently spent £15,000 fighting the 1734 campaign and petition whilst Winn had an outlay of near £6,000.¹⁵⁷ The huge cost of this election and petition meant that the Whigs were desperate for support in 1742 because of the paucity of funds. As early as November 1741 Sir Rowland Winn declared that '...we shall have many friends to bring in that are above one hundred miles from York; which makes me fear yt our subscription will fall far short...and I do not find that we are likely to have any further sums subscribed...'.¹⁵⁸ As Malton was more wary of spending freely, a list of forty county gentry who resided in London was

¹⁵⁶ Fitzwilliam (Malton) MSS., Winn to Malton, 23 Nov. 1741.

¹⁵⁷ Quinn, NH, XXI, 154

¹⁵⁸ Temple Newsam MSS., TN/C/15/227, Sir Rowland Winn to Irwin, 8 Nov. 1741.

drawn up and applications were made. It was bemoaned that '1500 or 1600L [must be] found att least', which was deemed more necessary as the East Riding agents alone claimed that they needed an extra £700. This caused great concern for the North Riding required much of what remained and there would be only £1,600 for the West.¹⁵⁹

Funding had always been a difficulty and the elections of the Triennial period had relied on the pockets of the candidates and their immediate backers. Landlords like Sir Walter Calverley could be relied on to treat their own neighbours,¹⁶⁰ but the financing of the campaign reflected the lack of an overall strategy. In 1702 Lord Irwin treated his way around the North Riding and paid the charges of the Leeds Corporation at the poll. However, the lack of a wider strategy lead to deficiencies; it was reported that Irwin would have to 'excuse those in the remotest part of Craven' who had no one to defray their expenses.¹⁶¹

The fact that freeholders would not travel without money indicates a stubborn resilience, and this was a psychology that did not vary over time. In 1727 William Wrather wrote that, 'it may be ye best method to have proper Agents in every place to pay theire Expense for going before they set forward', as 'but few will set out Except where they are headed or obliged by some Gentleman.'¹⁶² Another gentleman in Ripon, spent money 'in this Town and some of ye Adjacent Towns' and wrote that 'I should think the safest way woud be to Expend a little to have ye

¹⁵⁹ Fitzwilliam (Malton) MSS., Winn to Malton, 5 Dec. 1741.

¹⁶⁰ See, for instance, Margerison, Surtees Society Publications, 77, 26 May 1708, 110.

¹⁶¹ Temple Newsam MSS., TN/PO/10/4, 'Election Expenses', Dec. 1701; *ibid*, TN/PO/10/4/T316, Lord Burlington to Irwin, 1 Dec. 1701.

¹⁶² Fitzwilliam (Malton) MSS., Wm Wrather to Mr Buck, 20 Aug. 1727.

freeholders ready for you wch they will expect'. In 1742, a Tory gentleman bemoaned the fact that 'not one single freeholder wd bear a penny of their expenses but defrayed by me.'¹⁶³ These freeholders may well be allied to the cause, but they would withhold their participation without financial support.

Thus, the design enacted after 1727 appears to have been to approach the freeholders with local men and money and then bring them in with outside funds. Another gentleman from Staincliffe wrote in the run up to the 1727 general election that he believed the area, 'heavy in ye Interest' with over 400 voters ready to answer the call. However, 'things has not hitherto been so well managed as they were in ye late Election'. He expected over 800 more men could be called in, but he needed 8 or 9 shillings for each voter. Moreover it was felt that this was necessary 'to make ye best of a sharpe markt' that required horses for transport as well as expenses.¹⁶⁴

The Whigs learnt swiftly by experience that elections could not manage themselves. One gentleman reported that although he was awaiting orders for treating the 'poore voters' in Morley wapentake, in Agbridge some had taken it upon themselves to do this, which 'will I doubt make others expect it.'¹⁶⁵ Despite the fact that they were receiving reports from all over the county, from gentlemen and their stewards who were dispatched to townships in each wapentake, there was little room for mistakes. In Strafford wapentake, in 1741, it was said that 'some think a guinea and a

¹⁶³ Ibid., George Hatfield to Mr Buck, 13 Aug. 1727; Spencer Stanhope MSS., SpSt/11/5/3/22, 'Charles Radcliffe's account'.

¹⁶⁴ Fitzwilliam (Malton) MSS., J. Waddington to S. Buck, 18 Aug. 1727.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., R. Hopkinson to Mr Buck, 26 Aug. 1727.

half (a reasonable amount) at the distance that we are from York in a trading countrey where labour is dear and horses scarce...'. Lord Malton was beseeched to send '6 or 700L to carry ye votes to Yorke'.¹⁶⁶ Here was also an explicit assumption that many voters were not tied to a particular landlord and would need extra work from without of their locality; this would again force the party to adapt.

Expenses and the cost of the whole campaign was so high that money would only be spent on Turner's campaign in 1742, 'in favour of staunch old Whiggs and men who will pursue the generall good of their Country.'¹⁶⁷ Individual money was spent in other's credit and reclaimed later, although claims could come as a shock to the party hierarchy. It was clear that certain members of the electorate expected fiscal or material inducements, despite all that was done to cut costs. Again in the run up to the 1742 poll, it was claimed that 'these people must be frequently attended till ye Election be over, 'Else we shall be in great danger of loosing them, for they are True Swiss and will fight for most any.'¹⁶⁸ This indicates an independence and venality amongst certain electors that a party could not overcome, and some votes undoubtedly went to the highest bidder.

Whether these men were tenants and under pressure is unclear. A list of accounts for the 1727 by-election designates money spent on the 'Knottingley tenants' and the 'Thorner freeholders' and other men were mentioned by name, without a

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., Sam. Buck to Malton, 2 Dec. 1741.

¹⁶⁷ Temple Newsam MSS., TN/PO/10/9/21, 'Money Disbursed by Thomas Lee'.

¹⁶⁸ Spencer Stanhope MSS., SpSt/11/5/3/25, Mr Farrand to Stanhope, 11 Oct. 1741.

tenant/freeholder suffix.¹⁶⁹ These men may well have been small or middling freeholders. One report from 1741 claims that money was required for 'our freeholders',¹⁷⁰ an epithet which was not the same as 'our tenants', and this indicated a level of economic independence above tenant status. To gain support for the Whig cause among these men made financial incentives necessary to secure their place at the poll.

Any squeeze on funds was an attempt by the campaign leaders to control the areas of spending that were outside their direct influence. It was certainly difficult to bring in large numbers of men from outlying regions, and the difficult terrain that existed in parts of the shire and the bad weather at the elections of 1727 and 1742 made the hiring of wagons and horses vital. This was as well as defraying the costs of lost labour, and general treating. In 1742, the Tories not only wanted the costs to be kept down, but feared that 'Our adversaries profuseness makes many of our Friends in several parts think themselves neglected.'¹⁷¹

Come the poll neither side could afford to be spendthrift and the outlay was enormous. However, much of the accounting was rather loosely termed, as a list of accounts from the Tory Lord Bruce's manager in Hang West wapentake shows.¹⁷² He noted money 'Spent at Sinderby Court', or 'Mr Brown's expenses for

¹⁶⁹ Temple Newsam MSS., TN/PO/10/5, 'Expenses with the freeholders and comoners about the Election...Janry 1727'.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., TN/C/15/234, Richard Cooke to Irwin, 23 Dec. 1741. Some of Irwin's other accounts note tenants as separate from freeholders; for instance, *ibid.*, TN/PO/10/7, which refers to 'Mr Charleton's tenants' at the 1734 poll.

¹⁷¹ Spencer Stanhope MSS., SpSt/11/5/3/28, A. Perrott to Stanhope, 31 Dec. 1741.

¹⁷² Jervaulx Archive, ZJX 7/16, '1741 Election expenses', mic. 1094.

bringing in some Freeholders'. What these entailed is unknown; just charges for horses, accommodation, work lost and subsistence, or bribes? That it was also reported, on occasion, 'nor was it possible for to take Receipts' indicates the lax and probably venal nature of much electioneering. This list gives a total of £531.2s.3d. spent between August 1741 and January 1742. The first thing that is indicated was the various levels of organisation; those who were giving orders, men like 'Mr Ralfe' and 'Mr Carter'; those who were canvassing, like 'Thomas Nottingham'; those who were trusted messengers like 'Anthony Smith' who ran errands all over the country and was paid £8.12s. in total. Beyond this there was a wider community of interest that benefited, from the local farrier, to Edward Atkinson who was paid £21.5s.4d. for provisions for a treat. This entertainment was for the twenty-two owners of horses who were paid £26.4s. between them to transport twenty-two freeholders to the poll. These were probably tenants who were co-opted; in 1734 it was reported that the Earl of Strafford's tenants were paid 12d. a horse.¹⁷³ Similarly, there were eight Inns in York who benefited to the tune of £157.2s., or 30 per cent of the election expense. With the vast amounts of money disbursed at each campaign, a contest was a profitable business, even for tenants whose worth in the political process was recognised..

The accounts also reinforce the idea that there was a general price set for each vote. An account from Thirsk suggested that certain men expected 'the usual half guinea'.¹⁷⁴ This was what the

¹⁷³ Wentworth Papers, Richard Wardman to Strafford, 12 Mar. 1734, p. 502.

¹⁷⁴ Spencer Stanhope MSS., SpSt/11/5/3/29, ? to Stanhope, 13 Jan. 1742.

purchase of votes cost in the Bruce account, although only eight men were paid 'for his vote'. This price did not include treating at various places; over seven pounds was spent at eight local courts in the North Riding. Similarly, money was spent at West Witton fair, and on several occasions the same places would be returned to and canvassed and treated again.¹⁷⁵ Thus, certain voters may have received several payments.

From this list, it also becomes clear that at a local level, the system of electioneering fell into discrete sections; the early period was made up of visits to the manor courts, and on sending letters throughout the North Riding. Then there were treats of the locale and the freeholders, which were followed by sorting out the final arrangements for the poll, arranging the Inns at York and hiring horses. This level of organisation, however, had to be careful not to step on anyone's toes. The areas around Lord Bruce's seat in Hang West and Gilling East wapentakes were quickly canvassed; then various agents were sent into other areas, notably Langbargh, Hallikeld and Claro wapentakes, perhaps after permission to do so had been granted. Clearly there were many interests, high and low, to which each campaign had to show due deference. It was this that pushed up the cost of a contest.

This discussion of election logistics and public perceptions does show a vastly improved, methodical organisation, especially by the Whigs. To a large extent the Tories, and later the Opposition, had neither the talents nor the drive to forge a capable and lasting campaign strategy and were merely a reactive

¹⁷⁵ Tanfield was visited eight times and Masham five; see Jervaulx Archive, ZJX 7/16, '1741 Election expenses', mic. 1094.

force. They relied on the tide of events and traditional local patronage to swing voters to their side. From the traditional electoral sources, such as correspondence, it appears that although some of the electioneering at this time was aimed at a few dependent voters, or those whom it was felt could be bought off, it focused primarily on those voters who were politically conscious and who could be steadfastly independent. The electoral developments of the era reflected, as much as they affected, the views of the electors.

The claims of Quinn that 'many voters, particularly in the large agricultural areas of the North and East Ridings, were under the control of their particular landlord' indicates a measure of power and authority that is not reflected in the literature. Quinn went on to add that those who were independent, primarily in the West Riding, were only 'theoretically independent' and usually 'voted in accordance with blind prejudice'.¹⁷⁶ Many men may have voted as they had always done, or in favour of the beliefs of their local grandee; however this does not make them dependent or ignorant. The utilisation of local issues to extract promises from candidates, the furore caused by national issues like the excise and Sacheverell affair, and the focus on ballads, broadsheets and the press, all point to a section of the politically aware public who were more interested in party ideology.

Undoubtedly some voters were venal; Lord Irwin was informed in December 1741 that 'several of 'em [the Craven freeholders] are nibbling the Hook and wish to Gnaw this Gilded Bait.'¹⁷⁷ Equally, some voters were dependent, as tenants they

¹⁷⁶ Quinn, thesis, pp. 495, 496.

¹⁷⁷ Temple Newsam MSS., TN/C/15/231, E. Guy to Irwin, 15 Dec. 1741.

possibly could not afford to ignore their landlords wishes.¹⁷⁸ But the accounts and correspondence for early eighteenth century Yorkshire indicate the unsure and unstable state of electioneering at this time. Party campaigns reflected what O'Gorman has written for the later eighteenth century, that '[the] electoral system was controlled by local families and connections whose influence was exercised conditionally amidst habits of widespread political involvement.'¹⁷⁹

The huge increase in spending and the drive to squeeze out every possible voter increased the numbers polling, from a low of 9,289 in 1708 to a high of 15,351 in 1734 - a rise of over 65 per cent. More voters polled in 1708 as this pollbook is incomplete, however, it is clear that there was a large increase in turnout which mirrored the improvement in organisation. Whether it would be fair to say that this increase was made up of independent voters is difficult to prove. Certainly the use of freehold books and pollbooks allowed greater mobilisation of the electorate, but the question of whether the 1708 voters were more compliant than the 1734 voters because more of them were dependent on their own landlord to get to the poll is a moot point.

The political correspondence of early eighteenth century Yorkshire indicates a conditional relationship between the politicians and many of the electors. Conditions were set by both sides which meant that the politicians recognised that their level of support was often weak and that their level of control was a delicate balancing act. Just how fragile this could be will be

¹⁷⁸ W.A. Speck, Tory and Whig (1970), p. 38, 'The number of voters who were also tenants was probably small'.

¹⁷⁹ O'Gorman, Voters, Patrons and Parties, p. 7.

addressed in the next two chapters which deal with the mechanics of canvassing and petitioning.

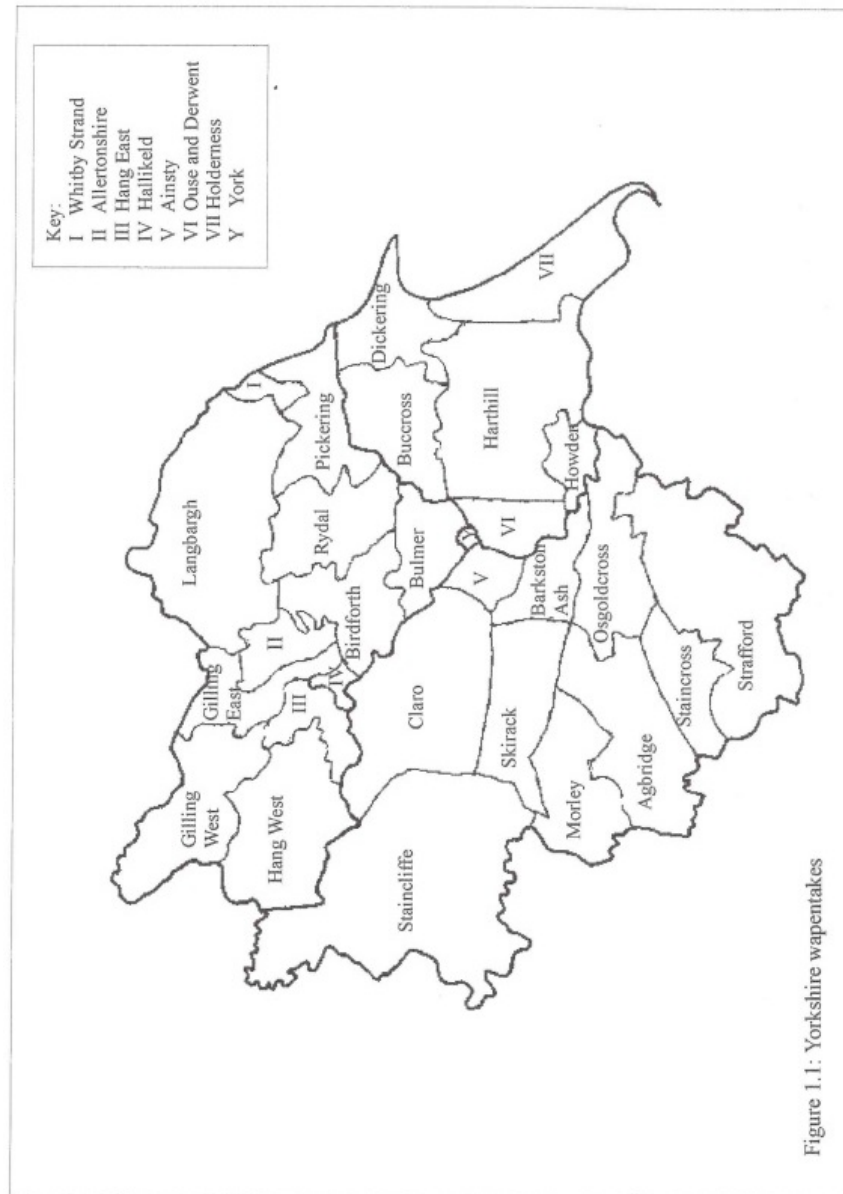


Figure 1.1: Yorkshire wapentakes

Chapter 2

Misplaced Beliefs and Raised Expectations: The Role of the Canvass

The canvass was one of the most important aspects of eighteenth century electioneering. As a means of locating general and specific strengths and weaknesses there were two forms of canvass undertaken; the first was formal, although often locally led, with names, addresses and promises noted; the second was tied in with wider issues of treating and entertaining as a means of canvassing local supporters. Votes were not necessarily recorded, but villages or sets of freeholders were entertained in the hope that they would favour the entertainer's party. At such treats, general levels of support could be gauged and preliminaries to a specific canvass undertaken. As canvasses tended to be local affairs they presumed little about the density of votes in a particular area, especially as often there was little known about the true number of voters.

Which of these tactics was preferred by the rival parties could influence their level of support at the polls. There was a need to find a balance between firstly, over-reaching interference in what was essentially an individual's right to poll, and secondly, an individual's need to feel courted by the politicians. In this way an informal treat may have been more fruitful in solidifying support, allowing voters a license to express deference or participation.

But how important was the canvassing process in forging a party's links to the electorate? Were the canvasses geographically widespread? Were they comprehensive in terms of those who could

poll? More importantly, were they accurate? The answers to these questions will intimate the value in which the politicians held the electors' beliefs and their electoral needs. As the Whig agent in the dales, Dr Saunders, noted, 'people expect to be taken notice of'.¹⁸⁰ If they were not courted and cajoled, their votes could easily slip away. This chapter will look at this method of electioneering in Yorkshire, its frequency of use and of type, and assess whether it did cause a slippage of political control and support.

The surviving election material for the pre-Hanoverian period in Yorkshire contains two lists of voters. One is the 1708 pollbook; the other is a minor canvass that was carried out for Sir Arthur Kaye in Allerton, Hallikeld and Hang West wapentakes in the North Riding.¹⁸¹ This paucity of extant information amongst the surviving correspondence reflects the nature of electioneering in this era. To a large extent it was *ad hoc* - an improvised and interest-lead activity. Contact with much of the electorate was left to local men and tended to revolve around their estates. Little was said of treating towns and villages that lay beyond the normal boundaries of an interest.

The Tory canvass of 1710 was more detailed than this usual sort of strategy. Over a period of a week, four months prior to the October poll, a single agent travelled around thirty-six townships

¹⁸⁰ Wentworth Woodhouse Muniments, WWM, M1, Dr Saunders to Malton, 7 Dec. 1733, mic. A66.

¹⁸¹ York Minster Library, Liber Miscellanea, Cat. 22, Add. MSS. 235, Pollbook for the 1708 Yorkshire County Election; B.L. Add. 24612, ff. 13-16, 'Notes from a Canvassing Book during a Yorkshire Election...'. The title of this latter source implies that it was a copy of a wider list - a frustrating implication.

and canvassed the standpoints of seventy-five men and several major interests. Whether these men were all the freeholders that could be located is unknown; the agent may have been able to utilise his or someone else's local knowledge to ascertain who could vote. Alternatively there may have been some lists of freeholders in existence. Certainly the 1708 pollbook would have given some indication of possible supporters. However, comparing the two lists would not have premised success for Kaye since of the seventy-five canvassed only five had supported him in 1708. Only twenty-nine had polled before and twenty-three of these had supported Conyers Darcy, the local candidate, giving him singles or doubles with his fellow Whig Sir William Strickland.. However, since there was no legal requirement as yet to have a voter's freehold recorded in the pollbook, locating electors from the pollbook alone may well have been awkward.

With this in mind it is little surprise that the canvass focused heavily on clergymen and those called 'Esquire' or 'Gentleman', as they were sure to have a vote and possibly an interest; in all twenty-five of those in this list were given such epithets. However, anyone who may have had some local influence was called on. Thus, the agent visited 'Mr Clark and Mr Askwith of Upsland, both Romans [Catholics] but willing to promote.'¹⁸² These men may well have had no vote but that did not mean they could not be courted for the cause.

This notion of courting was crucial and was one of the vital elements of the canvass, but before the advent of an improved party infrastructure the ability to locate and treat geographically widespread voters was difficult. This was especially true given

¹⁸² B.L. Add., 24612, f. 13, 'Notes from a Canvassing Book...'.

that certain voters could threaten a staunch independence. Mr Heaton of Firby was upset that 'Sir Arthur did not ask him the last election [1708]; and seeing him when he voted said, he might well have given him a vote, upon which Mr Heaton replied, that he might well have asked it.' Clearly, Heaton was unhappy that his services were apparently not required previously. How much reassurance was necessary from the agent is unknown but 'After some hesitation [he] promised Sir A[rthur] his vote and all service...'.¹⁸³

Other men were torn between local favourites and the church; at Redmire, Mr Thornton declared no knowledge of Kaye, but upon hearing that he was a companion of Lord Downe said he would give him a vote '(as all good christians should do for Churchmen) but will give one for Darcy if he stands.'¹⁸⁴ There was room for sturdy independence and individual opinion at shire elections, but at times local favourites like Darcy could gain votes at the expense of those candidates with closer ideological ties to a particular voter.

The agent also contented himself with more nebulous information about interests and feelings that ran high in particular towns. These interests are difficult to substantiate; for instance, it was contended that four friends from Coverdale and Bishopdale could bring in up to 400 supporters.¹⁸⁵ Where the funds for this were to come from was never mentioned, but it does give some indications that the Sacheverell election had created a ground swell of support for the Tories in the North Riding. The

¹⁸³ Ibid., f. 14.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid., f. 14.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., f. 14.

town of Middleham was said to be solidly pro-Tory despite the fact that in 1708 twenty-three of its twenty-six voters gave singles for the Whig, Darcy. However, the importance of the Sacheverell affair and Darcy's refusal to stand may well have changed attitudes in the town. Certainly, individuals gave indications of their support for the church and, through that institution, for the Tory party.

Larger interests that were crucial in these areas were also detailed. Mr Pinchney, steward to Lord Rivers, 'gave me good instructions how the country lay'.¹⁸⁶ Such information was vital for the agent in assessing where to canvass next and concerning whom to talk to about the poll. This latter course would probably need to be directed from higher personnel than the agent. With those in the list of interests including the Duke of Bolton and the Earl of Holderness, any possible contacts there would require the influence of Tory peers.

The underlying purpose of this qualitative canvass was to ascertain the level of support in a particular area for a man who was a relative unknown there. Given the poor state of canvassing in the shire at this time it was still not clear whether Kaye and his fellow Tory, Lord Downe would win the election. This was especially daunting for Kaye as the Tories were not running a joint-campaign and the other two candidates had both been representatives of the shire before the dissolution. Given the poor performance of Kaye in the North Riding in 1708, this canvass could ascertain his strengths there and the sagacity of his standing a poll. Had the canvass indicated that the influence of the Sacheverell case had worn off, and that Kaye's level of

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., f. 15.

support was minimal, especially amongst the gentry, it may have prompted him to desist from standing.

This canvass was a novel piece of electioneering in Augustan Yorkshire. Previously parties had relied upon oft-inflated estimates of expected numbers from local gentlemen's treats. Throughout the reign of Queen Anne, Sir Walter Calverley was active in promoting the Tory cause around Bradford. For example, in 1710 he 'had the freeholders of Yeadon, Guysley, Menston, Hawkesworth, Baildon, Shipley, Idle, Eccleshill, Bolton and Calverley-cum-Farsley, at an entertainment which I made them, about going into the election.'¹⁸⁷ He claimed to have treated some 200 freeholders, although the number of voters from these towns in 1708 was a quarter of that total. Despite this tendency to exaggerate, the actions of landlords like Calverley, who seem to have used finesse and social acumen to put their views across, played an important part in securing double votes at the 1708 poll. In his immediate vicinity of Agbride and Morley wapentakes, the Tories received 524 double votes from the 1,493 voters.

This level of informal canvassing was left to individuals and limited in scale. It involved utilising treats to gauge local opinion or to formalise such opinion - possibly what Calverley was doing at his entertainments. It represented a period of electioneering that was mainly concerned with mobilising as many interests as possible. This had a limited ability to rouse independent freeholders with any surety and to keep them pacified until the election. However, whilst party organisation was relatively poor and relied upon local gentlemen this did not matter too much,

¹⁸⁷ Margerison, Surtees Society Publications, 77, 13 Oct. 1710, 126.

because the voters were likely to resent too much outside interference. Hence, local landowners had a dual role of supporting their party's needs and mollifying their locale.

This was the state of affairs well into the Hanoverian period primarily because of the domination of the Tories after 1710. The Whig defeat in 1710 coupled with the deaths of the Junto Lords who had run the campaigns in the shire, and the lack of politically able and resident gentry, meant that the Whigs withdrew from shire politics until 1726. Thus, as there was no need to know who could vote or where any voters could be found, neither party improved electoral organisation. Hence, the electorate became an increasingly unknown quantity. It is against this background that the role of Sir Thomas Watson Wentworth and the revived Whig party after 1726 must be judged.

Upon Sir Arthur Kaye's death in June 1726 the style of campaigning was altered. The Whig party had a willing taskmaster in Watson Wentworth and he bought with him a number of estate and legal agents who were able to co-ordinate the by-election. He also found a popular and able candidate in Cholmley Turner. The manpower that the Whigs had lacked for sixteen years was now available and capable of running a county-wide campaign. The huge improvements made in electioneering by the Whig party at this time bore fruit for them at both the by-election and general election of 1727. Ironically, it also sparked the Tories into serious and organised electioneering in response.

Perhaps the most impressive aspect of the energy that these men put into the campaign in 1726-7 was their canvass prior to

the February 1727 by-election.¹⁸⁸ This instrument allowed the Whig party to test their own strengths throughout the shire. As such it was more structured and quantitative, although less informative about points of view, than the notes of 1710 which, by comparison, were a local opinion poll. The copy that exists for the 1726 canvass is a list of voters in their relevant townships and those townships are grouped by wapentake.¹⁸⁹ It is likely that a number of agents were sent out into the various districts and the end-product was a compilation of what they found. This was built upon a breakdown of each Riding into townships and possibly freeholds. Samuel Buck, the Whig's primary agent in the West Riding was sent 'the Freehold Book kept for this Riding [the West] and all the Towns names.'¹⁹⁰ This may have provided the basis for the West Riding section of the inquiry.

These books were sent to Buck at the end of August 1726 and it is likely that the canvass was begun shortly afterwards. It was known that the poll would be taken around January 1727 and so the Whigs would need to get their election machinery into full swing if they were to assess their strengths in any detail. Once the relevant information had been distilled from the freehold books the agents could act using the traditional ways of canvassing opinion such as treats, and take a formal canvass.

The extant copy of the 1726 canvass shows voters from every wapentake in the East Riding, and all bar Allerton in the North. In the West, however, there were no voters recorded from

¹⁸⁸ Fitzwilliam (Malton) MSS., 'Canvassbooks for the 1727 By-Election'.

¹⁸⁹ See Appendix VII, p. 427, for a copy of a page of this canvass.

¹⁹⁰ Fitzwilliam (Malton) MSS., Rich. Cowper to Mr Sam'l Buck, 3 Aug. 1726.

the Ainsty, or Barkston Ash, Claro and Morley wapentakes. There was a level of confusion concerning the right to vote of the Ainsty which may have put the Whigs off canvassing it.¹⁹¹ As far as Morley was concerned, the lack of a canvass could be explained by its strong support for the Tory party and the strength of the Tory candidate, Sir John Lister Kaye, in that area. Possibly it was felt to be too strong for the opposition and too unmanageable. Certainly, in 1726, it was reported that around Bradford, Turner 'suffers very much...for want of some of you gentlemen coming over...'. Turner was missing the interest of traditional West Riding Whigs like Sir William Lowther, whereas Kaye's men 'are day and night abroad and don't miss one house...'. It would appear that sections of Morley wapentake, especially the townships of Calverley, Farsley, Idle and Pudsey were Whig no-go areas; for they 'hath not had one of Mr Turner's friends ever been att them'.¹⁹² Indeed these towns, around Bradford, polled consistently for the Tories throughout this period.

However, were Kaye's efforts in this area a false economy? Given that his estates lay in this area, in the parishes of Almondbury, Batley, Huddersfield, Kirkheaton and Thornhill, he may have been better advised targeting other towns and wapentakes. The Tory Party appears to have had no county-wide canvass taken, and merely relied on hearsay as to their relative strengths in each wapentake. On the other hand, neither do the Whigs appear to have made formal inquiries in this area. Despite this they received 247 votes from Morley at the poll, and 843

¹⁹¹ See Chapter 3, p. 154, for a discussion of the rights of the Ainsty voters.

¹⁹² B.L. Add. 30306, f. 59, Henry Cholmley to Brian Fairfax, 12 Aug. 1726.

votes in total from the uncanvassed West Riding areas.¹⁹³ Quite how their support was ensured is uncertain; without knowing the levels of support, the logistics of getting favourable voters to the polls would have become increasingly difficult. Moreover, if these electors were not canvassed, the chances of the opposition treating them and gaining their votes instead, were greatly increased.

If the Whigs did not make enquiries in these wapentakes it begs the question of the use of this canvass. It correctly predicted Whig majorities in every wapentake in the East and North Ridings, and in the West it gave Whig majorities in Staincliffe and Strafford. Also, Tory areas were canvassed and relatively precise majorities were given to them in Agbridge, Osgoldcross, Skirack and Staincross. Also, the Whigs made sure that as many outvoters as possible were located; these included 122 men from Cheshire, Cumberland, Derbyshire, Durham, Lancashire, Lincolnshire, Northumberland, Nottinghamshire and Westmoreland. This in itself was a lot of effort for fewer voters than in the apparently uncanvassed areas of Yorkshire. Perhaps their apparent failure to lobby in these regions reflected a lack of supporters with enough local knowledge to direct the cause there. Equally, the material gathered about the uncanvassed regions may have been lost or never transcribed.

Interestingly, the canvass did not note down infirmity or illness, or refusal to promise or even vote. At later polls, for the local small-scale canvasses that survive, these voters accounted

¹⁹³ These totals are based on the derived totals used in Chapter 4, p. 197, n. 31, and Appendix VI, pp. 421-2. The number of voters that were correctly ascribed to their wapentake was 86 per cent; if the extrapolated totals are wrong, the Whigs may have done slightly better in these areas than these figures suggest.

for up to a third of the electorate.¹⁹⁴ Were these men left out of a party's calculations? Did anyone try to get them to the poll? The answers to these queries cannot be known. Possibly such voters were distilled from the lists to be dealt with separately; perhaps they were ignored. At later elections such men did actually poll despite having refused to promise, however their influence in 1727 must remain a mystery.

To the Whigs' benefit, the canvass was widespread and close to the mark. It is likely that it allowed them to focus their energies in the West Riding and make the most of the advantages that they clearly had. In predicting majorities the canvass looked at both urban and rural areas within the wapentakes, and as such must have been a great encouragement to the election managers. It far outweighed any information that the Tories had garnered, and gave the Whigs ample opportunity to turn a perceived majority into reality. Had the Tories seen the results, or performed an equivalent canvass of their own, they may well have desisted.

The predictions that the canvass made for the poll were as follows:

¹⁹⁴ See below pp. 104-8.

<u>AREA</u>	<u>TORY</u>	<u>WHIG</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
EAST RIDING	216	1,633	1,849
NORTH RIDING	697	2,606	3,303
WEST RIDING	1,843	1,556	3,399
OUTVOTERS	39	104	143
TOTAL	2,795	5,899	8,694

Table 2.1: 1727 canvass predictions.

From those areas *that were canvassed* the pollbook has the following results:¹⁹⁵

<u>AREA</u>	<u>TORY</u>	<u>WHIG</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
EAST RIDING	219	1,508	1,727
NORTH RIDING	665	2,243	2,908
WEST RIDING	1,868	1,523	3,391
OUTVOTERS	51	122	173
TOTAL	2,803	5,396	8,199

Table 2.2: 1727 pollbook results for canvassed areas.

On this basis the canvass had located more voters than actually showed up at the poll, however a subsection of the actual voters could not be ascribed to their correct Riding. Despite this, the level of voting, the likely turnout, and the strength of the party in each region was indicated by the canvass. It gave the Whigs the means of organising the voters from the various districts, and then checking whether they actually polled.

¹⁹⁵ These results are based on the derived totals used in Chapter 4, p. 197, n. 31, and Appendix VI, pp. 421-2. Around 88 per cent of the votes in the 1727 pollbook could be correctly ascribed to the correct Riding. These figures are intended to give a representation of the accuracy of the canvass.

Linking the canvass and the pollbook gives a greater indication of the importance of this canvass to the Whigs. The results were as follows:

<u>CANVASS PROMISE</u>	<u>POLLBOOK VOTE</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
KAYE	KAYE	2,729
KAYE	TURNER	22
TURNER	KAYE	60
TURNER	TURNER	5,544
X	KAYE	1

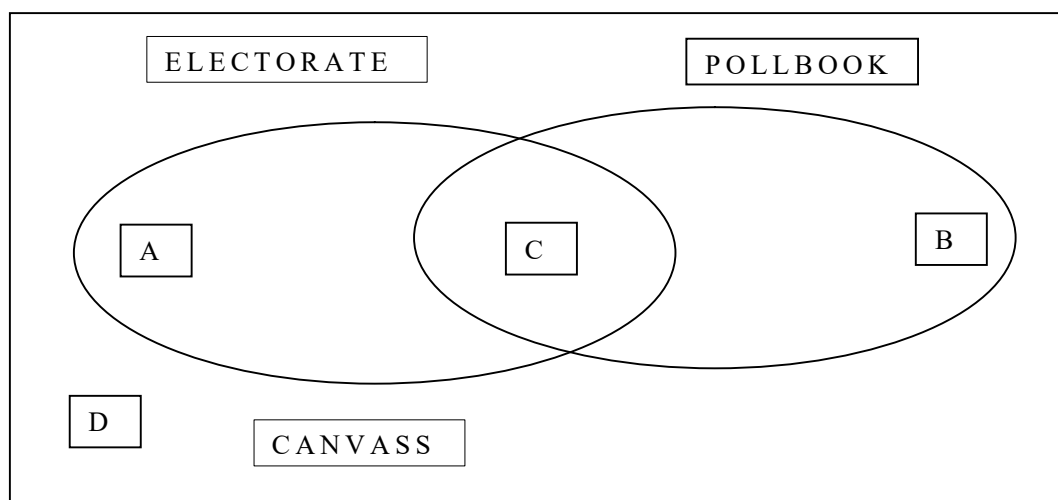
Table 2.3: relationship between canvass predictions and actual votes.

Of the 8,694 votes promised in the canvass, 8,356 (96.1 per cent) were delivered, a very high success rate. Moreover, of those who attended the poll, 99.0 per cent were consistent in both lists. For the Whigs, 5,544 (94.0 per cent) out of 5,899 promises were kept; the Tories had a similar success rate, as 2,729 (97.6 per cent) out of 2,795 promises were delivered at the polls. Despite the fact that several regions were missed out of the canvass, it tended to be very accurate. Most of those who were canvassed did poll; also those who were canvassed voted predictably. This meant that there were relatively few of those electors that the party knew about who were floaters. The Whigs' information was remarkably accurate.

The numbers that they had located in the three Ridings were consistent with this overall picture. The lowest value of delivered party promises for those who polled was for the West Riding and that stood at 3,284 (98.8 per cent); the lowest attendance was from the North Riding, which had 3,122 voters (94.5 per cent) who promised actually polling. Thus, the Whigs had located a

large section of the pool of voters that existed within the shire. That more voters promised for Turner and then reneged than did so for Kaye reflects two factors; firstly, almost twice as many Whig pledges were made as Tory promises; secondly, men may have promised for Turner to avoid giving offence to his agents. In spite of this, the Whigs had done as much as could be expected for a party that had lacked a county-wide organisation during the previous sixteen years.

The following figure illustrates the complexities that existed within the pool of voters:



*Figure 2.1: The make-up of the 1727 electorate.*¹⁹⁶

The ellipse 'A' represents all those voters who were canvassed; ellipse 'B' represents all who were polled; the intersection of these two, 'C', is all those who were canvassed *and* who polled. The area beyond these sets, 'D', represents all those uncanvassed and unpolled electors. The minimum electorate, therefore, consisted of those who were canvassed and who polled, plus those who polled but were not canvassed, and those who were canvassed but were not polled. It ignores all those uncanvassed voters who

¹⁹⁶ This figure is a representation of the position in 1726-7.

could have polled but did not, as nothing is known about them. In fact the minimum number of voters that existed at this poll was 11,913.¹⁹⁷ A high-proportion of this pool, 97.2 per cent, actually voted, and almost three-quarters (72.9 per cent) were canvassed. This is a minimum number for the size of the electorate at this time and, although it probably underestimates the true number of potential voters, it does show that the canvass picked up a large proportion of those who were to poll. This is important as the poll was discontinued on the fifth day by the Tories. That over 96 per cent of those canvassed had polled despite the abandonment suggests that the canvass had allowed the Whigs the chance to mobilise their supporters and poll them; this forced the Tories into an untenable position.

Of the 338 voters who were canvassed but not polled in 1727, 140 of them voted in 1734. Thus, of the pool of voters found by the Whigs in 1726, only 2.3 per cent failed to poll at any election. Those who only voted in 1734 remained relatively consistent party voters, despite the influence of the excise and the fact that this was now, to an extent, Government versus Opposition, rather than Whig versus Tory. Of the 131 who promised for Turner, ninety-five gave Government votes and ninety-four of these were doubles. For those who pledged to vote for Kaye, four out of nine gave Opposition doubles whilst three switched to the Whigs. Overall ninety-nine promised and gave a party vote. Those Yorkshiremen canvassed in 1727 were relatively predictable and consistent in word and deed.

¹⁹⁷ The minimum number of voters was $(A-C)+(B-C)+C$.
Thus, in this case:
 $(11,585-8,356)+(8,694-8,356)+8,356=11,913$.

The canvass gave Kaye a total of 2,795 votes and Turner 5,899; their actual totals were 4,234 and 7,351 respectively.¹⁹⁸ This gave Turner a prediction that was 80.2 per cent of his total; for Kaye it was 66.0 per cent. If one disregards those voters from areas that were not canvassed - the City of York, the Ainsty, Allerton, Barkston Ash, Claro and Morley - then the total number who polled was, at the most, 9,662.¹⁹⁹ Of this group, the number canvassed was 90.0 per cent of those who voted. For Turner, the proportion canvassed rises to 92.2 per cent, which was incredibly close to his tallies from these areas, and for Kaye to 83.1 per cent.

This is an impressive level of prediction and when tied to the number of promises kept it shows a useful canvassing mechanism. O'Gorman pointed out that there was still a large minority of voters that were 'not being successfully mobilised', especially as the numbers of voters increased.²⁰⁰ Yet in 1727 the Yorkshire electorate was not entirely unpredictable and the number who reneged were minimal. Despite the failure to canvass particular areas and the weakness in locating 34 per cent of the Tory vote, the Whigs had found a substantial sub-section of the electorate.

Whether there were thousands more men entitled to vote is hard to assess. The canvass does not mention those who refused to promise or threatened non-attendance. The increase in voters found in 1734 was met by a petition and objections to over a fifth

¹⁹⁸ W. W. Bean, The Parliamentary Representation of the Six Northern Counties (1890), p. 650; see also Sedgwick, The Commons, I, 357.

¹⁹⁹ The value of 9,662 may have been lower if there were more voters from these uncanvassed areas who voted than the derived totals of voters suggest.

²⁰⁰ O'Gorman, Voters, Patrons and Parties, p. 104.

of the voters at that poll.²⁰¹ Thus, it is difficult to know whether there were thousands more men who could have polled, quite legitimately, in 1727. Probably, given the nature of the terrain, and the novelty of the canvass as an electoral tool, as many were canvassed as was possible at this time. Stoker has found that 80 per cent of those canvassed in Cumberland in 1768 polled at the subsequent election.²⁰² Akin to this much later election in Cumberland the 'discovery' rate in Yorkshire is remarkable given the time-span since the previous contest and the poor state of electoral organisation before 1726.

Moreover, the Whigs had not just canvassed men who lived and owned land in the same township. Of those who actually polled, 8,836 out of 11,585 had freeholds which were the same as their abode. This accounted for 76.3 per cent of the voterage. In the canvass were recorded at least 1,852 (21.3 per cent) individuals whose freehold was not the same as their abode.²⁰³ Of this number 1,126 owned land less than ten miles from their abode, usually in the same parish. Thus, locating the bulk of the electorate in order to canvass their opinions ought to have been relatively easy. In 1734 and 1742 more men voted and the proportion of voters who owned land where they lived dropped substantially. In 1734 the value was 10,480 out of 15,351, or 68.1 per cent. In 1742, 68.3 per cent owned and lived on land in the same township; a further 20.1 per cent of the 15,063 voters owned

²⁰¹ See Chapter 3, pp. 138-9.

²⁰² Stoker, thesis, p. 79.

²⁰³ The canvass only recorded abodes, thus freeholds were derived from the linked canvass-pollbook table. As not all of those men who were canvassed actually polled, a few more men who lived away from their land may have been canvassed.

land within ten miles of their abode. A canvass undertaken in any of these years would have to be aware of such 'outvoters'.

The nature of the increase in the voterate and the decrease in the proportion of voters whose abodes were the same as their freeholds may have prohibited canvassing on a large scale after 1727; it was possibly too exhausting to find them. Moreover, the difficulty in locating specific voters may have pushed the parties towards more informal canvassing of opinions through large scale treats in such places as major towns and at manor courts. On the other hand the parties managed to locate individual outvoters from other counties and mobilise them. This may have depended on local knowledge as to who owned land in a parish, and where they lived. The improvements in organisation after 1726 would have allowed the linking of friends with a specific local knowledge of land tenure in one locale, to those in other counties who could canvass outvoters.

The extent to which the 3,229 men who were not canvassed but who polled regarded themselves as free agents is hard to discern. They may have been subjected to local pressures to poll, or had their favour courted and accepted at a treat. Certainly, the Whigs were confident in their canvass and most of the promises were kept. They may not have felt unduly worried that despite the fact that 72.9 per cent of the voters were canvassed, 27.1 per cent had to be regarded as floating voters; men who were not being mobilised properly. If the areas that appear uncanvassed were not missed out of the calculations then fewer of the electorate could be classed as 'independent'. Possibly the Whigs felt that they had done enough and that local influence and organisation would enforce the turnout of pledged voters, and discover any that were

missed. The comparison of canvass and pollbook indicates that the canvass was about as precise as the Whigs could have hoped for.

Beyond this the Whig's organised approach appeared to have influenced the Tories, whilst at the same time damaging their hopes for the immediate future. A Tory canvass of 1727, which has not survived, weighed up the strength of favour within the shire prior to the 1727 general election. It showed '...the interest so greatly lessened and their quondam friends so cooll',²⁰⁴ so that Lord Downe refused to stand a poll. The Whig canvass may have encouraged the Tories to attempt to maximise their own capabilities, but it had also elicited widespread support for Turner and may have drawn the sting from enough wavering voters who had now committed to his party. Thus, the Tories would have to wait for a new issue to drive a wedge between the Whigs and the electorate.

Despite the fact that this survey was unique for the eighteenth century in Yorkshire, other evidence exists that allows a closer focus into the nature of canvassing at this time. This evidence ties into two main issues which arise out of the 1726 survey. Firstly, were the votes solicited by the Whigs, and the pledges taken, from tenants or compliant voters, or were there substantial numbers of independent men? Secondly, was the level of predictability and hence the utility of the canvass a normal attribute of such a device? Did later, more local, examinations of electors allow the parties such confidence about the state of the electorate?

²⁰⁴ Wm Buck to Sam. Buck, 9 Aug. 1727, quoted in Quinn, thesis, p. 331.

A certain level of dependency within the strong Tory areas of Agbride and Morley wapentakes would be expected because of the estates of the Dukes of Leeds, the Calverleys of Calverley and the Kayes of Woodsome in that region. In 1741 a list of voters from Horbury detailed how and why certain men would vote. Several clothiers were engaged for Fox by Mr Neville, a man who employed at least two of them; Thomas Walker, a butcher, was one of Fox's tenants and would vote for him; and Mr Rhodes of Batley had engaged his tenant, Joshua Horner, for Fox.²⁰⁵ Similarly, the Tories knew which of their voters were old or ill, but who could be called up in an emergency; six such men from Dewsbury were 'all good votes and under ye care of Mr. Turner of Dewsbury and may upon ye least warning be gott to ye Election in Coaches.'²⁰⁶ Many of the men canvassed here were dependants.

A 'List of all the Freeholders within Sr Geo Saviles Man[o]rs in York who have promised to vote for Mr Turner', illustrates some of the problems of canvassing apparent dependants or supporters.²⁰⁷ Out of 173 voters canvassed seventy-one promised for Turner, eighty-one declared 'neuter' and twenty-one were apparently for Fox. A comparison of the list and the pollbook for the election suggests that only fifty-four of the seventy-one promises for Turner were fulfilled; moreover, there is no record of thirteen of these men having voted. Fox's twenty-one were more consistent and nineteen polled for him. Of the eighty-one neutrals, no record was found for forty-six of them, and

²⁰⁵ Temple Newsam MSS., TN/PO/10/12, a 'List of Horberry voters'.

²⁰⁶ Spencer Stanhope MSS., SpSt/11/5/3/17, a 'List of Dewsbury voters unpoll'd for Mr Fox'.

²⁰⁷ Temple Newsam MSS., TN/PO/10/12, a 'List of all the Freeholders within Sr Geo Saviles Manrs in York who have promised to vote for Mr Turner'.

although twenty-four polled for Turner, the large number of abstentions suggests a weakening of the pro-Whig Savile interest at this election.

Sir Rowland Winn reported that Sir George Savile himself 'will not be att any Expences and grumbles at ye expence they [the Whigs] have put him to...'.²⁰⁸ This refusal to bear any burdens may account for the reports of certain Whig managers that Fox's friends 'have work'd of some of our votes and particularly some of Sr George Savil's Tennants...'. These tenants were said to include one John Sutcliffe of Stansfield Hall whose estate was mortgaged for over 1400 pounds to Savile, and over whom it was felt Savile should have had some influence.²⁰⁹ He possibly did, however Savile's waning whiggism left Sutcliffe with more political freedom.

Savile may have allowed his tenants to stay at home or vote how they pleased; without external funds, from the Whigs or Savile himself, certain of these voters may not have been able to travel to York; alternatively the Tories may have paid some of them to stay at home, which was the feeling amongst some Whigs.²¹⁰ This was despite Savile's declared intention that his 'Interest shall be intirely at your [Malton's] service and disposal and I will accordingly give orders to my steward to let all my tenants know that they (and any person who have any Dependency upon me) are to vote as your Lordship shall direct them.'²¹¹

Lord Malton may have had more sway with his own dependants. Again in 1741, it was reported to him that at Malton

²⁰⁸ Ibid., TN/C/15/216, Winn to Irwin, 25 Oct. 1741.

²⁰⁹ Ibid., TN/PO/10/9/18, R. Milnes to Irwin, 1 Jan. 1742.

²¹⁰ Ibid..

²¹¹ Fitzwilliam (Malton) MSS., John Savile to Malton, 9 Dec. 1741.

there 'are several countrey Butchers freeholders who farm shops of your Lordshipp, whom we shall apply to.'²¹² It was expected that these men would follow the lead of the Malton interest. However, from these instances it is not clear whether the parties would have to apply pressure or subtlety to get these voters out. Possibly it was their inclination to vote that was being canvassed rather than their actual voting preference, which to an extent was taken for granted, although whether that was wise was a moot point.

The example of the list of Savile's manors was testament to the uneasy nature of promised votes from relative dependants. Another example lies in a series of lists from 1741 which detailed Edward Wortley's estates in Wensleydale and the men who fell within the range of his manors.²¹³ In one of these lists for the township of Buttersett,²¹⁴ John Routh, the servant of a local gentleman, John Scarr, pledged and polled for Fox whilst his employer did the same for Turner. The ambiguities of relationships may have made such actions unworthy of local comment at the time. However, the actions of some social superiors could infuriate a party hierarchy who would expect loyalty. This was especially pertinent when parties were having to deal with a number of voters who were steadfastly independent, occasionally obstreperous and usually costly. In many West Riding wapentakes polling could cost a party dear, for money had

²¹² Ibid., Peter Walmsley to Malton (n.d., 1741).

²¹³ S.C.A., Wharnccliffe Muniments, Wh.M 108-5 to 108-16, various documents concerning the 1742 by-election.

²¹⁴ Ibid, Wh.M 108-5, 1742 by-election material.

to be found to defray 'the loss of time for the poor manufacturers.'²¹⁵

As important in these areas was the necessity of supporting the woollen industry; three months before the 1742 by-election, it was reported that Fox had to promise to support the navigation of the Calder up to Elland, 'without which not anyone of the freeholders would make him a promise.'²¹⁶ The Tories also had to deal with Whig attacks on their character, and that of their candidate. In 1741 attacks were made in *The York Gazeteer*, about the role of George Fox as an Irish landowner. There was a belief that English woollen manufacture was suffering because of cheap Irish exports to France. Despite this, Fox was not viewed badly in the light of his Irish connections, and the Whigs found that they made little headway in this area of the shire at any poll.²¹⁷

These factors were designed to destroy the credibility of the opposition amongst the voters, and especially those who were independent and difficult to canvass. However, the Tories were always willing to treat and canvass in the West Riding and their estates gave them a good foundation; for instance, before Lord Downe pulled out of the 1727 general election 'Sir John Kaye...appointed a Treat at Dewsbury.' The patriarchs of the Kaye family were Lords of the Manors of four towns in Agbridge and owned land in a further seven. This interest cut across six different parishes and alongside their treating of the populace this

²¹⁵ Temple Newsam MSS., TN/C/15/234, Richd Cooke to Irwin, 23 Dec. 1741.

²¹⁶ Fitzwilliam (Malton) MSS., Winn to Malton, 26 Sep. 1741.

²¹⁷ Collyer, *PLPS*, VII (1952), 84; *Commons Journals*, XXIII, various petitions, 1739-41, 341, 357-8, 387.

may well have fostered a positive image for the Tory party.²¹⁸ There was a definite Tory outlook to this area. If the Whigs wanted to make any headway they needed to crack the Tories' standing with the independent, and some more dependent voters.

Aware of their poor position, some Whigs attempted to use the Quarter Sessions to improve matters. A West Riding Justice, Richard Witton, utilising the time that the local Opposition J.P. was in York, informed Malton that in December 1733:

I thought it proper for Mr Burton and I to have a sessions for highways which by law we are obliged to hold every four months, so we have summon'd all the Towns in Agbrigg being 52 or more to appear before us next Friday, which besides the ordinary business, may give us opportunity to know how every place stands affected.²¹⁹

This was designed to increase party awareness of where to treat and where to look for voters. In areas which were expected to be in opposition this may have been a better mechanism for ascertaining levels of support than a formal canvass.

Indeed the trouble with a formal canvass was that it placed too great an emphasis upon a party's support base. An informal canvass from 1733 covering twenty-two East and North Riding townships at least gave the government Whigs an indication of the order of magnitude of the electorate in these areas, alongside any areas of concern.²²⁰ It predicted that there were approximately

²¹⁸ Kaye was Lord of the Manors of Denbeigh Grange, Honley, Slaughthwaite-cum-Lingarth and Woodsome-cum-Farnley Tyas. He had land in Almondbury, Dalton, Flockton, Kirkburton, Rowley and Thurstonland. Margerison, Surtees Society Publications, 77, 11 Aug. 1707, 116-7.

²¹⁹ Wentworth Woodhouse Muniments, M1, R. Witton to Malton, 24 Dec. 1733, mic. A66.

²²⁰ The Whig party produced a short report on twenty-two townships in the North and East Ridings for the 1734 contest which focused on particular landlords or opinion leaders in those townships. The list

1,693 voters in these towns,²²¹ and the turnout was in fact 1,513. The difference mainly arose from Whitby where it was alleged that 400 voters resided; in fact 169 came from the Liberty of Whitby Strand. In other instances the canvass was precise. From Hunmanby it was reported that 'Mr Osbaldeston has engag'd this Town to a man for Winn and Turner and six or seven Towns about it.'²²² Indeed, the Whigs obtained doubles from all fifty-one voters from Hunmanby. At Stokesley, in Langbargh wapentake, a visit from Turner and Winn had allegedly secured 'a majority' of the forty voters. In reality fifty-one men polled, twenty-nine for the Government pairing.

Other interesting factors included those towns which were a thorn in the side of the cause. For instance, Scarborough had been overwhelmingly Whig in 1727 and would be again in 1742; but, in 1734 the canvassers were not so sure. They hoped that many Opposition voters were sailors who would be missing at the poll. However, they still feared that the freemen, who opposed the corporation, were likely to be for the Opposition; moreover, it was reported that 'Mr Duncombe sent about three weeks agoe 100L to be spent in Sr M[iles Stapylton's] interest.' In the event their fears were justified as Scarbrough did split 116 to sixty-seven for the Opposition.

The level of recognition of the strength of rival interests made the canvassing of towns and their opinions vital cogs in the election machinery. Even favourable towns needed recognition of

was alphabetical by Riding. Fitzwilliam (Malton) MSS., 'Mr Buck's Report on several places in The North and East Ridings'.

²²¹ Adding together the approximations for each township gives this value.

²²² Fitzwilliam (Malton) MSS., 'Mr Buck's Report'. Subsequent quotations are taken from the notes accompanying each township.

their support by means of formal or informal canvassing. However, it was the recognition of those sections of the voting public or their paymasters who had not declared that could prove the key to a campaign. Thus, at North Cave in the East Riding, the influence of Mr Burton for Sir Miles Stapylton was recognised, as were the problems surrounding the Earl of Burlington's failure to declare. The failure of supporters or opposition gentlemen to avow their allegiance could render the best laid canvasses of little use. To an extent their utility rested upon the acceptance that they were not definitive. Any list that gave names and pledges, rather than general opinions within a town, could backfire upon a cause if that area was then taken for granted.

In spite of one or two flaws, the Government canvass of 1733 fulfilled the party need to locate interests and approximate numbers of electors in these towns. It may have formed part of a wider scheme, but even as a stand-alone study of these important regional centres, it gave Lord Malton and the Government candidates an idea of what they should be undertaking to improve their chances at the polls. This sort of canvass, akin to the Tory notes of 1710, was an opinion poll that divined interests and relative strengths in a particular area. In this way it was useful, especially as it preceded the poll by at least six months which left plenty of time for opinions to change or be altered.

After 1727 the other, formal style of canvass - which noted actual names and abodes, indicated party popularity and identified the opposition, the infirm and those not willing to poll - became more localised. The best examples of this sort of canvass exist for the campaigning of the 1742 by-election. Several lists were taken

concerning areas of the North and West Ridings and indicate the general lack of control that was exerted upon the electorate. Following the 1726 canvass which was widespread and precise, and the other, interest-based lists like the Tories' notes of 1710 and the Government report of 1733, these registers of voters were surprisingly inaccurate. Furthermore, had the parties compared the pollbooks and their lists, they ought to have had a lack of confidence in the promised intentions of the electors. These factors cast a shadow over the utility of a canvass.

The first lists concern the townships encompassed by Wortley's Manor of Wensleydale.²²³ Wortley's agents canvassed nineteen townships and 141 voters; these men had names, abodes and votes or disinclination to poll recorded. Any voters who were Quakers were recorded as such; perhaps with the intention of checking whether they had taken the affirmation at the poll. This suggests that these lists would be checked against the pollbooks in case of a petition or scrutiny. Also noted were those unable to poll and any freeholders who were not found. The inclusion of this last level of information implies that the canvass ought to have been exhaustive. Few, if any, of those who could have polled should have been missed. Thus, the prediction was for forty-five Whigs, sixty Tories, ten unable to go, fifteen not inclined and eleven unsure. No voters were listed as not found.

From this list, 105 out of 141 men (74.5 per cent) were expected to poll. In fact 126 men polled from Wensleydale, giving fifty-six Whig and seventy Tory votes. However, of those 105

²²³ S.C.A., Wharnccliffe Muniments, Wh.M 108-5, lists concerning Buttersett, Gayles, Hawes, Snaisholm, Mosdale, Appersett, Lund, Sedbuske, Camshouse, Shawcoate, Askrigg, Thornton [Rust], Blean, Worton and Lewbeck, Busk, Marsett and Countersett, and Bainbridge. See Appendix VII, p. 428, for a copy of a page of this canvass.

canvassed as partisan, only sixty-six (62.9 per cent) voted, although all bar one voted as canvassed. Of those listed as not inclined, unable or unsure, seven polled. In this way the list was more accurate in denoting who was likely to stay away rather than who was likely to keep a promise to vote. That only sixty-six out of 126 voters (52.4 per cent) who polled were canvassed at all, despite the assurances that no potential votes were missed, indicates how little the agents actually knew of the electorate.

Wortley's men had vastly under-estimated the size of the electorate in this area. Including those who said they would not poll, there were 141 voters in the canvass; of these, seventy-three turned up to poll. The number who were canvassed but did not poll was sixty-eight; meanwhile fifty-three polled but were not canvassed. Thus, the minimum number of voters that existed was 194.²²⁴ At best only 126 (64.9 per cent) of those who could poll did so; most importantly, the seventy-three men in the canvass who polled were no more than 37.6 per cent of the possible electorate.

Wortley's agents drew up a second list covering his interests around Sheffield.²²⁵ In this list, covering seven towns in Strafford wapentake, the preferences of 183 voters were logged. Of these, 120 promised a party vote; three were unable to go, forty were not inclined to attend and twenty were undecided. Therefore, only 65.6 per cent of the electors were expected to turn up, which

²²⁴ Number of voters in canvass=141; number who polled=126; number canvassed and polled=73.

Minimum electorate=(141-73)+(126-73)+73=194.

²²⁵ S.C.A., Wharnccliffe Muniments, Wh.M 108-9 to 108-16, lists concerning Treeton and Orgrave, Handsworth Woodhouse, Bolterstone, Midhope, Ecclesfield and Bradfield townships. This was of the same format as the lists for Wensleydale.

leaves a large minority of floating voters. In fact these towns produced 135 voters, with only sixty-nine (57.5 per cent) of the 120 canvassed and partisan voters casting as pledged. A further forty-three of those sixty-three who would not declare did poll. This latter point indicates two factors; firstly, the duress that was possibly put upon those who said that they did not intend polling; secondly, that some voters may have objected to being asked their intentions and so said that they were not inclined.

Again the minimum size of the electorate for these towns can be calculated and the value is 206.²²⁶ Thus, the 135 who actually polled formed only 65.5 per cent of this pool of voters; more noticeable is the fact that the 112 who were canvassed and polled were only 54.4 per cent of this pool. This leads one to question the very nature of the canvass as a viable electoral mechanism. Was a formal noting of intentions of any use? Could it have more value than simple treating?

Certainly, Wortley's agents had little true idea of how many voters existed in his spheres of influence. Their beliefs about voting intentions and the electorate had a shaky basis. Of the 324 men canvassed in the two lists, 174 had not polled in 1734. Therefore, much investigation was needed to locate those who could poll, but these investigations were clearly of minimal value for many of those expected to poll did not. The Whigs did better than the Tories in terms of pledges kept, for sixty-eight out of 107 (63.6 per cent) of their promises were honoured. Only one voter promised for Turner but polled for Fox. Of Fox's 118 pledges only sixty (50.8 per cent), were kept and six others polled

²²⁶ Number of voters in canvass=183; number who polled=135; number canvassed and polled=112.
Minimum electorate=(183-112)+(135-112)+112=206.

for Turner. Of those who pledged and polled most could be relied upon to be predictable; it was the large number of voters missed by the agents, plus those who pledged and then refused, who make one question the utility of the canvass.

Thus, to an extent, within Wortley's lists, confusion reigned. Those who were uncanvassed or who declined to give a partisan pledge split 66:60 between Turner and Fox and show how little the canvasser could rely upon such men. Without these voters, who were an unknown quantity, in the lists, Fox's campaign looked in better health than it was in reality. If such an uncertain number of voters were extrapolated throughout the county much of the electorate could not be relied upon. The possible minimum pool of voters for the two regions was 400 voters and yet only 261 (62.3 per cent) polled. Of those who polled, only 135 (52.7 per cent) were canvassed. This leaves a huge question mark over the utility of the canvass, the agent's ability to do their job, or their perceptions of the electorate.

Whether the level of false promises was due to the social status of the canvasser intimidating the canvassed voters is unknown;²²⁷ Edward Wortley was not the Earl of Malton. However, these two lists promised Fox 118 votes to Turner's 107; at the poll the split was 121:140. Such a promising initial picture would have cheered the Tory candidate no end, and doubtless would have added to his disbelief at his eventual loss.²²⁸ The nature of these canvass returns add to the feeling that 'candidates may also have

²²⁷ Stoker, thesis, p. 88. Stoker argues that 'false returns given from fear' were likely.

²²⁸ In fact Fox was stunned by his loss and threatened a petition. See, Spencer Stanhope MSS., SpSt/11/5/3/20, objections to the 1742 poll.

had a misplaced belief in the strength of a canvass promise.'²²⁹ The accuracy of the canvass was rarely questioned and defeat at the polls was unlikely to engender a vast re-examination of why one's own support reneged. Defeat was more often put down to opposition machinations such as bribery and polling men twice, rather than irredeemed canvass promises, a poor turnout, or the actions of those who were uncanvassed.

The huge number of uncontrollable voters and pledges that were not kept is perplexing. These canvasses did not appear to be convincing the floaters, unless they were noted as undecided but were becoming convinced. There certainly seemed to be no moral obligation upon those canvassed to actually show up at the poll, that was if those who could poll were canvassed in the first place. The fact that uncanvassed men polled indicates that they were politicised in some way. These men were neither outvoters nor voters who had a freehold far away from their abode. They were simply missed by the agents. It was other factors that won them over and even if this was some other party mechanism, it does tend to argue against the efficiency of party organisation. The fact that by late autumn 1741 Wortley's support for the Tory cause was cooling must have had some affect on the areas within his sphere of influence. However, his agents were still canvassing the opinions of the freeholders in the name of Fox and were finding how unreliable they were.

A further two lists exist for this poll, both for the West Riding, and both emphasise the lack of awareness about voting intentions, one several months and the other a few days before the

²²⁹ Stoker, thesis, p. 80.

poll.²³⁰ The list taken over three months prior to the poll by 'Mr Pulleyn' of Burley-in-Wharfedale, gave names, addresses and intentions, as well as indicating any interests to which a voter owed loyalty. Once again the question of whether the canvasser used the 1734 pollbook, or local knowledge, or both, to create the list is unknown. It was probably a combination of both, although some errors cast doubt on the competence of the canvasser.²³¹ For instance, it was noted that there was 'no such person' as George Bottom of Guisley, who had split his votes in 1734. However, George Bottomley of Guisley did poll in 1734, and this had been a double for the Government - the canvasser's party at that election. Did the canvasser not realise this, or were these men two separate people?

Other confusions reigned; for instance, Richard Pulleyn of Hawkesworth, who voted Tory in 1734, allegedly sold his land before the 1742 poll, but Richard Pulleyn of Esholt voted Tory. Esholt and Hawkesworth were both part of Otley parish and so these could have been the same individual. However, the canvasser did not know of Pulleyn's removal to Otley, or was sure that he could not poll, as he noted an 'X' for him indicating a reticence or an inability to vote. Clearly, canvasses could be undone by such individual nuances as the spellings of names, as well as problems like a change of address.

²³⁰ Temple Newsam MSS., TN/PO/10/10, 'An Account of the Freeholders within the wapentake of Skyrack...', 17 Sep. 1741; *ibid.*, TN/PO/10/11, 'Mr Pulleyn's Account', 4 Jan. 1742. See Appendix VII, pp. 429-30, for copies of pages from these lists.

²³¹ The list TN/PO/10/10 covers Skyrack with the exception of Leeds. From the 1734 pollbook this would have included 520 voters; the list has 571. The townships in the source are listed alphabetically and any quotations here are taken from the notes accompanying each township.

This canvass predicted 229 votes for Fox of which 179 (78.1 per cent) were correct. Turner could expect 215 votes according to Pulleyn, however only 134 (62.3 per cent) polled for him. Pulleyn also listed 127 unknown or undecided voters and of these seventy-nine (62.2 per cent) did not vote. Overall, 392 (68.7 per cent) of the 571 predictions made were acted out, and only thirty-nine (6.8 per cent) of the partisan voters reneged and polled for the opposition.²³² It is important to note that those men who promised for Turner, who was Pulleyn's favoured candidate, were less likely to poll for him than those who supported Fox. Although few of Turner's supporters altered allegiance, many simply failed to poll.

A study of the landlord interests noted within the source is also illuminating. In total 365 voters had an interest ascribed to them. Certain individuals were in an awkward position; for example, Stephen Laycock of Burley was in the interest of Mr Pulleyn, but was 'the servant to Mr Dobson'. This apparently created a conflict as Laycock was undecided whether to poll but was for 'Turner if he vote', which he did not. Was Pulleyn's interest over Laycock tenurial? This may have created a clash with Dobson.

Other men were in one interest but promised another. Bernard Banks of Otley was in the interest of the Tory Fawkes family, but promised Pulleyn for Turner. Furthermore, Pulleyn had designs on another Fawkes man whom he believed 'may be gained over'. How likely this was is unclear. Possibly these men were promising for Turner in order to get rid of Pulleyn, for they both cast for Fox. Abraham Miller, a voter in the Tory interest of Sir

²³² In fact 352 (79.3 per cent) out of 444 who were declared as partisan voted, and 313 (88.9 per cent) of these men acted as they pledged.

Walter Calverley, as a trustee for Mr Ramsden, 'will not vote against Turner if it can be possibly avoided' and he was true to his word, casting for the Whig.

Quite what the nature of this 'interest' was is not known. Was it social, economic or both? Possibly these interests were based on landholding, on the major landholder's wider influence in the community and, doubtless for some, on the roles of employer and employee. This may mean that they were dependent in some way, whilst those marked as 'X' in the interest column were independent. Only five men were noted as 'tenant' and a further four were noted as voting as someone else desired. Of the five tenants three voted for their landlord's favoured candidate, and two did not poll. Ben Hassle of Barwick 'will not go [he is] tenant for Sr Geo Cooke and Sr Wm Lowther'. Indeed Hassle had not voted before and did not do so now; doubtless, the fact that he had one Tory and one Whig landlord accounted for this. For others the choice was easier. Sir George Savile held sway over Clement Burton of Potter Newton, whose cottage was built upon the landlord's waste. The extent to which he controlled other Whig votes is more dubious. For example, John Simpson of Seacroft 'rents 200L under Mr Savile' and followed Savile's notional Whig line at the poll. However, renting this amount of land must have given Simpson a level of economic and political independence tied to a sense of self-worth.

Despite these examples, the number of voters explicitly recorded as tenants was minimal. The strength of an 'interest' may still have been based on land, but many electors probably had a large degree of independence in thought and deed. Whichever the reasoning, of the 169 in a Tory interest, 165 promised for Fox,

and 132 (80.0 per cent) delivered upon that promise. Of the 176 on a Whig interest, 170 promised for Turner and 115 (67.6 per cent) cast for him. In fact 266 (72.9 per cent) of those recorded as being in a particular interest polled and 247 (73.7 per cent) of the 335 who claimed to be partisan were consistent in word and deed.

With regard to those who were not of any 'interest', matters were somewhat different. Whilst some sixty-nine (18.9 per cent) of those who were superficially dependent did not actually poll, ninety-five (46.1 per cent) of their 206 allegedly independent peers did not. Of the 111 who did, the votes split 85:26 in favour of the Tories. Clearly, those in an 'interest' were more likely to poll, and were more likely to poll for the candidate that their 'interest' supported. Those who were of no interest were more likely to be opposed to the canvasser's party.

Those in an opposing interest were also more likely to show consistency than those in the canvassing interest. The Whigs fared poorly from this inquiry and perhaps false promises were made. Why eighty-one (37.6 per cent) of those in a Whig interest should renege is perplexing. Of those who had no interest, only thirty-two promised for Turner and twenty-six (81.3 per cent) of these were faithful. Whether the 'interest' concerned had grown cool towards the Whig campaign, or indeed whether any named interest was strong enough to dominate a voter's political choice is questionable. From these findings, certain Whig interests failed to live up to that party's expectations. These included Pulleyn's own, from which twenty-four men failed to poll, and Lord Irwin's, which had ten who did not vote. Only two of these were noted as infirm or not willing to travel to York. That these men struggled to mobilise their own support is indicative of the malleable nature

of the words and actions of the electorate. Many, even those nominally owing duty to their superiors, acted independently of them.

To an extent Pulleyn recognised the shortcomings of the canvass. For instance, of the Ilkley voters he noted that he 'does not depend on several of these voters though they promised him'. He knew that some voters would be fickle, but was he aware of the scale of the problem? It was also regretted that he may have lost several votes near Thorner 'for a want of applying', but that 'Mr Wright, Steward to Mr Nelthorp says he can bring over two or three of these votes for Mr Turner, would it not be proper to apply to him'. Clearly Pulleyn was distressed at having missed some votes, but he hoped that a network of friendships could court and reclaim any lost favour.

Pulleyn's canvass was undertaken in a wapentake that had been Tory in 1727 and which had provided a healthy majority for the Opposition in 1734. Thus, to an extent he was always likely to be promoting a losing cause. Unfortunately, he appears to have courted a population that had a substantial number of men who would tell him one thing and do another. Whether these men were swayed between the canvass and poll is not known. However, once again the utility of a specific canvass taken months before a poll is brought into question.

One final list, concerning voters from twelve townships in Skyrack and Barkston Ash wapentakes, is a final indicator of the shaky nature of electoral control and promises.²³³ This list was concerned with the transportation of ninety-nine voters who had

²³³ Temple Newsam MSS., TN/PO/10/11, 'Mr Pulleyn's Account', 4 Jan. 1742.

promised Pulleyn for Turner. Of these men, seventy (70.1 per cent) polled, but only fifty-seven (57.6 per cent) did so for Turner. From these towns came 153 voters,²³⁴ however, this was not a canvass list but a list of 'friends' to be taken to York. Thirty-two men wanted their expenses defraying and they were to be paid fifteen shillings with no entertainment and seven shillings with. Six of these men polled for Fox, although whether they had taken Pulleyn's money and then voted Tory is unknown. They may have received a different pay-off from a Tory source. This was unlikely to have been more than the Whig rate as both sides offered equal amounts in order to keep costs down.

However, Pulleyn had difficulty keeping these men together in a cohesive unit even before he set off for York. Fewer than three in five that had promised went with him. If this gentleman's control was mirrored elsewhere, it was little wonder when the Whigs complained that 'Their [the Tories] Schemes answer better than ours'. In part this could be blamed on the appalling weather which meant that the Whigs' 'numbers do not match our expectations.'²³⁵ Even so the measure of control that was enjoyed was never very great. After canvassing some clergymen and gentry in Staincliffe wapentake in 1741, one Tory reported that 'I doubt but there are several Errors in this list, but those that I have

²³⁴ Pulleyn's home village of Burley was perplexing. It had fifty-four recorded Whig votes from men with twenty-seven different names. Each name was recorded twice with no generational tag attached. Thus, there were apparently two William Pulleyns, both Esquires. The Tory voters were noted once. Was Pulleyn polling these men twice at different booths? Was it an ascription error? Fox did complain after the poll about men polling twice. If these 'doubles' existed, why, according to his own list, was Pulleyn not taking them to the poll as well?

²³⁵ Fitzwilliam (Malton) MSS., Sir Rowland Winn to Malton, 15 Jan. 1742.

marked as promises, were absolutely so last year.'²³⁶ This agent may have felt a need to cover his back, but he also recognised the futility in making definitive statements about levels of support.

In part this was inevitable; despite the growing intricacy of party organisation at various levels throughout the shire, both sides overestimated the weight of their numbers. The Whig agent's returns made during 1741 gave the following predictions:²³⁷

<u>AREA</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>WHIG</u>	<u>TORY</u>	<u>?</u>	<u>NEUTER</u>
ER	2,173	1,582	407	184	0
NR	4,776	3,242	962	463	109
WR	8,858	4,260	3,754	844	0
TOTAL	15,807	9,084	5,123	1,491	109

Table 2.4: Whig predictions for the 1742 by-election.

The overall total of 15,807 was 750 in excess of the recorded total at the poll. The derived totals of voters who actually polled were as follows:²³⁸

²³⁶ Spencer Stanhope MSS., SpSt/11/5/3/9, 'A List of voters in the wapentake of Ewcross'.

²³⁷ Fitzwilliam (Malton) MSS., 'Scheme for bringing in the freeholders' (n.d., 1742); *ibid.*, 'Agent's Returns' (n.d., 1742). The West Riding totals included voters from York.

²³⁸ These totals are based upon a derived table of townships which could be correctly ascribed to a particular Riding. See Chapter 4, p. 197, n. 31, and Appendix VI, pp. 423-5.

<u>AREA</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>WHIG</u>	<u>TORY</u>
ER	2,006	1,431	575
NR	3,674	2,479	1,195
WR	7,741	3,228	4,513
TOTAL	13,421	7,138	6,283

Table 2.5: the derived totals of voters who actually polled in 1742.

The West Riding totals above include voters from York. The absolute values do not add up to the total number of voters at the poll; however, if one assumes that the missing 1,160 voters split between the three Ridings and the outvoters in the same proportion then the East Riding would have 2,177 voters, the North Riding would have had 3,987 and the West (with York) 8,107. This ignores the number of outvoters who were not included in the agent's returns. Thus, on this basis the Whigs' predictions for the East Riding almost match the extrapolated value. The West Riding predictions, for numbers alone, were relatively close to the mark, being 9 per cent away from the extrapolated total; however, the North Riding estimate was about 19 per cent above the expected figure.

This suggests a relatively accurate set of predictions. However, within the West Riding the Whig agents expected Turner to rally 4,260 votes; his actual turnout was probably closer to 3,350. In the North and East Ridings Fox was given 1,369 votes when he polled at least 1,770 and more likely a figure closer to 1,950.²³⁹ If the Whigs expected half of the 647 undeclared voters from these Ridings to plump for Fox, then their returns may have been more accurate. Apart from the East Riding, where their

²³⁹ Approximations have been given to within 50 votes for these extrapolated values.

expectations were met, these figures overestimated the Whig party's strength by 20 per cent in the North Riding and 27 per cent in the West Riding, and overall by 1,089 (13.5 per cent) votes. Moreover, they underestimated Fox's support by 1,926 (37.6 per cent) votes. At York, the numbers of Tories coming in to poll must have been a worry, even if the Whigs assumed that all the floaters had come in for Fox.

In fact they maintained that 1,491 were unsure and 109 neuter, which gave an overall floating vote of 9.4 per cent. Given the strength of their projected numbers this body of men probably did not worry them. Whether it was an accurate assessment is doubtful, not least because the Whigs' other predictions were so far off the mark. The difference between the Whig estimates of partisan votes and the projected level of partisan support in the Ridings was some 3,062 votes. If these men, who promised one way, yet, from the totals in the pollbook, appear to have polled another are treated as floaters, then in all there would have been 4,662 (32.1 per cent) voters in this category.²⁴⁰

By 1742, the Whigs clearly felt that the trials of the 1734 election were over and that normality would be returned to the shire. Their wapentake returns predicted that Fox would receive only 962 votes in the North Riding. In fact he gained 300 more, but the heat of the 1734 Opposition campaign had died down and 400 fewer voters followed his lead than supported the Opposition in 1734.²⁴¹ Perhaps the cooling off of the opposition in 1741-2, with Stapylton and Wortley, for example, less enamoured of the

²⁴⁰ This ignores the outvoters from the pollbook calculations. The total number of voters projected from the Ridings and York in 1742 was 14,541.

²⁴¹ Fitzwilliam (Malton) MSS., 'Agent's Returns' (1742).

Tory campaign, and the Earl of Strafford now dead, did cause the Whigs to become overconfident. Improvements in the East and North Ridings would be expected as the role of the excise and of Stapylton as a candidate did bolster the Opposition party in those regions. However, the Whigs had no reason to expect a diminished Tory total in the West Riding. This area had always been pro-Tory and never gave a Whig majority. With a West Riding gentleman as Tory candidate, there was no reason why the Whigs should get one now.

Fox's own estimates had 700 floaters,²⁴² but made no assessment of Turner's strength. The Tories do appear to have been rather more accurate about their numbers than the Whigs. They suggested a total for Fox of 1,899 votes from the East and North Ridings and 5,786 from the West. In fact Fox gained around 1,950 votes in the East and North Ridings and 4,750 in the West. Including the voters from York and the outvoters the Tory estimate was some 636 (9.0 per cent) votes in excess of Fox's final total, but any overconfidence came from the West Riding where the bulk of the Tory interest lay.

This level of expectation was nothing new. In 1734 the Whigs expected to poll 8,419 voters and only in the East Riding did they underestimate the strength of their support. In the West they predicted over 1,000 more than the 3,158 who voted in their cause, and in the North this was over 500 more than the 2,367 who travelled to York in their name.²⁴³ The general level of overestimation may have been recognised or at least explained

²⁴² Ibid., Wm Buck to Malton, 9 Nov. 1741.

²⁴³ Temple Newsam MSS., TN/PO/10/7, 'Scheme for bringing in the freeholders' (n.d., 1734).

away by the managers. There were several reasons why a poll did not live up to its billing. For instance, the weather, which in January 1742 was very bad and may have prevented many men from attending. Also, a lack of funds, for transporting voters and paying for their expenses at the poll, may have prohibited some from polling. William Buck, one of the major Whig agents, reported that 'want of moneys' could adversely affect the turnout.²⁴⁴

This still does not explain the high levels of inaccuracy in terms of promises to the canvassing side and their opponents, compared to the actual totals. Stoker's notion that 'a proportion of the electorate, embarrassed by the social pressure of a personal request for a vote, preferred to lie or tell a half-truth rather than give a refusal' is probably close to the mark.²⁴⁵ Also those who were not canvassed may have deliberately absented themselves when the canvasser called. The returns may have been based on general levels of support within townships rather than on a formal canvass. In 1741 the Tories were relying on thirty-nine men alone to look into the management of the West Riding campaign.²⁴⁶ In Staincliffe wapentake only five men were available, and one man, Mr Heelis, had to canvass thirty-six townships. Ninety-six townships in Agbridge and Morley wapentakes were canvassed by sixteen men, and as this region was the focal point of the Tory campaign its returns may have been more accurate.

The Whigs' returns did create a high level of optimism that laid false claims about their own and the Tories' support. Neither

²⁴⁴ Fitzwilliam (Malton) MSS., Buck to Malton, 9 Nov. 1741.

²⁴⁵ Stoker, thesis, p. 85.

²⁴⁶ Spencer Stanhope MSS., SpSt/11/5/3/18, a list of West Riding gentlemen for 1741.

party was fighting a lost cause at the 1742 poll. Despite the fact that the Whigs won by 956 votes, this number was only 6.3 per cent of those who turned out. However, false pledges were tendered, and false hopes must have been entertained. Similarly, both parties can have had little notion of the extent of wavering and floating voters, a vital element in any poll. It is little surprise that their schemes so often fell short.

The canvasses and inquiries made by the parties in the early eighteenth century in Yorkshire were regarded by them as a vital strand of electoral practice. They showed different interests attempting to locate voters within their own sphere of influence and then attempting to give an assessment of the splits in that area. Within this framework lay informal canvassing and treating, *and* formal noting of promises and often 'interests' or local opinions. The 1726 canvass was the zenith of the latter mechanism. It was a very accurate portrayal of the state of the parties in the shire; it was also far-reaching geographically and in terms of those who could poll. This canvass was an important experiment in election mechanics and logistics. Having been in abeyance for sixteen years, Whig organisation needed overhauling. The canvass allowed them to find out who their supporters were and where they were; more importantly it provided proof of their new-found zeal for the cause.

The other, equally specific, local canvasses demonstrate how much knowledge the politicians still lacked about the electorate. The lists indicated a level of comprehensiveness in terms of the numbers of voters, however, the fact that men who were not in the lists did poll indicates the election agents' lack of local political

awareness.²⁴⁷ Wortley's registers show how difficult it could be to find more than a large minority of voters who would be true to their word. The lists also overestimated the strength of support that Fox had in absolute terms, and relative to his opponents. In fact as the 1726 canvass and Pulleyn's lists intimate, a canvassing interest could never be as sure of the votes it was promised as it could those of the opposition. This applied to those interests like Wortley's which were non-resident, those like Savile's which were relatively disinterested and those like Pulleyn's which were local and politicised. The lack of convergence between promises and votes may have been due to individuals not wishing to offend social superiors, or due to waverers being noted as supporters in the hopes that this would show the canvasser in a more favourable light with his party. Possibly these formal canvasses alienated some voters who objected to any interference in their right to vote.

Whatever the reasons, canvasses, both formal and informal, after that of 1726, were of limited accuracy but were in constant use. To the politicians they were vital in creating some sort of gauge upon which to judge or base a campaign. Moreover, they hoped to create links to the wider community of voters. Whether any formal canvass achieved this is another matter. The size of the floating vote that a comparison of local canvasses and pollbooks shows up, was never fully registered by either Tories or Whigs. In this way the schemes and inquiries seem to have fostered an arrogance within the higher political community of the shire. Had they compared their lists to the pollbooks this large set

²⁴⁷ There may have been an unwritten recognition by the agents that possible voters had been out when they called.

of floaters would have been evident. Although it may have been indicative of a wider high-political naiveté, canvassing in Yorkshire in the early modern period certainly attests to the lack of knowledge and awareness that the politicians had about the voters.

Chapter 3

'Hurting a cause instead of serving it': The 1734 Election Petition

In scrutinising the web of interaction between the parties and the electorate, the use of wider legal and political processes reflects several of the perceptions and ambitions of the party managers. One such process was the use of a petition as a means by which defeated political managers and candidates attempted to rectify what they perceived to be iniquities in the political system and as an attempt by them to save face on a local and national stage.

O'Gorman and Speck have noted the party function of both the election petitions and the Committee of Privileges and Elections which decided upon them.²⁴⁸ After the Hanoverian succession this meant that supporters of the government Whig party which dominated the House of Commons, and hence the Committee, had the upper hand, particularly when a petition concerned a borough election. In such cases the number of voters petitioned against was generally small and overcoming their rights was relatively easy. After the passing of the Last Determinations (Amendment) Act in 1729, the Whigs, or at least those who supported the government, 'could for all time decide and determine the nature of the franchise in a constituency after a disputed return, whatever evidence existed.'²⁴⁹

²⁴⁸ O'Gorman, Voters, Patrons and Parties, p. 164-8; Speck argues that 'In practice the Commons decided these petitions on political rather than judicial grounds'; see W.A. Speck, 'The most corrupt council in Christendom', in C. Jones ed., Party and Management in Parliament, (Leicester, 1984), p. 107.

²⁴⁹ O'Gorman, Voters, Patrons and Parties, p. 13.

Much of the work on this issue, in particular that of O'Gorman and Speck, has focused upon the evidence of the borough constituencies. Although the wider implications of government control of election petitions are understood, there has been no substantive work on the mechanics of petitioning at a local level and little work on county election petitions. Stoker has argued that county petitions were rarely attempted because of the numbers of voters involved and 'the difficulties of obtaining evidence'.²⁵⁰ However, much evidence does exist concerning the Yorkshire petition of 1734 and this provides a means by which one can look at the difficulties of petitioning in the context of the largest constituency in England. This chapter will utilise the mechanics of the government Whig petition against the 1734 Yorkshire county election result and the Opposition party reply to it, in order to illustrate the role of the rival parties in electioneering and in relation to Yorkshire society. It will also emphasise the fact that the parties appeared to know relatively little about their potential supporters.

From the study of wider electoral developments in Yorkshire, especially after 1727, it is clear that politics and elections were becoming better organised processes. This was particularly true of the Whig party under the guidance of Sir Thomas Watson Wentworth. The Whigs comfortably won the 1727 by-election²⁵¹ and at the subsequent general election of that same year and the by-election of 1728 the Tories refused to contest the

²⁵⁰ Stoker, thesis, pp. 170, 172.

²⁵¹ Cholmley Turner defeated Sir John Lister Kaye by 7,683 votes to 4,364; see Bean, Parliamentary Representation, p. 650; also, Sedgwick, The Commons, I, 357.

shire. However, the true test of the Whigs' appeal to the shire electorate occurred in 1734 during the general election which was fought on the strength of opposition to the government and the excise.

In the run up to the poll the Whig temper was upbeat. They had won the 1727 by-election in some comfort and were now surrounded by an air of confidence. Their agents' reports from all the Ridings were optimistic, perhaps too much so, about a double return²⁵² and the prime opposition candidate, Sir John Stapylton, had died on his way to the initial Tory election meeting and had been replaced *post haste* by his son Miles. Furthermore, their organisation had a more comprehensive and holistic constitution than that of their opponents.²⁵³

At the poll, which was held at York between 15 and 21 May 1734, Cholmley Turner and Sir Rowland Winn, the government Whig candidates, faced an opposition coalition of Tories and Country Whigs, represented by Stapylton and Edward Wortley. Whether this coalition represented an Opposition party in Yorkshire at this time is debatable, although there was an anti-excise consensus.²⁵⁴ The campaign was managed by the personnel of the Tory party and Wortley, a country Whig, only intervened at the last possible moment.

Given that Turner had opposed the excise and was a popular figure in the shire, it was likely that he would be elected, whoever stood against him. However, the last-minute intervention

²⁵² See, for example, Fitzwilliam (Malton) MSS., 'Mr Buck's Report'.

²⁵³ It is not the intention here to discuss the role of the parties in the election itself, but merely in the aftermath of the poll.

²⁵⁴ See above, Chapter 1, pp. 29-34.

of Wortley to partner Stapylton was a move which gave the Opposition party a broader base on which to appeal to the electorate. Wortley's intervention may well have been the crucial element in Winn's defeat for two reasons. Firstly, the joint candidacy may have attracted some men to poll who had intended staying at home. Secondly, it meant that fewer voters would split their two votes between Stapylton and either of the Whigs. That only 9 per cent of the voters polled for Stapylton and Turner, the two most prominent 'country' candidates, indicates the importance of a party appeal in the shire. Hence, this dual candidacy threw the Whig's canvassing calculations into confusion.²⁵⁵

Thus, despite the organisational strength of Watson Wentworth, now Earl of Malton, and the government Whigs, their favoured candidate, Sir Rowland Winn, failed to be elected at the polls by 182 votes.²⁵⁶ This was a hammer-blow to the ego and prestige of the Whig party, but most of all it affected the position of Malton. Here was a man who had shown himself increasingly partisan over the previous decade; he had all but monopolised control of the direction that the Whig party in Yorkshire was taking, and Winn's defeat reflected as much upon the patron as it did upon the candidate.

²⁵⁵ The Whigs had calculated the level of support for their two candidates in a three-way contest with Stapylton to be 8,416 voters; Winn was around 600 votes shy of this. See Temple Newsam MSS., TN/PO/10/7, 'Scheme for bringing in the freeholders'.

²⁵⁶ From the pollbooks, 15,351 men polled and the final result was: Sir Miles Stapylton (Opposition) 8,001, Cholmley Turner (Government) 7,968, Sir Rowland Winn (Government) 7,819, Edward Wortley (Opposition) 6,018. However, Edward Harley, M.P. for Hereford, noted that Stapylton defeated Winn by 7,896 votes to 7,699; see Tory and Whig: The Parliamentary Papers of Edward Harley, 3rd Earl of Oxford, and William Hay, M.P. for Seaford, 1716-1754, eds S. Taylor and C. Jones (1997), Harley Journal, 24 Feb. 1736, p. 20. Such ambiguities concerning the result were reflected at the 1727 by-election, where the pollbook tallies do not match the declared totals.

In the eyes of the more partisan party supporters this loss could only have occurred 'with the help of an ungovernable mob's intervention and many other foul artifices.'²⁵⁷ They refused to accept that their own organisation, in the face of widespread opposition to the excise and the government, could have failed them. Moreover, the party hierarchy ignored the fact that the excise crisis had provoked a deluge of popular literature aimed at all sections of society. Sir Thomas Frankland noted that the government ought to be 'very sorrey at their kindeling a fier (wch perhaps) [it] may not be in their power to extinguish.'²⁵⁸ Indeed the opposition to the excise provoked popular fears, as this 'Porter's song' showed:

Then Citizens now mind you this, there's seven years to
come
And if our Freedom's bought and sold, our Business then is
done
And a begging we will go.²⁵⁹

This level of anti-government opinion was a defence of the rights of the populace. It gave support for traditional 'country' ideals which attacked government corruption, a vice that was seen to be strengthened by means of septennial parliaments.²⁶⁰ Such feelings were widespread in the shire, although never all-encompassing, and were bolstered by the dissemination of opposition views in

²⁵⁷ Lashley, *York Miscellany*, p. 66.

²⁵⁸ N.Y.C.R.O., Worsley of Hovingham Archive, ZON 13/2/19, correspondence of Thomas Worsley (d. 1751), Sir Thomas Frankland to Thomas Worsley, 13 Oct. 1733, mic. 607.

²⁵⁹ Lashley, *York Miscellany*, p. 38.

²⁶⁰ In this view such corruption could only be increased by Walpole's desire to levy a general excise on consumerables; this had the attendant fear that the growth in numbers of excisemen would infringe the liberties of the subject in searching for untaxed goods.

national journals like *The Craftsman* and in local newspapers like *The Leeds Mercury* and *The York Courant*.

Thus, the declaration of a dual candidacy between Stapylton and Wortley provided a focus for this discontent and gave the Opposition a return at the polls at the expense of Winn. It was the effect of widespread government Whig disappointment that led to the next two years hard toil as Malton attempted to overturn the result and get Winn elected instead of Stapylton.

Given that the High-Sheriff, as returning officer, was likely to declare the result soon after the election, any opposition to the poll had to become a reality quickly. A scrutiny could be asked for immediately but a petition had to be lodged no later than fourteen days after the poll. The nature of polling meant that each side ought to have had some indication of any false votes amongst the opposition supporters. At each voting booth or desk were situated a poll agent for each side; whether these men had canvass lists to examine the voters against is unknown, however they were stationed at each booth to question voters as required.²⁶¹ The determination of a voter's right was as vital as the pre-election organisation. It was important that each man was questioned about his land: was it worth forty shillings correctly assessed to the land tax after all deductions? had the voter been in possession for a year? was it a conveyance, annuity or lease for years or for lives? The questioning of particular voters was a crucial factor in election logistics and the commitment of the agent was vital in ascertaining whether any had been bribed or voted twice or were

²⁶¹ York Minster Library, Hailstone Collection, 4.7/39, a list of the officers of the poll, 1727.

under-age. However, for the agent concerned this could prove a fruitless task against an obstinate or unflustered voter, especially as such agents probably had a limited local knowledge and knew few of the voters well.

In 1727 the Whigs took a copy of the list of Tory voters and located what they believed to be 189 illegal votes.²⁶² This was only a small amount of the opposition votes, around 4 per cent, but it showed some in-depth local knowledge. Voters were objected to because of their age; the nature of the landholding; that some had paid no taxes, and so on. The level of local knowledge is indicated by one or two examples; for instance, Nathaniel Guy who lived and owned land in 'Sparlington' (Spaldington) in the East Riding had 'no writings of his estate'; John Booth of Doncaster had allegedly only been in possession for nine months. In fact the Whig compilation declared that thirty-one votes were rejected at the poll; clearly the utilisation of local 'captains' had many functions over-and-above simply getting electors to the poll and these included checking the pollbooks, in order to gain valuable votes. In this instance the Whigs only found 189 bad votes at the time of the poll, a factor which underlines a point made by O'Gorman that nominally a scrutiny was of minimal value; there was little time to assess the votes of so many who had polled before the next Parliament met.²⁶³ Thus, in 1734 a scrutiny would be unlikely to give Winn a majority on its own.

²⁶² N.Y.C.R.O., Kirkleatham Hall Estate, ZK, 'Manuscript Pollbooks for the January 1727 Yorkshire County By-Election', mic. 1041. This section relies on 'A Book taken Alphabetically of all freeholders as voted at the Crown End for Sir John Kaye Bart...'.
²⁶³ O'Gorman, Voters, Patrons and Parties, p. 164.

The knowledge of the Whig agents in 1727 was county-wide. The 189 men who were objected to were from 122 townships across the shire, although it is noticeable that all of them held land in the place where they lived. Neither the Whigs nor the Tories had the ability or immediate local knowledge to check those voters that owned land away from their abode. At the poll in 1727, 76.3 per cent of voters gave their freehold as located in the township where they lived; in 1734 68.3 per cent did so and by 1742 this had dropped to 68.2 per cent. The decrease was undoubtedly due to better organisation and the ability to get more voters (often those more difficult to locate) out; but perhaps it was also due to improved communications. That this figure decreased so much indicates how much more knowledge of local society was needed to advance any queries about a man's right to poll. Despite this, the check in 1727 was undertaken at the time of the poll and indicated that a quick scan of the pollbooks could be made to ascertain the legality of a sub-section of the voterate; this would give a pointer as to the value of a petition.

By May 1734 Malton probably felt that he had the ability, supporters and resources to fight Winn's cause. Thus on 22 May, when the opposing candidates met with the High-Sheriff, Winn demanded a scrutiny of the poll. At this point 'Sir Miles and Mr Wortley insisted upon a 10000L bond as a security that Sir Rowland sho[ul]d defray all expenses that might attend it.'²⁶⁴ This ought to have immediately awakened Winn and Malton to the opposition that they were likely to face if they contested the issue; perhaps they felt that their opponents were attempting to

²⁶⁴ Wentworth Papers, Rev. D. Travis to Strafford, 24 May 1734, p. 510.

bluff their way out. Whichever the reality, the High-Sheriff agreed to the principle of a scrutiny, but moved that the question be discussed on 30 May.²⁶⁵ There is a possibility that the Sheriff was uncomfortable with the notion of a scrutiny and wanted to take legal advice on the issue.

Indeed by the next meeting a legal opinion on the whole notion of the scrutiny had been made. It was declared by one Serjeant Darnell that:

I do not think that the sheriff is by any law obliged to enter into a scrutiny, but if all the Candidates agree to it he may, but upon such scrutyns I think he cannot administer an oath nor admitt any Evidence to falsifie the freeholder's oaths nor do anything more than upon a survey of the poll alter what appears upon the face of the poll to be wrong.²⁶⁶

Thus the government Whigs were in trouble on two counts; firstly, they needed the victor to agree to the scrutiny, an unlikely eventuality. Even if Stapylton did agree, they could only assess the number of voters who had polled twice, rather than any other offence. The matter of proving whether someone had voted twice would rely on the presence of a supporter with extensive local knowledge, enough to differentiate between men from local families and decide who could or could not vote, and who had lied. This latter point also complicated matters as voters were supposed to have sworn an oath required by the Bribery Act of 1729. Moreover Darnell's opinion did not allow for the challenging of a man's right to vote, or the use of evidence that

²⁶⁵ Collyer, PLPS, VII, 66.

²⁶⁶ L.C.A., Battie Wrightson MSS., BW P/11, 'Sgt Darnell's opinion on a scrutiny', 25 May 1734.

would contradict the freeholder's oath that a voter had sworn. Indeed a vote could not be rejected on the grounds of disbelief alone, especially as each voter was under oath when he polled. Therefore, more concrete evidence was required; under the terms of a scrutiny alone this was not feasible. Darnell's opinion was a buttress of the overall rights of individual electors and by extension of the rights of the wider political nation.

For Winn the verdict got worse:

If he [the Sheriff] do proceed in any scrutiny I think he ought to go through the whole Poll and therefore if there be not time...he ought not to begin with it, for I think unless the whole be gone through no man may say how it may come out and therefore his return ought to be accurate as it stood upon the 1st taking, unless the case of one Person voting more than once.²⁶⁷

Clearly the option of a scrutiny was not likely to be taken up by any candidate but Winn. The time scale and size of the operation, as well as the difficult legal concepts involved with regards to what constituted a scrutiny, made this approach untenable. By 1 June it was reported that 'the sheriffe publicly declar'd the adjournment unnecessary and that it was occasion'd by bad advice, but had since obtained the best counsel, and that he thought himself oblig'd by honour as well as duty to return Sir Miles Stapylton and Mr Turner.'²⁶⁸

Winn was furious at the decision; similarly Lord Malton was 'very much out of temper and sower.' The Opposition party were on a high, and George Phipps, reflecting upon a rumour that Turner was dead declared that, 'Mr Wortley will out poll Sir

²⁶⁷ Ibid..

²⁶⁸ Wentworth Papers, Travis to Strafford, 1 June 1734, pp. 512-3.

Rowland 1000 men' in any by-election that was to follow.²⁶⁹ The rumour was false but the fact that it could create a little local excitement indicates the level of exultation that was felt in the anti-government section of the shire. The general rejoicing and county-wide bonfires can have done little for Malton's humour and at this point the recourse to a petition was seized upon.

Above Malton's disbelief, the motivation for this was twofold. Firstly, Winn's supporters had met at the George Inn to plan the scrutiny and had collected a subscription towards the cost of the enquiry alongside 292 signatures in favour of that enquiry.²⁷⁰ These included thirty-four clerics and a gamut of landowners, some of whom were prominent in the shire at large, others in their own local areas. This strength in numbers was crucial because of the cost of the operation; it apparently cost Winn over £6,000 and Malton over £15,000 to fight the election and petition.²⁷¹ Subscriptions from others in the interest were vital at an early stage. Moreover, with the election campaign organisation still more-or-less intact the Government party had the opportunity and the tactical base to launch an attack on the election of Stapylton. Indeed, the Earl of Burlington was informed that the Whig gentry preferred 'a petition to the House of Commons' and that subscriptions were raised 'and committees were appointed'.²⁷² They were ready to take the fight on.

²⁶⁹ Ibid., Phipps to Strafford, 11 June 1734, pp. 514, 515.

²⁷⁰ Wentworth Woodhouse Muniments, WWM, M1, '1734 Petition' (n.d.), pp. 85-7.

²⁷¹ Quinn, NH, XXI, 154.

²⁷² Chatsworth House, Devonshire MSS., Correspondence, Letter Box I, 1720-36, 218.0, Lords Carlisle, Irwin and Malton to the Earl of Burlington (n.d.).

Secondly, Malton knew that the Commons was the one forum where the whole issue of legality could be settled and he knew that his party was still in the ascendancy there. As *The Craftsman* noted, the government, through its majority in the Commons, controlled the Committee of Privileges and Elections and therefore 'weeding the House' of undesirables was an easy option if a petition was heard.²⁷³ Above this, as Winn had been assured during the run up to the poll, the Yorkshire Whigs could 'depend upon all the service possible f[ro]m all the people in his majestyes service'.²⁷⁴

There were militating factors against this confidence; for one the size of the project and the threat of a counter-petition which would drag the process out; also the fact that the 1734 election had been a testy one across the nation. By 1735 there would be seventy-three petitions before the Committee,²⁷⁵ and Yorkshire was a large constituency where, although nominally based on forty shillings of freehold land, the franchise had variations. Much evidence would be needed, thus dealing with that poll may have been left until easier elections had been dealt with.

At this early stage, however, Malton was convinced of the strength of his case and the necessity to petition. The Whigs sent out lists of instructions as to what their supporters in the county were to look for. With an organisation and infrastructure available in each wapentake, local knowledge, at a premium at a

²⁷³ *The Craftsman*, 25 May 1734, quoted in Langford, The Excise Crisis, p. 144.

²⁷⁴ L.C.A., Nostell Priory MSS., NP A1/4/14, Sir William Strickland to Sir Rowland Winn (n.d.).

²⁷⁵ See Langford, The Excise Crisis, p. 145.

time like this, could enable the petitioners to garner information on a wide scale. Inquiries were to be made as to whether a voter's lands were worth forty shillings after all deductions and if so were they assessed on the land tax. Was the land in the voter's possession and if so had the voter been in possession for a year? They were to check the voter's age at the poll to make sure he was twenty-one; they were also to check that all lands were freehold and not copy or leasehold, or built on the lord of the manor's waste. Any objections were to be noted and directed to Winn's agents. Also, if any objections made by the Opposition were found their strengths and weaknesses were to be pointed out in a footnote to the agents.²⁷⁶

This last point focuses upon the dual problems for the agents on both sides. On the one hand they had to search out the opposition's fraudulent votes, but on the other they had to locate those votes that were likely to be objected to by their opponents and try to give them credibility. Already the Opposition party in the shire were complaining that 'Whig attornies, bailiffs, postmasters and others' were interfering in the sanctity of landholding for political ends; this was 'unwarrantable' behaviour.²⁷⁷ They were sure to reply in kind and as time passed they added as much to the momentum of the petition as did the government Whigs.

In the period up to January 1735 both parties were increasingly active in foraging for information. What was going on at a local level is unclear, however one piece of information

²⁷⁶ Temple Newsam MSS., TN/PO/10/7, 'Inquires for Sir Rowland Winn'.

²⁷⁷ Lashley, York Miscellany, p. 67.

does give some pointers. Henry Beane, writing to Winn in the spring of 1740, set out all the work he had 'done relating to his Petition' in the East Riding.²⁷⁸ Four years after the petition had died in the Commons Beane was still awaiting payment, which indicates some of the financial difficulties experienced by individuals in connection with electioneering in this period. In July 1734 he had received instructions to enquire about votes in the Hunsley Beacon and Bainton Beacon divisions of Harthill wapentake and the town of Beverley. This area had returned 335 Tory voters and 106 split voters at the poll, so this was a large task for one man. The work was 'to be done in as private a manner as possible' and was undertaken in July, August and September. Apparently Beane spent twenty days riding and holding meetings with 'several Gents ab[ou]t the same affair' and his cost for this work was £11.11s.. In November he was to report to Colonel Moyser at York, presumably to update the party attorneys about the position in his area.

However, on this point Beane alone demanded £14.14s. for completed work, and the cost across the county must have started to spiral. Little wonder then that in December 1734 Sir Tancred Robinson of Newby Hall was invited to play a part in the forthcoming success of the petition 'by contributing to the expense necessary.'²⁷⁹ It was increasingly vital that the petition was heard soon and completed quickly before a reticence to contribute set in.

²⁷⁸ L.C.A., Nostell Priory MSS., NP A4/1574/3, Hen. Beane to Winn, 6 Mar. 1740.

²⁷⁹ L.C.A., Newby Hall MSS., NH 2501A, Wm Stables to Sir Tancred Robinson, 21 Dec. 1734.

Moreover, as the government Whigs crystallised their tactics the problems of funding were exacerbated by a lack of zeal from within their own ranks. Turner was already elected and showed little desire to extend the fight; similarly the Earl of Carlisle, although subscribing to the cause, was to show little interest as time passed. Quinn has indicated Carlisle's criticism of the ministerial Whigs in London who had given little to the cause during the election. Certainly Malton informed Irwin of the need to 'lay the subscription before the absent Lords of our Party', notably the Dukes of Devonshire, Newcastle and Rutland, and the Earls of Cholmondeley, Effingham and Westmoreland.²⁸⁰ Beyond this, Carlisle saw that the gentry in the shire were becoming drained in terms of energy and money.²⁸¹

This overall feeling of fatigue was noted by Elsa Finch when writing to Lady Burlington on 10 June 1734; she wrote that 'the proceedings at York have been very extraordinary but are to tedious to write.'²⁸² She recognised that the justification for the fight may be present but that the process may prove too wearisome to sustain. Perhaps these people saw that pragmatism was the way forward; they had one man elected and accepted that as a positive showing at this poll. This view was echoed by O'Gorman who stated that a petition would necessarily involve 'long hours of parochial detail.'²⁸³ However, Malton was too close to the issue and the support of the 292 men at *The George* at the end of May and beginning of June drove his lobby onwards.

²⁸⁰ Temple Newsam MSS, TN/C/14/156a, Malton to Irwin, 5 June 1734.

²⁸¹ Quinn, NH, XXI, 152.

²⁸² Chatsworth House, Devonshire MSS., Correspondence, Letter Box I, 1720-36, 219.0, Elsa Finch to Lady Burlington, 10 June 1734.

²⁸³ O'Gorman, Voters, Patrons and Parties, p. 165.

In such a large constituency this lobby would have to be hardened to the monotony and enormity of the task ahead. To check the pollbooks of over 15,000 names for fraudulent votes and at the same time to ensure the validity of their own votes was going to take time. It was not only necessary to garner as much damaging information about the opposition as possible, but also to prevent them from knowing the details. One Opposition supporter noted that the Whigs would not attend the races at York in August, 'a silly resolution to hinder their own devotion.'²⁸⁴ They met at Pontefract instead in September to review their situation.²⁸⁵ Clearly both sides were working to destabilise the other in a matter which to them was of crucial import. Thus the government Whigs accused Stapylton's followers of offering wagers on the outcome; the fact that they had apparently come into contact with some Whig reports may have increased this bullish attitude. One West Riding Whig, on the other hand, firmly believed that their opponent's returns could be obtained 'by the dint of a little money'.²⁸⁶

How successful either side was in obtaining the other's lists is not known. To obtain such information would have been a huge boon and would have avoided much unnecessary work. It may well have been that because they could not be sure of the other side's strength they overstated their own objections. When the objections were printed the Whigs had objected to 1,555 of

²⁸⁴ Wentworth Papers, Peter Wentworth to Strafford, 20 Aug. 1734, pp. 516-7.

²⁸⁵ Lashley, York Miscellany, p. 73.

²⁸⁶ Sir Wm Wentworth to Malton, 24 Dec. 1734, quoted in Collyer, PLPS, VII, 68.

Stapylton's votes.²⁸⁷ Collyer has noted that these objections would have given Winn the election; however, this outlook took no account of his rival's position, for Stapylton prepared his own reply to Winn's petition and found alleged faults with 2,106 of the latter's voters. In total this meant that 23.8 per cent of the voters were allegedly fraudulent.²⁸⁸ If this could be proved it would damage our perceptions of the size of the electorate. An Opposition advocate felt that the issue was more complex still, as he noted in February 1735 that Winn's agents 'have objected to a great many Good votes and mist as many bad ones...throughout the county.'²⁸⁹ Proving what was false and what true would jam up proceedings in the Committee of the Commons for quite some time.

This level of alleged fraud also leads one to question the role of party in politics, in that they would have been quite openly transporting bad votes to the polls. If they got away with this it may have significantly contributed to an election victory; if not then the legal and financial cost could be enormous. Possibly, because the cost of petitioning was high enough to prevent many disputes, it would be worth the risk. Equally important, bad votes that showed up again and again could prove

²⁸⁷ Although the printed lists contain 1,555 of Stapylton's voters objected to by Winn, Edward Harley's journal gives a figure of 1,609 objections. The reason for the difference of fifty-four is uncertain; perhaps the extra objections were found after the copy was printed. *Tory and Whig*, ed. Taylor *et al*, 24 Feb. 1736, p. 20.

²⁸⁸ Collyer found that over 1,600 of Stapylton's votes were objected to; he makes no comment on the counter-petition. Why his figures differ from mine I know not, unless his list was different. Collyer, *PLPS*, VII, 68. For the lists of objections: L.C.A., Nostell Priory MSS., NP D3/4/2, 'List of Objections of Sir Miles Stapylton to Sir Rowland Winn's voters'; Spencer Stanhope MSS, SpSt/11/5/3/12, 'List of Objections of Sir Rowland Winn to Sir Miles Stapylton's voter's'.

²⁸⁹ L.C.A., Vyner MSS., VR 244, Geo. Hassle to Wm Aislabie, 15 Feb. 1735.

to be solidly partisan because people had inside information about them. A turncoat whose right to vote was uncertain could face a tricky time at the poll.

It took until 28 January 1735 before the petition was read. It declared that

several hundreds of persons polled for Sir Miles Stapylton who had only long Leases of Years, or Copyhold Estates, and had no Freehold Estates; several others polled for Freeholds which they were never in Possession of, or which lay in a different county and others polled for lands which had never been assessed at all; several others for Cottages built upon the Lord's Waste...and several others which were only Hospital-men, and received Alms; others who were under Age, or had purchased their freeholds within a year...or did likewise vote twice...

Beyond this other general Whig grievances were aired as the High-Sheriff 'did refuse to enter into the Scrutiny to the prejudice of the majority of the freeholders of the County of York and of the Petitioner Sir Rowland Winn.'²⁹⁰

Winn's supporters had a series of complaints that they felt were valid, based in law and provable. However, the petition was adjourned until April and two factors sought to unnerve Malton and his adherents. Primarily, none of those who presented the petition were 'masters of it, so that we make but a ridiculous figure, not being able to tell our friends what sort of evidence we shall go upon.'²⁹¹ Malton had no idea how long the evidence would take to address in the Committee; this could only add to the expense as witness costs for transport to and accommodation in

²⁹⁰ Commons Journals, XXII, 28 Jan. 1735, 334.

²⁹¹ Wentworth Woodhouse Muniments, WWM, M1, Malton to William Buck, 5 Feb. 1735, mic A66.

London, and for lost work, would add up for 1,555 cases. Malton desperately needed to convince the government that their case could be concluded quickly.

If this affected his peace of mind, the second factor, a petition of 'several freeholders' against the election of Turner, must have been a body-blow. It is unknown whether Malton knew that this card would be played, but on 3-4 February 1735 this petition stated the case against 'many persons...who had no right [to vote].' It attacked 'many undue Influences, and other illegal, corrupt and unwarrantable Practices, [which] were made use of by Lord Lieutenants, Justices of the Peace, Postmasters, Excisemen, and other Persons...'.²⁹² This petition is of interest for a number of reasons. Firstly, it was a petition of several freeholders in the name of Edward Wortley who finished last in the poll. It sought to set aside some 2,200 votes of Turner and Winn, the latter of whom was unnamed in the petition - a factor that would then see Wortley elected with Stapylton. Who these petitioners were is unknown although the Opposition hierarchy was undoubtedly involved. Wortley's petition was of note for a second reason, namely the fact that it attacked the court interest in the shire at large. Whilst the government Whig petition was based on illegal landholding, the counter was based on the traditional country shibboleth of government interference at elections.

This last factor develops a point that the Tories had held true since the poll of 1727, when they felt that the Whigs had deceived them. On the Sunday of that poll Sir John Lister Kaye retired giving Turner the election; however, the High-Sheriff allowed much 'Sham-Polling' which gave the Whigs an allegedly

²⁹² Commons Journals, 22, 3-4 Feb. 1735, 349.

inflated majority of 3,458. Apparently much of this majority was 'made up of what votes his [Turner's] managers pleased, having or not having a right to vote...'. Moreover, Turner's voters were to be let 'into the Castle-Yard, early in the morning, before Day, by a Back Door, who had a *Watch-Word* to the Gaoler...to fill and crowd up the stands, and thereby have an Opportunity of voting themselves, and debarring Sir John Kay's men from voting.'²⁹³ On this evidence many freeholders were convinced that the Whigs had and would always attempt such political manoeuvring.

How long Wortley's supporters had been working towards their petition is unknown for there is little extant correspondence on the issue. Instructions had been sent out, but unlike Winn's they raised issues beyond those concerning lands that were not worth forty shillings or were not held for one year. These included: the illegal acts of Justices 'by Colour of their Authority'; the actions of the Church courts; summons to Roman Catholics 'in order to influence them or their interest'; 'Prosecutions for pretended Riots'; bribes and secreting duplicates of assessments; the illegal votes of curates, parish clerks, singingmen and almsmen.²⁹⁴

Two sets of arguments were developed in the shire; the government Whigs looked, quite sensibly, towards factors they could prove relatively easily, like landholding and the age of the voters. The Opposition however, focused on more nebulous complaints about 'illegal practices' and 'bribes'. Proving or disproving these would take time and be difficult to undertake; as

²⁹³ York City Library, 'A Letter from York to a Norfolk Member of Parliament at Westminster...' (1727), Y324-42.

²⁹⁴ S.C.A., Wharnccliffe Muniments, Wh.M 107-6, notes on a single sheet concerning the petition.

a money and time-wasting device this petition could be most profitable in deterring the Commons from hearing the evidence, or Malton from carrying on. Certainly it was the belief of one Tory that 'the Yorks[hire] petition will not be tryd', as much because it was 'slow work' as anything else.²⁹⁵

The Commons postponed deliberations in April 1735 and the remainder of the year was spent collating evidence and taking a closer look at those men who had polled. For example, early in 1735 Henry Simpson, a gentleman from Wharfedale, was sent the following missive about some Craven tenants:

reserving the free Rents now paid of which you have an Account in the rental 1733 and about a third of 'em are Leaseholders for 4 or 5000 years. But Assure you that not one of 'em voted (in respect of such a long lease) but where they had a freehold sufficient in another place.²⁹⁶

Here indications were given of good votes; however, friends amongst those in charge of local rates could help expose bad votes. In February 1735, at a meeting of the land tax commissioners for Claro wapentake, in the West Riding, 'a freeholder came in and desired to appeal agst an assessment for 15 shillings a year'. He was asked 'if he voted for that 15 shillings a year, to which he said yes, and for Sr Rowland Winn and Mr Turner.'²⁹⁷ The observations of allies helped each side focus its strategy for the petition. They helped locate tenants who had

²⁹⁵ Jervaulx Archive, ZJX 7/13/2, J Cotton to Bruce, 10 Feb. 1735, mic. 1094.

²⁹⁶ S.C.A., Wharnccliffe Muniments, Wh.M 107-7, Wm Taylor to Hen. Simpson, 15 Jan 1735.

²⁹⁷ L.C.A., Vyner MSS., VR 244, S. Hutchinson to Wm Aislabie, 22 Feb. 1735.

voted to find out if they had sufficient freehold; moreover they helped locate false votes and information to back up allegations about the most steadfastly independent of opponents.

At this local level the petition had forced the politicians to take a closer look at those men who polled for them. A series of lists pertaining to Edward Wortley's supporters, possibly collected to bolster his freeholders' petition, is illuminating in its depth.²⁹⁸ One set of lists, which focuses on his own voters, covers 394 individuals. From this information it becomes clear that no information was tracked down about 116 men and that he had given up on eighty-seven supporters whose votes were untenable. For instance, concerning the freehold of Jarvis Brownley of Leeds, it was reported that he 'knows he has none'. Similarly, Walter Rogerson of Armley near Leeds, was listed by Winn as not being assessed and Wortley's agents found out that he knew this when he polled. James Hugden, a freeholder from Heptonstall near Halifax proved a quandary. He was polled as Ogden to which the government Whigs replied that there was no such person; this could be reversed. However, they also said that he was not assessed, and although he had 'eleven pounds a year from his freehold', he admitted that he was not assessed. In attempting to avoid the taxes he put pressure on the Opposition cause. Other voters were reportedly too poor to have any freehold land. Why these men had polled is perplexing; had someone knowingly paid their passage to York? Did they believe they would not be caught? If this was true of these men how many more votes were bad?

²⁹⁸ The following sources were used to compile two datasets concerning Wortley's electoral friends and foes: S.C.A., Wharnccliffe Muniments, Wh.M 106-1a-6, 107-29-34, various material concerning the 1734 election.

Other men claimed ignorance or fought for their rights; Tim Jackson of Barwick-in-Elmet in the West Riding declared that he 'had sixteen pounds per annum of copyhold' and thought this was sufficient right to vote. Joseph Jarvis of Dalton near Sheffield, in reply to the accusation that he had no freehold, stated that he owned 'four stinted pasture gates' at Dalton and voted for another sufficient estate elsewhere. The shady nature of landholding and its links with the franchise was represented by Thomas Duffield of Ripon, who was also declared devoid of a freehold. Wortley's agents reported that he had a '10L Annuity' but questioned whether it was paid out of freehold lands. Landholding and the franchise had many grey areas.

At this point it is unknown whether either side fully comprehended the exact nature of the other's objections to their individual voters. Stapylton did send Lord Bruce a copy of Winn's objections in February, but this can have been general at best.²⁹⁹ Thus, much of the next year was spent collating evidence. In part this was due to the need to make as thorough a determination of voting rights as possible, as a return to Henry Beane's letter shows.³⁰⁰ In January 1735 he was instructed to pursue 'a new Enquiry' of voting qualifications 'in Every Town of my Divisions.' He was to 'inspect the Parish Rates of Each Town to see how Every voter was assessed and for what and if in Proportion for 40s', and again he was riding for twenty days. He was then to alphabetise the names of the towns and voters therein, perhaps in

²⁹⁹ Jervaulx Archive, ZJX 7/13/5, Stapylton to Bruce, 14 Feb. 1735, mic. 1094.

³⁰⁰ L.C.A., Nostell Priory MSS., NP A4/1574/3, Beane to Winn, 6 Mar. 1740.

preparation for a printed copy. In February he travelled to Pontefract to Joshua Wilson, one of the attorneys fighting the Malton cause, to deliver his lists and to appraise him of the situation. In March, during Assize week, he went to York with his papers and two copies of the East Riding pollbooks taken at Beverley. For this work he charged £30.16s.4d..

Beane's work was expedited to become a very specific location of voters and their assessments, then to get them printed out. This indicates the level of importance in which the petition was held and the intricacies of local party co-operation, but it neglected to take into consideration wider feelings. Walpole best indicated these when he wrote to Carlisle that 'what will be practicable must be considered, as well as what infinite service it will be to lay open such a scene of iniquity.'³⁰¹ John Dickinson, the estate steward of Sir Joseph Pennington of Warter in the East Riding, was sure that Winn had more good votes than Stapylton in his area. But he wished the issue 'had been settled some other ways, without so much trouble and expense'. After being admonished by his employer he noted that 'what I mentioned...was only 'cos I thought it was a great Deal to Hazard on any affair'.³⁰² Dickinson certainly put forward an air of unease about the petition in Yorkshire that was mirrored in government circles.

Later in the century it was noted that there were 'great inconveniences arising from the numbers of questions which were necessarily agitated at every contested election, upon the rating

³⁰¹ HMC, Carlisle, VI, Walpole to Carlisle, 30 May 1735, 156.

³⁰² H.U.L., Pennington of Warter MSS., DDWA/12/1(b), John Dickinson to Sir Joseph Pennington, 31 Jan. 1735.

of lands and tenements of freeholders who claimed to vote.'³⁰³ Indeed, the whole business was getting messy; a mass of detail was being produced on both sides, and Walpole knew that by fighting this cause Malton was laying himself and the government Whigs open to wider attack. In the county at large this was certainly the case, for the 'whole clamour and curse of the county...' was pointed at Malton 'for having taken the land tax books and having them exposed.'³⁰⁴ Many in the shire objected to having their qualifications looked into, which was one of Serjeant Darnell's objections to a scrutiny. Having taken an oath at the poll they regarded any other questions as overbearing interference. Moreover, it was feared that too studious a study of taxation records would land the north of England with a heavier bill.

Stoker has illuminated certain of the problems of a search for illegality after the poll. He felt that 'As well as being difficult to remove, it was accepted procedure not to challenge a voter who had polled at a previous election.' He also points to the possible fines for perjury and fraudulent voting that were not usually imposed because a successful challenge could flood the polls with false voters.³⁰⁵ Pushing the inquisition into illegality would incense the population of the shire. This made petitioning a risky business and which may well have been why the counter-petition looked at bribery and corruption rather than landownership; as it delved less into personal matters it was more likely to receive approbation from the wider community.

³⁰³ S. Heywood, A Digest on the Law Respecting County Elections, (1790), p. 89.

³⁰⁴ Wentworth Papers, Phipps to Strafford, 10 Jan. 1735, p. 522.

³⁰⁵ D. Stoker, thesis, pp. 154, 157.

The comment of Carlisle's son, Colonel Charles Howard, in February 1735 was particularly telling, for he noted that 'The spirit of our Yorkshire Petition I think is much flagged...'.³⁰⁶ Malton could not see the weariness of the shire and took no account of the beliefs of the electorate at large which were alluded to in December 1735 by Sir Tancred Robinson, who wrote 'the spirit for it [the petition] daily subsides.'³⁰⁷ Possibly Malton had not expected the issue to drag on this long; he had wanted a quick reversal of fortune. However, once it began he had to see the matter through.

Despite the reservations of Walpole, which were feeding into Carlisle's doubts, Winn and Malton were still exacting support from many areas and from trusted friends. Robert Appleton, the clerk of the East Riding, wrote to Winn in August 1735 that Mr Harland and Mr Jones came to examine the pollbooks for Stapylton. He noted how they 'compared their Check Books with the Original poll and had blank leaves to mark the variations as to Name and Places, but their Books contain a page and a halfe or more than the Original the consequence of which you may judge.' The Opposition were as active in co-ordinating their campaign against Winn in a systematic manner, and the Government party had little knowledge of what information they had found. However, Appleton was on his guard against all possibilities for 'I never wo[ul]d take out above two Poll Books at a time, so that if they should have attempted to take them away by

³⁰⁶ HMC, Carlisle, VI, Colonel, The Honourable Charles Howard to Carlisle, 27 Feb. 1735, 156.

³⁰⁷ Ibid, Sir Tancred Robinson to Carlisle, 6 Dec. 1735, p. 158.

force they co[ul]d never have taken more than two and I had placed persons in a proper place to prevent them.'³⁰⁸

The government Whigs had friends in important local positions and undoubtedly used these men to influence the ability of either side to conduct their business. As the Opposition would need at least limited co-operation from the county administration, they could have been stalled. However, given that after the adjournment from January to 15 April 1735, there followed a further recess in parliamentary activity concerning the petition until 16 January 1736, the Opposition had time enough to gather their facts. For instance, in February 1736, it was felt that from Hallikeld wapentake in the North Riding, Winn's attorneys would not 'make out one in ten bad [votes that] they had objected to.'³⁰⁹ Only in certain cases did the Opposition feel threatened; of John Fell of Ripon it was noted, 'ask no Questions about him he has been babbling with the agents of the other side.'³¹⁰ Many freeholders remained steadfast against the accusations of their opponents; however, some, like Fell, were liable to crack. Such men, though few and far between in these lists, were independent of controlling influences.

The work of the Opposition, headed by the Tories, was as cohesive as that of the government Whigs, although they lacked that party's organisation. Stapylton agreed to 'take his part in managing' and declared the importance of unity at all meetings.³¹¹

³⁰⁸ L.C.A., Nostell Priory MSS., NP A4/1578/4, Robert Appleton to Winn, 30 Aug. 1735.

³⁰⁹ Ibid., Vyner MSS., VR 244, ? to Wm Aislabie, 22 Feb. 1736.

³¹⁰ Ibid., VR 244, 'Lists of Sir Miles Stapylton's voters objected to in Ripon'.

³¹¹ Jervaulx Archive, ZJX 7/12/3, Stapylton to Bruce, 14 Feb. 1735, mic. 1094.

Beyond this, certain sections of the Opposition had time enough to foster further anti-government sentiment. On 3 March 1735 a 'petition of Alehouse-keepers and Innholders of the City of York and several hundred citizens' complained to the Commons about widespread local abuses and the quartering of soldiers in the City after the election. These petitioners were upset about a speech made by their Whig M.P., Edward Thompson and the 'Threats and undue Influences used by the late Lord Mayor, and some other Magistrates...before and at the said Election, for no other reason, but giving their Votes for such Representatives in Parliament as, in their own free Judgement, they thought most proper.'³¹² The Committee of the Whole House threw the petition out on 2 April;³¹³ however it indicated the level of opposition to the ministry and its interference in the shire, and the heavy handed approach that was maintained, both in terms of troops and investigations into landholding.

This factor was further outlined in a letter from Stapylton to Lord Bruce; in it Stapylton declared that 'there is a spirit within-doors and without to stop this arbitrary oppressive petition and if we do suffer it will be from ye notion which prevails yt it is impossible to do anything, for under this notion they do what they please.'³¹⁴ The Opposition could see the discomfort that the constant enquiries across the shire were creating; they also felt the squeeze that it was putting on funds. In May 1734 it was noted that there was a shortfall between their election expenses and funds of £839.8s.11d.. By June it was declared that it was

³¹² Commons Journals, XXII, 3 Mar. 1735, 400.

³¹³ *Ibid.*, 2 Apr. 1735, p. 443.

³¹⁴ Jervaulx Archive, ZJX 7/13/8, Stapylton to Bruce, 23 Apr. 1735, mic. 1094.

'uncertain whether ye County gentlemen...will come into ys new additional charge.'³¹⁵ Finding the money to carry the fight forward was a huge headache for both sides.

Whilst the Opposition had a shortfall of over £800, they claimed to have located 712 bad votes. Of these, 266 were not assessed, 195 had no freehold, 197 had a freehold that was not worth forty shillings a year, and there were twenty-five cases of no such person existing in a particular township. They were having to go through the same motions as their opponents, however at least they could state that they had not initiated the affair. It is noticeable that at this time they had 712 names, yet by January 1736 Stapylton's reply to Winn's petition had increased this to 2,106. Whether this was gamesmanship, aimed at unsettling their rivals when the petition was finally heard, is unclear; perhaps the Opposition had found the money for an extra push.

The petition was finally presented in January 1736, and the first issue raised was whether each side should swap lists of objections; this was carried in favour of Winn. Thus, within three weeks each side had to produce lists for the candidate objected to, or his agent, of which individuals were objected to and why.³¹⁶ The procuring of these lists created a flurry of activity at the local level. Once again Henry Beane was involved as in that same month, after an apparent lay-off since March 1735, he received fresh instructions. He was now to 'view every voters Estate' in his

³¹⁵ Ibid., ZJX 7/13/9, same to same, 27 May 1734, mic. 1094. The subscription raised £3,038.16s.5d. but expenses were £3,878.5s.4d.; ibid, ZJX 7/13/10, same to same (n.d., 1734), mic. 1094.

³¹⁶ Commons Journals, 22, 16 Jan. 1736, 499-500.

division which was 'not assessed at 40s a year and speak to the value thereof of my own knowledge and get the ten[an]ts rec[eip]ts for their rents.' He was also to treat the various 'Parish Officers in Every Town in order to procure the original assessments.' When he received the list of Winn's voters objected to by Stapylton, around seventy in his area, he was under 'orders to make good the same' and get to London to give in his information.³¹⁷

Two factors arise out of this work. Firstly, Beane was owed £149.9s.8d. in total for his input and was still unpaid in 1740, which extrapolated across Yorkshire indicates the high cost and lack of funds available. Secondly, the amount of interference in local matters was unprecedented in any contemporary's lifetime. This could only create ill-feeling amongst much of the electorate and wider county-society. Stapylton and the Opposition were no angels, but to many within the shire he had been duly and properly elected; what the petition was doing was to push the bounds of government Whig credibility and community tolerance to the limit. As Stoker has written, the bulk of the electors hated change and were 'eager to preserve their rights and privileges.'³¹⁸ Such investigations could only create a feeling that the politicians were attempting to subvert the established order and the electoral will.

Deliberations over the petition troubled politicians at Westminster from January until April 1736. At first the debate was procedural with Stapylton's attornies attacking the validity of

³¹⁷ L.C.A., Nostell Priory MSS., NP A4/1574/3, Beane to Winn, 6 Mar. 1740.

³¹⁸ Stoker, thesis, p. 173.

the East Riding pollbooks as two months had elapsed before Appleton had given them to the High-Sheriff.³¹⁹ Stapylton's counsel noted that there was 'no Proof having been given that no alterations had been made therein after the Election and before the Delivery.'³²⁰ Again the Opposition could cite government interference in the due electoral process. It was noted that 'if the Legislature itself did not regard its own acts but thought fit to construe them as it best served present purposes, How could it be expected That they would be obeyed and observed without Doors'.³²¹ However, the issue was resolved in Winn's favour.

It was only in March that the nature of the disqualifications was to be heard and these brought up a series of issues concerning elections in general and specifically relating to Yorkshire. After dealing with the question of the East Riding pollbooks the focal point shifted to questioning Stapylton's voters. Dealing with the first material point, the acceptance of 'parole evidence', took a great deal of time in merely disqualifying John Maken, and indicated the problems of time that the petitioners would face. The 'parole evidence' device was designed to show that Maken's confession, made after the event, that he had no freehold despite the fact that he swore at the time of the election that he had, could be accepted as evidence. This was the order of evidence that Darnell had objected to in his opinion on the legality of a scrutiny. Precedents were read and witnesses examined and although several voters were disqualified by the ruling in favour of Winn's counsel 'That Evidence be admitted as to a Persons

³¹⁹ Commons Journals, 22, 24 Feb. 1736, 587-8.

³²⁰ Tory and Whig, ed. Taylor *et al*, Harley Journal, 24 Feb. 1736, p. 21.

³²¹ *Ibid.*, Harley Journal, 24 Feb. 1736, p. 22.

having no Freehold at all', it had taken from 26 February until 2 March to get this through.³²²

Whilst there was a constant and tortuous flow of witnesses through the Committee, the issue of whether or not the Ainsty of York, which abutted onto the City of York, had a right to vote, was of wider import. This device was used by the Whigs to wipe out a block of Stapylton's votes as their freeholds were said to be no part of Yorkshire. In fact Winn objected to eighty-three voters and Stapylton to fifty-three on these grounds. If this was carried it still would not give Winn a majority, but would narrow the gap by thirty. The issue was based on an act of Henry VI's reign, as to whether the Ainsty was a parcel of York, which was a City and a County in its own right, or whether it was 'separate and divided from the county of York.' It was resolved that freeholders within the Ainsty 'had a right to vote'.³²³

This was a setback for Winn and Malton, who now faced the tedium of waiting on their own evidence, then facing Stapylton's replies, then awaiting the evidence against Turner. However, the lists of objectionable votes raise some important points about how the politicians perceived the electorate and how they organised for the petition itself. The lists provide information about name, freehold, abode and objection. In this way it is possible to see: if any of these men had polled before or would poll again; whether any of these voters were objected to, in 1727, or would be again

³²² Commons Journals, XXII, 26 Feb. 1736, 593; see also *ibid.*, 2 Mar. 1736, 604 and 4 Mar. 1736, 612; Tory and Whig, ed. Taylor *et al*, Harley Journal, 26 Feb. 1736, p. 26.

³²³ Commons Journals, XXII, 9 Mar. 1736, 622.

in 1742; where each party focused its attack; and why these men were objected to.³²⁴

Of the 189 men objected to in 1727, 112 did not poll again. Of the seventy-seven who did, only twenty-three were objected to in the 1734 petition and the reasoning tended to be the same in the latter dispute as it was in 1727. For example, in 1727 the vote of William Scott of West Ardsley in the West Riding was disputed because he had paid no taxes; in 1734 it was reported that he had no forty shilling freehold and was not assessed proportionately for any freehold. Similarly, Samuel Harrison of Thorner in the West Riding reputedly held no assessed freehold of forty shillings value in 1734, and the reason in 1727 was that he voted by right of his wife's son's estate. Why the other fifty-four who polled at both elections were left out of the petition is unknown; perhaps the claims made in 1727 had been rectified or were simply too dubious.

In 1742 several short lists, pertaining to 205 votes involving both candidates, formed a kernel of disputed votes.³²⁵ This time 154 voters had not polled before; of the other fifty-one, only twenty had been objected to in 1734. Of these, seven had no reason given in 1742; the others had similar objections made. For instance, Robert Pearson of Topcliffe in the West Riding was

³²⁴ The following section draws much of its basis from a computer-aided study of the following lists: L.C.A., Nostell Priory MSS., NP D3/4/2, 'List of Objections of Sir Miles Stapylton to Sir Rowland Winn's voters'; Spencer Stanhope MSS., SpSt/11/5/3/12, 'List of Objections of Sir Rowland Winn to Sir Miles Stapylton's voter's'. The style of both lists was similar; see Appendix VII, p. 431, for a copy of a page of the latter list.

³²⁵ Spencer Stanhope MSS., SpSt/11/5/3/20, objections to the 1742 poll. See Appendix VII, p. 432, for a copy of a page of these objections.

declared fraudulent in 1742 because he was a Parish Clerk whose salary was paid by the inhabitants and whose property was not freehold. In 1734 the objection made was that he had no freehold land and was not assessed. Most of the objections in 1727 and 1742 reflected local knowledge which pointed to the ability to identify possible frauds. Richard Garlick of Sedbergh, whose electoral rights were disputed in 1734 when he allegedly lacked sufficient freehold land, was under attack again in 1742 because it was pointed out that his freehold was a field worth thirty shillings a year only. Whether he felt that as he had polled before he had the customary right to do so again is unknown; perhaps the failure of the petitions in 1734 made his legally untenable voting right that much more secure in fact.

What becomes clear is that beyond any immediate local knowledge both parties in 1734 needed to undertake a lot of work to uncover bad votes. Each side located disputed votes in each Riding in proportions that corresponded to the relative strengths of their opponents in that particular area. The following table displays the relative percentages of those who polled in 1734 for the Opposition and those who were petitioned against by Winn.³²⁶

³²⁶ In this table those who polled for the Opposition include Opposition doubles and singles and split votes - some of the latter group were petitioned against.

<u>AREA</u>	<u>1734 VOTERS(%)¹</u>	<u>PETITION(%)²</u>
EAST RIDING	10.8	10.2
NORTH RIDING	26.0	20.8
WEST RIDING	59.6	65.8
YORK	1.8	1.5
OUTVOTERS	1.8	1.5

¹ n=7,892 ² n=1,555

Table 3.1: percentages of those who polled in 1734 for the Opposition and those who were petitioned against by Winn.

The figures for the petition do not add up to 100 per cent as three of the voters could not be located in any one Riding due to the vague nature of the information provided. Clearly fraudulent votes were uncovered in the same proportion as voted in each Riding; the Whigs were well aware of the Tory stronghold in the West, and may well concentrated on this area with some recourse to men like Henry Beane in the East.

For the government Whigs objected to by Stapylton the values were as follows:³²⁷

<u>AREA</u>	<u>1734 VOTERS(%)¹</u>	<u>PETITION(%)²</u>
EAST RIDING	19.2	24.3
NORTH RIDING	32.5	27.5
WEST RIDING	44.7	44.5
YORK	1.6	2.0
OUTVOTERS	2.1	1.5

¹ n=8,502 ² n=2,106

Table 3.2: percentages of those who polled in 1734 for the Government and those who were petitioned against by Stapylton.

³²⁷ In this table those who polled for the Government include Government doubles and singles and split votes - some of the latter group were also petitioned against.

Again there were five voters whose locale could not be fixed. However, these figures for Stapylton's objections reflect the fact that the Opposition may have had to work harder than the government Whigs. They had fewer friends and proponents in the East and North Ridings and yet had to concentrate much of their attack in those areas because of their opponent's strengths.

Each side worked hard to uncover bad votes wherever they existed. Of the 2,106 frauds that the Opposition located, only 1,378 or 65.4 per cent owned freeholds in the township or hamlet where they lived. For their opponents the figures were 1,059 out of 1,555, or 68.1 per cent. Many of the remainder would have possessed land or tenancies in nearby hamlets, possibly in the same township. However the fact that so many did not give the same location for freehold and abode made the logistics of locating false entitlements that more difficult because a more extensive local knowledge would be required to seek them out.

As each side attempted to widen the search for bad votes, operations were extended beyond shire boundaries. The Opposition objected to forty-one voters from outside Yorkshire; from Cheshire, Derbyshire, Durham, Lancashire, Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire, Westmoreland and London. The Government party similarly found twenty-three frauds in Derbyshire, Durham, Lancashire, Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire and Westmoreland. These frauds were found in approximately the same proportion as there were voters for each side from these other areas at the election itself. The nexus of party organisation that existed at the poll carried over to the petition, even beyond the geographical extent of the shire.

From both lists it becomes clear that each side was primarily objecting to new voters. The following table shows the percentages of voters in each list, Opposition and Government, who had or had not voted in 1727 and which way they polled.

<u>1727 VOTE</u>	<u>OPPOSITION(%)¹</u>	<u>GMT(%)²</u>
TORY	5.4	13.2
WHIG	22.4	8.1
NOT VOTED	72.2	78.7
¹ n=2,106 ² n=1,555		

Table 3.3: previous voting behaviour of voters objected to in 1734.

Almost three-quarters of those objected to in 1734 had not polled before; it may well have been that the huge increase in turnout between these polls, from 11,595 to 15,351 was made up of many illegal votes. Possibly both parties felt on sounder legal footing attacking those voters who had not polled before. In relation to the 1742 poll the figures were as follows:

<u>1742 VOTE</u>	<u>OPPOSITION(%)¹</u>	<u>GMT(%)²</u>
TORY	8.0	29.1
WHIG	30.2	9.9
NO VOTE	61.8	61.0
¹ n=2,106 ² n=1,555		

Table 3.4: future voting behaviour of voters objected to in 1734.

This table indicates that more of the voters were to return to poll in 1742 than did so between 1727 and 1734. Similarly, those who did return to poll were favourable to that side they had supported in 1734. They may also have felt increasingly confident about their political rights after the petition failed.

What the lists of objections do reveal is some differences in approach and elements of what appears to be both parties clutching at straws. On the Opposition side most of the objections were based on a lack of freehold worth forty shillings a year *and* a lack of assessment. In total 1,042 (49.5 per cent) of their objections were based on this factor. This was then bolstered by another 899 (42.7 per cent) stating a lack of freehold land or a lack of assessment or both, or land not worth forty shillings. Thus 92.2 per cent of their objections were based on these basic defaults in the requisite requirements for voting.

The lists do not specify whether men were polling when they only possessed copyhold; similarly no claims are made about the splitting of land to gain votes or of fraudulent conveyances. Other claims had a more specific basis; two men were mortgagees and were not in possession but had polled; there were twenty-one cases where no such person existed where a vote was claimed; nineteen had voted twice and there were twenty-nine cases of joint tenants voting where one vote at best could be allowed. Interestingly, for all the Opposition attacks on Malton's interference in landholding rights, they based their case on this type of evidence. However, they could still argue that they had not provoked the issue.

Other more specious arguments were interspersed; for example they complained that the votes of Adam Rawlinson of Muck Britton - which ought to have been Monk Bretton - who owned land in Barnsley could not stand as there was no such place as 'Muck Britton'. This line of reasoning was tenuous as mistakes or differences were very common even in printed pollbooks.

Moreover one of his neighbours from 'Monk Bretton' was objected to merely for having no freehold.

Winn's attack also focused on landholding irregularities and 1,361 (87.5 per cent) names on his list were objected to on the basis of a lack of freehold or assessment. However, more credence was given to matters that may have proven more difficult to verify. For example, the Government party complained that fifteen men were 'compelled to vote for Stapylton by threats.' This may have been the case but it is a rather subjective factor. One of the voters, Thomas Hoyle of Horton in the dales of the West Riding was apparently 'A Lunatick'. Unfortunately the grounds for this are not known, but once again it may have been a difficult point to prove. Undeterred by this fact Hoyle returned in 1742 to cast another Tory vote.

There were irregularities that were common to both lists. For instance, John Ward of Long Marston in the Ainsty in the West Riding, was alleged by the Opposition to have no freehold nor to have been assessed; yet another John Ward of the same township was objected to on the grounds that anyone owning land in the Ainsty was an alien to the shire. If these were two people, why did the second line of reasoning not apply to the first John Ward? If they were one person (which they were), why split him into two unless the aim was to make a more impressive list or to confuse the enemy?

The lists indicate that no one, of high or low status, was immune to disputation. Stapylton queried the rights of fourteen 'gentlemen'; Winn only uncovered one. However, of more interest is the attack by Stapylton on thirty-four clergymen who polled and by Winn on a further twenty-three. Stapylton's enquiry

concerned landholding in thirty-two cases and whether any such person existed in the other two; Winn's focused on landholding in twenty and whether any such person existed in one. This proves somewhat perplexing as only six of these men were stipendiary curates whose position could be seen as rather tenuous. One late eighteenth century theorist stated that 'schoolmasters and parish clerks, seised of lands by virtue of their offices, are usually admitted to vote, and curates not.'³²⁸ With regards to perpetual clerics, it was noted that their 'privilege of voting in elections...[was] by virtue of their ecclesiastical freeholds', as long as they were 'charged to some one or more of the...public taxes.'³²⁹

Overall there were thirty-two stipendiaries who polled in 1734, but the attack on clerics focused on the perpetuals and there was some confusion involved. The basis for the disputes over land and assessment is unclear, perhaps these men had not paid the relevant charges. However, of the men objected to because they were said not to exist, more evidence is available. Anthony Witton, Perpetual Curate of Brignall in the North Riding was objected to by Stapylton; in fact the curate's name was Wilton. Similarly, George Goundrill, Rector of Atwick, was declared non-existent; however, he was very much alive and also held the perpetual curacy of Nunkeeling and the rectory of Sproatley, both in the East Riding. Robert Watley of Toft in Lincolnshire, the Prebend of Bilton, was accused of holding a freehold that was no part of Yorkshire; another Robert Watley - in fact there was only

³²⁸ Heywood, A Digest on the Law, p. 80; see also J. Simeon, A Treatise on the Law of Elections, (1790).

³²⁹ Heywood, A Digest on the Law, pp. 75-6, 77.

one - was said to lack a forty shilling freehold. On the other hand they objected to Dun Field for this latter offence, but did not take into account, or ignored his right to vote, as Field Dunn, the Rector of Wistow near Hull.

Winn's men were as guilty of such confusion. Jon Dugeon of Haxey apparently polled by right of being a cleric, however in the pollbook itself he was not denoted as 'Cl' and there is no such place as Haxey in Yorkshire. However, Winn objected on the basis of a lack of a suitable tenure. Such errors, deliberate or otherwise are relatively easy to examine for a group like the clergy who can be located in time and space by other means.³³⁰ The confusion of places, the doubling up of objections and the difficulties introduced by misspelt names are all factors which were likely to be multiplied for the wider population and which may have lead to a deliberate or an accidental blurring of voter's rights through poor contemporary record linkage between pollbooks and local sources.

Other, more legal and tenurial conundrums existed. There were cases on both sides of a majority of a town's voters being objected to. The Opposition disputed fifteen out of twenty-six voters from the Whig township of Nafferton in the East Riding, on the basis of a lack of sufficient freehold and assessment. Were the Opposition clutching at straws, or did they feel that these men were all lying *en bloc* about their qualifications? Possibly they were transported to the poll despite their insubstantial claims to vote, on the basis that a full check of the voterage was unlikely and that the Government party needed their support.

³³⁰ See Chapter 5, pp. 248-308, for the politics of the clergy.

Winn disputed the rights of the majority of voters from the township of Slaithwaite, near Huddersfield. In 1727 forty-six men from this township polled for Kaye; Turner objected to nineteen of them and twelve of these were said to hold leases for lives, alongside three who held leases for years under Kaye himself. Baskerville has shown how important leases for lives were in Cheshire at this time, however, their role in the Pennine districts of Yorkshire is not as clear-cut.³³¹ Eight of those objected to in 1727 cropped up again in Winn's list of 1734; this time they were accompanied by all the other thirty-two voters from that township. In 1742 forty-three Slaithwaite men polled for Fox, however only two featured in Turner's list of complaints. That these men should figure so prominently in the petition lists indicates the level of complexity surrounding the shire franchise. Were these votes legal or not? In Winn's lists the invalidating claim was again a lack of sufficient freehold land, rather than the specific nature of the freehold.

At this point Wortley's lists, of voters objected to, and voters considered to be legal, are again important.³³² From these lists it is clear that the Opposition regarded leases for lives as a true freehold; twelve men from Farnley Tyas, six from Lingarths and forty from Slaithwaite, all townships near Huddersfield, had good votes because they had 'sufficient freehold by leases for life by Sr Arthur Kaye made thirty years ago.' The very notion of a politically and electorally sound tenure was a moot point. Had

³³¹ See Baskerville *et al*, PH, 12, Part 2, 126-42; Dr Steve King has informed me that leases for lives died out in Yorkshire after the end of the period in question.

³³² S.C.A., Wharnccliffe Muniments, Wh.M 106-1a-6, 107-29-34, 1734 election material.

these leaseholders been forced to give evidence at Westminster, the whole issue of leases for lives would have to have been addressed. Within Yorkshire people were unsure about the political rights of this form of tenancy. However, it was only when a result was in dispute that the issue would come to the fore. Thus, the opportunities for multiple instances of fraudulent voting were apparent.

Both sides published their lists of objections whilst attempting to give away as little as possible. It was up to their opponents to find evidence to prove that their votes were good; thus the bulk of the objections merely stated a lack of sufficient land or assessment. The Opposition probably included as many alleged frauds as possible in the hope of tiring Parliament and their opponents out. The Government party relied on getting as many individual cases heard as possible in order to facilitate Winn's election by as large a majority as possible. This would discredit the Opposition and save their own faces at a national and local level.

By the end of April only half the 1,555 votes had been assessed, and notwithstanding the confidence of Winn's brother, Thomas, that, 'your Parliam[entar]y affair was in so good a state',³³³ many Whigs were looking to end their involvement. Thomas Winn himself reported that 'both ye French and English newspapers...hint as if the Petition wo[ul]d not be gone through with this session.' Moreover, Sir Tancred Robinson informed Carlisle that 'some people's thoughts are now employed how to

³³³ L.C.A., Nostell Priory MSS., NP A4/1585/18, Thomas Winn to Sir Rowland Winn, 18 Apr. 1734.

make a proper... [retreat] on this issue', especially as only 130 votes a week were being queried.³³⁴

Indeed Malton and Winn may have sensed the unease concerning the whole affair, for on 22 April they concluded their case following 18 days of hearings over a nine week period. In that length of time fewer than half of the objections had been disqualified.³³⁵ This left 'Sr Miles' Councill [to] open yr side of ye Question...in very strong terms', by attacking the corruption of the Justices who had allegedly threatened many voters.³³⁶ Soon after this Malton and Winn backed down. Their reasoning is unsure; Collyer cites Egmont's Diary which relates how Winnington moved to end the hearing - this would have pushed the affair over until later in the year. Egmont wrote that 'Sir Miles having an undoubted majority' made this inevitable.³³⁷

The Opposition was pleased that the issue had been dropped by Winnington, but recognised that unless Winn desisted, it could be resurrected within fourteen days of the start of the next session.³³⁸ However, Irwin was informed that 'to ye great surprise of all us, not in ye secret, Sr Rowland gave up his cause. Your lords[hi]p may possibly give a guess at ye reason but I am at a loss to account for yr manner of acting.'³³⁹ According to the journal of William Hay, the ministers had persisted in the

³³⁴ Ibid.; HMC, Carlisle, VI, Sir Tancred Robinson to Carlisle, 2 Apr. 1736, 164.

³³⁵ Tory and Whig, ed. Taylor *et al*, 22 Apr. 1736, p. 26; HMC, Carlisle, VI, Sir Tancred Robinson to Carlisle, 24 Apr. 1736, 168.

³³⁶ Temple Newsam MSS., TN/C/15/19, Henry Ingram to Irwin, 4 May 1736; HMC, Carlisle, VI, Colonel, the Honourable Charles Howard to Carlisle, ? Apr. 1736, 171.

³³⁷ Egmont quoted in Collyer, PLPS, VII, 71.

³³⁸ Jervaulx Archive, ZJX 7/13/10, Stapylton to Bruce (n.d., May 1736?), mic. 1094.

³³⁹ Temple Newsam MSS., TN/C/15/19, Henry Ingram to Irwin, 4 May 1736.

hearings 'to oblige the Yorkshire Gentlemen in the Court Interest'. Moreover, whilst they hoped the tedium of the petition would keep other inconvenient business out of Parliament, they also aimed to show 'the impossibility of hearing a County Petition' so that 'they might be troubled with no more'.³⁴⁰ It was little wonder that a cause which owed so much to the whims of the ministers should collapse once they lost all appetite for it.

Whatever the reason, Collyer is right to point out the rifts that occurred among the Yorkshire Whigs.³⁴¹ Carlisle had lost interest earlier in the year when meetings to apprise the gentry of the situation were being held in London and not in the county. He wrote that 'a few gentlemen, unknown to the rest, without their approbation and concurrence had taken upon them the conduct and direction of this affair.'³⁴² Lady Irwin was forthright in her attack on some Whigs whose violence for the petition had 'wholly lost' the election. She declared that this zeal hurt 'a cause instead of serving it' and thus the disgrace for its failure was Malton's.³⁴³

Within the shire it was reported that Malton's defeat was met by 'great rejoicing...by ringing the bells at Honley, Holmfirth, Benton, Almondbury, Huddersfield &c. by bonfires and great rejoicings.'³⁴⁴ *The Leeds Mercury* also noted that 'Justice was done' and that 'the inferiour Freeholders who had the courage to appear in the Country Interest' were treated in local public houses.³⁴⁵ This widespread joy at the failure of the petition, coupled to the feeling among the higher echelons of the party that

³⁴⁰ *Tory and Whig*, ed. Taylor *et al*, Hay Journal, 4 May 1736, p. 76.

³⁴¹ Collyer, *PLPS*, VII, 71.

³⁴² HMC, *Carlisle*, VI, Carlisle to ?, 22 Feb. 1736, 160.

³⁴³ *Ibid.*, Lady Irwin to Carlisle, 20 May 1736, p. 173.

³⁴⁴ Whiting, *YASRS*, 117, 11 May 1736, 29.

³⁴⁵ Lumb, *TSM*, XXIV, no.542, 18 May 1736, 105.

Malton was mistaken in taking the issue this far, indicated the isolation of Wentworth Woodhouse within the local political nation. Malton and Winn had spent vast resources on fighting a cause that was too grand in scale. The opposition they faced was equally as steadfast and represented the view of many in the shire that the ministerialists were attacking the sanctity of electoral right.

The 1734 election petition had something of an epilogue at the general election of 1741 and subsequent by-election in 1742. At the former poll, it was reported that the petition had damaged Whig self-belief to the extent that 'this county is now given up into the hands of the Torys'.³⁴⁶ After the debacle of the petition, Turner would not openly declare for the Whigs and refused to stand; no one else could be induced to oppose the Tories. However, it was felt that Malton 'will persuade sum silly Sr Rowland or other [to stand]' against the Tory pairing of Stapylton and Lord Morpeth.³⁴⁷ Clearly, the petition had damaged perceptions of Lord Malton's political acumen and realism. To an extent he was seen as a man divorced from the wider Whig convictions within the shire, perhaps too determined to recover what he had lost after the 1734 poll.

However, the by-election that followed Morpeth's death renewed the Whigs' standing. The Tory candidate, William Fox, was seen as vulnerable by the Whig party, who managed to persuade Turner once more to be their candidate. Perhaps the

³⁴⁶ L.C.A., Newby Hall MSS., NH 2826/8, (Elizabeth Worsley to (Lady Frances Robinson)), 5 Aug. 1740.

³⁴⁷ Ibid..

Tories were deluded about their own strengths for Fox could not believe it when he lost. The defeat at the latter poll was said to be due to 'the secret practice', which involved bribery, polling men twice and perjury in the face of the freeholder's oath.³⁴⁸ It was reported that 'Mr Fox must not allow the Election to be good though he has not a majority.'³⁴⁹ The Whigs reflected on the fact that 'Mr Foxes party are very much out of humour and complain very much of foul play and tell abundance of lies and impossible stories.'³⁵⁰ Fox sought to redress his grievances with a petition, but was forced to accept that 'as petitions are found impracticable for to carye a county and the expense intolerable there will be small hopes from that method.'³⁵¹ Fox believed that the failure of the 1734 election petition secured Turner's position; no one could now realistically gain success in such a manner. It was alleged that Turner had polled 1,500 bad votes precisely because the Whigs felt that the Tories would never petition. Of course Fox would never have polled any bad voters himself!

The excise issue upon which the 1734 general election had focused had been played upon by the Opposition party as an infringement of the public's rights. It allowed the juncture of country Whigs like Wortley and Tories like Stapylton. Thus, a level of Opposition unity was achieved in terms of anti-excise ideology, but the bulk of the work of the campaign and counter-

³⁴⁸ Jervaulx Archive, ZJX 7/15/32, William Fox to Bruce (n.d.), mic. 1094; Spencer Stanhope MSS., SpSt/11/5/3/20, objections to the 1742 poll.

³⁴⁹ Spencer Stanhope MSS., SpSt/11/5/3/20, objections to the 1742 poll.

³⁵⁰ Whiting, YASRS, 117, 25 Jan. 1742, 70.

³⁵¹ Jervaulx Archive, ZJX 7/15/43, George Fox to Bruce, 26 Jan. 1742, mic. 1094..

petition was undertaken by the Tories and very few Whigs joined them. Only 13 per cent of those who polled Whig in 1727 and who polled in 1734 altered their allegiance to the Opposition. A further 6 per cent who polled Tory in 1727 and polled in 1734 cast for the Government party at the latter poll. The election and petition, whilst utilising 'patriot' ideology failed to weaken the Whig-Tory dichotomy within Yorkshire. However, the election petition gave the public further indications of ministerial interference in the localities and it did crystallise resentment against the government in favour of the traditional 'country' ideal of the freedom of elections.

The wider implications of the failure of the petition were to enforce the feeling that normal methods of electioneering, such as treating, canvassing and acting in the community's interests, were the only acceptable way to resolve a shire dispute. What the petition of 1734 showed was the futility of contesting such a large county through this mechanism. The nature of the franchise and the sheer numbers of voters made it impracticable. The very fact that the franchise extended the right to vote to 'people of little or no substance' affected wider perceptions of the electorate because 'everyone pretends to have a voice equal, as to such elections, to act with the most worthy knights and esquires...'.³⁵² Thus despite the introduction, in the reigns of William III and Anne, of a freeholder's oath, as well as the need to have forty shillings a year above all charges,³⁵³ the depreciated level of forty shillings lead many to be able to vote. In this way the distinction between

³⁵² Heywood, *A Digest on the Law*, pp. 17-18.

³⁵³ *ibid.*, p. 25; the Acts were 7/8 WIII c25 and 10 Anne c23.

bad votes and poor voters may have become blurred. This again gave Malton and Winn false hopes.

What the petition did achieve was to indicate a level of incredulity amongst all sections of county society that one side would attack the normative electoral structures after a contest that had been no different to any previous poll. The election itself was the site for legal questioning of voters' rights; taking matters beyond this was pushing the bounds of support and diminishing the favour of the wider community. To an extent Malton was justified as his man had lost by fewer than 200 votes. In 1727 and 1742 the Tory candidates were soundly beaten. For Malton in 1734 too much was at stake; thus he pushed the shire to the limits of its endurance. In this way he showed that too much interference by the politicians in the political nation would not be tolerated. However, he did perhaps awaken those same politicians to the nature of their electors' needs and their rights to poll within accepted bounds.

Chapter 4

A Shire in Flux - Voting Trends in the Early Eighteenth Century

In the period from 1708-1742 Yorkshiremen, and a few hundred outvoters, went to the polls on five occasions to elect representatives for the shire.³⁵⁴ This need to poll was the product of the level of political development and rivalry that existed between the two parties which grew as the eighteenth century wore on. The developments deduced from the electoral correspondence of the period are placed in a more specific context by an analysis of the canvass and petition. These point to two developments; firstly, the inability of certain local party organisations to muster individual voters; secondly, the fact that the politicians interfered in the running of normal electoral practices seemingly without a care. However, can one analyse whether these developments affected the levels of support for each party in the shire? What was the make-up of their support within each Riding? Did the levels of support in these areas alter in response to more time and energy spent on campaigning?

These are questions which focus on the state of politics at any single point in time. Whilst they indicate the relative strengths of the parties, they say nothing about the make-up of the supporters of those parties. Did they attract new or experienced voters? What was the turnover of voters? Were there any

³⁵⁴ The pollbooks utilised were as follows; for 1708, York Minster Library, Liber Miscellanea, Cat.22, Add. MSS. 235 (I am grateful to the Dean and Chapter of York Minster for their permission to use the 1708 pollbook); for 1727, Fitzwilliam (Malton) MSS., 'A Bag of Pollbooks for the 1727 By-Election'; Kirkleatham Hall Estate, ZK, 'Manuscript Pollbooks', mic. 1041.; I received electronic copies of the 1734 and 1742 pollbooks from Professor W.A. Speck, to whom I am most grateful. For copies of pages from these pollbooks see Appendix VII, pp. 433-8.

variations across the shire? For instance, the bulk of the campaigning concentrated on the West Riding; did this lower the turnover of voters in that Riding compared to the East or North? These issues rely on the dynamics of voting over a number of elections. With this in mind, the picture of voting behaviour addressed in this chapter will have two focal points; firstly, a view of voting at each election, in order to give a general picture of the changes that occurred in Yorkshire; secondly, a specific location of longitudinal voting behaviour over the 1727, 1734 and 1742 polls.

Results for the shire at large

The first factor to look at is the number of voters mobilised at each election. The following table includes the absolute figures for the number of voters in the pollbook, and the number of voters in each Riding that were deduced from each pollbook.³⁵⁵

<u>POLL</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>ER</u>	<u>NR</u>	<u>WR</u>	<u>OUT</u>	<u>YORK</u>
1708	9,289	1,683	2,349	5,214	40	3
1727	11,585	1,727	3,013	5,175	173	142
1734	15,351	2,279	4,416	7,858	260	267
1742	15,063	2,006	3,674	7,471	476	270

Table 4.1: the number of voters in each Riding.

The number of men polling between the two general elections of 1708 and 1734 increased by 65.3 per cent. This is an indication of

³⁵⁵ See below, Appendix III, pp. 388-90; also, Appendix VI, pp. 421-5. In 1727, 88 per cent of voters could be ascribed to their correct Riding; in 1734 and 1742 the values were 98 per cent and 92 per cent respectively. For the wapentake results from each Riding, see Appendix VI, pp. 418-20.

an increased willingness or ability to vote, be that through the effects of improved electioneering, or for more esoteric reasons.

The proportions of voters from each Riding were as follows:

<u>Riding</u>	<u>1708^a</u>	<u>1727^b</u>	<u>1734^c</u>	<u>1742^d</u>
ER	18.1	16.9	15.1	14.4
NR	25.3	29.5	29.3	26.4
WR	56.1	50.6	52.1	53.8

^aN=9,289 ^bN=10,230 ^cN=15,080 ^dN=13,897

Table 4.2: the proportion of voters from each Riding (%).

The fluctuation in the vote for each area reflected several factors: the strength of electioneering at each election; the fact that fewer voters could be ascribed to their correct Ridings in 1727 and 1742, compared with 1708 and 1734; and the incomplete nature of the 1708 pollbook.³⁵⁶ Also, in 1727 Kaye and Turner did not poll all their voters as the former abandoned the election. With some West Riding wapentakes, for example Staincliffe, due to come in towards the end of the contest, this would account for the lower proportion of voters from that Riding at this poll. Nevertheless, the make-up of the voterate from each Riding stayed relatively stationary and the vast numbers of West Riding voters mirrored the amount of time and resources put into electioneering in that arena.

Across the Ridings the make-up of the vote for the rival parties could oscillate markedly. For the Tory or Opposition voters it was as follows:

³⁵⁶ See Appendix III, pp. 374-7.

<u>POLL</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>ER</u>	<u>NR</u>	<u>WR</u>	<u>OUT</u>
1708 ^a	11.9	17.1	70.9	0.1	0.0
1727 ^b	5.8	18.1	74.0	1.4	0.7
1734 ^c	9.9	25.2	61.6	1.9	1.4
1742 ^d	8.8	18.4	67.5	3.3	2.0
^a N=2,922 ^b N=3,749 ^c N=6,578 ^d N=6,512					

Table 4.3: the make-up of the Tory/Opposition voters by Riding (%).

They were served particularly badly by the East Riding where they received less than a third of that Riding's vote at all four elections. In 1727, prior to the by-election, Sir John Lister Kaye wrote to his wife of 'the encouragement I have received from all Quarters, except the East Riding which was always against us'.³⁵⁷ This recognition of the paucity of the anti-Whig vote in the East Riding was another reason why so much energy was spent in the West; there was little point working for minimal gains elsewhere. This did not stop the Tories over-estimating their overall level of support. Kaye added that 'with fair play I cannot lose the election';³⁵⁸ how wrong he was can be seen by looking at the Tories' voting performance in the North Riding which was as poor as that in the East. In 1734 this was a peak of around 38 per cent of the votes cast there, in the other elections it dipped to between 33 per cent and 36 per cent. Not even their majority in the West Riding could make up for the poor levels of support they received in the East and North.

What is clear was the Tories' huge reliance upon the West Riding, apart from at the 1708 and 1734 general elections. In 1708, the candidacy of the popular landowner, Lord Downe,

³⁵⁷ Staffordshire County Record Office, Dartmouth MSS., D.1778/V/787, Sir John Kaye to (Lady Kaye), 7 Jan. 1727.

³⁵⁸ Ibid..

secured a seat for the Tories; in 1734 the general opposition to the excise and the government lead to a more widespread campaign. Thus, it was only at general elections that the Tories managed to secure a return. Paradoxically, when they fielded a West Riding landowner at the by-elections of the period, they lost despite their overwhelming support in that area. This was primarily due to the fact that at those times they lacked support in the other two Ridings. The anti-Whig or anti-Government party vote in the East and North relied upon the candidacy of a local gentleman to maximise its potential.³⁵⁹

The Opposition improvement in 1734 is shown in the following table which compares their support to that of the Tories at the two by-elections.

<u>POLL</u>	<u>EAST RIDING</u>	<u>NORTH RIDING</u>	<u>WEST RIDING</u>
1727	219	678	2,775
1734	648	1,657	4,056
1742	575	1,195	4,391

Table 4.4: the level of Tory/Opposition support in the Ridings.

The fact that one is comparing two by-elections with a general election is liable to confuse the political outlook - the nature of polling, the issues involved and the heat of the contest differed markedly. Perhaps the most important factor, however, was that in 1734 the weight of the excise issue was compounded by two other factors; one was the improved Opposition campaign, when compared to the Tory one of 1726-7; the other was the important role of Sir Miles Stapylton, a North Riding man, as the main Opposition candidate. These factors indicate the reasons for an

³⁵⁹ See Appendix I, pp. 367-8, for the election results of the period.

increase of support of over 244 per cent in the North Riding between 1727 and 1734, which compares with just over 1 per cent for the Whigs. However, whilst the latter held their levels of support relatively steady at each poll, Fox polled almost 28 per cent fewer anti-Whig voters in the East and North in 1742.³⁶⁰

In 1741 Stapylton was not convinced that William Fox's candidacy would win the Tories another seat; indeed one Tory canvasser in the North Riding noted that 'coolness appears in all those who are thoroughly attached to the interest of Sr Miles Stapylton.'³⁶¹ That the Opposition M.P., of a strong Tory background, was not active in support of Fox shows the lack of a major issue in 1741-2 to forge opposition unity. It also indicates that Stapylton felt that Fox, as a West Riding gentleman, could not best represent the North, whereas he and Turner could. Indeed Turner's independence of action in Parliament may have made him acceptable to Stapylton as a partner; while no major issue divided these two men in 1741-2 Stapylton probably saw little need to oppose Turner. Clearly, if the face of the candidate was not acceptable to a particular interest, then a party campaign could be stricken. As far as the Tories were concerned this was the case in the East and North Ridings in 1742.

The Whig showing was as follows:

³⁶⁰ It is important to remember that these figures may be, to an extent, misleading as 98 per cent of votes were ascribed to their correct Riding in 1734 compared to 92 per cent in 1742.

³⁶¹ Jervaulx Archive, ZJX 7/12/23, Thomas Willoughby to Bruce, 3 Nov. 1741, mic. 1160.

<u>POLL</u>	<u>EAST RIDING</u>	<u>NORTH RIDING</u>	<u>WEST RIDING</u>
1727	1,508	2,335	2,400
1734	1,423	2,367	3,158
1742	1,431	2,479	3,080

Table 4.5: the level of Whig/Government support in the Ridings.

That the Whigs' support had reached stayed steady shows their unity within these areas; both campaign and candidates were popular, especially Cholmley Turner. The very fact that Turner was a candidate at all three polls gave a semblance of cohesion to the Whig campaigns and provided a clear focus, either for or against his party, for the electorate. Moreover, the campaigning influence and energy of Sir Thomas Watson Wentworth, later Baron Malton, forced the Whigs to maximise their support in 1727 and to maintain those levels at the subsequent polls.

Certainly, the Whigs had a stronger landlord interest in the East and North Ridings, and the Tory effort there was never homogeneous. Much of the Tory or Opposition work was ill-suited to extensive and coherent campaigning whereas the Whigs had major landowners who were politically active on their behalf. In the North Riding wapentakes of Hang East and Hang West the Darcy Earls of Holderness acted as managers; in Langbargh and Pickering Lyth their candidate Cholmley Turner was a resident force; and the Earls of Carlisle held land around Malton in the North Riding, and in its adjacent wapentakes of Buccross and Dickering in the East. In 1708 and 1727 the Tory party had no major landowners fighting their cause in the East and North Ridings; it was the anti-excite feeling of 1734 and the candidacy of Stapylton which increased Tory support in the North Riding.

Moreover, the role of the Earl of Bruce became crucial in their electioneering.

The Whig performance in the Ridings, in terms of voters, was as follows:

<u>Poll</u>	<u>ER</u>	<u>NR</u>	<u>WR</u>	<u>Outvoters</u>	<u>York</u>
1708 ^a	26.7	30.2	42.1	1.0	0.0
1727 ^b	23.3	36.0	37.1	1.9	1.7
1734 ^c	19.8	32.9	43.9	1.6	1.8
1742 ^d	19.4	33.6	41.7	3.3	2.0

^aN=3,726 ^bN=6,481 ^cN=7,188 ^dN=7,385

Table 4.6: the make-up of the Whig/Government voters by Riding (%).

The Whigs drew support from a widespread area, although the West Riding predominated because of its size and population. The scale of resources deemed necessary to fight the West Riding provoked one former M.P. to declare, 'I thought undertaking the whole West Riding a very great hardship...[thus] he [Turner] should not undertake anything in the East Riding.'³⁶² This was indicative of the Whigs' traditional strength in the East and the need to concentrate elsewhere. Sir William Strickland felt this was important when he declared that the North Riding freeholders 'were always hirelings.'³⁶³ He believed that the bulk of the independent freeholders were to be found in the West, and that was the area of most concern, where the most effort would be required. The fact that the Whigs managed to create a steady level of support in this Riding indicates that they did manage to achieve something of a rapport with the electorate and consistently produced the required effort to gain a representative.

³⁶² Wentworth Woodhouse Muniments, WWM, M1, ? (Sir George Savile) to Mr Griffith, 2 Nov. 1733, mic. A66.

³⁶³ Ibid., Sir William Strickland to Malton, 28 Nov. 1733, mic. A66.

Of further interest is the growth in the number of outvoters at the polls; this can probably be ascribed to better organisation and communications. The number of outvoters increased by over 275 per cent, from 173 in 1727, to 476 in 1742. This compares with an overall increase in the size of the electorate of under 33 per cent between these two polls. This increase reflected the fact that in some cases it would have been easier to transport men to the poll from towns like Manchester, Nottingham or even London, than from a distant part of Yorkshire itself, such as Sedbergh. The election managers' pleas for extra funds for the transportation of voters from outlying districts are testimony to the importance given to utilising every avenue of support. At the 1742 poll the major influx of 'foreign votes' came from Derbyshire, Lancashire, Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire and Westmoreland; of these only Lancashire sent a Tory majority whilst only the Lincolnshire voters were split; the others were of a Whig hue. This was a similar pattern to that of 1734 when 260 outvoters came in to York.

The Lancastrian outvoters were certainly regarded with some importance. In 1741 Fox was reported to have written to the Bishop of Chester to get the voters out from Manchester; all ten who polled were Tories, whereas in 1734, seven Tory voters were matched by five Whigs. Similarly, it was noted by the Whig Richard Goodwin that the area beyond Saddleworth had been greatly neglected; also that efforts were made by the Duke of Montague in Clitheroe 'to sollicit for Mr. Turner.'³⁶⁴ Both parties

³⁶⁴ Fitzwilliam (Malton) MSS., Richard Goodwin to Malton, 13 Oct. 1741; Ibid., R.G. Sawsey to Malton, 19 Oct. 1741.

were more willing and able to canvass and expend funds on calling in voters from outside Yorkshire as the century wore on. This indicates the increased vitality of electioneering and the increased need to maximise the turnout. Edward Greenwood commented that:

My son in law Driffield, Excise Officer at Clitheroe, and Mr Wrigglesworth Excise Officer of this Town, have both promised me to attend yr County Election in favour of Mr. Turner, provided they can have Persons to supply their Plows during their absence without charge to themselves.³⁶⁵

These men were subject to the same manner of electioneering and asked for similar rewards to their Yorkshire counterparts. That they were regarded as important shows the lengths that the parties were prepared to go to, in order to work for victory. It also indicates the vitalised management and cohesion of election campaigns and the need to locate every possible voter.

This growth in outvoters also sheds light upon one other point about eighteenth century elections - that of ensuring the legitimacy of the governing structures. Langford has argued that county M.P.s had an onerous responsibility to represent their locale and to work for its benefit.³⁶⁶ This then fed into the ideal of virtual representation and a wider nexus of interests. The boom in outvoters meant that the propertied interests of several other northern counties were having some influence within the political nation, no matter how small. Thus property in these areas was not being neglected even though the 'home' shires of the outvoters

³⁶⁵ Temple Newsam MSS., TN/PO/10/9/6, Edward Greenwood to Richard Witton, 22 Sep. 1741.

³⁶⁶ P. Langford, 'Property and Virtual Representation in Eighteenth-Century England', *HJ*, 31 (1988), 83-115.

may not have had an election. The role and property of the outvoters tended to support the established political structures and keep down any calls for reform.

The issue of turnout at these polls is more uncertain. The general election of 1734 had the largest turnouts when the excise was the primary issue. The overall increase in the turnout from the East Riding was just under 35 per cent between 1708 and 1734; over the same period, that of the North Riding rose by over 46 per cent. The vastly improved organisation allowed resident landlords to locate any untapped sources of voters. Moreover, the fact that prominent north-country gentlemen stood in 1727, 1734 and 1742 probably added to the number of men voting. In the West Riding, there was almost a 52 per cent increase in the number of voters between 1727 and 1734. This reflected the size and importance of this whole area; the cornerstones of the rival interests lay there throughout the period. That the bulk of the extant literature refers to the West Riding also indicates its importance. How the West was won would determine the outcome of any poll.

Hopkinson claimed that turnout was around 75 per cent for Westmoreland in the Augustan period, and Holmes has estimated turnouts of between 72-78 per cent, for Northamptonshire in the same period.³⁶⁷ The canvasses of the years 1726-42 for Yorkshire do tend to show a very low turnout for particular local areas, however, no complete canvass exists and so estimating turnout can only be given in terms of approximate ranges. With no mortality

³⁶⁷ Hopkinson, thesis, 1973, p. 5; G.S. Holmes, 'The Electorate and the National Will', in his, Politics, Religion and Society in England, 1679-1722 (1986), p. 21.

data to estimate the number of previous voters who had now died, and with no knowledge of the number of abstentions, the estimate can only be across a range of 10 per cent.³⁶⁸ Moreover, the questioning of the right to poll of over a fifth of the 1734 voters in the petition enquiry means that the possible electorate could have been very much lower than has been thought.³⁶⁹

The heat of battle in 1734 meant that both sides had probably maximised their potential and the turnout was somewhere in the region of 70-80 per cent. On this basis, at the 1742 poll, despite the poor weather, the range was the same; however, the 1727 turnout was likely to have been smaller, between 50-60 per cent, due to the fact that organisation, especially on the Tory side, was not very advanced. The increase in numbers of outvoters and voters in general, is indicative of better organisation and an increased willingness to poll.

Electoral partisanship and township unanimity

As the century wore on this need to find as many supporters as possible was made feasible by the improvements in the infrastructure surrounding elections. However, a problem for party managers in 1708 was the ductile nature of the vote. A large number of voters in the East and North Ridings would only plump, usually for Lord Downe. Of the 330 Tories in the East Riding, 34.8 per cent plumped for Downe and only 54.5 per cent saw Downe and Kaye as a team. In the North Riding their joint campaign managed 53.2 per cent, or 256 voters from 481 who

³⁶⁸ See pp. 199-200 below for the impact of mortality.

³⁶⁹ See Chapter 3, p. 138-9 .

voted in singles or doubles for the two Tories; of the rest, Downe secured 186 single votes, or 38.7 per cent. The West Riding was more of a Tory stronghold, with the Tories receiving 1,721 doubles from 2,461 voters who gave them singles or doubles, or 69.9 per cent.

The following table indicates the huge number of voters who gave singles at the 1708 poll.

<u>Riding</u>	<u>Singles</u>	<u>Doubles</u>	<u>% Singles</u>	<u>% Doubles</u>
East	830	853	49.3	50.7
North	997	1,352	42.4	57.6
West	2,000	3,214	38.4	61.6
Other	31	12	72.1	27.9
TOTAL	3,858	5,431	41.5	58.5

Table 4.7: singles and doubles in each Riding in 1708.

The numbers of singles and doubles in 1734 were:

<u>Riding</u>	<u>Singles</u>	<u>Doubles</u>	<u>% Singles</u>	<u>% Doubles</u>
East	129	2,150	5.7	94.3
North	197	4,219	4.5	95.5
West	464	7,394	5.9	94.1
Other	29	498	5.5	94.5
TOTAL	819	14,458	5.4	94.6

Table 4.8: singles and doubles in each Riding in 1734.

Clearly, between 1708 and 1734 there was an increase in party organisation or voter awareness in favour of a party campaign, or both. In 1708 five candidates stood, and party co-operation was a very localised affair; the large number of singles may have reflected the strength of local prejudices against the other four candidates. In 1734 both parties attached huge importance to the

value of giving doubles or singles; indeed the Government party called for none but double voters to be transported to York. At first, having only one candidate, the Opposition wanted singles for Sir Miles Stapylton; but when Edward Wortley declared himself a candidate in their interest they asked for doubles. That he was a relative unknown to many of the voters and that they would have had little time to assess his beliefs makes the level of support for the joint campaign that much more impressive.

Furthermore, of the doubles cast in 1734, only 9 per cent were not loyal to one party; again this was an improvement on 1708 when many votes were cross-party. The increase in partisanship becomes clear from the following table, which looks at the level of party votes in singles and doubles as a proportion of votes cast.

<u>AREA</u>	<u>1708</u>	<u>1734</u>
ER	1,344 (79.8%)	2,071 (90.9%)
NR	1,627 (69.3%)	4,024 (91.1%)
WR	3,642 (69.9%)	7,214 (91.8%)
TOTAL ELECTORS	6,653 (71.6%)	13,309 (91.5%)

Table 4.9: partisan voting in singles and doubles in each Riding in 1708 and 1734.

This indicates an increased level of partisan voting over time, a fact that is more prevalent if one discards single votes from the picture as not being party votes. This last statement depends on the individual preferences and reasoning for each voter; however, a single vote was a positive vote for one candidate and indicated a negative view of the others. This reflected either a lack of party cohesion and co-ordination, or the inability of a party to

overcome specific local grievances or pressures and appeal to a wider caucus of opinion.

Taking only party doubles as indicators of partisanship gives the following results:

<u>AREA</u>	<u>1708</u>	<u>1734</u>
ER	522 (31.0%)	1,942 (85.2%)
NR	829 (35.3%)	3,827 (86.7%)
WR	1,964 (37.7%)	6,750 (85.9%)
TOTAL ELECTORS	3,322 (35.8%)	12,519 (86.0%)

Table 4.10: partisan voting in doubles in each Riding in 1708 and 1734.

The party message grew to such an extent that those voters who were being mobilised in 1734 tended to give double votes - the importance of the excise issue may well have increased the polarity of voting. In particular areas this polarity could be astonishing; Staincliffe wapentake in the dales of the West Riding saw only thirty-eight (2.8 per cent) of the 1,366 voters split their votes in 1734. Considering that each side had very few resident gentry in this area, this was remarkable. In the shire as a whole in 1708 there were five candidates, and fifteen different voting-types were recorded; in 1734 the four candidates were recognisable as representatives of opposing parties and, although ten voting-types were recorded, almost 86 per cent of votes were party doubles. The increased effort put in by both sides had paid off.

In all, the number of Government doubles cast was 1,148 more than the 6,011 for the Opposition. The joint Government campaign had far wider support across the shire, although Wortley's candidacy kept this lead to a minimum as it meant that

fewer voters would poll Stapylton/Winn or Stapylton/Turner. Stapylton's ability to gain the steadfast support of 667 men who gave him singles, plus his joint appeal with Turner, which gained him an extra 731 votes, got him elected. Of the votes he got with Turner, 143 (19.6 per cent) came from the Whig's stronghold in Langbargh wapentake. Clearly, this indicates that it was Stapylton's widespread popularity that gave him the edge over Winn. Had a West Riding Tory stood at the poll, he may have found eliciting support in the North Riding more difficult; Fox certainly found this in 1742. Winn's undoing was Stapylton's Tory appeal in the West Riding and his local appeal in the North. Thus, once Wortley cemented the Opposition cause by declaring, the 14.0 per cent of voters who did not favour a party double, and more importantly the 731 (4.7 per cent of the voterate) who split Stapylton/Turner and the 667 (4.3 per cent of the voterate) who plumped for Stapylton, decided the outcome of the battle between Stapylton and Winn.

The results for partisanship in Yorkshire at this time do not quite match those found by O'Gorman. In the counties whose results he collated, partisanship in the early eighteenth century was very high, between 80-98 per cent. Thereafter it started to dip, although in Kent there were still remarkably high levels of party voting in 1727 and 1734.³⁷⁰ The result for Yorkshire in 1708, even including single votes, was 10 per cent lower than his base figure for the period 1701-15, and the increase in partisanship in 1734 indicates the changing face of politics in the shire. The fact that four candidates stood and not five, the huge increase in political organisation and the impact of the excise issue meant

³⁷⁰ O'Gorman, *Voters, Patrons and Parties*, pp. 368-371.

that the dichotomy of Government and Opposition had more focus than the Whig-Tory divide of 1708.

That the excise election of 1734 caused the most consternation within Yorkshire is witnessed by the number of townships and villages whose pattern of voting altered over the last three elections. The voting behaviour of 719 townships and hamlets which sent voters to all three polls was analysed, and the results for each Riding, for outvoters, and for York, are shown in the following table:³⁷¹

<u>Area</u>	<u>Number of</u> <u>Towns</u>	<u>Tory</u> <u>Towns</u>	<u>Whig</u> <u>Towns</u>	<u>No Party</u> <u>Control</u>	<u>Change in</u> <u>1734</u>
ER	141	12	60	0	69 (42)
NR	199	25	94	1	79 (58)
WR	357	115	66	4	172 (109)
Out	21	5	7	0	9 (4)
York	1	0	0	0	1 (1)
Total	719	157	227	5	330 (214)

Table 4.11: township voting patterns.

The figures in parentheses indicate a permanent switch in party allegiance; thus, in 1734 no fewer than 330 townships changed, and of these 214 did not change back in 1742. This demonstrates an incredibly volatile electoral situation, although whether the fact that 29.8 per cent of the recorded towns changed their allegiance in this way indicates a transformation from Tory-Whig to Opposition-Government voting is debatable, despite the fact that this involved a large section of the electorate. It possibly reflected either ideological shifts among the freeholders or their

³⁷¹ These township voting patterns rest on the contention that where six out of every ten voters polled the same way, then there was a simple party majority in that township.

opinion leaders, or simply a turnover of voters where new voters of a particular political hue replaced old voters with a separate ideology.

In no wapentake did more than half the townships vote consistently in all three elections, although the East and North Ridings provided further support for the Whig party whilst the Tories were stronger in the West Riding and especially in Agbridge, Claro, Morley, Skirack and Staincliffe wapentakes. Although each party could command majorities of up to 40 per cent of the townships in any Riding, both had to be wary of the substantial number of townships which were clearly not reliable. This gives some indication as to why each side needed to work so hard during each campaign.³⁷²

These figures also present a view of a collective local psychology within different townships across the shire, for 384 (53.4 per cent) places had a consistent simple party majority at these polls. In this way, they give credence to the belief that voting gave a sense of ritual or belonging; especially if this local political psychology could be excited enough, by an issue or a local landlord, to create a community of feeling among men from the same township at the polls.

The investigation of township voting patterns can be pushed a little further to look at those townships which were unanimous at the polls.³⁷³ However, which party was supported at each poll

³⁷² Figures 5.1.1-5.3.4, pp. 236-47, give an indication of the shifting pattern of party voting in the shire between 1708 and 1742.

³⁷³ Unanimity rates are looked at in, F. O'Gorman, 'Electoral deference in "unreformed" England, 1760-1832', *JMH*, 56 (1984), 391-429; see also S. Richardson, 'Independence and Deference: A Study of the West

could change from election to election, as the township voting figures show. The strengths of such an analysis rely on the villages, chapelries or townships under investigation being considered as unique electoral blocks, which clearly they were not. Estates and the influence of landlords may have overlapped township and village boundaries; local influences did not tend to be coterminous with local temporal boundaries.

Hence majority voting can only be a simplistic guide to the strength of deference or of widespread independence among local men towards a party or landowner. Without recourse to other sources it would be foolhardy to judge the strength of participation or deference; this last point is given more weight by the strength of community opinion. Any emphasis given to unanimity as an indicator of deference stresses that point to the detriment of other opinions; thus one would tend to ignore Landau's view 'that most voters were simultaneously deferential and independent' in preserving their own self-esteem and views whilst respecting their social superior's position.³⁷⁴ Such an investigation tells us little about the strength of community feeling in the eighteenth century, be that through an expression of a moral economy or the power of a landlord over his locale.³⁷⁵

To an extent, unanimity rates in Yorkshire indicate that there may have been a clash of interests at this time. In 1708,

Riding Electorate, 1832-41', Ph.D., University of Leeds, 1995, Chapter VII, pp. 225-28.

³⁷⁴ Landau, HJ, XXII, 579-80.

³⁷⁵ For the role of community self-expression see E.P. Thompson, 'The Moral economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century', Past and Present, 50 (1971), 76-136; the case for landlord influence in Cheshire has been quantified in Baskerville *et al*, PH, 12, Part 2, 126-42.

unanimity rates broken down by the numbers of voters in each township, were as follows:

<u>VOTER-RANGE</u>	<u>UNANIMITY</u>	<u>DISCORD</u>
0-10	524 (50.8%)	507 (49.2%)
11-20	21 (15.9%)	111 (84.1%)
21-30	12 (34.3%)	23 (65.7%)
31+	8 (17.7%)	40 (83.3%)
TOTAL	565 (45.3%)	681 (54.7%)

Table 4.12: township unanimity in 1708.

These totals encompass voters who gave singles or doubles; thus the figures hide the huge number of singles that were given at the polls, and they tend to cover the vast number of voters who neither polled for a party as a unit or either of the two elected men. What also needs consideration is the fact that this poll was a five-way contest and that there were many different influences pulling on the voterate. Nevertheless, these figures do show a very large number of villages which did not vote in unison; almost a half of villages with fewer than eleven voters were divided. This is more remarkable when considering that 269 places had only one man who polled.

Taking the same voter-ranges the proportion of voters was as follows:

<u>Voter-range</u>	<u>Voters</u>	<u>Unanimity</u>	<u>Discord</u>
0-10	3,692 (39.7%)	1,398	2,294
11-20	1,937 (20.9%)	325	1,612
21-30	868 (9.3%)	308	560
31+	2,792 (30.1%)	526	2,266
Total	9,289(100%)	2,557	6,732

Table 4.13: voters per township in 1708.

The figures noted above do stress the importance of small villages and large towns in the aggregate totals. Thus, 39.7 per cent of the voters at this poll hailed from villages and towns with between one and ten voters and 62.1 per cent of them lived in towns which had no unanimity. Similarly, 30.1 per cent lived in towns with thirty-one or more electors and 83.3 per cent of these towns were divided. This makes for a hugely uncertain electoral picture at this point in time, where much of the electorate, partisan or not, came from towns which had no unanimity at the polls.

However it is important to note that the level of unanimity was a local phenomenon which depended on local whims. For example, Dent showed a party unanimity at the polls, however forty-nine out of fifty voters polled for the local Whig candidate, Conyers Darcy, alone and would not give doubles with his Whig partner. This either shows strong landlord influence or popular deference, or a remarkable strength of will by the populace not to favour a candidate whom they knew nothing about. A mix of these factors was probably at work, especially given the reports that Darcy had paid for thirty-eight freeholders to travel the 77 miles from Sedburgh to York to vote for him.³⁷⁶ This illustrates the

³⁷⁶ Speck, *Tory and Whig*, p. 66.

importance of local prejudices between candidate and electors, and the self-interest of the former. Alternatively, the lack of an efficient local party machinery to activate the electorate meant that polling mirrored the clash of rival interests.

Figures for the next general election which left a pollbook, that of 1734, show the following number of voters for each township size:

<u>Voter-range</u>	<u>Voters</u>	<u>Unanimity</u>	<u>Discord</u>
0-10	5,361 (35.6%)	3,474	1,887
11-20	2,849 (18.9%)	1,346	1,503
21-30	1,452 (9.6%)	626	826
31+	5,419 (35.9%)	2,080	3,339
Total	15,081 (100%)	7,526	7,555

Table 4.14: voters per township in 1734.

For each of these ranges there was an increased level of unanimity at the poll; this may of course have been exaggerated by the strength of the excise issue. However, the results for the townships dispel any images of vast numbers of villages voting in lock-step:

<u>VOTER-RANGE</u>	<u>UNANIMITY</u>	<u>DISCORD</u>
0-10	1,305 (73.9%)	462 (26.1%)
11-20	99 (48.5%)	105 (51.5%)
21-30	26 (44.1%)	33 (55.9%)
31+	32 (41.0%)	46 (59.0%)
TOTALS	1,462 (69.4%)	646 (30.6%)

Table 4.15: township unanimity in 1734.

In 1734 there were 871 places which registered only one voter; if these are removed from the totals they give an overall unanimity

of 47.8 per cent which indicates a very low level of party unity. O'Gorman noted that 'uniform voting was the exception rather than the rule' and that 'the vast majority of villages knew nothing of unanimous voting.'³⁷⁷ This was certainly the case in Yorkshire in the early eighteenth century. Moreover, despite the fact that levels of partisanship had increased, the excise issue had not polarised a large majority of townships - although there were party majorities at the polls - but it did polarise splits within townships.

Certainly the view from Yorkshire mirrors Northumberland in the later eighteenth century, where Stoker found that the most extreme voting behaviour was in villages with a handful of voters.³⁷⁸ In Yorkshire, at both elections, the rates in the three Ridings were comparable. It cannot be argued that one or other is skewing the overall picture; however, this may still hide subtle variations in the strength of deference and participation. Whether these low unanimity rates suggest a relatively open society is an interesting question. The low level does imply that landlord influence could never be taken for granted. More importantly, they are another reason why the parties had to expend so much energy at elections.

Unanimity tends to show a snap-shot of how influence affected the voting public, but it takes no account of any change in local and national issues. The large number of villages that changed their voting behaviour at the 1734 poll is indicative of the fact that unanimity does not represent consistency of action -

³⁷⁷ O'Gorman, *JMH*, 56, 416.

³⁷⁸ Stoker, thesis, pp. 264-5; Stoker looked at extreme voting based on 9 out of 10 votes going one way.

the floating vote may have affected the pattern.³⁷⁹ By 1734, party voting was quite evenly split within townships and between different areas that felt different pressures or had different beliefs.

The results noted in this chapter so far show that the growth of party organisation as detailed in the extant correspondence was linked to an increase in the size of the voterate and its associated partisanship. However, the use of pollbooks as 'stand-alone' indicators of the habits of the electors misses some major points about them, which the results for township voting over time allude to. They show that a large number of places altered allegiances or were permanently split, a factor which points towards a dynamic and fluid state of political action amongst the voters. With this in mind the next section will look at voting behaviour at the final three polls of the period and will address the issues of turnover, turnout and voting consistency.

The return to poll

It is the purpose of this section to look at the elections of 1727, 1734 and 1742,³⁸⁰ and to determine how many men returned to poll. Were these men consistent in their voting behaviour? Did they recognise a longitudinal, ideological relationship between

³⁷⁹ This is not to question the individual voter's principles and indicate venality; for instance a Whig voter might happily vote against the Tory in 1727 because of his fundamental views on the national interest, but his opposition to the excise may lead him to poll for the Opposition party in 1734 - an action which he may have felt would not prejudice the state. Not all floaters were venal waverers; the protest vote in Yorkshire in 1734 reflected the national trend against Walpole.

³⁸⁰ This longitudinal inspection of voting behaviour rests on the methodology and software explained in Appendix III, pp. 383-8.

the supporters and views of the Tories, Kaye and Fox, in 1727 and 1742, and the Opposition candidates in 1734? Or was Fox undone in 1742 by the refusal of Opposition supporters from 1734 to countenance him as their favourite? On this issue, the appeal of the Whig candidate, Cholmley Turner, who was regarded as something of an independent himself, needs clarification.

The total number of men who polled at the elections of these years was 26,952. Of these, 15,455 men voted once and 11,497 twice or three times.³⁸¹ The values are summarised in the following table:

<u>POLL</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>1 POLL</u>	<u>2 POLLS</u>	<u>3 POLLS</u>
1727	11,585	4,786	3,249	3,550
1734	15,351	4,163	7,638	3,550
1742	15,063	6,506	5,007	3,550

Table 4.16: voting experience in Yorkshire, 1727-42.

A visualisation of the polls can be seen in the following diagram:

³⁸¹ This is given by the number who polled in 1727 *and* 1734, *plus* the number who polled in 1734 *and* 1742 *minus* the number who polled at all three elections (these men are included in the total who polled in 1727 *and* 1734), *plus* the number who polled in 1727 *and* 1742 but not in 1734. Thus:

$6,490 + (8,248 - 3,550) + 309 = 11,497$.

With the 1734 election as a pivotal poll, the number who polled twice or three times is also the number who polled at that election and either or both of the others, plus those who polled in 1727 and 1742 but not 1734. From Table 1 this is then $7,638 + 3,550 + 309 = 11,497$.

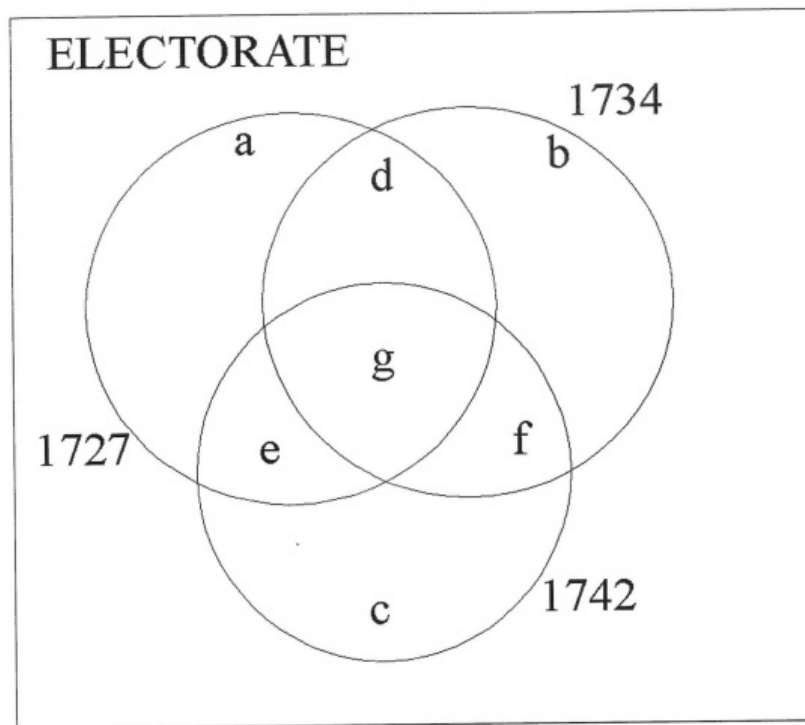


Figure 4.1: The Yorkshire voterate, 1727-42.

The areas 'a', 'b' and 'c' represent the 15,455 (57.3 per cent) voters who polled only once. The relative values for 1727 and 1742 are higher than for 1734 as the pollbook for that year was likely to have many links with the pollbooks on either side of it. The other two sources, the first and last in the series, would have relatively few links with each other, although they would have many with the 1734 pollbook. In this way it was more likely that anyone who polled in 1734 would have polled in 1727 or would do so in 1742. This pivotal poll was also a general election which focused the opposition to the government and hence it would have increased the energy of electioneering and therefore the turnout.

Equally important, it may have had a knock-on effect at the 1742 poll.

The number of voters who polled in 1727 and returned to poll again, either once or twice, was 6,799 (58.7 per cent) men.³⁸² In percentage terms this was slightly more than the 8,557 (56.8 per cent) experienced voters at the 1742 poll.³⁸³ In all 4,700 of these men had their first political experience at the 1734 general election, whilst in all 8,250 had polled at that election as well as the 1727 poll. The rivalry and animosities that were forged in the heat of the excise poll may well have kept individual politicisation at a high level for the 1742 poll. Indeed despite the fact that relatively more voters from the 1727 poll returned thereafter, the turnout at that poll was poor. In 1742 the turnout was comparable to that of 1734 and this brought out many experienced voters, for whom the poll of 1734 had possibly been a seminal political moment.

For the Ridings, the following table indicates the numbers who polled once, twice and thrice:³⁸⁴

³⁸² These men are represented by the areas 'd', 'e' and 'g' in Fig. 1.

³⁸³ These men are represented by the areas 'e', 'g' and 'f' in Fig. 1.

³⁸⁴ These values are based upon derived totals for the number of voters from each Riding. These were extrapolated from the number of voters located for each Riding and are therefore approximate. In 1727 the estimates were: East, 1,959 voters; North, 3,418 voters; West, 5,870 voters. In 1734 the totals were the 98 per cent of voters that were located for each Riding: East, 2,279 voters; North, 4,416 voters; West, 7,858 voters. For 1742 the values projected were: East, 2,177 voters; North, 4,987 voters; West, 8,107 voters. Outvoters and voters from York are not included in this table. Any relative figures based on these totals are given to the nearest whole per cent.

<u>RIDING</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>1 POLL</u>	<u>2 POLLS</u>	<u>3 POLLS</u>
EAST	4,156	2,512	1,029	615
NORTH	7,343	3,887	2,434	1,022
WEST	13,933	7,879	4,206	1,848
TOTAL	25,432	14,278	7,669	3,485

Table 4.17: voting experience in each Riding, 1727-42.

The West Riding provided 52.7 per cent of the 26,952 voters who polled in these years; this is hardly surprising given its size and population. In all, those who polled three times were around 14 per cent of the voterate, those who polled twice were around 30 per cent, and those who voted only once 56 per cent. That the values for each Riding were comparable suggests that the parties were correct to spend most of their resources in the West Riding. With the number of experienced voters from any one area at any one election relatively low, the need to locate new voters made an input of resources into the West Riding all-important.

The following table highlights the return to poll and hence the levels of experienced voters.

1727 voters : 56.0% polled in 1734

1734 voters : 54.8% polled in 1742

Table 4.18: the return to poll in Yorkshire, 1727-42.

These values are 12-14 per cent below those found for Westmoreland in the period 1761-8. However, they mirror the low return to poll for that shire in the 1700s, for in 1708 only 49 per cent of the 1702 Westmoreland voterate returned.³⁸⁵ Clearly, only a small majority of those men who voted at any one election

³⁸⁵ Stoker, thesis, p. 199, Table 13; Hopkinson, thesis, p. 253.

returned at the next. Given the rapid overhaul and improvement of election machinery this is surprising, although it is also indicative of the need to have a better organisation in order to mobilise a diffuse and changing electorate.³⁸⁶

Certainly, there were a gamut of problems facing the parties in Yorkshire. For example, the poll of 1727 was incomplete because Kaye desisted; moreover, the influence of the excise in 1734, and the fact that the 1727 and 1742 polls were by-elections, may have altered popular perceptions and turnouts. The failure of Malton's petition in 1734 dampened his ardour for the Whig cause in 1741-2 and may have affected turnout, as might the squeeze on funds after the petition. A further mitigating factor was the awful weather for the poll in 1742 which probably discouraged some men from polling, although the fact that the turnout matched that of 1734 stresses the willingness of men to poll, or the strength of electioneering. The correspondence for the 1741-2 campaign placed as much emphasis on organising for that poll as for any other. In the minds of the managers it was a crucial election; the Whigs wanted to regain a county seat, the Tories wanted to retain their pre-eminence.

Whilst there were many external influences affecting turnout, there were also personal factors such as the sale of property or infirmity and illness. Unfortunately, little is known about mortality rates for this period. Stoker has utilised some census information for Carlisle and its immediate surroundings to calculate an adult male mortality rate of 1.84 per cent per annum

³⁸⁶ Of course, there is the effect on these figures of those under influence whose superior altered allegiance or decided to abstain.

for the years 1779-1813.³⁸⁷ Utilising this figure means that 87 per cent of the voters of 1727 would still have been alive in 1734, and 87 per cent of the 1734 voters would still have been alive in 1742. Thus, 64 per cent of the surviving 1727 voters polled in 1734, and 63 per cent of the surviving 1734 voters polled in 1742. Interestingly, 76 per cent of the voters of 1727 would still have been alive at the last election; hence the 3,857 men who polled at both elections were 44 per cent of the surviving electors. This relatively low figure could have been caused by a strong individual wish not to poll at subsequent elections, or the demise of a particular local influence or of its political enthusiasm. However, a higher mortality rate would mean that the estimate of 76 per cent survivors between 1727 and 1742 is too low. Despite this, neither party could rely on rallying a substantial number of experienced voters.

The figures for each Riding show how the proportions of experienced voters tended to vary (figures adjusted for mortality in parentheses):³⁸⁸

1727 East Riding voters :	53% (61%)	polled in 1734
1727 North Riding voters :	59% (68%)	polled in 1734
1727 West Riding voters :	56% (64%)	polled in 1734
1734 East Riding voters :	51% (63%)	polled in 1742
1734 North Riding voters :	54% (66%)	polled in 1742
1734 West Riding voters :	57% (70%)	polled in 1742

Table 4.19: the return to poll for each Riding, 1727-42.

³⁸⁷ Stoker, thesis, pp. 199-200. Applying this figure to data from a different county for a period up to 50 years beforehand is dubious. However, with no extant information concerning mortality in Yorkshire at this time, this is the best estimate available.

³⁸⁸ See n. 31 for the derived totals. The number of voters common to the 1727 and 1734 polls were: East, 1,041; North, 2,000; West, 3,295. The figures given in Tables 4.19, 4.21 are based upon derived totals of voters in each Riding and are given to the nearest per cent.

The proportions for the Ridings were spread with the East returning fewer experienced voters. Why this should be is unclear; despite the fact that the parties spent less time and money in the East Riding, the Whigs, in particular, had a strong interest there. Unless there was a higher mortality rate or rate of turnover of landownership, the reason for its relatively low return to poll may have been an over-estimation of the numbers of voters derived as coming from that Riding in the 1727 pollbook.³⁸⁹ Equally, the Tories fared badly in the East in 1727 because they appear to have spent so little time fostering support there. Thus, the poor level of support for the Tories in 1727 compared to 1734, alongside deaths, the enfranchisement or eligibility of new voters and the turnout of voters in 1734 who would or could not poll at the previous election, meant that the turnover of voters was high.

1727-1734 : 56.7% turnover

1734-1742 : 44.3% turnover

Table 4.20: the turnover of voters in Yorkshire, 1727-42.

For the three Ridings the break-down is as follows:

³⁸⁹ This was projected from the 88% of votes which could be accurately placed in their correct Riding; the estimate of 1,959 for the East may be too high.

East Riding 1727-1734 : 54% turnover
North Riding 1727-1734 : 55% turnover
West Riding 1727-1734 : 58% turnover
East Riding 1734-1742 : 46% turnover
North Riding 1734-1742 : 41% turnover
West Riding 1734-1742 : 45% turnover

Table 4.21: the turnover of voters in each Riding, 1727-42.

Many of those voters apparently politicised in 1734 returned to poll again in 1742; this, coupled to the higher turnout at the former poll, meant that the turnover from 1734 to 1742 was less than from 1727 to 1734. Certainly in the East Riding, 54 per cent of those who polled in 1742 had done so in 1734; for the North and West Ridings the values were 59 per cent and 55 per cent respectively. Again these relative values depend on the estimates made,³⁹⁰ but the low value for the West Riding may indicate the difficulties in locating any voters there due to the nature of much of the terrain. The low return to poll from this area does damage the argument that the candidacy of the West Riding Tory, George Fox, would have increased local awareness in that area, just as Turner's candidacy would have done in the North Riding.

The experience of voting did increase over time, to the extent that just 4,163 (27.1 per cent) of the 15,351 voters in 1734 polled only once. In 1727 the electorate were at the whims of two parties who were politically inexperienced in terms of contesting a poll. For this reason the turnout was probably low. In 1734 improved organisation and the chance to vote at a general election created greater opportunities, although only 6,489 (56.0 per cent) of the 11,585 who polled in 1727 returned in 1734. The partisan

³⁹⁰ See n. 31 above for the derived totals. The voters common to both the 1734 and 1742 polls were: East 1,167; North 2,366; West 4,469.

nature of the excise campaign captured the imaginations of a majority of those who polled in 1727. However, the juncture of opposition Whigs and Tories in 1734 and the animosity of this particular campaign may have caused a level of disquiet which will have put some men off voting.

What is evident is support for Quinn's assertion that there was 'clearly an extremely large turnover of voters in Yorkshire over a period of fifteen years.'³⁹¹ The parties had shown themselves capable of eliciting support from more voters in the shire, now it seems that they did so from a constantly changing set of men. But how partisan were the electorate? Was Whig consistency greater than Tory? How many men changed their allegiance?

Political constancy, 1727-34

The following table cross-tabulates the votes between 1727 and 1734:

	<u>GMT</u>	<u>OPPN</u>	<u>SPLIT</u>
<u>TORY</u>	414 (16.9%)	1,840 (75.0%)	199 (8.1%)
<u>WHIG</u>	2,846 (70.5%)	831 (20.6%)	360 (8.9%)
<u>TOTAL</u>	3,260 (50.2%)	2,671 (41.2%)	559 (8.6%)

Table 4.22: voting behaviour, 1727-34.

The influence of the excise as a motive to oppose the government probably accounts for the higher ratio of Tory:Opposition supporters than for Whig:Government. However, in absolute

³⁹¹ Quinn, thesis, p. 467.

terms, the return to poll in favour of the Government party worked in Turner's favour.

Of the 6,490 men common to both polls, 4,686 (72.2 per cent) voted in a consistent manner. This means that they presumably saw a link between, on the one hand, the campaigns of the Tories and the Opposition, and on the other, between the Whigs and the Government. Moreover, 4,469 of these voters cast doubles at the 1734 election; this meant that 68.9 per cent of those voters who returned recognised and supported a joint campaign at that poll.³⁹² That the Whig-Government line was stronger than the Tory-Opposition one is shown by the fact that 8.7 per cent of the returning Tory-Opposition voters gave singles as opposed to 2.0 per cent of the Whig-Government voters. That 159 of the 160 singles for the Opposition were for the Tory, Stapylton, rather than the Country Whig, Wortley, would indicate that plumping for the Tory in 1734 was the only *modus operandi* for certain of Kaye's supporters.

In each Riding the rival parties elicited similar levels of loyalty from experienced voters. In the East Riding 62 per cent of Tories returned in 1734 and this compares with 52 per cent of Whigs. The difference was probably due to the increased effort in that region by the Opposition at the latter poll; in 1727 they had all but given the area up, in 1734 they boosted their efforts. There were also several local social and political alterations. In 1734 it was reported from Beverley that, 'The votes Sir Miles gott come most of them influenced by Mr Richard Burton, who collects rents

³⁹² Much of the analysis on pages relies upon extrapolated figures for the parties' support in each Riding - hence the relevant percentages are given to the nearest whole per cent.

for Sir Michael Newton, Mr Pelham and Mr Perriman'.³⁹³ These men were all important landowners in the region having inherited the lands of the late Tory, Sir Michael Warton, and they were all Lords of the Manor of Beverley.³⁹⁴ There was also a complaint that Sir Rowland Winn's association with the excise damaged his chances, and one Whig proclaimed, 'Almost all the tanners and shoemakers who are in great number in Beverley deserted from us..'.³⁹⁵ Another factor was the indifference of the Duke of Somerset who had inherited many estates of the Duke of Northumberland. Equally, the refusal of the Earl of Burlington to declare frustrated the Whigs.³⁹⁶

As important was the role of several minor gentry figures. At North Cave, 'Mr Burton...had been busy for Sir Miles (Stapylton) but had not yet a majority.'³⁹⁷ In 1734 the town switched from Whig to an undecided frame of mind as nine men polled for the Whigs and twelve for the Tories. A similar problem for the Whigs was found at North and South Driffield, where Mr Langley, 'who is the Lord of the Manour', engaged many for Stapylton.³⁹⁸ Again the Whigs lost ground to the Tories. However, even with these local changes, only 18 per cent of Tories and Whigs from 1727 who polled in 1734 switched allegiance, and despite the Whigs' fears 74.6 per cent of returning Whigs gave a

³⁹³ Fitzwilliam (Malton) MSS., 'Mr Buck's Report'.

³⁹⁴ K.G. Allison ed., The Victoria History of the East Riding, VI (1989), 161. Beverley manor included the townships of Sandholme, Storkhill, Thearne, Tickton, Weel and Woodmansey.

³⁹⁵ Strickland quoted in Collyer, PLPS, VII, 64.

³⁹⁶ VCH East Riding, IV, 24. The East Riding Victoria County History publications provide much information about manorial holdings and advowsons.

³⁹⁷ Fitzwilliam (Malton) MSS., 'Mr Buck's Report'.

³⁹⁸ Ibid..

Government vote, whilst 74.3 per cent of Tories polled for the Opposition.³⁹⁹

Matters were much the same in the North Riding, where 63 per cent of Tories from 1727 polled in 1734 and 57 per cent of Whigs returned. Stapylton's position as a North Riding gentleman may have increased the return to poll of former Tories. Indeed, 74.8 per cent of those former Tories displayed a loyalty towards the Opposition, compared to 71.0 per cent of former Whigs who gave Government votes.⁴⁰⁰ There were reports in 1734 that Turner had instructed his tenants and friends around Kirkleatham in Langbargh division to give only singles for him: 'Mr Turner is not so strenuous in his Division of the County as he ought to be...he gives too much encouragement to single votes.'⁴⁰¹ Apparently Turner was uncomfortable with a joint campaign. However, it was correctly reported that the joint interest was strong in Kirkleatham, as '200 freeholders gave Sir Rowland [Winn] their votes with a great deal of frankness'.⁴⁰²

Notwithstanding the improvement in opposition fortunes in 1734, there appeared to be little serious chance of removing the Whig stranglehold, especially in the larger settlements. At Yarm despite Mr Challinor being 'busy for Sir Miles', the Whigs held the Town convincingly, collecting thirty-four out of fifty-one votes.⁴⁰³ It was reported that in Northallerton the only opposition was 'from a Tanner who said he wou'd not vote for Mr Turner because He voted against the Excise.' However, no Northallerton

³⁹⁹ See Appendix VI, p. 421, Table VI.4.

⁴⁰⁰ See Appendix VI, p. 421, Table VI.4.

⁴⁰¹ Fitzwilliam (Malton) MSS., Wm Buck to Sam'l Buck, 9 Aug. 1727.

⁴⁰² Ibid., 'Mr Buck's Report'.

⁴⁰³ Ibid..

voter cast for Winn alone which would have been *the* pro-excise vote. Upon visiting Sedbury, Middleham, Richmond and Northallerton Turner reported that 'all was very well.'⁴⁰⁴ This was the case for all towns apart from Middleham where the Tories were always strong and where they gained doubles from thirty-seven out of forty-four voters.

Tory party constancy between the polls was aided by the estates and influences of the Tory manager, Lord Bruce, especially in Hang West wapentake. Another major factor was the lessening of the influence of the Duke of Bolton and the purchase of Lord Lonsdale's Manor of Wensleydale in 1723 by Edward Wortley, who was an Opposition candidate in 1734.⁴⁰⁵ The decline in Tory support in 1742 reflected the coolness of Wortley towards Fox's campaign, despite Bruce's continuing involvement.

The minor gentry also aided the Tory cause; for example, William Topham was an important landowner around Coverham who owned the Manors of Agglethorpe, Caldbergh and Hauxwell. The townships of Melmerby and Carlton which lay close-by were strong Tory towns; in 1734, the former cast nine Tory and three Whig votes; the latter seventeen Tory and eight Whig; interesting here is the fact that sixteen voters split their votes, mainly for the two North Riding gentlemen, Turner and Stapylton. However, the Topham estates were sold to the whiggish Franklands in 1740 on Topham's death, and this may have accounted for some of the damage to the strength of the Tory vote in the area at the subsequent poll.⁴⁰⁶

⁴⁰⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁵ VCH North Riding, I, 261.

⁴⁰⁶ See *ibid.*, pp. 200-286, for a good account of manorial holdings in Hang West.

Despite the role of these men, 17.1 per cent of Tories switched their allegiance, a slightly lower proportion than the 19.3 per cent of Whigs.⁴⁰⁷ This was a sizeable sub-section of the electorate and showed the problems of political control. For the relative number of voters who gave consistent party votes or who switched between the two elections was the same for the East and North Ridings, despite the fact that two of the candidates came from the North in 1734. If local influences were to have a major import one would expect the North Riding to have more splitters than the East at that latter poll, however it did not. Presumably, party voting took preference over any local allegiances for these experienced voters.

In the West Riding, the Opposition gained support from 75.1 per cent of the 1,782 Tories who returned, and again 16.7 per cent switched allegiance. Interestingly, of the 1,513 Whigs who returned, only 67.1 per cent gave Government votes in 1734, whilst almost a quarter altered their allegiance.⁴⁰⁸ Why this should be so is unclear, although opposition to the influence of Malton and the government Whigs at the polls, and towards the excise issue were probably major factors. There were also local nuances across the Riding. In Staincliffe wapentake, the Whigs claimed that the large number of voters 'cost very considerable sums' and that there was an apparent lack of local gentry to 'take all the expense'. It was also decried that 'the freeholders will not stir in many Parts of the Country without having an Entertainment or two for if they have not they say they are neglected.'⁴⁰⁹ In 1733 the

⁴⁰⁷ See Appendix VI, p. 421, Table VI.4.

⁴⁰⁸ See Appendix VI, p. 421, Table VI.4.

⁴⁰⁹ Fitzwilliam (Malton) MSS., Winn to Malton (n.d., 1741).

Government manager Dr. Saunders, a local cleric, complained that 'people expect to be taken notice of, by way of treat, and being disappointed (Mr Whetherhead having no communication to that purpose) in pure spite, fell to drinking Sr Miles and Sr John Kaye's healths at their own charge.' This bilious independence added to the problems of old-age, voter disposition and the lack of horses, all of which were factors that Saunders feared would damage their turnout.⁴¹⁰ The Opposition also complained that this area lacked partisan gentry figures to treat the freeholders,⁴¹¹ although, it was reported that they had been 'laying about a little money northwood about Sedborrow' and indeed they managed to gain seventy-six double votes to the government Whigs' eighty-six from Sedbergh itself.⁴¹² Even so, both sides feared the vagaries of action of such an uninfluenced set of voters.

Across the shire, the Tory return to poll had no major regional variations and despite their strength in the West Riding they were no more able to rally their troops there than in either of the other Ridings. The relative values show no clearer party allegiance amongst the Whigs than the Tories and indeed the Whigs did worse by their long-term supporters in the West Riding than did the Tories.

Just as important as those men who were consistent was that large minority of men who switched or split their votes. A total of 1,245 (19.2 per cent) returning voters switched allegiance. Of these, 831 (66.7 per cent) changed from Whig to Opposition and

⁴¹⁰ Wentworth Woodhouse Muniments, WWM, M1, Dr Saunders to Malton, 7 Dec. 1733, mic. A66; *ibid.*, same to same, 3 Nov. 1733, mic. A66.

⁴¹¹ The Wentworth Papers, Sir John Bland to Strafford, 11 Nov. 1733, p. 490.

⁴¹² *Ibid.*, Phipps to Strafford, 1 Dec. 1733, p. 492.

this meant that over 11 per cent of the Whig support in 1727 reneged. More intriguing are the number who supported Turner and then plumped for Stapylton rather than the Whig Wortley, which would have been a more logical way to show opposition to the excise whilst not disavowing one's Whig roots. Of the 831 Whigs who switched, 115 (13.8 per cent) plumped for the Tory. For the Tories of 1727 who returned, 381 (15.5 per cent) switched to give a Government double, whilst thirty-three (1.3 per cent) gave singles for Winn or Turner. Overall one can see the level of unease about the excise and the unpredictable nature of the electorate that existed within the shire.

It is clear that Wortley made no little difference to the Opposition campaign. Overall he and Stapylton elicited votes from 831 former Whigs, whilst the Government were favoured by 414 former Tories. In every Riding the joint-Opposition campaign made in-roads into previous Whig strengths and this reflected upon the fact that the Opposition candidates were a popular Tory and an opposition Whig. Few men would split their votes between Wortley and either Turner or Winn, but the value of Wortley's candidacy was clear to Stapylton.

This factor needs to be considered alongside the 559 (8.6 per cent) returning voters who gave split votes. The nature of splitting depended upon individual and local perceptions; for instance, in the North Riding the candidates from that region, Stapylton and Turner, gained 154 votes to a mere thirty-one for any other split combination. This reflects the importance amongst certain sections of the electorate towards favouring local interests rather than party ones. In the West Riding, 107 of the 285 who split Winn/Stapylton in 1734 had voted Tory in 1727. In 1734

these men may have wanted to support the local West Riding candidate, Winn, whilst having a Tory option through Stapylton.

In all 1,804 voters either switched their votes or split them in 1734. This meant that as far as the parties were concerned, almost 28 per cent of the experienced electorate were floaters; this was a large subsection of the voterate, and does not take account of those men who may have promised, and therefore whose votes were counted upon, and then refused to poll. These men were a vital and volatile phalanx and it is little wonder that the parties had to spend so much time and energy working for votes.

Of the 1734 electorate the Government candidates were in a slightly stronger position. Only 2,671 (40.0 per cent) of the 6,680 Opposition voters had polled in 1727 and this may have reflected the fact that the earlier poll was cut short by Kaye; of these 1,840 (68.9 per cent) were Kaye supporters in 1727. For the Government, 3,260 (44.6 per cent) of their 7,313 supporters had voting experience, and 2,846 (87.3 per cent) were steadfast in the cause at both polls. Thus, the Whigs had a larger body of men who were loyal to them across the elections and they had slightly more supporters with experience of voting. As they won the 1727 poll by a large margin, this was not wholly unexpected.

What was also noticeable was the number of voters who had different abodes between the two polls. Most of these gave township names like Bradford in one pollbook, and a more specific name like Heaton, which was in Bradford parish, at the other. Whilst most of these men may not have moved between the two polls, some undoubtedly had. Of the 1,683 (25.9 per cent) who polled at both and had different townships as their abode, 1,167 (69.3 per cent) were consistent in their voting behaviour.

This compares with consistent voting by 3,519 (73.2 per cent) of the 4,807 who gave the same township. Whether those who moved, most of whom did not travel very far, were more independent than those who did not is a moot point. The influences acting upon those who moved and those who stayed do not appear to have been markedly different.

Both parties appeared to have had an equal sway over the 8,862 inexperienced voters in 1734.⁴¹³ This body of men was crucial in the election campaigning, and the Opposition rallied 4,209 (47.5 per cent) to their cause whilst the Government were supported by 4,053 (45.7 per cent). The campaigns of both parties elicited support in roughly equal amounts from the new voters and only 1.2 per cent of them were splitters and therefore had to be regarded as floaters by the politicians. Moreover, of the partisan voters, only 492 (6.0 per cent) gave singles and 395 of these were for Stapylton. Clearly, these new voters do appear to have been heavily politicised by the excise or the party campaigning surrounding this general election.

In fact, the proportion of returners who were floating voters or who split in 1734 was around 12 per cent of the total number of voters at that election. Whilst this was no small set of men, the numbers of inexperienced voters was far larger. Whether this worried the parties is unknown - it did not reflect in their correspondence, but neither did reports concerning experienced

⁴¹³ To date the bulk of the literature on longitudinal analysis of the electorate (those members of the electorate who actually polled) has focused upon those men who returned to poll, whereas new voters have not received the attention they deserve. An important point about nominal record linkage is the location of returners so that these new voters can be located and assessed. See O'Gorman, Voters, Patrons and Parties, pp. 193-99; C. Harvey, E.M. Green and P.J. Corfield, 'Record Linkage Theory and Practice: an Experiment in the Application of Multiple Pass Linkage Algorithms', HC, Vol 8 No 2 (1997), 79-88.

men. Both parties were aware of the need to poll in absolute terms, the vagaries of those who had not polled before could make or break an election campaign.

Whilst the Opposition could not count on a double success at the polls, the recognition by many new and old voters that a joint campaign existed bolstered Stapylton's position, for it meant that his supporters did not have to chose between plumping and splitting with a government Whig. This was the value of Wortley's candidacy and it vindicated his decision to stand. If any voters did split they did so by a ratio of two-to-one for the two elected men, Stapylton and Turner. In fact it was Stapylton's ability to gain support in terms of singles and with his major Whig rivals, amongst both new and old voters, that gave him the election rather than Winn. He gained 667 singles to Winn's seventy-five, and he gained votes from 731 of those who also favoured Turner. Thus, despite the fact that Winn and Turner outpolled Stapylton and Wortley in terms of doubles, the Tory could defeat the ministerialist because across the whole electorate he had a wider appeal.

Political constancy, 1734-42

More voters were common to both the 1734 and 1742 polls; in fact 8,248 voters from 1734 returned in 1742. Thus, 53.7 per cent of those who had polled in 1734 returned and 54.7 per cent of those who polled in 1742 were experienced voters. Cross-tabulating the votes of these men gives the following results:

	<u>TORY</u>	<u>WHIG</u>
<u>GOVERNMENT</u>	679 (17.3%)	3,240 (82.7%)
<u>OPPOSITION</u>	2,847 (79.2%)	747 (20.8%)
<u>SPLIT</u>	371 (50.5%)	364 (49.5%)
<u>TOTAL</u>	3,897 (47.2%)	4,351 (52.8%)

Table 4.23: voting behaviour, 1734-42.

Overall 6,087 (73.8 per cent) of those who returned recognised a link between either Opposition and Tory, or Government and Whig at the two polls. The fact that Turner was a candidate for both the Government and Whig parties may have focused individual beliefs concerning the rival personalities and ideologies involved across the two elections. Moreover, the Whigs were now, both relatively as well as absolutely, polling more former Government supporters than the Tories were polling Opposition voters. Despite this, 1,426 (17.3 per cent) voters reneged on their 1734 allegiances and 735 (8.9 per cent) who had split in 1734 returned.⁴¹⁴ This gives a much fuller picture than the one previously presented for these two elections.⁴¹⁵ However, in line with the conclusions of Adman *et al*, the Yorkshire electorate was showing 'a sturdy independence' away from consistent party allegiances as 1,313 of those who polled a party double in 1734 and returned switched in 1742.⁴¹⁶ This was 15.9 per cent of the returners, and such floating voters were of vital importance in deciding an election result.

⁴¹⁴ See Appendix VI, p. 423, Table VI.5, for a breakdown of the voting in each Riding.

⁴¹⁵ See P. Adman, W.A. Speck and B. White, 'Yorkshire Election Results 1734 and 1742: A Computer Analysis', Appendix to Quinn, NH, XXI, 171. The authors of this piece, writing over twelve years ago, were constrained by software limitations.

⁴¹⁶ *Ibid.*.

Similar numbers of voters returned from each Riding between these two polls as had done so between 1727 and 1734.⁴¹⁷ In the East, around 54 per cent of that Riding's voterate in 1742 had polled in 1734. In the North 59 per cent of the voters were experienced; whereas in the West 55 per cent had voted in 1734. However, whilst 69.9 per cent of the experienced voters from the North and East Ridings saw a link between Opposition and Tory or Government and Whig, the value for the West Riding was 77.3 per cent. In the East and North a further 20.5 per cent switched allegiances; in the West 14.9 per cent did so. This mirrored the level of commitment each party showed in the West Riding. The fact that Fox, the Tory candidate, was a West Riding man may have hardened the perceptions for or against him of the voters in that region; but if this was the case one would have expected the North Riding voters to be polarised in a similar way by Turner's candidacy.

In the East Riding, Fox received 385 votes from men who polled in 1734. These accounted for around 62 per cent of his supporters from this region at the 1742 by-election. However, of these 385, only 209 had been Opposition friends - a third of his 1742 supporters - which indicates the complex nature of the support for the Tory. Around 41 per cent of those who were in the Government interest in 1734 returned to poll for Turner and they made up 39 per cent of Turner's votes in 1742. Coupled with the 179 voters who opposed him or split in 1734 and who now supported him, exactly half of his East Riding support was experienced.

⁴¹⁷ Much of the analysis on pages 215-24 relies upon extrapolated figures for the parties' support in each Riding - hence the relevant percentages are to the nearest whole number.

There had been Whig fears before the 1742 election based upon the solid performance of the Opposition at the previous poll. For instance, it was reported that 'all Howdenshire is neglected.'⁴¹⁸ This was said to be because no one had contacted the Bishop of Durham to encourage his interest once more. However, whilst political divisions between local landlords may have affected the voting patterns in certain townships in 1734, in general the Whigs did have a huge preponderance of local resident gentry figures who were willing to work for the party cause. Men such as the Boyntons of Burton Agnes, the Ellerkers of Rise, the Hothams of South Dalton, and the Osbaldestons of Hunmanby, all owned large tracts of land and also dominated as lords of the manor and as patrons to local advowsons.⁴¹⁹

The Tory position was so poor in the East during the Triennial period that Lord Downe wrote to the Earl of Oxford about filling the vacant Lord Lieutenancy in 1714 with a favourable man 'for the breaking of that interest in the East Riding which has always opposed your Idps measures.'⁴²⁰ The Tories continued to struggle throughout the Hanoverian period and the election of 1734 must be viewed in the glare of the excise, and the fact that many towns gained more of an anti-government outlook at this time is indicative of the strength of feeling about that issue. By 1742 it was largely forgotten and the East Riding was solidly within the Whig fold.

⁴¹⁸ Fitzwilliam (Malton) MSS., George Hume to Malton, 20 Oct. 1741.

⁴¹⁹ For information about the East Riding gentry at this time refer to The Victoria History of the East Riding I-VII; also, English, Great Landowners of the East Riding, p. 26.

⁴²⁰ HMC, Portland, V, Archbishop Sharp to the Earl of Oxford, 11 July 1711, 58.

In the North, 62 per cent of Fox's voters were experienced. Of these 802 men, 557 (69.5 per cent) were true to the Opposition/Tory cause, whilst 178 (22.2 per cent) switched from the Government. Interestingly, fifty-six men who had split for Stapylton and Turner now polled for Fox. These men favoured the Tory ideal above that of their local candidate, Turner, whom they had favoured in 1734. However, whilst 203 (25.3 per cent) of Fox's votes came from Bulmer and Hang West wapentakes, near the estates of the Tories Sir Miles Stapylton and Lord Bruce, Fox still complained that it was Stapylton's reticence to support him in 1741-2 that cost the Tories the poll. He wrote of the 'rotten hearts that were concealed under ye specious pretence of friendship.'⁴²¹ Indeed, the Tories polled 500 fewer votes from the North than the Opposition had in 1734. Many of those Opposition friends who returned were loyal, but much of their support had dissipated.

Clearly, local considerations could have had as much to do with this diminishing support as landlord convictions. At Easingwold, one of the major towns in Bulmer, the town tended to vote along the same lines as the Driffield family, who were local J.P.s. In 1727 both town and family were split evenly. In 1734, the Opposition were quick off the mark and the Whigs bemoaned the fact that Stapylton had ventured into town before anyone 'stirred for Winn and Turner'.⁴²² At that poll, both the Driffields and Easingwold were behind the Opposition; in 1742 both gave majorities for the Whigs. This new-found whiggism was increased

⁴²¹ Jervaulx Archive, ZJX 7/15/38, George Fox to Bruce, 21 Dec. 1741, mic. 1160.

⁴²² Fitzwilliam (Malton) MSS., 'Mr Buck's Report'.

by the death of the recusant third Viscount Fauconberg, who was Lord of the Manor. The fourth conformed and returned to the Whig standard prior to the 1742 poll. This was alongside the appointment of a Whig vicar, Ratcliff Russell, and of two Whigs as stewards of the Forest of Easingwold, Francis and Christopher Goulton.⁴²³

Turner, meanwhile, received the votes of 1,102 former friends; this was only 41 per cent of his overall support, projected as 3,342 votes, at this poll.⁴²⁴ However a further 462 who had split or opposed him in 1734 supported him at the by-election, which meant that 47 per cent of his support had polled before. Langbargh wapentake provided Turner with seventy-five voters who had split Stapylton/Turner at the 1734 poll; in the North Riding those who split this way in 1734 polled three to one for the Whig in 1742. The 462 floaters from the North Riding who had split or been in opposition and now turned Whig helped damage Fox's position at the election. They provided nearly 16 per cent of Turner's supporters in the North Riding and meant that Fox was merely picking up stray votes.

The Whigs had majorities at every election in Allerton, Gilling East, Gilling West, Hang East and Whitby Strand, as well as in Turner's heartland of Langbargh and Pickering Lyth. In Gilling East, Gilling West and Hang West the Whigs dominated the major and minor gentry through their landholdings; for example, the holdings of the Darcy Earls of Holderness were important enough to gain Conyers Darcy the Lord Lieutenancy of

⁴²³ G.C. Cowling, A History of Easingwold and the Forest of Galtres (Huddersfield, n.d.), pp. 50-2, 56.

⁴²⁴ See Appendix VI, pp. 421-5, for projected results for each side at the three elections.

the North Riding from 1727-40. Other Whigs, like the Duke of Devonshire, Sir Hugh Smithson and Sir William Robinson, also owned lands and manors in this region and were all active for the party or easily activated by it.⁴²⁵

In the West Riding a number of influences were at work. Firstly, 2,610 (55 per cent) of a projected 4,765 Tory voters in 1742 had polled in 1734. Of these men, 2,010 (77 per cent) polled Opposition/Tory at the two elections, and 365 (14 per cent) switched to the Whig fold. Colley's view that there was 'an electoral rapport between toryism and the centres of trade and population' holds true for the populous districts of Agbridge, Claro, Morley, Staincliffe and Skirack.⁴²⁶ These areas provided 1,466 (57 per cent) of the 2,595 Tory voters of 1742 in Yorkshire who had given Opposition doubles in 1734. This intensity was given more direction by the Opposition manager, Lord Bruce, who was very active in rousing his supporters in the Craven area. Towards the end of the 1742 poll Bruce wrote that 'I cannot be satisfied I wish any Freeholders being left behind.'⁴²⁷

In the wapentakes of Agbridge and Morley, the heartland of the woollen and worsted industries, the most damning report of Whig chances was given by Archbishop Blackburne. Anticipating a vacancy at Halifax vicarage, he wrote that the town was 'all in a most disaffected corner of my diocese, filled with a very numerous swarm of freeholders crowding in against us in every contest in the election of our shire knights...'.⁴²⁸ Indeed, although

⁴²⁵ VCH North Riding, I, 112, 121, 129.

⁴²⁶ Colley, In Defiance of Oligarchy, p. 8.

⁴²⁷ Spencer Stanhope MSS., SpSt/11/5/3/19, Lord Bruce to J. Stanhope, 'Saturday night' (16 Jan. 1742).

⁴²⁸ Blackburne quoted in Collyer, PLPS, VII, 59.

in 1734 121 voters gave Government votes with 117 of these being doubles - compared to 143 doubles and twenty singles for the Opposition, the numbers of Government voters garnered deluded the Whigs in 1742. Richard Cooke felt that he could bring in sixty-eight freeholders, if the subscription would pay for another 160 who had apparently promised him their votes. He wrote that 'the great part of our freeholders are poor manufacturers [and] they must be supply'd with Horses as well as charges.'⁴²⁹ Cooke recognised the importance of the voters from this area, however the Whigs could not rally these men at the poll. In 1742, the Tories polled 276 men to the Whigs' ninety from Halifax.

A second factor in the West Riding was the number of men who switched from Government to Tory. Overall, the 679 men who switched to the Tories were 9 per cent of the Government voters at the 1734 poll; now they made up almost 10 per cent of the vote for Fox. Agbridge and Morley wapentakes alone accounted for 111 (17 per cent) of them. This area of the shire was strong in the Opposition cause in 1734, and the candidacy of the local Tory, George Fox, was more appealing in 1742 than that of Turner. This was again reflected in the fact that 186 voters who had split for Stapylton and Winn now voted for Fox, and 138 (74.2 per cent) of these came from the West Riding.

Among the 433 West Riding men who opted for Turner when they had opposed him or split before there were possibly clear ideological reasons for such action. However, John Thorne was apparently engaged by Frank Miller for Fox 'upon a promise that he woud buy all the cloth he should make.' Miller had not done so

⁴²⁹ Temple Newsam MSS., TN/C/15/234, Richard Cooke to Irwin, 23 Dec. 1741.

and Thorne promised his vote to Richard Witton for Turner.⁴³⁰ Alongside the 1,425 who were loyal to Turner at both elections in the West Riding, those who switched to his camp meant that the relative levels of support he elicited there from experienced voters, were no worse than those gained by Fox.

To an extent this was because the Whigs were pushing hard to regain ground lost in 1734. In 1741 the failure to declare of the Earl of Scarbrough and the Duke of Leeds lead to frantic activity. Turner wrote to Malton in October apparently fraught with tension that Leeds had not announced his intentions. Once he had, Samuel Buck also wrote to Malton declaring that, 'yor prescence becomes more necessary, as the Duke of Leeds has now declared for Mr. Fox' and as Scarbrough was definitely neutral, this meant 'we shall lose double the number'.⁴³¹ These Whig fears were heightened because Leeds was busy in the area; he told his own tenants to poll for Fox, and gave orders to the steward of Wakefield Court, Mr Marsden, to campaign in that interest. Money was often defrayed at Court sessions, where many freeholders worked or attended for redress of grievances.⁴³² It was also reported from Barnsley that 'The Duke of Leeds is so zealous and earnest in making intrest for Mr Fox, that I fear Mr Turner will not have many votes in that town.'⁴³³ It was little wonder that Buck and Turner were anxious.

The Whigs put everything into counteracting this Tory effort, to the extent that pressure was put on a local gentleman,

⁴³⁰ Ibid., TNPO/10/9/8, Richard Witton to Irwin, 23 Oct. 1741.

⁴³¹ Fitzwilliam (Malton) MSS., Cholmley Turner to Malton, 3 Oct. 1741; *ibid.*, Sam'l Buck to Malton, 7 Oct. 1741.

⁴³² Jervaulx Archive, ZJX 7/16, '1741 Election expenses', mic. 1160.

⁴³³ Fitzwilliam (Malton) MSS., Ri. Goodwin to Malton, 13 Oct. 1741.

Francis Foljambe, to relent in letting several of the freeholders of Tickhill administer their local tithe. The freeholders were concerned about the rigid nature of its collection, and the Whigs worried that 'there are above sixty freeholders in the place', many of whom would be alienated from the cause if Foljambe pushed the issue. Thus it was imperative that calm was restored and that they must 'manage our own friends.' Foljambe did relent and 'consent to gratify the freeholders of Tickhill in their own way.'⁴³⁴

This activity meant that the Whigs kept much of the support the Government had received in the West Riding. Considerable effort was spent in coaxing the voters and Sir Godfrey Copley's orders to his tenants, to follow him 'upon pain abeing turned off their farms', was an unusual statement.⁴³⁵ The level of Whig support in the West that this electioneering developed, was far in excess of the relative support Fox gained from those friends of the Opposition in the East and North Ridings.

To an extent, the view of the 1734 Opposition candidate Edward Wortley, that Fox was 'Not called a Whig and therefore will want a great deal of those got by Sr Miles [Stapylton]', was an important factor. Wortley also claimed that the party spirit had declined after the 1741 general election, which was then exacerbated by the role of winter and of foul play by the Whigs through bribery and polling men twice.⁴³⁶ This can be illustrated by the return to poll between 1734 and 1742. The number of men

⁴³⁴ Ibid., Sam. Buck to Malton, 21 Nov. 1741; *ibid.*, same to same, 2 Dec. 1741.

⁴³⁵ Ibid., Geo. Hume to Malton, 20 Oct. 1741. This is the only such threat that I have found explicitly expressed in the correspondence concerning these Yorkshire elections.

⁴³⁶ S.C.A., Wharnccliffe Muniments, Wh.M 108-21-28, memoranda on the 1742 by-election.

who polled Opposition/Whig, which would suggest a loss of faith in the anti-Government cause, was 747 (20.8 per cent). In absolute terms, the number who polled Government/Tory was 679; this was 17.3 per cent of Government returners. Fox lost more support to Turner from those who were opposed to the government in 1734 than Turner did to Fox from those previously in favour.

The major difference occurred in the North Riding where 284 former Opposition supporters polled for Turner. Of these, 188 (66 per cent) were from Bulmer, Hang West and Pickering Lyth. It is important to remember that this was a by-election and that Stapylton was already elected unopposed at the 1741 general election. Thus, many men from the North already had one Tory representative from their Riding, and may have favoured the election of Turner as another, more whiggish, North Riding representative.

One other factor indicated a shift of opinion towards Turner which compounded Fox's difficulties. For it was not just those who had favoured the Opposition joint-campaign in 1734 who failed to poll for Fox. These men had given one vote for an opposition Whig and may have been expected to poll Whig in 1742. Fox also lost eighty-eight (13.2 per cent) of the 667 who gave singles for Stapylton in 1734; this was 26.0 per cent of the 339 voters who polled for Stapylton and returned in 1742. Fox himself declared that alongside the artifices of the Whigs, 'the defection among ourselves...[and] ill-usage from some of our own party' caused his defeat.⁴³⁷ He was probably correct in asserting that the lack of whole-hearted support from men like Stapylton

⁴³⁷ Jervaulx Archive, ZJX 7/15/43, Fox to Bruce, 26 Jan. 1742, mic. 1160.

and Wortley, who had shown a general lack of interest, had cost him dearly at the polls. However, compared to the Whigs, the difference in terms of lost support at York was minimal. The problems for Fox were his failure to mobilise experienced opposition supporters, for he certainly appears to have lost out heavily in the East and North Ridings, plus his failure to appeal to any new voters. Turner attracted 3,654 new voters to his standard whilst Fox gained 3,152. In relation to their totals at the polls, these figures were around 45 per cent; however, the difference of 502 voters was 51.8 per cent of Turner's majority. Turner's ability to gain these new votes, plus the fact that 393 more men polled Government/Whig than voted Opposition/Tory, cost Fox the election. Possibly, this was a reaction to the death of the fervour surrounding the excise; alternatively some opposition Whigs may have sensed the uneasy state of Walpole's government in 1742 and felt that there was nothing further to be gained by following Fox to the polls. This will have been exacerbated by the widespread feeling that Turner was no government lap-dog.

One final point about those who polled at the last two elections of the series is that relatively fewer of them appear to have changed abode than did so between the first two polls; in all 1,489 (18.1 per cent) did so. Of those who appear to have moved, 1,083 (72.7 per cent) voted in a consistent manner; for those who did not migrate 5,007 (74.1 per cent) polled uniformly. Again the numbers of floaters were about the same and do not indicate a difference of opinion between these sets of men.

The elections of 1727 and 1734 saw a limited return to poll of 56.0 per cent of the 1727 voterage; thus the parties had to work

hard to locate many new voters. To a lesser extent this was true for the 1742 poll, however there were still 6,806 (45.2 per cent) voters at that election who were political novices. Despite these factors, there was a sharp degree of partisanship amongst those who polled across any two elections. Akin to the comparison of the 1727-34 elections and the 1734-42 elections, over three-quarters of the 309 men who polled in 1727 and 1742 followed a partisan line. In fact 234 (75.7 per cent) polled consistently and of these, 160 (68.4 per cent) were Whig. Party voting was the normal state of affairs for old and new voters, and also for men who had abstained, for whatever reason, at the general election of 1734.

As much as this can be posited for the voters within Yorkshire, it is true of the outvoters. Sixty-four outvoters were common to both the 1727 and 1734 elections and forty-four (68.8 per cent) of these were consistent voters. Between 1734 and 1742, of the 102 men who polled at both elections, seventy-seven (75.5 per cent) showed a party loyalty. Again this indicates that the excise and the strength of the Opposition campaign appears to have politicised much of the electorate.

However, within the set of voters who polled in 1727 and 1742, 25.3 per cent switched allegiance. This is indicative of the size of the floating vote that existed throughout the shire. Of the 6,490 who polled in 1727 and 1734, 19.2 per cent switched and 8.6 per cent split at the second poll. With regard to the 8,248 common to the 1734 and 1742 elections, 17.3 per cent switched and 8.9 per cent had split in 1734. Thus, neither party could be sure of the votes of over a quarter of the returning voters and this

was without considering the role of those who would not poll, or who gave false promises.

The high level of turnover and of the floating vote for Yorkshire was of the order of that which occurred elsewhere during the 'rage of party'. For instance, Westmoreland between 1701 and 1702 saw a 54 per cent return to poll; moreover 20 per cent of the voterage was classed as floating. In Cheshire, between 1701 and 1702, 14 per cent were floaters, whilst there was an overall average of 16 per cent of voters in Hampshire, Rutland and Westmoreland who switched during the years 1700-15.⁴³⁸ The size of the floating vote, and the number of new voters at each poll, point to the very necessity of appointing a vital and coherent party structure to campaign for every election.

The campaigns that were launched were run by a similar vanguard of managers. The Whig and Government campaigns were focused upon Lord Malton and Cholmley Turner and a familiar set of operatives were utilised within each wapentake at each poll; this helped to crystallise the nature of a consistent campaign for this group and its supporters. The Tory and Opposition line was again fought by one group, lead by Lord Bruce and the Earl of Strafford. However, these men had a fragmented approach to the poll in 1727 and although it reached a momentum that could give Stapylton a return in 1734, this later organisation was forged upon the excise crisis. The support of opposition Whigs in the electoral infrastructure was lost in 1742, and the popularity of the Tory, George Fox, was limited beyond the West Riding. It was the

⁴³⁸ Hopkinson, thesis, pp. 253, 254; P.J. Challinor, 'The Structure of Politics in Cheshire, 1660-1715', Ph.D., Wolverhampton Polytechnic, 1983, p. 211; Speck, *et al*, Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research, 48, 76-84.

ability of Turner to appeal to Whigs in the West Riding and to those with a more local mind-set in the North that allowed him to maintain a consistent level of support at all three polls. In this way, as Fox's support in the North and East Ridings wavered, Turner could be elected.

O'Gorman is right to present the notion that the infrequency of elections, the turnover of voters and candidates, plus further social influences may have dampened party consciousness.⁴³⁹ Indeed, the strengths of partisanship in Yorkshire are somewhat false as the Opposition and Tories ran four different candidates at the three polls. However, the same ideology of opposition was common to all four; also the opposition to them was personified in Turner and Malton at every poll. Thus, to an extent there was a clearly identifiable party dichotomy at the polls.

Political constancy, 1727-42

But what was the strength or appeal of a notional party ticket amongst the 3550 voters who polled at all three elections of the period? The following table shows the general relationship of party and non-party voting:⁴⁴⁰

<u>VOTE</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
PARTY	2,193 (61.8%)
SWITCH	1,038 (29.2%)
SPLIT	319 (8.9%)

Table 4.24: voting behaviour, 1727-42.

⁴³⁹ O'Gorman, Voters, Patrons and Parties, p. 382.

⁴⁴⁰ For a complete breakdown of these votes see Appendix VI, p. 426, Table VI.7..

Despite the fact that a consistent party line was shown by 2,193 men, the 1734 poll had created much confusion among the voters. The votes of 38.2 per cent of those who polled at all three elections altered in either 1734 or 1742 from the position held in 1727, with 1,038 men switching party allegiance at either of the last two polls and 319 casting a split vote in 1734. However, 460 (13.0 per cent) altered allegiance in 1734 and then switched back to the original party, and only 532 (15.0 per cent) had a transformation in opinion and changed party in 1734 never to return to the fold. Even so, a large minority of this set of voters was floating.

Each Riding reflected the strengths of each party across the period of fifteen years. The East Riding had 615 men who polled at every election; of these, 437 (71.1 per cent) were consistent and 384 (87.8 per cent) of these partisans were Whig or Government supporters. Overall, the East Riding was strongly partisan, although 28.9 per cent switched their vote at one or more elections - a large minority of whose outlook was affected by the excise and opposition to either the Government or the Whig establishment within Yorkshire, or both.

In the North Riding, only 536 (52.4 per cent) of the 1,022 who polled at all three elections were partisan voters. As was the case in the East, the Whigs were the major benefactors; they secured 409 partisans (76.3 per cent) to their cause, and 199 (48.6 per cent) of these were from the wapentakes of Langbargh and Pickering Lyth - the centres of influence of Turner. Their opposition was strongest in Bulmer and Hang West wapentakes, where sixty-five (45.1 per cent) of the Tory/Opposition's 144

partisan voters were located. This again reflected the impact of the Stapylton family and of Lord Bruce in these regions.

However, the fact that 47.6 per cent of the voters in the North altered their stance at one or more polls, indicates that there were changing attitudes within this region. The number of men who altered their stance in 1734 but reverted back in 1742 was 108, whilst only 101 altered in 1734 and did not switch back; of these, sixty-three went into opposition to the Whigs. More surprising were the 128 who switched in 1742, especially the eighty-eight of these who went Tory; quite what the influence here was is unclear. Overall, the influence of Stapylton increased the number of splitters in 1734 and there may have been a hangover from this in 1742 which benefited Fox.

In all, 1,848 men polled three times from the West Riding, and 1,140 (61.7 per cent) voted uniformly. Of these men, 696 (61.1 per cent) were pro-Tory/Opposition, whilst 444 (38.9 per cent) were Whigs or Government supporters. The bulk of the Tory/Opposition phalanx was concentrated in Agbridege, Morley and Staincliffe wapentakes, where they had expended a lot of effort. These areas provided 390 (56.0 per cent) of the constant Tory/Opposition men. Malton's home wapentake of Strafford was an equally steady Whig/Government redoubt, supplying 118 (26.6 per cent) such partisans. These areas were clearly important to the rival parties and were strong and consistent supporters for them.

The overall picture tends to emphasise the strength of local party interest in certain areas. In the West Riding in 1734 the support for the two local men, Winn and Wortley, was minimal and more men supported Winn and Stapylton, thus fulfilling both Tory and local interests. However, these ninety-six men were still

less than one-in-twenty of those who polled at every election. Moreover, of these men, forty-eight (49 per cent) were 1727-Tories who split and then polled for Fox. Very few Tories split in 1734 and then polled Whig in 1742. In the shire as a whole this gradual change was undergone by a mere 105 (3.0 per cent) of the voters. Thus, although the West Riding was a confused area in terms of long-term polling, it had some strident party regions.

Of the 3,550 voters who appeared at all three polls, 2,664 (75.0 per cent) gave the same abode at all three elections. Of the 886 who did not, 323 gave a township within the same parish at one or more polls. Of those who gave the same abode, 1,651 (62.0 per cent) were consistent partisans; for those who migrated, the number was 542 (61.2 per cent) men. Overall, the movement of voters over time does not appear to have affected their level of support for a particular ideology, or the strength of the floating vote. Whether finding voters who moved made electioneering much harder to undertake is unknown, although this may have accounted for some abstentions.

Within that group of men who polled at all of the three elections, the picture is confused. There was a large subset for whom consistent voting was not the norm and waverers or floaters made up 38 per cent of the 3,550 who voted three times. Perhaps the parties recognised the vacillatory nature of many of the voters and diverted their attention to those who were new voters at each poll. To an extent, however, this illustrates the minimal control of the politicians over the electorate, and those who actually polled.⁴⁴¹ The evidence of the canvass and of the petition, as well as that for turnout and turnover, suggests that although

⁴⁴¹ See Chapter 2, pp. 78-122, and Chapter 3, pp. 123-70.

electioneering improved, the parties still lacked an overall awareness about those who could poll and those who would poll. To an extent it appears that they flooded the shire with energy and resources as much out of general as specific knowledge of these men.

Gentry voting behaviour

One section of the shire whose behaviour ought to have been consistent was the gentry, a group which wielded some influence at the polls if their correspondence is to be believed. There were 975 gentlemen who polled at the four elections which left pollbooks; the number of men who only polled once was 541 (55.5 per cent), whilst 434 (44.5 per cent) polled twice or thrice.⁴⁴² Of the latter group, 226 (52.1 per cent) were consistent Whigs, and the consistent Tory and wavering vote split the rest of the returning gentry by 105/103.

That the Tories fared so poorly was illustrated by a list of those who had declared for Fox in November 1741. Two months prior to the poll seventy-six gentlemen were in Fox's interest.⁴⁴³ The fact that the Whigs noted this as 'as small pack to hunt [for] such a Fox'⁴⁴⁴ is indicative of the lack of active Tory gentry when

⁴⁴² There are problems with drawing conclusions from the gentry. Unlike the clergy there is no register of them, or at least no easy way of deciding who they were, and the use of 'Esq', 'Gent' and 'Mr' was often inconsistent. This is shown by the fact that from the nominal record linkage possibly 234 of these gentlemen voted again, with no descriptor added in the pollbook. In this section the figures quoted include these extra links. See Appendix V, pp. 409-13.

⁴⁴³ Jervaulx Archive, ZJX 7/15/27, a list of declarations for George Fox (n.d., Nov. 1741), mic. 1160.

⁴⁴⁴ Fitzwilliam (Malton) MSS., ZPB, 'A list of the Gentlemen who met at York the 30 August 1741'.

compared to the Whigs who were mobilised. The list of Tories included fifteen Peers who would not normally vote, but of the other sixty-one, only thirty-three actually polled.

The comparison of experienced voters for the gentry and shire voterate is:

1727 voters : 56.0% polled in 1734
1727 gentry : 69.4% polled in 1734
1734 voters : 54.8% polled in 1742
1734 gentry : 60.6% polled in 1742

Table 4.25: the return to poll of gentry and voters, 1727-42.

For turnover, the comparison of voters and gentry is as follows:

1727-1734 voterate : 57.7% turnover
1727-1734 gentry : 61.7% turnover
1734-1742 voterate : 46.3% turnover
1734-1742 gentry : 28.6% turnover

Table 4.26: the turnover of gentry and voters, 1727-42.

The gentry voters were more likely to return to poll than the rest of the electorate and in 1742 they had a lower turnover. Beyond this, the gentry's level of partisanship was akin to the electorate at large. For the 1734 poll, only forty-six (8.7 per cent) of the 528 voters gave split votes and 461 (87.3 per cent) of them gave party doubles. Overall, in the four elections of this period, between 59-63 per cent of the gentry were Whigs, 23-29 per cent Tories and 12 per cent floaters. This compares favourably with Stoker's findings for Westmoreland.⁴⁴⁵

⁴⁴⁵ Stoker, thesis, p. 197.

Alongside the lower proportion of waverers, or floaters, the gentry can be seen as providing a clear party message at the polls. Whether the turnout of these men was low is unclear and difficult to judge. How a gentleman was and is defined was and is an awkward proposition, even before one attempts to find such men. However, the proportion of gentlemen in the voterate was 2.6-2.7 per cent in 1734 and 1742, a rise from the 1.9 per cent of 1727. As will be seen,⁴⁴⁶ the partisanship of the gentry could affect the voting behaviour of a particular area. The amount of time and energy spent by both parties makes this conclusion not unexpected. For the Whigs it was the ability of the voting and non-voting gentry alike to mobilise and maintain levels of party support that was important for them. The Tories lacked as many voting gentlemen - however they had a solid group of men - gentry and clergy alike, who were willing to work for them throughout the shire. It was this mix of support for each party that fostered a wider party appeal in the period post-1708.

The evidence from the Ridings, especially for the West, shows that the politicians could never rely upon a substantial section of the shire electorate. The numbers of floating voters were indicative of a two-way flow of deference within the political society of the shire, with the parties' needs weighed against those of the freeholders. In this way one can see how the nature of inflexible canvassing, of noting promises months before a poll, had to be weighed against the electorate's ever changing moods. The electoral strategies for the fulfilment of wider party requirements relied on increasing local organisation; this looked

⁴⁴⁶ See the chapter on the clergy; Chapter 5, pp. 248-308.

towards marshalling dependants and independents alike. There appears to have been a strong undercurrent of landlord influence and local campaigning, necessitated by the needs of the voting community, and against this background the electorate tended to become more partisan over time.

This state of flux in the shire is shown up by several factors. Firstly, the large number of towns whose allegiance switched at the election of 1734, and the fluctuating wapentake votes in the North and West Ridings. Just over half of the townships whose voting patterns can be deduced from the pollbooks for 1727, 1734 and 1742 voted consistently; yet, almost a fifth saw a transformation of opinion in 1734. Secondly, although the return to poll in the period 1727-1742 showed the bulk of men voting in a consistent fashion, it was never more than a small majority of voters. Similarly, it has also been shown that there was a large minority of returning voters who were waverers or floaters and whose votes could not be relied upon. Alongside the evidence of the canvass and petition, the numbers of returning voters indicate that there must have been great strains upon the local party agents who were attempting to locate their supporters. Thus, thirdly, each party had to work hard to gain the votes of many new and inexperienced voters at each election, and this may account for the huge increase in energy and money expended at the polls. It was this changing face of the Yorkshire electorate that made the shire's political life so unpredictable.

This chapter has focused upon the opinions of landowners in the electoral process to enlighten our perceptions of voting behaviour, as these men left most of the requisite information and were the biggest players on the political scene. However, it would

be difficult to affirm that every voter was dependent on his manorial or tenurial lord, if indeed he had one. There were as many reasons for voting behaviour as there were voters - thus there is a need to elucidate upon the reasons why these men polled as they did. This is a complex issue and will be addressed in the final two chapters of this thesis which focus upon the clergy, and individual voting communities.

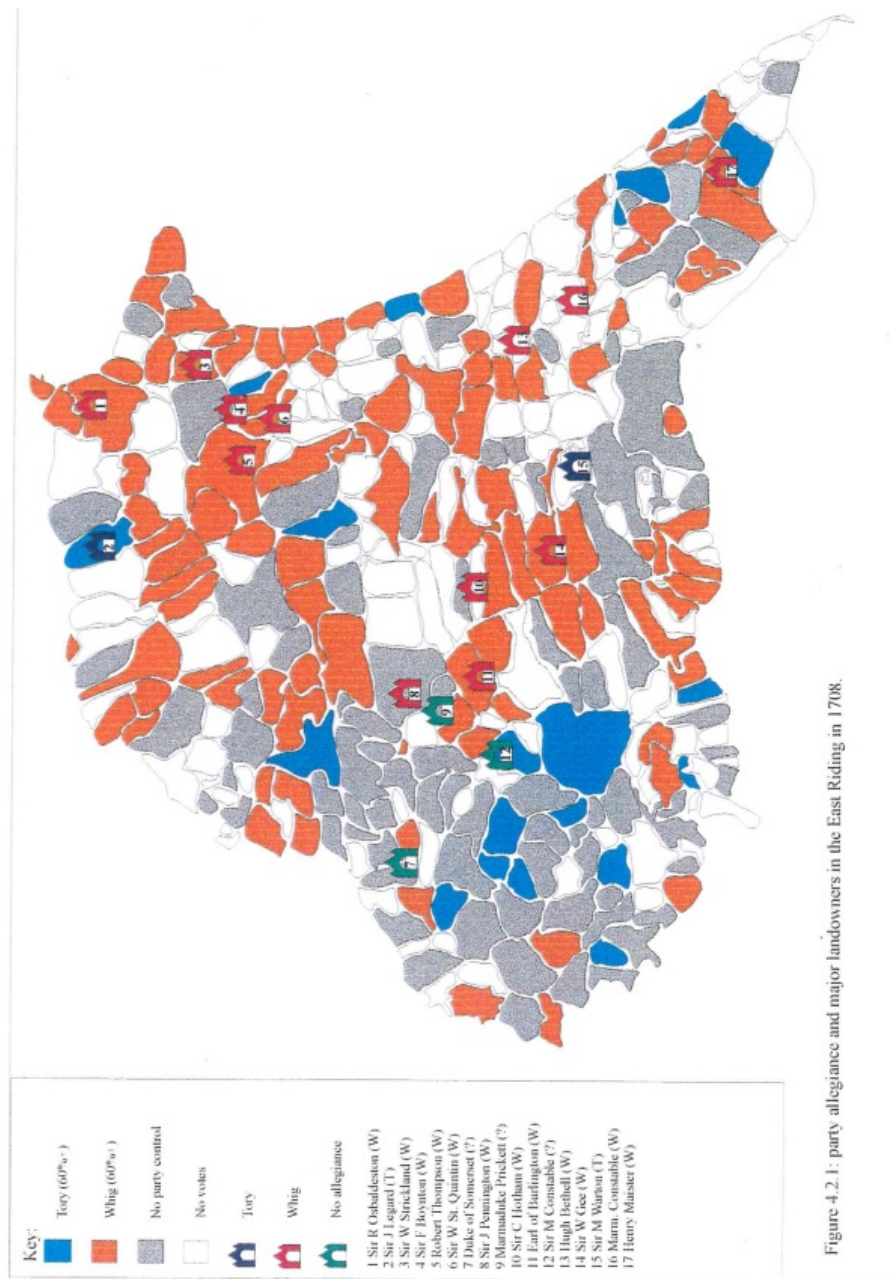


Figure 4.2.1: party allegiance and major landowners in the East Riding in 1708.

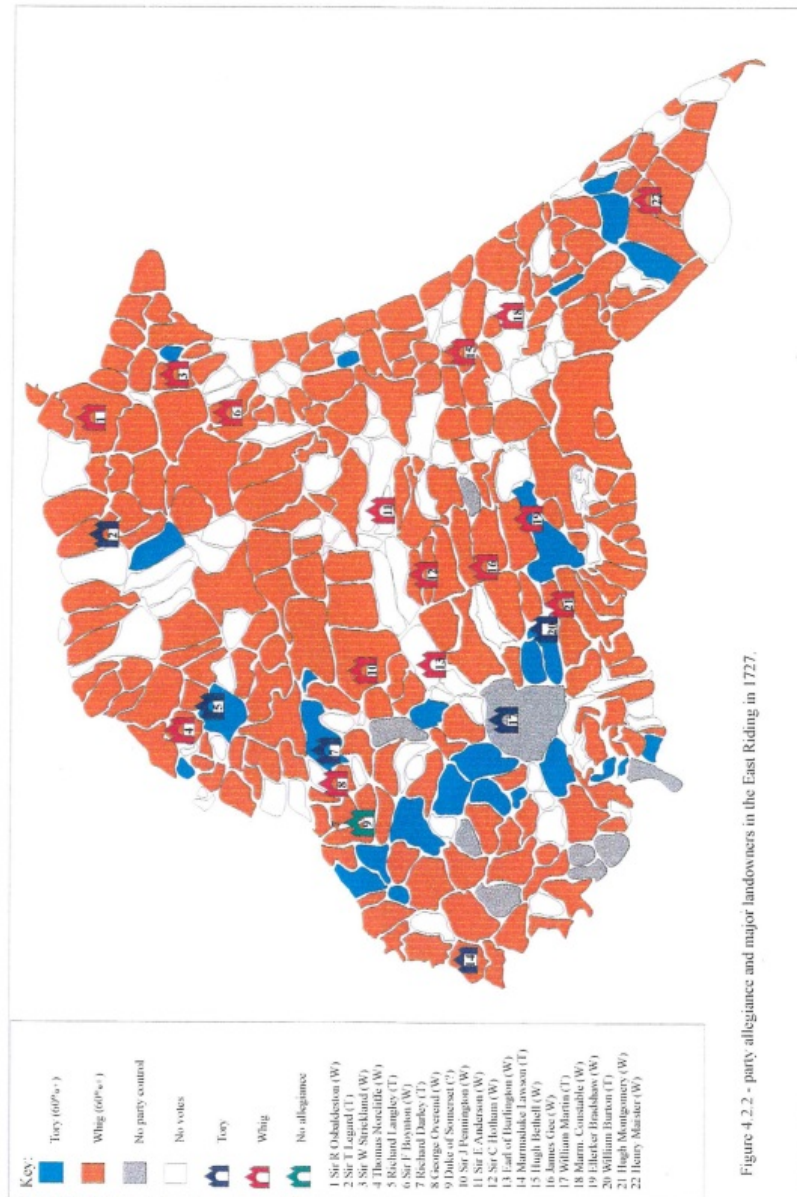


Figure 4.2.2 - party allegiance and major landowners in the East Riding in 1727.

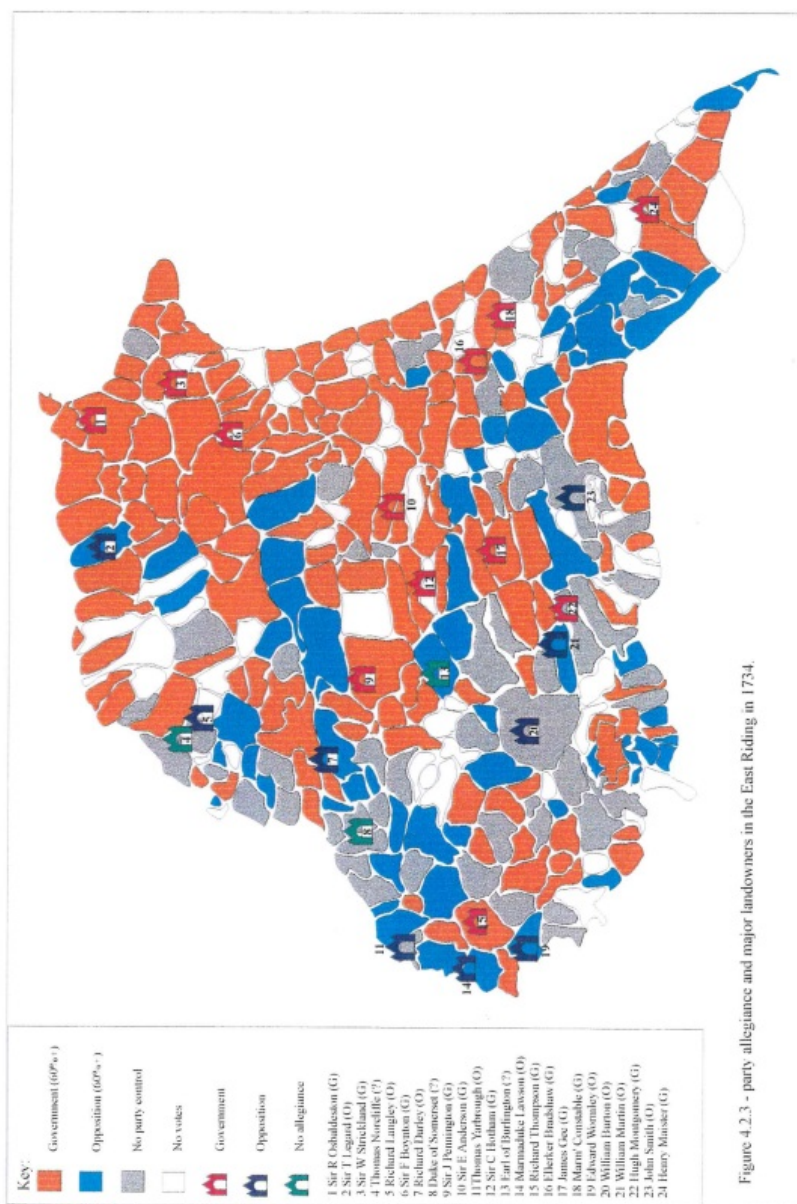


Figure 4.2.3 - party allegiance and major landowners in the East Riding in 1734.

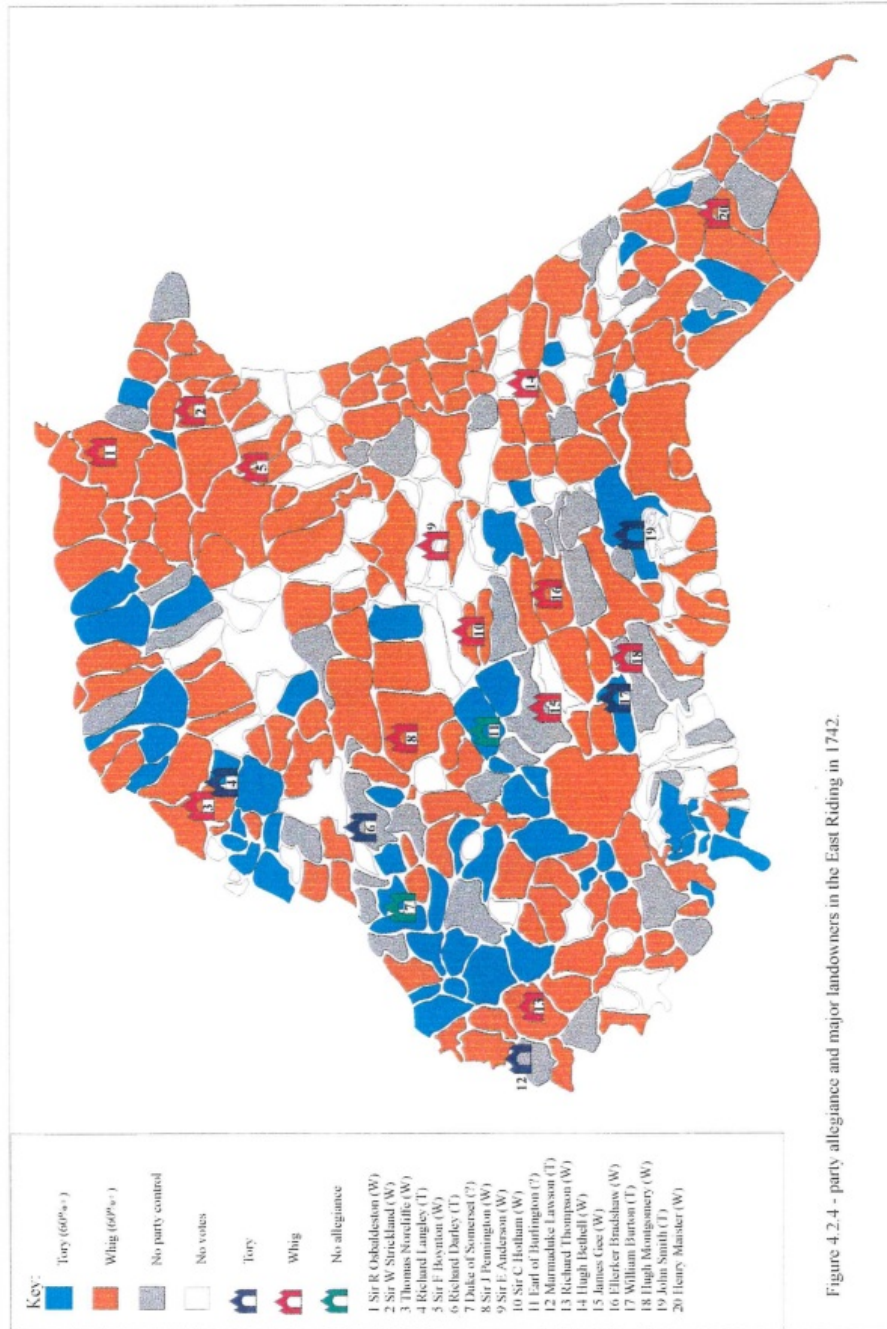


Figure 4.2.4 - party allegiance and major landowners in the East Riding in 1742.

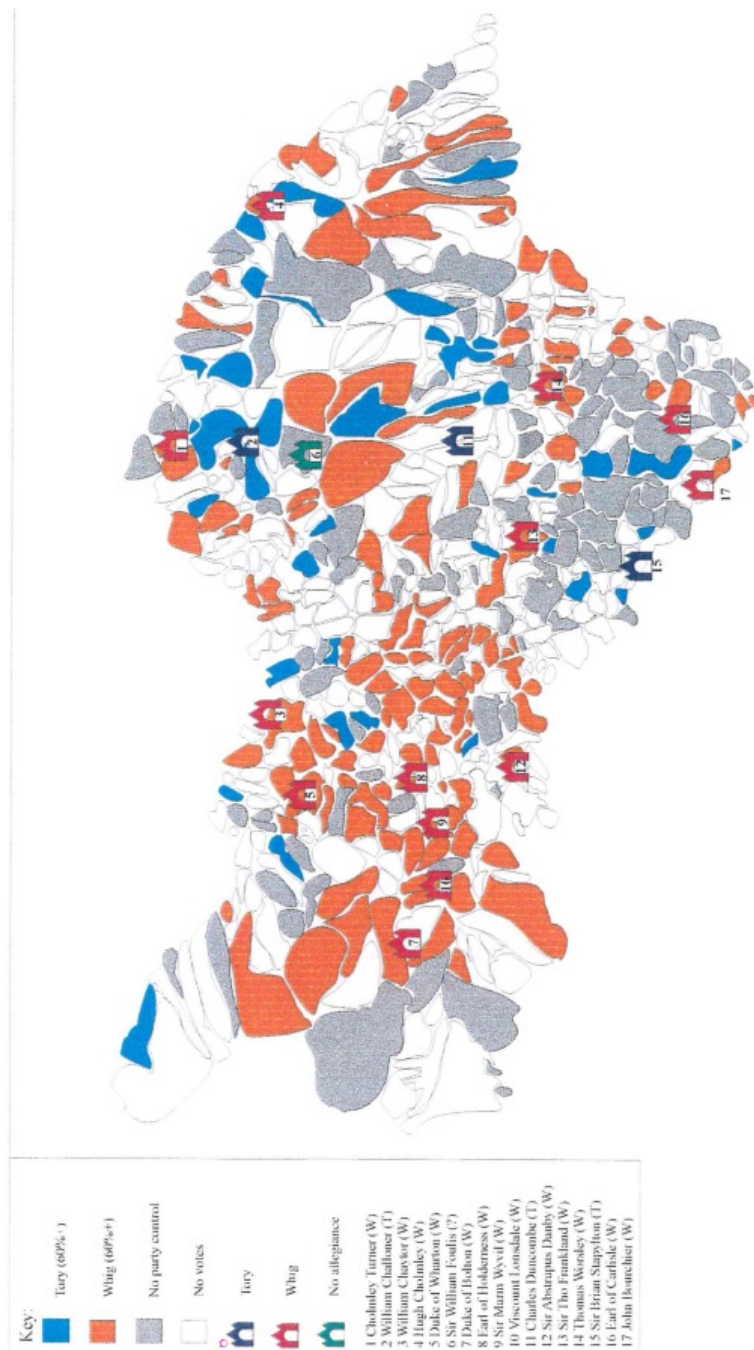


Figure 4.3.1: party allegiance and major landowners in the North Riding in 1708.

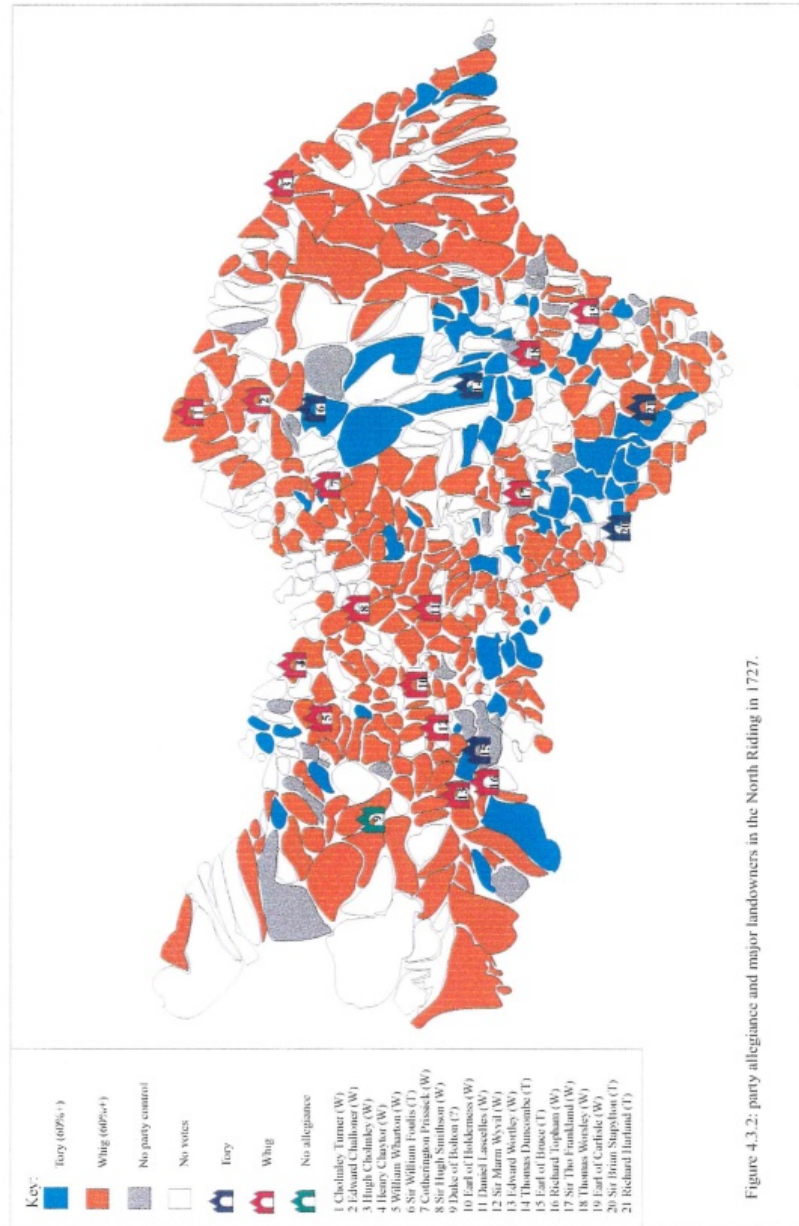


Figure 4.3.2: party allegiance and major landowners in the North Riding in 1727.

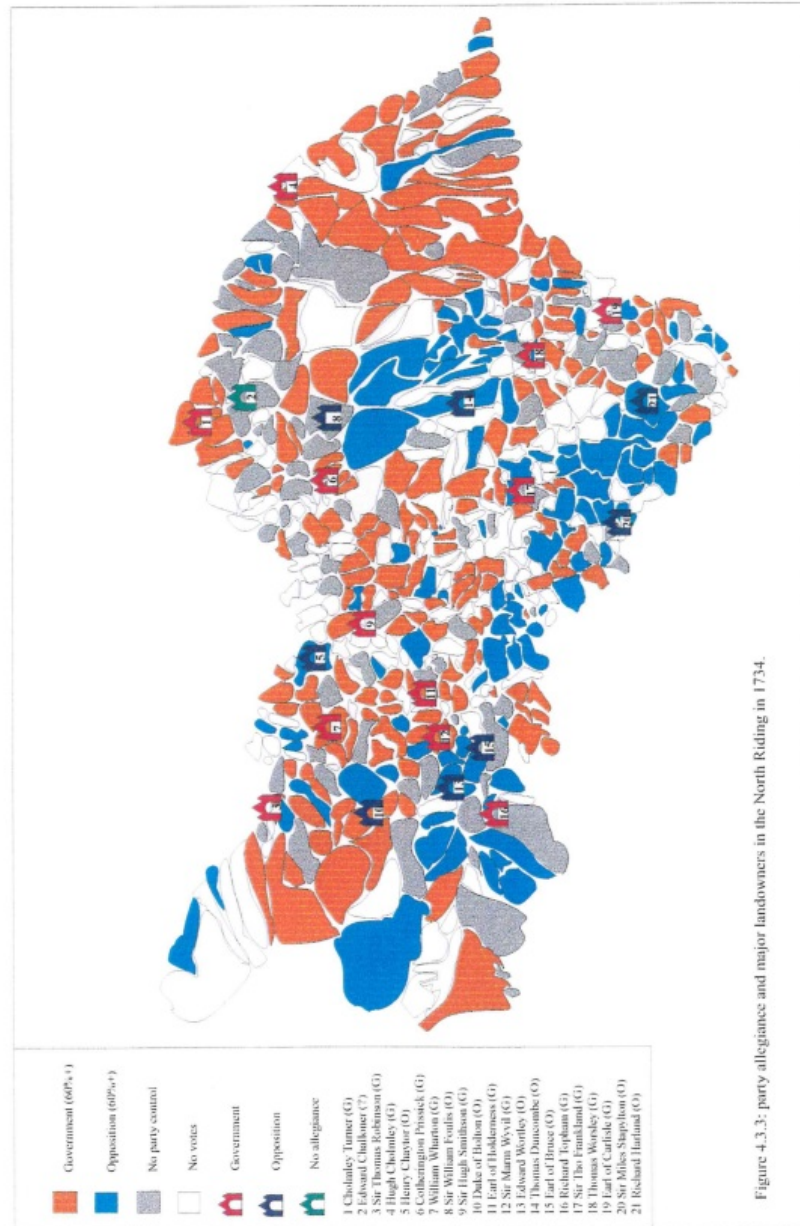


Figure 4.3.3: party allegiance and major landowners in the North Riding in 1734.

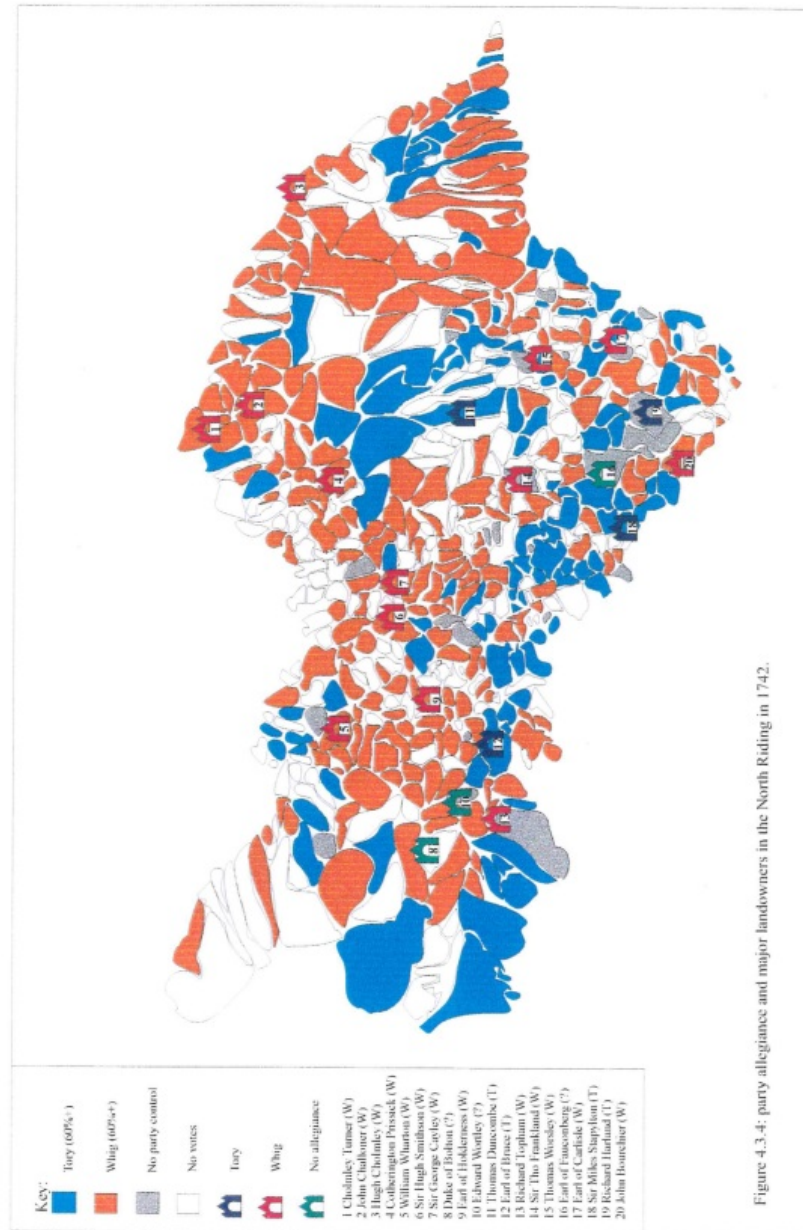


Figure 4.3.4: party allegiance and major landowners in the North Riding in 1742.

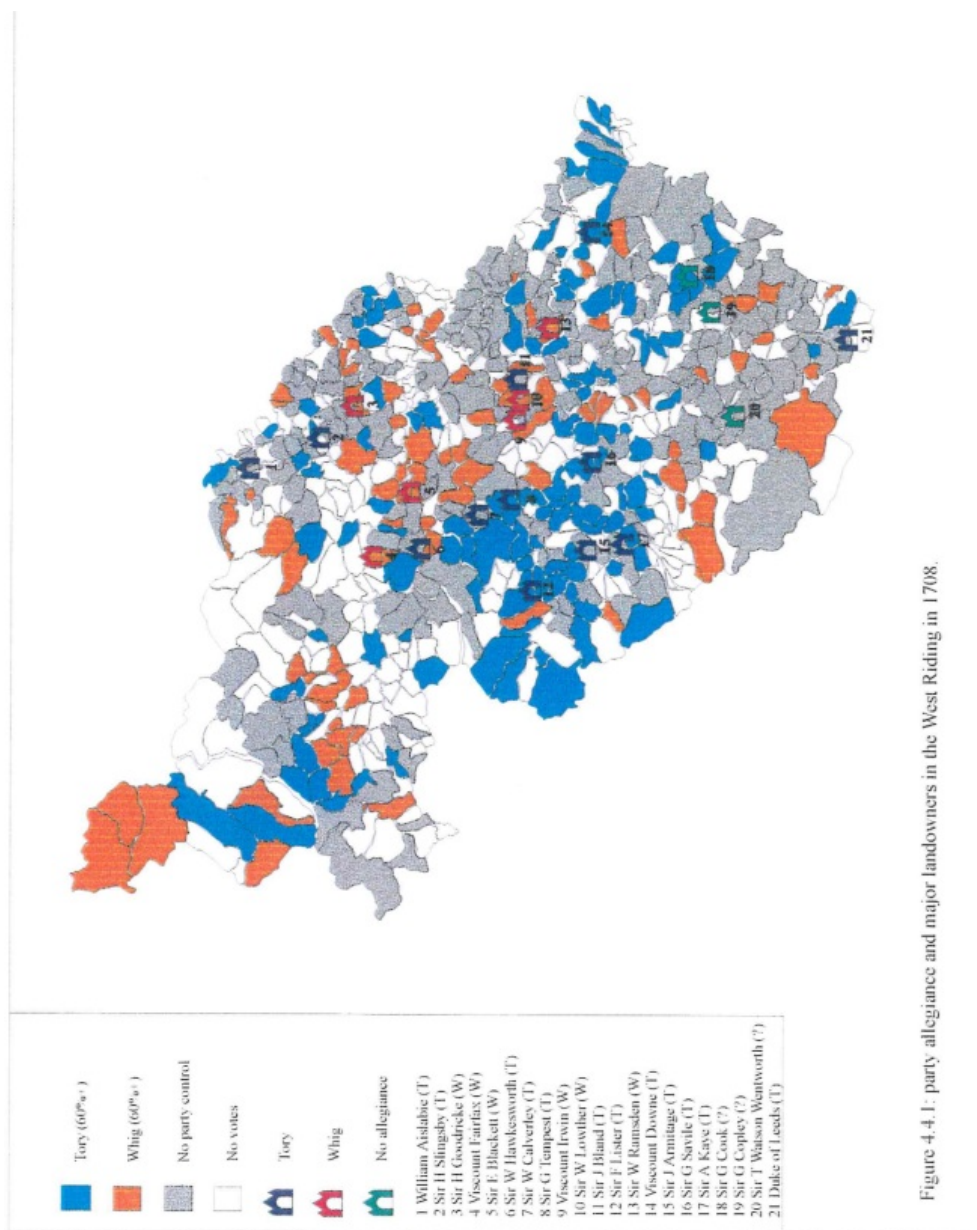


Figure 4.4.1: party allegiance and major landowners in the West Riding in 1708.

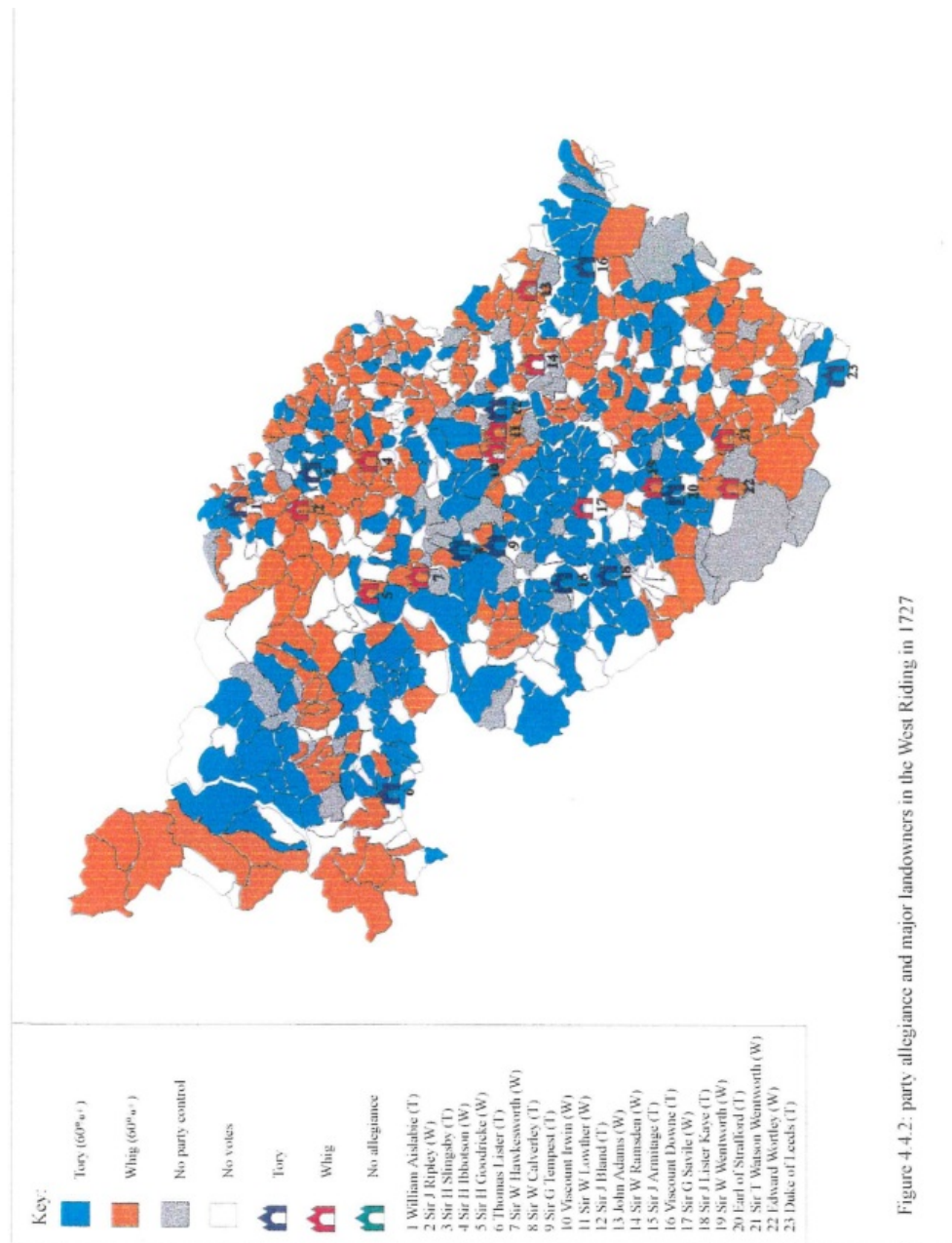


Figure 4.4.2: party allegiance and major landowners in the West Riding in 1727

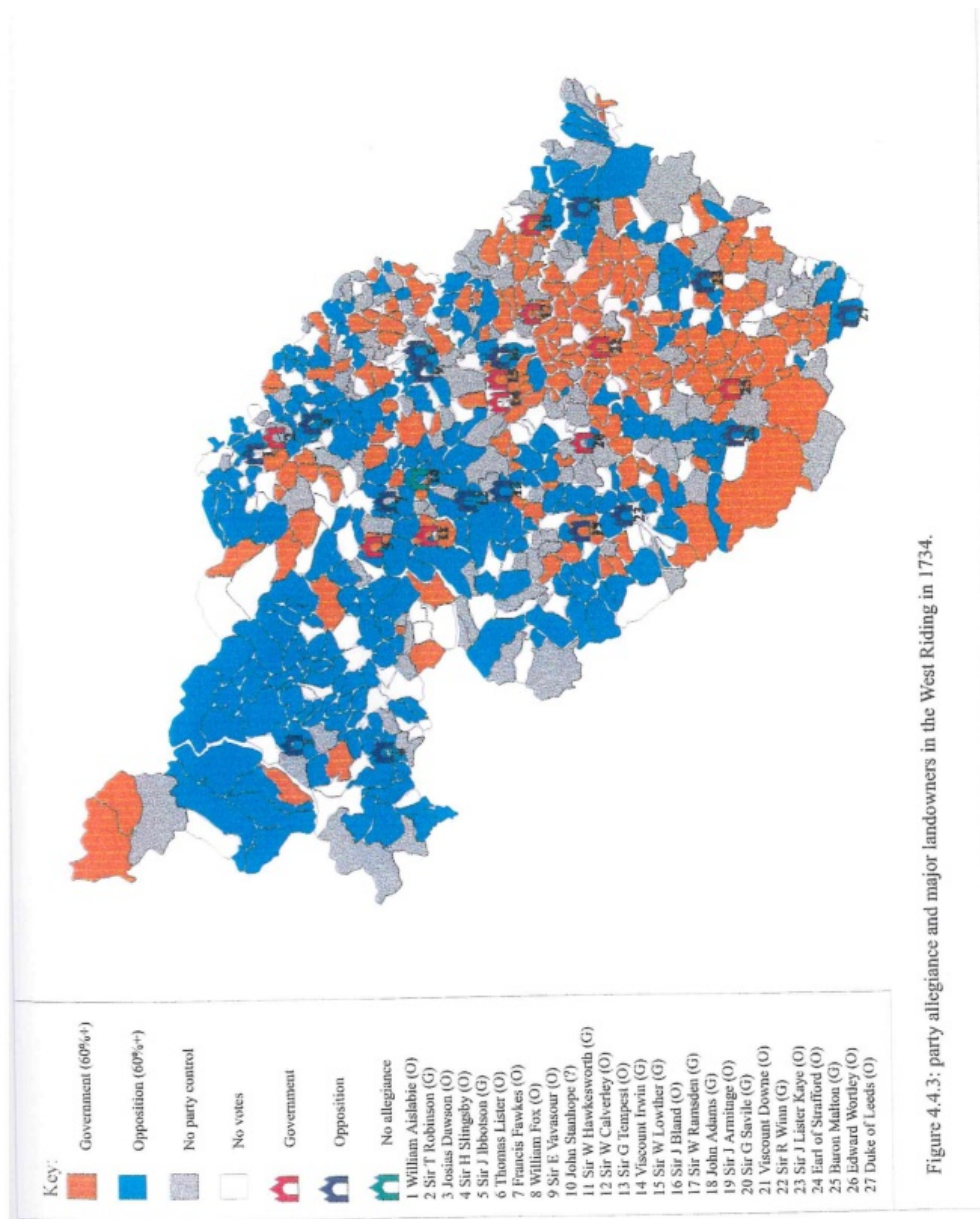


Figure 4.4.3: party allegiance and major landowners in the West Riding in 1734.

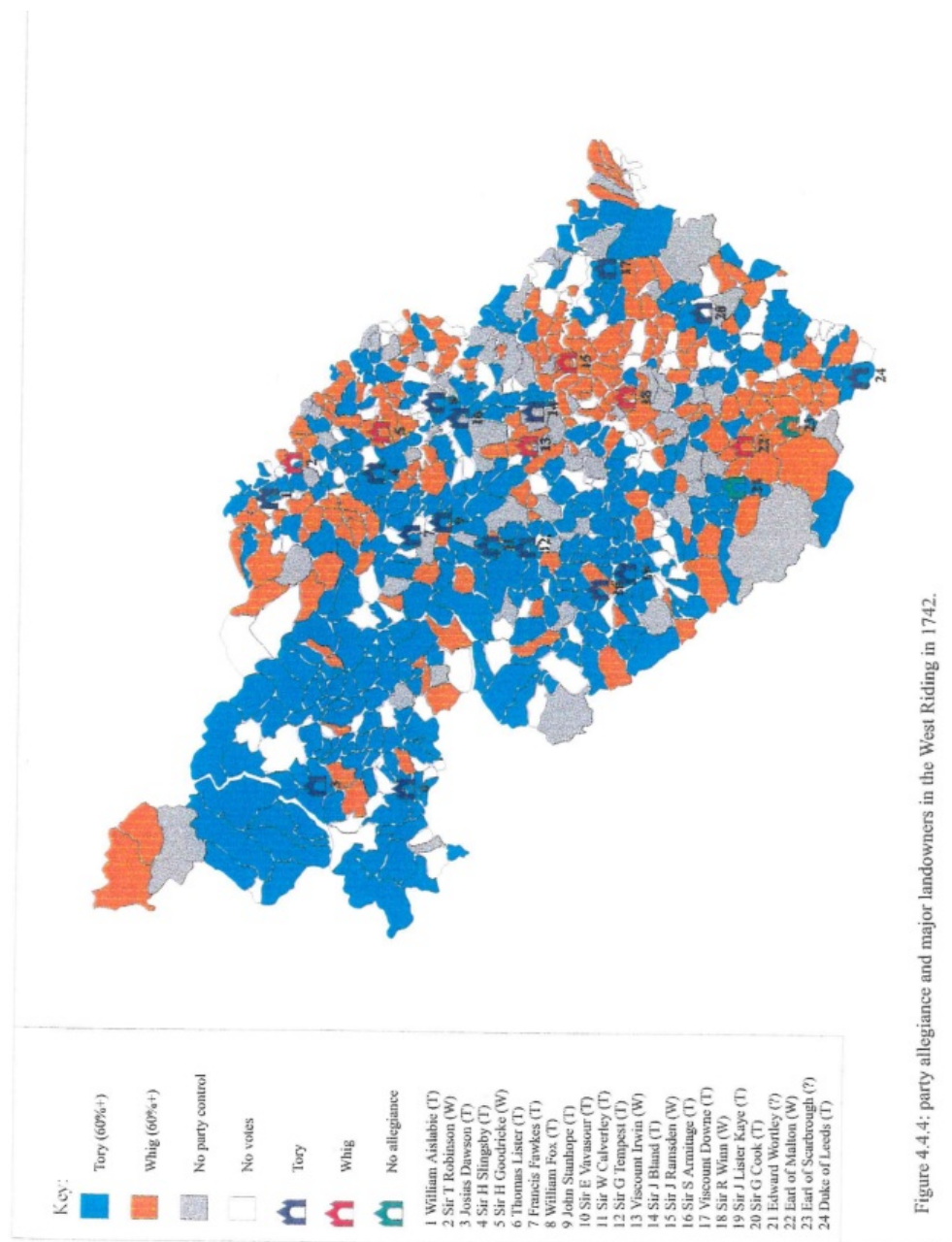


Figure 4.4.4: party allegiance and major landowners in the West Riding in 1742.

Chapter 5

Making 'Merchandize of the Souls of Men': The Politics of the Yorkshire Clergy

One group of voters at shire elections would appear to stand out both to their contemporaries and to anyone studying the pollbooks of the period; these men were the Anglican clergy. To those present in York during the vote, a phalanx of clerics could prove an impressive sight. Certainly at the Sacheverell poll of 1710 it was reported that 'the Dean with a great body of clergy voted for Downes and Kay, the Church Party candidates.'⁴⁴⁷ The role of religion, and hence the appearance of the clergy, was a cornerstone of the party differences of Anne's reign; moreover, to many voters its influence continued into the Hanoverian period.

Similarly for the psephologist, the clergy are an important factor in eighteenth century politics; they offer the chance to investigate a specific section of the electorate that is easily identifiable.⁴⁴⁸ The pollbooks for the period 1708-42 style clerical voters as 'chr' or 'cl', or occasionally and more usefully, in the case of the 1727 pollbook, 'Vicar'. Thus, it ought to be a simple matter to distil these men from the records and deduce their wider political motives. For whom did they cast their votes and why did they do so?

The only other statistical attempt to look at the politics of Yorkshire clergy in the eighteenth century was a brief calculation

⁴⁴⁷ B.L. Add. (Portland) 70421, f. 321, Dyer, 24 Oct. 1710.

⁴⁴⁸ There are methodological problems that are enlightened by an investigation of the clergy. These are detailed in Appendix V, pp. 414-6.

of voting behaviour based on the 1734 and 1742 pollbooks. However, this took no account of who these clerics were and the nature of their patronage ties. These points were taken up by Baskerville when he looked at the political role of the Cheshire clergy. He wrote that 'Without such additional data and analysis, we may know in broad outline what happened to the votes of some members of the Hanoverian clergy, but we cannot hope to explain why.'⁴⁴⁹

A closer inspection of the pollbooks alongside institution and visitation records allows one to pin-point each cleric in his benefice;⁴⁵⁰ to locate his status as vicar, rector, perpetual or stipendiary curate or as a dissenting minister and then to locate his patron and that person's interests. Can strong influences be seen at work within the religious fray of Augustan England? How many clergymen felt the need to turn out to vote after the Hanoverian succession? Can any motives for polling be unearthed? A study of the clergy reflects a complex web of influence at work, which mirrored the wider political arena of county society, giving insights into questions of deference and participation, turnout and turnover that affect our view of those who voted.

This complexity is increased because of the size and nature of the diocese of York, which covered 903 parishes in Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire and Durham. Herring's visitation of 1743 was the

⁴⁴⁹ Adman *et al*, NH, XXI, 168-74; S.W. Baskerville, 'The Political Behaviour of the Cheshire Clergy, 1705-52', NH, XXIII (1987), 75.

⁴⁵⁰ The pollbooks cited in Chapter 4, p. 171, n. 1, have been utilised for the study of the clergy alongside the following: B.I.H.R., Institution Act Books 8-12; *ibid.*, Visitation Books, V1698/Exh.Bk and V.1717-9/Exh.Bk; Archbishop Herring's Visitation Returns York Diocese, 1743, eds S.L. Ollard and P.C. Walker, YASRS, LXXI, LXXII, LXXV (Wakefield, 1928). I am grateful to the staff of the Institute who were exceedingly helpful.

most thorough of any in the first half of the century; the visitations of Sharp, Dawes and Blackburn did not enquire into parish society in the same depth or with the same level of participation as Herring's. Thus it is difficult to gauge the level of pluralism and the strength of turnout at the polls from the clerical body before the 1742 poll. The 1743 visitation had 836 returns from 711 clerics; in 393 cases they were non-resident and 335 were pluralists. However, many jurisdictions existed in the diocese; some parishes were located in the four Deaneries of the Archdeaconry of Richmond in the diocese of Chester; others came under the peculiar jurisdictions of the Minster of Ripon or of the Bishop of Durham. Beyond this, many clerics paid a stipend to a curate who also polled. These factors add to the variety of interests among the clerics and make turnout and individual ideology difficult to quantify.⁴⁵¹

'The principles of the Church of England'

The religious ideology of the eighteenth century was crucial to the strength of the political parties. Anne's reign saw the most heated concentration of political activity, with religion as a major factor. With the accession of Queen Anne, the clergy and their supposed political vehicle, the Tory party, saw a monarch who would give the Established Church the support they felt it needed, after the upheaval of the 1688 Revolution and the Toleration Act which had severely discomfited many of them. The Queen believed that 'I know the principles of the Church of England and

⁴⁵¹ Herring's Visitation Returns, LXXI, ix-xiii; for turnout see below, pp. 272-6.

I know those of the Whigs; and it is that and no other reason which makes me think as I do of the last.'⁴⁵² The division of high politics seemed to consist of a dichotomy between the Tory high-church and Whig low-church parties. The Sub-Dean of York, William Pearson, wrote to the Tory Archbishop, John Sharp, that 'I should be glad to find their Parties taking any other Badge to distinguish themselves by than that nonsensical one of High-Church and Low-Church which has done us so much mischief.'⁴⁵³ Although specifically referring to Scotland, Pearson's comments mirrored those of the Yorkshire Antiquary Ralph Thoresby, who wished he could have 'all distinctions laid aside.'⁴⁵⁴

. This religious fracture was hardened by the Whig impeachment of the Tory divine Dr Sacheverell. This perceived attack on the very ideological fabric of the Church was the one factor which ensured the Tory landslide at the 1710 poll. Within Yorkshire this election saw the two Tory candidates garner well over 6,000 votes each whilst the only Whig who could be persuaded to stand mustered fewer than 3,000.⁴⁵⁵ One contemporary noted that 'Had they [the Church party or Tories] made less of an appearance of contempt the modest partys of their own church would have better liked them.' Moreover, he added, the Whig candidate Sir William Strickland, was 'a true Church of England man',⁴⁵⁶ despite being painted as the opposite. This

⁴⁵² Queen Anne quoted in N. Sykes, Church and State in England in the XVIIIth Century (Cambridge 1934), p. 36.

⁴⁵³ Leeds University, Brotherton Library, Pearson Papers, MS. Dep 1989/1/5, Wm Pearson to Archbishop Sharp, 5 Jan. 1709.

⁴⁵⁴ Atkinson, Ralph Thoresby the Topographer, II, Thoresby to John Toland, 12 Oct. 1715, 273.

⁴⁵⁵ The final tallies were Viscount Downe 6,659, Sir Arthur Kaye 6,412 and Sir William Strickland 2,910; see Bodl., MS Willis 9, f. 159.

⁴⁵⁶ York City Library, Hammond's Diary.

indicated that there were moderates among the clergy. However, the staunch Tory Sir Charles Duncombe had welcomed Sacheverell to his home near Richmond in 1710,⁴⁵⁷ and his attitude may have affected that of his nominee at Helmsley, Richard Leake. Leake had split his votes in 1708; whether he would have been allowed this liberty in 1710 is unlikely.

Such moderation was an impossible dream for many clerics, for whom the notion of the 'Church in Danger' from the Whigs was a persuasive argument. At the visitation of 1695 the Archdeacon of York, Knightly Chetwood had railed against Whig-inspired 'dissenters coming in unto the blessed Church of England.'⁴⁵⁸ What the Tories wanted was a Church untainted by either Dissent or Catholicism; thus they could quite happily back the monarch, be it through signing the Association to William III in June 1696, or through allegiance to Anne. As long as the Church of England was untainted in its purity they had no complaints. The Whig belief was that the Tories were a mere step away from reasserting non-resistance as a political creed and in reverting to the succession of the exiled Catholic, James Stuart. The Reverend Richard Stretton wrote to Ralph Thoresby in March 1710 that 'All the Papists, priests and Jesuits in town [London], are zealous for Dr Sacheverell.'⁴⁵⁹ By implication the Tories and high-church prelates were tarred with the same brush and the general election that followed in October kept the religious ill-feeling on the boil. Indeed two months after this contest Thoresby informed the

⁴⁵⁷ G.S. Holmes, The Trial of Dr Sacheverell (1973), p. 240.

⁴⁵⁸ 'The Diary of Abraham de la Pryme', ed. C. Jackson, Surtees Society Publications, 54 (1870), 58.

⁴⁵⁹ Thoresby Diary, I, 233, Rev. Richard Stretton to Thoresby, 9 Mar. 1710.

Reverend John Strype about 'the present ferment, which is not allayed in these parts [the North]. A gentleman of £400 per annum was barbarously slain near Hull, for arguing the low church...'.⁴⁶⁰

A report from 1702 had contended that,

at an Election in Yorkshire, in the midst of poleing, stood up a fellow who ball'd out as loud as he was able, 'I publish the banes of Matrimony between the Church of England and the Church of Rome, if any person knows a lawfull impediment, let them speak'. The loudness of the speach surprised everyone, at last stood up another who forebad the banes the reason being requir'd, because the two churches are so near a kin.⁴⁶¹

This was a crude representation of the Augustan Anglican Tories as a party with crypto-Jacobite sentiments whereas in reality the Tories and Anglicans in Yorkshire were never Jacobites. The Rector of Barwick-in-Elmet, George Plaxton, saw the ties between Anglicanism and the Tories; he wrote 'God preserve us, for 'tis his arm only that can defend his Church', and he ridiculed the local Whig squire William Lowther as 'the Town's disgrace...fawning for a place.'⁴⁶² However, he supported the Church as established in law and balked at the idea of a return to Catholicism. Indeed, in 1707 he wrote to the Archbishop about Sir Thomas Gascoigne, a recusant who had recently sought shelter in his church: 'Sr Tho Gascoigne calls himself a Protestant, and so do the Independents, Quakers, Presbyterians etc. but Sr Tho like them is a Protestant of an ill Edition.'⁴⁶³

⁴⁶⁰ Atkinson, Ralph Thoresby the Topographer, II, Thoresby to Rev. John Strype, 6 Dec. 1710, 170.

⁴⁶¹ B.L. Add. 27989, f. 12, Percival Papers.

⁴⁶² 'Letters of the Reverend G.E. Plaxton', ed. E.M. Walker, TSM, XXXVII, Part 2 (Leeds, 1945), Rev. G.E. Plaxton to Richard Thornton, 9 Jan. 1710, 85; Y.A.S., Plaxton Papers, MS 1001.

⁴⁶³ Gloucestershire County Record Office, Lloyd-Baker-Sharp MSS., D3549 6/1/P17, George Plaxton to Archbishop Sharp, 23 May 1707.

Clerics like Plaxton sought a unified, strong Church of England which would not yield to the twin vices of recusancy and Dissent. They wanted honest, resident men to be given vacant livings; men who would provide a staunch Anglican lead in their parish. During Anne's reign these hopes were reflected among many of the clergy; for instance the Tory canvass of certain townships in the North Riding in 1710 found Mr Bruce, the Rector of Middleton Tyas, 'a very hearty old fellow and an utter enemy to Whiggism.' Similarly, Mr Neal, the Vicar of Northallerton, would support 'any gentleman of the Church.'⁴⁶⁴ Most important to these men was the strength of Anglicanism, and they differed from their Whig counterparts not by any spoken allegiance to the Stuart cause, although some may have desired a return of King James, but rather in their perceptions of the threat to the established order caused by the Toleration Act of 1689. They also feared the subservience of the Church to Parliament, especially the Commons who 'are commonly a company of irreligious wretches who cares nothing what they do, nor what becomes of the church and religious things, if they can but get their hawkes, hounds, and whores, and the sacred possessions of the church.'⁴⁶⁵

This final point was driven home for many Tories after the Hanoverian succession when they saw their church under threat from a foreign Protestant Prince and his low-church Whig advisers; thus they attacked the nature of preferment and ideology in church and state. The Address at the beginning of the Convocation of 1741 summed up the public side of the Whig ecclesiastical cause; it called upon God to 'support and defend our

⁴⁶⁴ B.L. Add. 24612, f. 15, 'Notes from a Canvassing Book...'.
⁴⁶⁵ Jackson, Surtees Society Publications, 54, 16 Sep. 1697, 150.

holy Religion, as by the laws of the Realm now happily established in the Church of England.'⁴⁶⁶ It also re-iterated support for the House of Hanover. For many Tories this public face hid a more devious plan; they saw the Whig lay hierarchy and episcopacy as subverting the Church's true design by increasing the toleration of non-conformity and smothering the spiritual and temporal roles of Anglicanism.

Many clerics perceived this smothering as being enabled by an increase in careerists. One pamphlet stated of the average Bishop that 'the fleece is all he wants, the flock may wander where they list.' The average Cathedral Chapter talked of God 'for whose Honour they Pretend to meet', whilst a scenario was painted of the general preferment of 'friends and creatures.'⁴⁶⁷ For those in opposition to the establishment this pointed to an attack on the faith of the public. The Curate of Hunslet, present at a meeting of clergy at *The Angel Inn* in Leeds in the 1750s, decried the fact that 'all clergymen [met], and yet not one word of spiritual things among us.'⁴⁶⁸ To many this was the unacceptable face of a latitudinarian Church policy.

One result of this was the suspension of Convocation after 1717. Although Bishop Atterbury had failed to gain support for his high-church plans in 1710, because of a co-operation between both high and low-church divines, Convocation was still seen as an important factor in the running of the Anglican machinery.

⁴⁶⁶ B.L. Add. 32690, f. 401, 'The Humble Address of the Archbishop, Bishops of the Province of Canterbury in Convocation Assembled,' (n.d., 1741).

⁴⁶⁷ B.I.H.R., Bishopthorpe Papers, Archbishop Blackburn's papers, Bp. C&P III/8/1, 'The Anatomy of a Modern B----p etc.' (date removed.).

⁴⁶⁸ The curate of Hunslet, quoted by R.G. Wilson, 'Georgian Leeds', in D. Fraser ed., A History of Modern Leeds (Manchester, 1980), p. 34.

After 1717, as Bishop Warburton of Gloucester put it, 'to have laws framed and modelled solely by the State, and (without previous communication) imposed on the Church, is making of it the meanest and most abject of all the State's creatures.'⁴⁶⁹ Many clerics feared that the autonomy of the Church was lost and that the secular heads of state would come to dominate it.

One nominally Whig cleric, William Bowman, the Vicar of Dewsbury, attacked the state of religious belief among the clergy and was suspended on a basic income for a sermon he preached at Wakefield in 1731. In his printed speech he declared that

Nothing then can excuse an ambitious Priesthood, who tamper with the consciences of Men, who preach up Doctrines unknown to the Scriptures, and make void the Commandment of God by their Tradition; who have more regard to their own Greatness, than the Salvation of those to whom they preach, and who prefer their authority over, not their care of, the Churches.⁴⁷⁰

Had Bowman not had the pamphlet printed he may have got away with his less than flattering sentiments towards the Whig hierarchy. However, a prolonged dispute took place as he was suspended from a living in the presentation of the Crown. In 1727 and 1742 he voted Whig, however in 1734 he could or would not poll; his defiance of ecclesiastical authority saw him become the living representation of the irreligion that the Tories saw pervading the state. Bowman himself protested his innocence and begged forgiveness; he had no desire to become a martyr, more especially as the Whigs declared that he had offended 'the whole

⁴⁶⁹ N. Sykes, From Sheldon to Secker, (Cambridge, 1959), p. 65.

⁴⁷⁰ B.I.H.R., Bishopthorpe Papers, Archbishop Blackburn's papers, Bp. C&P III/8/2, William Bowman, 'A Sermon Preached at the Visitation Held at Wakefield, 25 June 1731.'

body of the clergy.' However, it took until 1736 for him to recover his living when he recanted in front of several clerics, both Tory and Whig.⁴⁷¹

The Tories would see this persecution for the sake of conscience as typical of the godless society the Whigs were creating; that a Whig vicar in a prominent manufacturing area should agree indicates that not all clerics were time-servers or unaware of their higher duties. In 1740 Bowman's son, another Whig cleric, produced a pamphlet that attacked 'The Imposture of Methodism' and the nature of this new Dissent.⁴⁷² Clearly some Whigs were cool towards Toleration and the view of the Church that the episcopacy held. On the other hand, some Whigs still feared the appearance of Tory divines of 'such coercive sentiments and misguided zeal, [who will not] ever think the Church out of Danger so long as their great grievance, the Toleration act, is subsisting.'⁴⁷³

There is no doubt that many clerics saw political animals struggling for control of the vehicle of their faith. That their faith was strong is not in question; Mather has written that 'English Churchmanship of the Georgian epoch was 'Higher' in a spiritual sense than is commonly supposed'; similarly Ollard noted that the bulk of Yorkshire's clergy were 'conscientious and dutiful'.⁴⁷⁴ However, these men were divided in how they thought

⁴⁷¹ Ibid., Bp. C&P III/8/7, Wm Bowman to Archbishop Blackburn, 8 Sep. 1731; *ibid.*, Bp. C&P III/8/16, Samuel Hayter to Dr (Robert) Taylor, 25 June 1736.

⁴⁷² Lumb, *TSM*, XXVI, no. 761, 2-9 Sep. 1740, 88.

⁴⁷³ B.L. Add. 33344, f. 86, 'An Appeal to the Reason and Conscience of all True Englishmen' (Mr Curteis to the Duke of Newcastle, 19 Nov. 1733).

⁴⁷⁴ F.C. Mather, 'Georgian Churchmanship Reconsidered: Some Variations in Anglican Public Worship, 1714-1830', *Journal of*

the interests of the Church would best be served. Neither Whig nor Tory parsons were particularly enamoured of the Stuarts or wanted a Restoration. Beyond that point, issues of time-serving and patronage, as well as faith and duty, come into play. These affected the way in which clerics acted once they entered the political stage.

Clerical voting patterns

At the four polls of 1708, 1727, 1734 and 1742 the number of voters who were noted as being clergymen were 146, 208, 393 and 346 respectively; from the nominal record linkage of the pollbooks these values become 146, 256, 422, 371.⁴⁷⁵ The increase in numbers between elections matched the overall increase in the voter rate at the elections; however, the proportion of clerics in the overall number of voters rose from 1.5 per cent in 1708 to 2.7 per cent in 1734. The excise issue and the strength of the opposition to the government made the 1734 election a heated event; it is perhaps unsurprising that the by-election of 1742, with no such issue at the fore, attracted fewer clergy to the polls, although other ideological and logistical problems may have played a part in this decrease.

In all 783 different clerics polled during this time; 468 (59.8 per cent) voted once, whilst 315 (40.2 per cent) polled two or more times. This suggests a high turnover of clerical voters, although many of those who polled only once could have polled

Ecclesiastical History, 36, No. 2 (1985), 282; Herring's Visitation Returns, LXXI, xxiii.

⁴⁷⁵ The analysis that follows will be based on these latter figures. See Appendix V, pp. 414-7.

twice had they so desired, since they held their benefices across more than one poll. Of those who only voted once, 181 (38.7 per cent) were Tories or Opposition voters, 242 (51.7 per cent) Whigs or Government voters, forty-two (9.0 per cent) gave cross-party votes and three (0.6 per cent) gave votes for the Independent Whig in 1708. Of those voting more than once seventy (22.2 per cent) were Tories or Opposition men, 181 (57.5 per cent) were consistent Whig or Government voters, whilst sixty-four (20.3 per cent) switched sides or split in 1734. Thus there was a high level of party activity, alongside a differentiated religious and political ideology, among the clerics, which would be expected due to their position in society.

Of the 783 clerics, the bulk were perpetual curates, rectors or vicars. Only sixty-six (8.4 per cent) were stipendiary curates; there were 632 (80.7 per cent) perpetuals, made up of 156 perpetual curates, with 203 rectors and 273 vicars. Fourteen were schoolmasters and seven held prebendal stalls or were doctors of divinity who did not appear to poll for their benefice. Of the other sixty-five, three were Quakers and three Presbyterians, whilst ten were mere deacons not yet ordained as priests. These men did not have benefices and would have voted by right of land held in the shire. In the pollbooks these men were simply noted as 'Cl'; utilising other sources it becomes clear that this small section of the clergy (2.6 per cent) had not been instituted to a benefice at the time of polling.⁴⁷⁶ For example, Stephen Newton of Sheffield voted for the Government candidates in 1734 by right of a freehold in Sheffield; by 1742 he had been ordained priest and

⁴⁷⁶ See B.I.H.R., Institution Act Books 8-12; *ibid.*, Visitation Books, V1698/Exh.Bk and V.1717-9/Exh.Bk; also the Institute's card index of clerics; Herring's Visitation Returns, LXXI, LXXII, LXXV.

instituted as curate at Brotherton by the Dean and Chapter, and he voted for the Whig, Cholmley Turner, by right of that living. Similarly, twenty-eight men were outvoters who had land in Yorkshire but were clerics elsewhere, and therefore it is more difficult to locate the influences on them. The extent to which their patrons affected their votes has to be balanced against the fact that they must have voted by right of their own property.

In all, forty-eight (6.1 per cent) clerics could not be found by utilising the Visitations and Institution Act Books; whilst these men remain enigmatic they ought not affect the overall study of the clergy as a group and conclusions can still be drawn about the role of patronage and independence. However, that clearly demarcated records are available for the study of the clergy, who are in this way a privileged group, and still 6 per cent of them remain elusive shows the difficulty of identifying individuals from over three centuries ago.

Most of the clergy were identified as Oxbridge graduates;⁴⁷⁷ however, Cambridge provided 481 (61.4 per cent) to Oxford's eighty-four (10.7 per cent). St John's College Cambridge was well represented with 178 (22.7 per cent) men, whilst another 118 (15.1 per cent) were from Trinity and Christ's, Cambridge. Most of the men were well-educated or at least 'literate' (thus they could read and write Latin), with only fifty-five (7.0 per cent) not called 'literate' where they were identified in the diocesan records, and only fifty-seven (7.3 per cent) whose education could not be established.

⁴⁷⁷ See, Alumni Cantabrigienses, part 1, To 1751, 4 vols, eds J. Venn and J.A. Venn (Cambridge, 1922-26); Alumni Oxonienses, (1500-1714), 2 vols, ed. J. Foster (reprint, Germany, 1968); Catalogue of Graduates of the University of Edinburgh, Faculties of Arts, Divinity and Law (Edinburgh, 1858).

That so many men went to Oxbridge at around the same time did not appear to lend itself to any wider generational or environmental split in terms of politics. A report from *The Leeds Mercury* of 20 April 1736 informed 'The Gentlemen educated at St John's College in Cambridge', that 'the Anniversary York Meeting on 6 May, to celebrate the Memory of their Founders, will be this year held at the Black-Swan in Wakefield'. Moreover, it was hoped that this meeting would 'maintain and strengthen their good Institution.'⁴⁷⁸ However, any loyalty towards their *alma mater* did not necessarily install political unanimity; of the 178 clerics from St John's Cambridge, 100 were Whigs, but a large number gave split or Opposition votes. Lord Malton presented seven men between 1708 and 1742, of these four were from his Cambridge college, St John's, and two from Christ's, Cambridge. These men naturally followed Malton's party lead, but it is not possible to talk of many colleges as breeding grounds for a particular political party from these results. Trinity Cambridge was an exception, for of its sixty-three graduates who moved into a Yorkshire living, fifty-one were Whigs and only seven Tories. Similarly, from the Presbyterian University at Edinburgh came twelve Whigs and two Tories. Most colleges followed the split highlighted at Brasenose Oxford from whence there were seven Whigs, five Tories and five non-party voters. Overall the clerics were well-educated men, but their colleges, whilst having slight majorities of Whigs, still provided graduates who were not institutionalised political cannon fodder.

The bulk of the clerics lived on the benefice they voted for; only 199 (25.4 per cent) did not. Of these, forty-three were

⁴⁷⁸ Lumb, *TSM*, XXIV, no. 549, 20 Apr. 1736, 103.

pluralists who lived on a different benefice from that for which they voted. A further 102 lived within the parish that a chapelry fell into, or in a nearby township; twenty-eight were outvoters. Although thirty-one men lived in York or in large towns like Beverley and Leeds, only six lived above ten miles from their benefice; from these figures it may be possible to argue a strong case for local clerical influence. A minimum of 227 (29.0 per cent) of the clerics were pluralists, and the bulk of these men held other livings of their own patron or similarly politically inclined patrons. For example, Trinity College Cambridge added Whitchurch Vicarage to their living of Kellington to which Daniel Hopkins already ministered.

The 1708 poll produced seventy-four (50.7 per cent) Tory clerics, forty-nine of whom gave double votes; twenty-six (17.8 per cent) gave Whig votes and eleven of these were doubles; forty-two (28.8 per cent) voters split their votes, with sixteen favouring the two most prominent candidates, the standing Whig M.P. Sir William Strickland and the Tory Viscount Downe, whilst twenty cast votes for Downe and the Independent Whig, Thomas Watson Wentworth. In terms of votes cast the Tories were on stronger ground at this time among the clergy. However, there were well over 400 livings in Yorkshire, thus the turnout of 146 was relatively low; also the number of overt Tory voters was too low to support any claim that they were a bedrock of the Tory party at the polls. Their ideological influence may have been wider, but without a pollbook for the contentious election of 1710, any analysis of the role of the Augustan clergy has to be based on the 1708 poll. In terms of clerical turnout in Yorkshire

in 1708 there is little statistical evidence to give credence to the belief that the Tories dominated the clergy; many voters clearly abstained for reasons of their own.

Of the 146 voters, fifteen (10.3 per cent) were nominees of the Tory, Archbishop Sharp, and thirteen of these gave one of their votes to Lord Downe whilst six polled for Downe and Strickland; surprisingly only one gave a double Tory vote. A further nineteen (13.0 per cent) were promoted by the Crown or government, and whilst sixteen of them cast a vote for Downe, ten gave Tory doubles. There were seventy-one (48.6 per cent) clerics with lay patrons and here the nature of patronage did not paint a strong party picture. Twenty of the patrons were Tories with sixteen nominees casting one vote for Downe, and only ten voting for the Tory partnership of Downe and Kaye. Of the fifteen clerics with lay Whig patrons, only six gave Whig votes. Amongst the other thirty-six clerics whose patrons were undecided as to their loyalty, or whose loyalties are unknown, the picture is again one of strong support for the leading Tory, Downe, and no strong party case. Overall the position of patrons and clergy was as follows:

<u>PATRON</u>	<u>TORY</u>	<u>WHIG</u>	<u>SPLIT</u>	<u>VOTED</u>
<u>SUPPORT</u>	<u>CLERICS</u>	<u>CLERICS</u>	<u>SUPPORT</u>	<u>DOWNE</u>
Split	6	3	1	8
Indep.	1	0	0	0
Tory	36	6	23	55
Whig	5	7	6	10
Unknown	15	7	16	25

Table 5.1: the party relationship between patrons and clergy at the 1708 general election.

This indicates the lack of strength of party politics at this time, for although Downe gained a substantial number of votes from the clergy, the other Tory candidate, Sir Arthur Kaye, fared relatively poorly. The number of split votes or singles amongst those clerics with Tory patrons gives little indication of a strong party cause; it also mirrors the diverse nature of voting in the wider political sphere, where the number of singles was high and where party voting was not as strong as it was to be later in the century.⁴⁷⁹ The Tories received only forty-nine doubles from the clerics (hence the votes of 33.6 per cent of these clerics). Admittedly those who polled for the Whigs formed less than a fifth of the clerical voters, and fewer than half of these gave doubles, but this also indicates the paucity of party campaigning at this time. That fifty-five (37.7 per cent) men voted in almost equal numbers for Downe alone, or with the Junto Whig, Strickland, or the Independent Whig, Watson Wentworth, does not suggest a rigid Tory party hold over the electoral conscience of the clergy.⁴⁸⁰

Only twenty-six (17.8 per cent) of these clerics returned to poll again, despite the fact that several held their benefices throughout this period. The apparent lack of enthusiasm may have been an individual matter or may have been settled at a higher level. For example, the poll of 1727 was not carried through to the end and many Tory clerics may not have made it to York; similarly, many patrons may have decided not to subsidise a trip

⁴⁷⁹ Hall, thesis, pp. 80-2.

⁴⁸⁰ This last paragraph disagrees with the stance taken in my article, 'Whig Party Fortunes in the Yorkshire County Election of 1708', NH (1996), pp. 127-8. The ideas set out in this article were based on rather minimal research into the patronage and politics of the Anglican clergy in early eighteenth century Yorkshire.

to the poll. Without surviving records for the average cleric it is impossible to substantiate individual reasoning for an abstention. Henry Plumpton, the Perpetual Curate of Snaith in the West Riding voted Tory at all four polls; his patrons were the prominent Tory landowners, the Yarburgh family. At Levisham, in the North Riding, Isaac Wykes had been Rector since 1698 on the presentation of the Etherington family who were nominally Whig; however, Wykes did not vote until 1727 when he had also become Vicar of Ebberstone and Kirby Grindalyth on the presentation of the ardent Whig Dean of York, Richard Osbaldeston. Clearly, the nature of a return to vote or the ability to turn out at all could depend heavily on the political enthusiasm of a patron.

Patrons would tend to look for like-minded men, or men who had won their favour; thus it would be unusual, though not unknown, for someone to be deliberately crossed by their nominee. However, by the 1727 election the strength of party feeling amongst patrons and their charges was increasing. Just as party organisation improved, so did the numbers of clerics turning out and their solidarity with the cause. Compared to 1708, in 1727 there was an increase of 110 clerics, to 256, who polled and of these 230 (89.8 per cent) were voting for the first time; given that the poll was cut short more may have intended to vote. At this election the Whigs mobilised considerably more support than the Tories, gaining 173 (67.6 per cent) votes as opposed to a tally of eighty-three (32.4 per cent) for their opposition. Of these men, only eighty-nine (34.8 per cent) did not poll at any other time, which was probably due to the fact that political organisation was improving and that there was less time to wait until the next poll. Moreover, there was a turnover of place as well as patron from the

1708 poll; for of the 146 places whose clerics polled at the earlier contest, thirty-seven (25.3 per cent) were not represented by a clergyman at the polls again; of these thirty had Tory clergy at the first election. Alongside the increased numbers at the polls, there was a deficit of Tories from the 1708 poll due to this turnover.

Of the 256 clerics in 1727, patrons have been identified for 240 (93.8 per cent) of them. Of these eleven were priests or deacons with no benefice, two were outvoters, two were Presbyterians and two were Quakers. For those whose patrons were found the overall position was as follows:

<u>PATRON SUPPORT</u>	<u>TORY CLERICS</u>	<u>WHIG CLERICS</u>
Tory	41	15
Whig	16	107
Unknown	19	42

Table 5.2: the party relationship between patrons and clergy at the 1727 by-election.

The strength of the Whigs was evident among the clergy at this poll and as Gertrude Savile stated, 'The malcontent clergy who were so in the late reign, now preach obedience, loyalty and unity.'⁴⁸¹ In 1727 the major increase in clerical voters came from those men with clerical patrons, be they holders of perpetual livings, members of the Dean and Chapter at York, or other Bishops. Vicars, rectors and perpetual curates were patrons of thirty-one (12.1 per cent) of those who voted, the Dean and Chapter a further seventeen (6.6 per cent) and other Bishops and Chapters eight (3.1 per cent). It was here that the number of Whig

⁴⁸¹ HMC, Savile, Gertrude Savile to Sir George Savile, 20 June 1727, 125.

votes increased substantially; the thirty-two clerical patrons who were Whigs themselves, provided a further twenty-six votes through their assistants; the eighteen Tories provided thirteen more votes for their party. With there being only two candidates, the possibility for party voting increased. Of the lay patrons, sixty-five out of ninety-six can be identified as Whig or Tory, and sixty of their nominees cast party votes akin to their own. Crown and Archiepiscopal appointees were a different matter, especially if the patron had changed. For example, fifteen of the twenty-four clerics who polled were appointed by the Tory Archbishops Sharp and Dawes; the change to a Whig, Lancelot Blackburn at Bishopthorpe Palace in 1724 may have made some of these men re-evaluate their position, for only seven of them voted for the Tory, Sir John Lister Kaye.

This poll was a watershed in the improvement of party organisation for Yorkshire elections. This was reflected in the correlation between patron and nominee voting as 82.7 per cent of clerics with partisan patrons who could be located voted in step with those patrons; that thirty-one (17.3 per cent) men did not is perhaps more surprising. Of these, sixteen were nominated by Queen Anne and the previous Tory Archbishops or their Chapters; these are the best cases for time-servers - men who tacked to the prevailing political wind. However, the Whig candidate, Cholmley Turner, was widely regarded as an independent and not a government Whig, therefore many Tory appointees may have thought him a suitable M.P.. Four men who stand out include the two nominees of George the First, both of whom voted Tory; also Joshua Goodall, Vicar of Hunsingore, who ignored his Tory patron Sir Henry Goodricke and cast his vote for Turner; similarly, the

Perpetual Curate of Rawcliffe, Charles Hall, defied Thomas Yarburch to poll for the Whig, despite having given a double for the Tories in 1708. It was possible to go against a patron's wishes, and the strength of an individual's will or local township interests may have been more important in deciding a voting intention.

In 1734, whilst almost 4,000 extra voters turned out, the clerical vote increased by 64.8 per cent to 422. This figure disagrees with the one given in the last study of this poll because that account had not considered the four men noted in the pollbook as LLD,⁴⁸² who happened to be clerics; similarly, there was no knowledge of those men who could be linked between the pollbooks, but who lacked a clerical denominator in one or more of them. Without delving deeper into the nature of the clergy it was impossible for this to have been known. The final tallies gave the Government 256 (60.7 per cent) clerical votes to the Opposition's 137 (32.5 per cent), whilst twenty-nine (6.9 per cent) clerics split. At this poll the clergy-patron link was as follows:

<u>PATRON</u>	<u>OPPOSITION</u>	<u>GOV'T</u>	<u>SPLIT</u>
<u>SUPPORT</u>	<u>CLERICS</u>	<u>CLERICS</u>	<u>SUPPORT</u>
Split	10	13	1
Opposition	57	15	6
Government	27	185	10
Unknown	34	34	12

Table 5.3: the party relationship between patrons and clergy at the 1734 general election.

Primarily the increase in numbers and consistency of party following comes from those appointed by other clerics and

⁴⁸² Adman *et al*, NH, XXI, 173.

laymen. For example, of sixty-five clerics who had secular Whig patrons, fifty-seven supported the Government party. By this time the effects of twenty years of Whig government appointments and ten years of a Whig Archbishop were creating a block of Whig followers. Sixty-nine out of ninety-three Crown and Archiepiscopal appointees were government Whigs. The number of clerics following their patron's lead in 1734 was 75.0 per cent. Of the forty-two (13.0 per cent) who disagreed with their patron and polled for the opposite party twenty-one were clerical nominees and thirteen Crown men; that only four were lay appointees indicates the strength of co-operation and the convergence of views between lay-nominees and their superiors.

At this poll 125 (29.6 per cent) were polling for the only time which reflected the energy of electioneering and the strength of feeling involved in the excise issue. These men were almost evenly split between the Government and Opposition, but it was the ability of the former to rally 174 men who had voted before, or who would vote again, that won them overall clerical support. The Opposition following was mainly from men who would only vote at this election; a mere sixty-five of their supporters had voted before or would do so again.

There were only six men who had polled in 1727, who would return to poll in 1742, but who did not vote in 1734; five were Whigs in 1727 and all but one were Whigs in 1742. Four of their patrons were laymen, with three being Whig and one with an unknown preference; the other two patrons were the Crown and the Archbishop. Quite why these men did not poll is unknown. They may have been ill or too far away to poll in 1734; alternatively they may have felt too strongly against the excise and the

Government party, but not in favour of the Opposition. They may have reflected a portion of the electorate who had no stomach to support either their natural favourites, the government Whigs, or the Opposition whom they could not favour. However, compared to those men who only voted at this election, such principled abstentions were in a minority.

At the final election of the period the Whigs increased their hold on the clerical vote and once again they enjoyed huge success amongst clerics appointed by other clergy or laymen. Half of the secular patrons were Whig, some sixty-four out of 131, and 128 of their nominees polled Whig; of the twenty-three Tories, twenty-two voted with their patron. The Archbishop's appointees and those of the Crown provided another seventy-two Whigs out of eighty-six such voters. Among clerical patrons seventy out of 112 were Whigs and fifty-six of their nominees polled the same way. The overall position was as follows:

<u>PATRON SUPPORT</u>	<u>TORY CLERICS</u>	<u>WHIG CLERICS</u>
Tory	47	16
Whig	27	189
Unknown	26	42

Table 5.4: the party relationship between patrons and clergy at the 1742 by-election.

Of the forty-three (15.4 per cent) men who voted out of step with their patrons views, twenty-seven were clerical appointees and eleven those of the Crown. That men whose livings were granted by Queen Anne or Archbishop Dawes should now vote Whig was not that unusual if they voted in deference to their new patron's Whig views.

The most unusual occurrence was that the Perpetual Curates of Crostone, Illingworth, Ripponden and South Oworm in Halifax parish, which were four of the eleven chapelries in the gift of the Whig Vicar of Halifax, George Legh, should oppose their patron. In the first part of the century the previous Vicar had not polled; he was politically inactive and at the elections of 1708 and 1727 only one curate voted, in each case voting Tory. In 1731 the Whig Archbishop wrote to Walpole declaring a need to find an incumbent favourable to whiggism, '...on account of the very great advantage it might be to His Majesty's service in the County of York if I should live to see that vicarage filled with a proper incumbent.' He supported the presentation of a low-church divine, the aforementioned Dr Legh, to overcome the negative attitude of the previous Vicar. He went on

There are in that parish eleven chapelries...in the disposal of the Vicar, all in a most disaffected corner of my diocese, fill'd with a very numerous swarm of freeholders, crowding in against us in every contest in the election of our shire knights....⁴⁸³

Legh's appointment had an immediate effect in 1734 when nine of the curates voted for the Government candidates, including the two who were previously Tories. However, in 1742 seven of these men returned to poll and only three supported the Vicar; the coolness of the other four may have reflected the fact that the Tory candidate, Fox, was a local man with extensive estates in the manufacturing districts of the West Riding. If this was the reason

⁴⁸³ Blackburn to Walpole, 2 Jan. 1731, quoted in Collyer, PLPS, VII, 59.

for the switch of votes it would show a strong correlation between local feeling or economic need and the use of the franchise.

Turnout within the shire varied across the Archdeaconries; however, for the shire as a whole in 1733, it was believed that 'above 400 clergymen have votes in this County.'⁴⁸⁴ It is unlikely that this included stipendiary curates, though it recognised the approximate number of beneficed clerics. In 1743, the three Yorkshire Archdeaconries in the Diocese of York, Cleveland, the East Riding and York, had a total of 520 clergymen working in them, with 113 being stipendiaries.⁴⁸⁵ York Archdeaconry had 211 beneficed clergy and fifty-four stipendiaries; at the 1742 poll the 138 perpetual clerics and the twenty-one stipendiaries gave turnouts of 65.4 per cent and 18.6 per cent respectively. Taking the same values for the total number of clerics and translating them to the 1734 election gives turnouts of 77.7 per cent and 17.7 per cent for the 164 beneficed clergy and twenty stipendiaries.⁴⁸⁶

In the East Riding in 1727, there were ninety-two benefices, with eleven of these held in plurality; however from these parishes only forty-five clerics (55.6 per cent) polled at York.⁴⁸⁷

⁴⁸⁴ Wentworth Woodhouse Muniments, WWM, M1, ? to Malton, 13 Nov. 1733, mic. A66.

⁴⁸⁵ Herring's Visitation Returns, LXXI, LXXII, LXXV; these returns were used to calculate the number of clergy active in the shire.

⁴⁸⁶ There was no Visitation return for 1733-4, the closest are for 1726 or 1743; both are equally as likely to give variations when compared directly to the 1734 pollbook, and as a rough guide to turnout either would suffice.

⁴⁸⁷ See the following for a list of the livings in this Archdeaconry; B.I.H.R., Archdeaconry of the East Riding, Convocation Papers 1685-1857, ER.Conv, 'Archdeaconry of the East Riding Convocation Poll List', 7 Nov. 1727, St Mary's, Beverley.

This poll was cut short by the Tories and this factor affects any importance we may place upon the number who voted. In 1734, the turnout of sixty-eight beneficed clerics and one stipendiary were 61.8 per cent and 3.0 per cent of the clerical electorate; in 1742 these proportions stood at 57.1 per cent, for the sixty beneficed clerics, and 9.1 per cent, for the three stipendiaries.

Cleveland Archdeaconry was the least populated of the Archdeaconries in terms of clerics; in 1743 it had eighty-eight perpetual clerics and twenty-four other curates. However, its turnout was larger than in the other areas, for in 1734 seventy-eight (88.6 per cent) beneficed clergy polled, alongside nine (37.5 per cent) stipendiaries. In 1742 the values were sixty-seven (76.1 per cent) beneficed clerics, and seven (29.2 per cent) stipendiaries. The fact that the popular candidates at these polls, Sir Miles Stapylton and Cholmley Turner, were from the North Riding, probably helped increase the turnout.

From the Yorkshire Deaneries of the Archdeaconry of Richmond in 1708, fourteen (20.6 per cent) perpetual clerics voted out of a possible total of sixty-eight, whereas none of the eleven stipendiaries polled. By 1727 this proportion of beneficed clergy had grown to twenty-three (29.5 per cent) out of seventy-eight clerics; there were also now four (19.0 per cent) out of twenty-one curates who polled.⁴⁸⁸ After this point in time party organisation vastly improved, and although stipendiary voters showed no increase in numbers, the number of perpetual clerics who voted rose to thirty-eight in 1734 and forty-three in 1742.

⁴⁸⁸ See, L.A.S. Butler, ed., The Archdeaconry of Richmond in the Eighteenth Century, YASRS, 146 (Leeds, 1990).

At most, however, this final figure was no more than 54 per cent of the possible electorate, which perhaps indicates the difficulty in mobilising voters to journey to York from far away. It also brings into question who was to pay for these men to travel to York. Baskerville has rightly pointed out that there was no link between a livings' value and the voting habits of its incumbent.⁴⁸⁹ Indeed, although the living of Northallerton was said to be worth £300 per annum in 1726, its Vicar did not poll at the next shire election although he could have afforded the cost. Similarly, Joseph Cookson of Leeds was said to have an income of near enough £400 a year, yet he only voted in 1734, despite holding the post of Vicar of St John's at the time of the 1727 and 1742 polls.⁴⁹⁰ This does, however, beg the question of how the poorer clergy managed to get to York. For example, the curacy of Cundall in the North Riding was worth £9 in 1726, and William Peacock, the curate, augmented his income by running Wath school which had a salary of £20. However, this was still a relatively low amount and given that he did not poll until 1742, it may well be that he had to wait until then to find someone who would stand his charges. His lay patron at Cundall was politically inactive, and his patrons at the school were five local clerics of mixed politics; it may have been a local Tory activist like Lord Aylesbury who eventually defrayed his costs. In 1742 Lord Irwin, who was running much of the Whig campaign in the East Riding, paid out £35 to the Rector of Boynton, Nicholas Wolfe.⁴⁹¹ This was

⁴⁸⁹ Baskerville, NH, XXIII, 78 n. 13.

⁴⁹⁰ HMC, Portland, 16th Report, VI, The Earl of Oxford's Journeys, 98-9, 141.

⁴⁹¹ Temple Newsam MSS., TN/PO/10/8/T883, 'Accounts of moneys spent in and about the 1741 election...on Lord Irwin's orders'.

probably meant to cover a wide set of charges, such as local treats, but may also have included Wolfe's costs at the poll itself. That his patron was the staunch Whig, Sir William Strickland, whom one would have expected to defray his charges, makes this extra income from Irwin unusual. The issue of who got the clergy to the polls is a difficult one to answer and a lack of active patrons in certain areas may account for low turnouts.

In Yorkshire the clerical turnout would appear to have been quite low in 1708 and 1727, and at the last two polls it continued to be so for stipendiary curates - which may have reflected the cost for these men of getting to York to poll or their lack of enfranchisement. The turnout of beneficed clerics in the three Archdeaconries of York Diocese in 1734 was 314 (77.1 per cent) out of 407, and of stipendiaries thirty-one (27.4 per cent) out of 113. In 1742 there was a turnout of 266 (65.3 per cent) perpetuals, and thirty-one (27.4 per cent) stipendiaries. There were clear distinctions between each Archdeaconry; York was more populous and encompassed the West Riding where many of the clergy and political managers resided, and as such it may well have been possible for more men to be mobilised. That the turnout from Cleveland was so high is more perplexing unless ideology or local landlords were more influential than usual in mobilising local incumbents.

The major factor that appears from this analysis is the poor appearance of the clergy at the polls, apart from in 1734. If one includes Richmond Archdiocese then the turnout of perpetuals was 72.0 per cent in 1734 and 63.5 per cent in 1742 - this does not

indicate a high level of political enthusiasm.⁴⁹² For example, Oliver Naylor was a non-resident rector in the East Riding, a Prebend of Lincoln, and a domestic chaplain of the Earl of Carlisle, one of the most important managers in 1734. However, neither he nor his curate, George Longmire polled at either the 1734 or 1742 elections. If these men would not poll, it is no surprise that other clerics, or even other voters, did not.

Patrons and Clerics

From these basic election results it seems clear that patrons and nominees came to see more eye to eye politically as the century wore on. Certainly most patrons would have appointed like-minded men to positions that they owned. The Tory Perpetual Curate of Snaith, Henry Plumpton has already been mentioned as a man who was secure in the support of his Tory patron at all four polls. Similarly, Jonathan Wakefield, the Rector of Lessay, was presented by the Tory M.P. Viscount Downe, and consistently polled against the Whigs. In fact, of the seventy Tory clerics who polled at more than one election, thirty were presented by Tory laymen. It could be argued that they voted consistently purely to keep their places and were time-servers; however, consistent opposition to the prevailing political tide would not gain further preferment higher up the ecclesiastical ladder, and the actions of

⁴⁹² With Richmond Archdeaconry there were a maximum of 486 perpetuals in these years. In 1734 there were 352 perpetuals who polled; in 1742 the total was 309.

these men shows a level of ideological consistency amongst at least some of the clergy.

Of the 181 consistent Whig voters, few appear to have voted in Anne's reign; most were appointed during the reigns of George I and George II, or were only prepared to vote once it became advantageous to do so. These would probably be the best candidates for time-servers in the Georgian clergy.⁴⁹³ In truth this was the case for some clerics; for example Jonathan Bradley, appointed by the Dean and Chapter to the Rectory of St Mary's in York, changed his voting habits from Tory in 1708 to Whig after 1727 in line with the metamorphosis of his patrons. Other clerics who were appointed by non-committal patrons, for instance the Rector of Linton, James Roberts, on Robert Oates' benefaction, may have had more opportunity to change their voting habits. Roberts' switch from Tory to Whig occurred over a period of nineteen years, and was a move to support a popular independent Whig.

In fact of the sixty-four clerics whose voting habits in more than one election were non-party, most were appointed by non-active patrons. It was possible that ideology or a more mature outlook may have mollified some men's views. Luke Smelt, Rector at Lastingham, was appointed by Queen Anne and voted Tory in 1727, however at the next two polls he cast for the Whigs. It is not possible to tell whether he had altered his beliefs or was affected by other interests. Without diaries or letters personal motives are difficult to assess.

It is more simple to identify men who changed voting behaviour when they moved patron and benefice. These men

⁴⁹³ Adman *et al*, NH, XXI, 173.

numbered but a handful of voters, however they do indicate a level of deference and perhaps even of corrupt views. Whilst serving as Perpetual Curate of Wheldrake during the 1734 election, John Teasdale gave a double vote for the Opposition; at this time his patron was Francis Annesley, a man who did not vote at any shire election in this period. However, prior to the next election he was presented with a living at Drax by the government, and accordingly he voted Whig in 1742. This may have been an ideological change for him, but it may also be an indication that ecclesiastical preferment was linked to a modification of views.

This last comment would seem to be born out by the voting habits of the sixty-six stipendiary curates. Of these men, fifty-four had patrons who voted during this period, and fifty-one of the curates voted in step with their patron. This may be further evidence to support the notion that it was expedient to follow a patron's lead. However, most men would choose or back a like-minded man or one who had come well-recommended, to serve a cure. Even here this may have led to a difference of opinion that did not divide a partnership; when Hollis Pigot became the Whig Vicar of Doncaster, on the presentation of the Mayor and Aldermen, he kept the previous curate, John Holmes, and did so despite the latter's divergent voting behaviour. Holmes may well have been recognised as an able and popular cleric, whatever his political leanings. In general, however, it was only natural that most stipendiaries were politically synchronised with their patrons.

Many patrons saw a great value in staking their claim to the right of presentation to a living, and in the benefits that could

accrue from it. From Sussex in 1734 one of Newcastle's managers wrote to his lord that some of the clergy were firm, but that others 'will go as enjoyn'd by their Patron.'⁴⁹⁴ This was particularly true of the lay patrons in Yorkshire who perceived advowsons as valued property. The number of caveats issued against the installation of a priest in a benefice, until a particular named party was approached, increased after Blackburn became Archbishop. At Hunslet the principal inhabitants issued a caveat after they insisted that they had the right to nominate their curate rather than the Vicar of Leeds. The fact that more caveats were noted in the Institution Act Books after 1724 may have been an administrative change; however, that nineteen caveats were issued between 1724 and 1732, and eighteen between 1733 and 1742 indicates the importance of clerical livings as property and hence political tools.⁴⁹⁵

This importance possibly increased the frequency with which both parties questioned the right of certain clerics to poll at shire elections. Several lists exist of questionable votes for the 1727 and 1742 shire polls some of which include short explanations for the rejection.⁴⁹⁶ For example, in 1727 'Thomas Gasboyn' was rejected for 'not having [his benefice] under seale.' Similarly in 1742, the vote of Robert Pearson, the Parish Clerk of Topcliffe, was cast out because he had a salary that was paid by the inhabitants and was not freehold. In fact he had voted Whig as the Perpetual Curate of Kilburne in 1734, and perhaps his change of

⁴⁹⁴ B.L. Add. 32689, f. 218, John Jenkins to Newcastle, 4 May 1734.

⁴⁹⁵ B.I.H.R., Institution Act Books 11, 11A and 12.

⁴⁹⁶ N.Y.C.R.O., Kirkleatham Hall Estate, ZK, 'Manuscript Pollbooks', mic. 1041, in particular 'A Book taken Alphabetically of all freeholders as voted at the Crown End for Sir John Kaye Bart...'; also, Spencer Stanhope MSS., SpSt/11/5/3/20, objections to the 1742 poll.

heart in 1742 gave umbrage to some of the freeholders. Other parish clerks and curates were rejected or questioned as having 'no freehold' or for being a 'stipendiary substitute'. Clerics who were schoolmasters also faced problems; for example Mr Langstaff at Dacre, who voted for Turner in 1742, was said to teach 'for a sallary' which consisted of 'a copyhold in Knaresbrough forest' and was not freehold. Over the two elections nineteen clerical voters were rejected or queried; of these four had voted before or would do so again for the same living. Were they just the unlucky ones who were found out at these polls? Accepting that in general a clerical living was freehold, and that local customs are difficult to locate for the clergy as a whole, the bulk of the voting clerics were probably legitimate. However, the clerics were no more a privileged body than the freeholders at large when it came to the machinations of party manoeuvring to gain extra votes.⁴⁹⁷

Party strategy was the most important factor in mobilising voters, especially among the lay patrons, who were a sizeable number in Yorkshire. Hirschberg has calculated that in the York diocese, out of 810 livings, 40.5% were in the gift of the establishment - the Crown or the Church. Of the rest, 42.1% were presented by private sources, 4.7% by Oxbridge colleges and 12.7% by 'other' patrons.⁴⁹⁸ In terms of the perpetual curates, rectors and vicars who polled in Yorkshire, the totals are summarised in the following table.

⁴⁹⁷ See Chapter 3, pp. 161-2, for an analysis of the clergy whose votes were petitioned against in 1734.

⁴⁹⁸ D.R. Hirschberg, 'Government and Church patronage in England, 1660-1760', *Journal of British Studies*, XX (1980), 113.

<u>PATRON</u>	<u>PER CUR</u>	<u>RECTOR</u>	<u>VICAR</u>
Crown	12	50	43
Clergy	89	22	118
Laity	49	126	96
College	0	5	17
Other	5	0	0

Table 5.5: the patronage of the perpetual clerical voters in Yorkshire.

Thus, the Crown presented to 16.6 per cent of perpetual livings, the clergy to 36.2 per cent, the laity to 42.9 per cent and colleges to 3.5 per cent. If we include stipendiary curates, the totals alter so that the clergy nominated 42.3 per cent and the laity 38.8 per cent, with the Crown at 15.0 per cent.⁴⁹⁹

However, it is more useful to look at the nature of patronage at a lower level. Among the laity who nominated clerics most were nobles or upper gentry, be they baronets, esquires or self-styled 'gentleman'. Certain men nominated to several benefices, for instance, Lord Malton appointed seven men. Similarly, the Whig Earl of Holderness nominated six and the Tory Marquis of Aylesbury nominated four. Other leading gentry figures were prominent; Sir Charles Hotham presented five men and the Whig candidate, Cholmley Turner a further five. Ten laymen also had chaplains who polled, six were Whigs and four Tories, and all these men voted as the political allegiances of their patrons dictated.⁵⁰⁰ It is probable that more of these clerics were chaplains of the gentry, although this is difficult to ascertain from the sources. Such men would have been appointed by like-minded

⁴⁹⁹ There were sixty-six stipendiaries, all nominated by clerics.

⁵⁰⁰ Baskerville argues that chaplains were more sensitive than most to their patrons needs; see, Baskerville, *NH*, XXIII, 75.

patrons and, if they voted, it was likely that their political views would converge with those of their patron.

By and large the patronage was well dispersed; 209 different individuals or groups of people dispensed the 282 lay presentations. The antiquary, Browne Willis was informed by the Precentor of York, John Richardson, in 1722, that 'the Patronages have been much altered.'⁵⁰¹ Purchases and leases did cloud the question of clerical patronage, especially among the laity. Four were in the gift of freeholders, including the schoolmasterships of Hemsworth and Shipton, and the readership at Sedbergh. In these instances a compromise between the town and cleric may well have operated to the satisfaction of all concerned. However, of the 282 clerics with lay patrons, 169 were presented by people with a clear-cut party allegiance; 137 of these clerics gave votes in step with, and only twelve voted against, their benefactor.

Individual patrons would certainly try hard to obtain livings for friends or suitable men, even before the present incumbent had died or resigned. For example, Viscount Irwin wrote to Newcastle in support of Mr Hitch, for the Rectory of Felchurch. He stated that Hitch 'made us many friends in a Part of the county where most of the Gentlemen, I believe I may say all, are professed Jacobites.' A few months later Irwin promoted the virtues of Mr Draper to become the Dean of Middleham, as opposed to Mr Place of Bedall who already 'has one of the best livings in the County and is in very good circumstances, it can be no great disappointment to him if he misses [out at Middleham]'.⁵⁰²

⁵⁰¹ Bodl., MS Willis 35, f. 2, John Richardson to Browne Willis, 18 Aug. 1722.

⁵⁰² B.L. Add. 32698, f. 325, Irwin to Newcastle, 16 Nov. 1741; B.L. Add. 32699, f. 103, Irwin to Newcastle, 10 Mar. 1742.

However, patronage alone was not always enough to gain a living, especially whilst the conscientious Sharp and Dawes were incumbent at Bishopthorpe. In 1700, Sharp wrote to the Duke of Leeds that,

In this particular recommendation of Mr Ferrand to Vicar of Wakefield in case Mr Lee should die, I do most earnestly beg of yor Grace not to lay yor commands upon me: for if you will give me leave to speak my sense freely, I do much doubt whether he have all the Qualifications necessary for the discharge of so great and difficult a post.⁵⁰³

Clearly some livings were too important to simply give to the highest bidder.

The clerical patronage of those who polled can be broken down in terms of the church hierarchy, into high and low. The former encompasses the Archbishop as well as the Dean and Chapter, both of York and of other sees; the latter includes those curates that were appointed by individual parish clerics. Three Archbishops were in place between 1708 and 1742 and their political and spiritual outlooks varied. John Sharp was Archbishop from 1691 to 1714 and although noted as 'exceeding strict, religious and pious', he was also 'humble, affable and kind.'⁵⁰⁴ Sharp was Queen Anne's closest clerical confidant and had been one of her chaplains. A high-church man, he promoted the spiritual views of the Tory Party without giving them overt support at the polls, despite claims to the contrary. For example, in 1702 Lady Russell complained that he was 'guilty of some

⁵⁰³ Gloucestershire County Record Office, Lloyd-Baker-Sharp MSS., D3549 6/1/L5, Sharp to the Duke of Leeds, 19 Jun. 1700.

⁵⁰⁴ Jackson, Surtees Society Publications, 54, 6 May 1698, 178.

prevarication' in not coming out in support of Lord Hartington at the shire election, Sharp replied that he would 'never disserve them [Sir John Kaye and Thomas Watson Wentworth] by espousing an interest against them.'⁵⁰⁵ However, Sharp never gave wholehearted public support or meddled in any county election. He was also one of the major mediating forces who managed to defeat Atterbury's virulent high-church platform at the Convocation of 1711. Sharp was a politically mild yet spiritually staunch Anglican, a man who promoted the able and committed.

As such, on his death bed, Sharp nominated his successor, the equally staunch Anglican Sir William Dawes, Bishop of Chester. Dawes was regarded as the leading preacher of his day, a devout Anglican who would shore up Yorkshire Toryism for ten years. However, this period also coincided with a nadir in the electoral activity of the shire and as a result his political activity and influence cannot be assessed. He was succeeded by a Whig, Lancelot Blackburn, who was Archbishop from 1724-43. Blackburn was less of a spiritual leader but sat well with Whig aspirations in the county. He visited York only once in 1726-7, during his primary visitation, and made ordinations in three summer months a year at Bishopthorpe Palace until 1733, when he no longer came into the diocese.

Unlike his predecessors, Blackburn worked with the Whig political hierarchy of Yorkshire, thus much of the patronage of the establishment was geared up to support the Whig or Government party. In 1733, he wrote to Malton stating that 'I shall not give myself the needless trouble of sending to such of

⁵⁰⁵ Gloucestershire County Record Office, Lloyd-Baker-Sharp MSS., D3549 6/1/R16, Sharp to Lady Russell, 4 July 1702.

my charges as I know to be in your Lordships dependence', but as to the rest, 'I shall take the best care.'⁵⁰⁶ The political role of this Whig prelate was much greater than Sharp or Dawes and of the sixty-one voting clerics who were appointed by the Archbishops, Blackburn nominated thirty-four. Of these men twenty-nine were Whig voters; this is a much higher ratio of convergence than for Sharp's and Dawes' appointees. However, Sharp lived through a period of weaker party control and was himself not a political activist, and Dawes was not alive during any contests. Also, as the hierarchy altered its political colours, many lower clergy changed their voting habits out of ideological reasoning or because they had no wish to go against the prevailing tide of whiggism.

The other major source of hierarchical control was provided by the Dean and Chapter. As early as 1709 the Earl of Nottingham complained to Sharp that the Chapter at Lincoln nominated to livings by lot and were busy making 'merchandize of the souls of men.'⁵⁰⁷ The Chapter at York was not seen in this light but it did control many livings, and fifty-eight men voted under its patronage. However, the Chapter were not in themselves particularly active at elections; moreover the Dean and Chapter did not always see eye to eye. The Dean was a Crown appointee whilst the Prebends were appointed by the Archbishop and this could lead to problems. Whilst both Crown and Archbishop had a unified outlook harmony reigned; however, after Blackburn succeeded to York and appointed more Whig Prebends, the Tory

⁵⁰⁶ Wentworth Woodhouse Muniments, WWM, M1, Blackburn to Malton, 3 Nov. 1733, mic. A66.

⁵⁰⁷ Gloucestershire County Record Office, Lloyd-Baker-Sharp MSS., D3549 6/1/N22, the Earl of Nottingham to Sharp, 16 Apr. 1709.

Dean, Edward Finch, became increasingly obstreperous. He clashed with the residentiary canons over the use of the common seal and over bell-ringing. In comparison with this it was noted that upon the appointment of the Whig Richard Osbaldeston as Dean, 'in most matters he was rarely opposed.'⁵⁰⁸ Osbaldeston was a major landowner in the East Riding and rector in four parishes. He was tutor and Chaplain to George I, II and III and was later to become Bishop of Carlisle. As a constant supporter of the government he was joined by more Whigs in the Chapter as the century wore on.⁵⁰⁹

Within the Chapter the major canons with interests in Yorkshire included the Dean and Sub-Dean, the Chancellor and Precentor, three of the four Archdeacons and the twenty-two Prebends. These twenty-nine stalls were administered by 100 different men between 1708 and 1742; however, only forty-one registered votes at any of the polls of that period, with fifteen voting more than once. In 1708 those who voted were primarily Tory, however, only one out of twelve cast for the joint Tory candidates. The fact that seven polled for Downe and the independent Whig, Watson Wentworth, may indicate a desire not to waste a vote by plumping; they may have wished to vote for Downe but not to vote for the other Tory, Kaye, hence the other vote was 'dumped' on Wentworth. After 1728, when he became Dean, Osbaldeston probably organised more of the Chapter to poll, despite the fact that only four of them were resident in York at any one time. Seventeen out of twenty-one who polled in 1734

⁵⁰⁸ D.M. Owen, 'From Restoration until 1822', in G.E. Aylmer and R. Cant eds, A History of York Minster (Oxford, 1979), pp. 241-2.

⁵⁰⁹ John Le Neve, Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae, 1541-1857, vol. IV, York Diocese, ed. J.M. Horn, and D.M. Smith, (1975).

were Government party supporters and sixteen out of seventeen polled Whig in 1742. Only two men voted Tory or Opposition at the two polls - the Prebend of Knaresbrough, Thomas Lamplugh, instituted in 1712, and the Prebend of Strensall, Samuel Brearey, instituted in 1722. They also held livings in the diocese which the previous Tory Archbishops had presented them to, and these were the freeholds which they voted for. Their ideologies, it seems, were more important to them than the beliefs of the far-off Chapter who did not contribute to their election expenses and could not evict them.

Although most of the Chapter turned to the Whig cause this does not mean that they were any less avowed in their faith. Willis noted that Sharp had only appointed Prebends 'such as had lived in his diocese and had recommended themselves by doing their duties in their parochial cures.'⁵¹⁰ Later Archbishops were beset by applications for preferment, but many Prebends still resided on their cures and administered the creed. Curtis stated how the Dean and Chapter were 'a crowd of vicars and mean curates' and that they were 'a faction which could better persuade men to loyalty than virtue, and ranged themselves more formidably against political opposition than against heresy itself.'⁵¹¹ To an extent this holds some truth; Osbaldeston for one certainly sought, found and bestowed favours. However, it would be wrong to insist that the accession of the House of Hanover ended true faith among the higher clergy in one fell swoop. It is difficult to maintain that, although Whigs were winning more

⁵¹⁰ Browne Willis quoted by Owen, in Aylmer *et al*, York Minster, p. 242.

⁵¹¹ Curtis, The Politics of Lawrence Sterne, p. 5.

coveted prizes than ever, they did not feel part of any greater calling.

The influence of the lesser clergy was akin to that of the laity. They presented 124 clerics who polled in this period and certain men had blocks of power. The influence of the Vicar of Halifax has already been discussed and his eleven chapelries were matched by the eleven that the Vicar of St John's in Leeds could present.⁵¹² The Tory Vicar, Joseph Cookson, was more active than his predecessor Bright Dixon had been; however, Cookson did not vote in 1727 and only gave a single in 1734. Of the curates in his charge, ten polled after 1727 and two did so twice. On only two occasions were Whig votes cast, and in the main these men tended to favour the Opposition. However, Cookson was not a political activist in the mould of Vicar Legh at Halifax; whether he organised the clerics in his area to poll is unknown, but the clerical turnout from his parish at each election was never more than six of the eleven curates. Similarly, the Vicars of Almondbury, Ecclesfield and Otley each presented four men who polled to several curacies; however, in tandem with the lay patronage, the clerical patrons in general were a diffuse company.

Non-conformists

As far as non-conformists are concerned this study is inconclusive. Whether many of the 6.1 per cent of clerics who could not be identified in time and place were dissenters is not known. However, of the seventy-five dissenting ministers who

⁵¹² See above, pp. 271-2.

were listed by name in Herring's visitation, only one polled. One problem that dissenting ministers had which their Anglican peers did not was that their tenure was not regarded as freehold in the eyes of the law. An account of the Knaresbrough poll of 1714 noted that Richard Hill 'the presbyterian priest...has the burgage no longer than he supplies the office there and [that] therefore is no freehold.'⁵¹³ This lack of a fixed position and property may well have deterred dissenting ministers from polling under the guise 'cl' or 'Rev'.

This is not to say that none of the freeholders were non-conformists, for it was reported that in Halifax the Presbyterian minister had a congregation of 600 in 1715, 'sixteen of whom had votes for the county.'⁵¹⁴ A canvass of Wensleydale prior to the 1742 by-election lists twenty Quakers in a pool of 141 men canvassed, or 14.2% of the perceived electorate.⁵¹⁵ Only nine voted, but they were all Whigs. Indeed, Holmes has estimated that 15-20 per cent of the freeholders were dissenters and this may well have been the case in Yorkshire.⁵¹⁶

In fact, there is more evidence for the numbers of dissenters who polled based on the 1742 pollbooks. These books included information about whether any voters had affirmed; in the four books of Whig voters there were 208 who did so, whilst in the four Tory books, there were eighteen. This meant that at least 1.5 per cent of the voters were non-conformists. However, given the

⁵¹³ Chatsworth, Devonshire MSS., uncatalogued Knaresbrough material, Knaresbrough election, February 1714, copy brief of the poll.

⁵¹⁴ Herring's Visitation Returns, LXXI, Appendix 4, 224-33.

⁵¹⁵ S.C.A., Wharnccliffe Muniments, Wh.M 108-5, 1742 by-election material.

⁵¹⁶ G.S. Holmes, 'Religion and Politics in Later Stuart England' in his Politics, Religion and Society, p. 201.

fact that not all of the clerks were particularly fastidious about recording affirmations and also the level of damage to these books, this number is probably too low.⁵¹⁷ Despite this there was still an ideological solidarity between the Whigs and non-conformity, with 92.0% of these dissenters being Whig.

Of the three Presbyterians and three Quakers who were identified as 'cl', all six voted for the Whig or Government party. But as Fryer has noted for the country as a whole, it would seem that as far as county elections are concerned in Yorkshire, 'neither upon the ground of numbers nor of political influence' can the dissenters be called the backbone of the Whig party.⁵¹⁸ Bradley has disagreed with this view and has shown how, especially after 1770, the effect of radical non-conformity was stronger than its numbers.⁵¹⁹ Certainly in Leeds the non-conformists were a strong influence among the merchants and in the Corporation, and certain of them had shire votes. Similarly, throughout the shire, Dutch and French immigrants in the seventeenth century had added to the strength of non-conformity in Yorkshire.

Even so, the strength and political sway of this section of society is difficult to assess. Hey has estimated that in 1676 the Deanery of Doncaster had 736 dissenters out of a population of 23,497. This would tally with the view of one Tory newspaper in 1710 that '..the Dissenters are neither so formidable nor so

⁵¹⁷ Temple Newsam MSS., TN/PO/10/6, Sheriff's books for the 1742 by-election. All eight have some damage including five which appear to have been attacked by rodents!

⁵¹⁸ Fryer quoted in J.E. Bradley, 'Nonconformity and the Electorate in Eighteenth Century England', *PH*, 6, Part 2 (1987), 237.

⁵¹⁹ J.E. Bradley, *Religion, Revolution and Radicalism* (Cambridge, 1990), pp. 412-3.

numerous in this County as was apprehended.'⁵²⁰ The influence of Dissent is still enigmatic, but what is sure is that from linking the pollbooks to the clerical records at least 93.9 per cent of the clergy who were called clerics in the pollbooks were Anglicans, and less than one per cent were known non-conformists.

The clergy and party strategy

The clergy as a whole had a wider influence at election-time as election agents. Certain clerics were fanatical in their allegiance; it was noted of Jacques Sterne, an Archdeacon of Cleveland and Precentor of York, that he was 'a Whigg it is true, but with all the fury of an Inquisitor.'⁵²¹ Not all were quite such firebrands, but the ability of the parties to utilise the role of the clergy as ground troops was a useful electoral tactic. This was true even of the churches; for example, in 1698 Sir John Kaye had asked the Mayor of Leeds to promote his candidacy, and 'make [it] as publick as you can by getting itt published in yr Churches and Chapells'.⁵²²

Throughout the period certain of the clergy were ardent canvassers and lieutenants for a particular cause. Around Sedbergh the Whigs lacked local gentlemen to organise and canvass and relied heavily on the local Vicar and Schoolmaster,

⁵²⁰ D.G. Hey, 'The Pattern of Non-conformity in South Yorkshire, 1660-1851', NH, VIII (1973), 92; Bodl., Nichols Newspapers, Vol. 73, f. 415, *The Post Boy*, no. 24, 6 Oct. 1710.

⁵²¹ The Letters of Spencer Cowper, 1746-74, ed. E. Hughes, Surtees Society Publications, 165 (1956), Lady Sarah Cowper to Lord Cowper, 3 Nov. 1752, 156.

⁵²² B.L. Stowe MSS. 747, f. 96, Sir John Kaye to Mayor of Leeds, 23 July 1698.

Dr Saunders.⁵²³ In fact Saunders did so much good work for Malton that the latter did all in his power to gain him further preferment, for 'if no value is set upon zeal for the public cause an Indolence will certainly arise.'⁵²⁴ Here there was a clear tie between preferment and political action, an important factor after 1715. A vacancy could lead to all sorts of claims for worthy men; for instance, at Wrelton in 1742, Robert Reynolds 'a steady friend to the Whig cause' was promoted by the York M.P. Edward Thompson. A slightly different emphasis was given by Andrew Wilkinson who backed John Clark the Schoolmaster of Beverley, for the same living. Wilkinson stated that Clark had been 'useful to the County in the education of our Children.'⁵²⁵ Fourteen of the clergy acted as schoolmasters in important areas and at popular schools, like Drax, Hemsworth and Sedbergh. Favourable actions and the positive nature of a clerics' political creed could be a step up the ladder of preferment.

Equally this ladder could be closed to all who acted against the government; opposition charges had no avenue of exploitation as far as establishment advowsons were concerned; however, they were no less prominent. In 1733 the Vicar of Batley, Mr Rhodes, who had been given the Vicarage of Dewsbury when it was sequestered from Thomas Bowman, was causing Lord Malton some concern. Apparently, he 'has promised his own vote' to the Government party, 'but makes all the interest he can against them, now he holds Dewsbury, in Sequestration by the AB's

⁵²³ For example, see Wentworth Woodhouse Muniments, WWM, M1, Malton to Dr Saunders, 10 Dec. 1733, mic. A66.

⁵²⁴ Ibid., WWM, M3/27, Malton to his sister, 1 Dec. 1737, mic. A14.

⁵²⁵ B.L. Add. 32697, f. 29, Edward Thompson to Newcastle, 21 May 1741; *ibid.*, f. 48, A. Wilkinson to Newcastle, 23 May 1741.

[Archbishop's] mear favour: a word enough for the wise.'⁵²⁶ Clearly Malton would, and could, not be seen to let him get away with that line of action. Rhodes may well have altered his actions in line with other orders, but some men were always anathema to the government side. In 1742, the Tory Vicar of Bardsey backed his patron, George Fox against the tirades of the Whig Jacques Sterne. The press was a fertile seed-bed for these two men, especially the opposing prints in York, *The Courant* and *The Gazeteer*.⁵²⁷

The staunchest supporters of either side made themselves known at the meetings that were held in York to decide upon candidates and tactics. In 1734 thirty-four of the clergy signed the initial post-election petition against the election of the Tory, Sir Miles Stapylton.⁵²⁸ These included the Archbishop, the Dean, three Prebends and the Dean of Middleham. Many of these signatories were the 'hard core' of the clerical Whigs, men who had actively canvassed for the party, or who had or would vote again along the same lines - in fact nineteen of them voted Whig on more than one occasion. A meeting of the Cleveland clergy in 1736 was said to be 'quite melancholy' at the defeat of the petition. This was 'surprisingly [more] hateful to al[l] ye Governments true friends here, than if ye Pretender had been declar'd by ye H[ouse] of C[ommon]s to be our most religious and lawful Sovereign.'⁵²⁹ Clearly politics was increasingly important

⁵²⁶ Wentworth Woodhouse Muniments, WWM, M1, Mr Wilton to Malton, 10 Dec. 1733, mic. A66.

⁵²⁷ See, Curtis, The Politics of Lawrence Sterne, pp. 98-100; Collyer, PLPS, VII, 83-7.

⁵²⁸ Wentworth Woodhouse Muniments, WWM, M1, '1734 Petition' (n.d.), pp. 85-7, mic. A66.

⁵²⁹ B.I.H.R., Bishopthorpe Papers, Archbishop Blackburn's papers, Bp. C&P III/8/17, Rob. Taylor to Dr Hayter, 13 May 1736.

to these clerics, as indeed they were ever more important to the party managers. At the next election, in 1742, the clergy formed thirty-six of a list of 167 active Whigs who supported Turner from the start of the campaign.⁵³⁰

For the Tories who met at York in 1741 to support Fox's candidacy, eight of the sixty-one present were clerics.⁵³¹ Again these were long-standing Tory supporters, four of whom had voted in three or all of the four shire polls. These were staunch supporters and activists of the Tory or Opposition party in Yorkshire, and they all had active Tory patrons like Thomas Yarburgh and the Wentworths of Woolley. They took part, as did their Whig counter-parts, in electioneering, only for them the prizes - in terms of preferment - were much reduced. However, for the likes of John Wakefield and David Travis whose patrons were Viscount Downe and the Earl of Strafford respectively, to aid Tory election hopes was only natural.

The clergy also took part in borough elections, most notably at York, where several were freemen of the City. In 1695 it was reported by Archbishop Sharp that the 'Clergy of the City (upon whome I can be presumed to have Influence) are generally as industrious to promote Mr Jenkins Interest as he can desire.'⁵³² This shows the clear link between politics and religion, a link that was to continue throughout the 'First Age of Party'. In 1713 it was reported that Dean Finch, in support of the Tory Robert

⁵³⁰ B.L. Add. 32697, f. 522, 'A list of Names of Lords, Gentlemen and Clergy who met at the George Inn in York, 29 Aug. 1741'.

⁵³¹ Fitzwilliam (Malton) MSS., 'A List of the Gentlemen who met at York the 30th August 1741'.

⁵³² Gloucestershire County Record Office, Lloyd-Baker-Sharp MSS., D3549 6/1/L12, Sharp to the Duke of Leeds, 21 Sep. 1695.

Fairfax, 'has stopt Mr Greaves (the verger) intermeddling...Mr Jenkyns had not one in the whole City more devoted.' It was added that this 'well deserves a speedy letter of thanks.'⁵³³ Without doubt, after 1724, the influence of Archbishop Blackburn or his officers, as well as Dean Osbaldeston or the Chapter, who were patrons of several of the livings within York, would have been important in that city's elections. At the 1741 York poll nineteen clerics voted; of these seventeen gave double votes for the two Whigs, Edward Thompson and Sir William Milner, whilst only one gave a double for the two Tories, Sir John Lister Kaye and Sir Godfrey Wentworth.⁵³⁴ Nine of the Whig clerics polled in any of the shire contests and they were all consistent Whig voters; however, in this particular borough election they could not secure two Whig seats and had to be satisfied with the election of Thompson alongside Wentworth. Clearly the role of the clergy was firmly established in the political sphere and to some of their number may even have helped support an Erastian state of affairs.

Convocation

To an extent the acceptance of the suppression of Convocation was tied into this Erastianism. In 1660 Dr Peter Heylyn decried the fact that 'some busy members of the House of Commons will thrust themselves into concernments of religion, when they shall find no Convocation sitting to take care

⁵³³ C.R. Markham, The Life of Robert Fairfax of Steeton (1885), Sir Francis Hildyard to Robert Fairfax, 23 Aug. 1713, p. 255.

⁵³⁴ Institute of Historical Research, Local History Section, York Borough Pollbook, 1741 (York, 1741).

thereof.'⁵³⁵ This seemed prophetic for the period after 1717, as Parliament would not revive sitting Convocations for fear that they would serve as a breeding ground for high-church activism and a resurrection of latent Tory values among the lower clergy. However, in certain sees elections were held for Proctors,⁵³⁶ and some evidence exists for Yorkshire which backs up Holtby's point that 'To elect approved clerics...was to display loyalty to the Administration.'⁵³⁷

The make-up of the Convocation of the Northern Province of York was as follows: the Archbishop, the Bishops of Durham, Chester, Carlisle, and Soder and Man, with their respective Deans; also the Archdeacons of York, the East Riding and Cleveland, alongside those from Nottingham, Northumberland, Durham, Chester, Richmond, Carlisle and Soder. The Chapter of York also had two Proctors, whilst those of Chester, Carlisle, Southwell and Ripon had one each. The clergy of each Archdeaconry had two representatives as did the clergy of the jurisdiction of the Dean and Chapter of York, whilst those of Southwell had one. Finally, the peculiar jurisdictions of Howdenshire, Allerton under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Durham and Allerton under that of the Chapter of Durham nominated two Proctors each.⁵³⁸

⁵³⁵ Dr Heylyn to Archbishop Sheldon, 12 Apr. 1660, quoted in Sykes, Sheldon to Secker, p. 66.

⁵³⁶ See P. Langford, 'Convocation and the Tory Clergy, 1717-61', in E. Cruickshanks and J. Black eds, The Jacobite Challenge (Edinburgh, 1988), pp. 107-22.

⁵³⁷ R.T. Holtby, 'Thomas Herring as Archbishop of York, 1743-47', NH, XXX (1994), 109-10.

⁵³⁸ See B.I.H.R., Convocation Books, Conv.Bk 5-7.

Thus, had it met, twenty-two members of the Convocation would have been from Yorkshire. Five of these, the Archbishop, the Dean and the Archdeacons became Whig dominated, except the East Riding Archdeaconry, which throughout this period was held by Heneage Dering, who was also Dean of Ripon and was the son-in-law and nominee of Archbishop Sharp. He polled for the Opposition in 1734, but otherwise was politically inactive. Of the other elected members in 1708, the bulk of them are not recorded in the pollbook for that year. Only four voted and only two of these polled for the two Tories, Downe and Kaye. The same was true of the 1710 Convocation which saw eight new faces, but only three of these had any record of voting before, although they all would do so again. They included the strong Tory John Wakefield, Lord Downe's nominees, but they also included John Bradley who altered his voting patterns to suit the times - he was nominated by the Chapter to his Living and was a Proctor for their jurisdiction, thus after 1727 he consistently voted Whig.

There was a slow but gradual turnover of those elected as Proctors after the death of Queen Anne. By 1722, only seven of those present from Yorkshire in 1710 were still in place; however, those present were not yet Whig-dominated. The Tory Archbishop and Dean were now joined by five other men who had voted, or would vote, Tory at shire elections. These included the Prebends of Knaresborough, Thomas Lamplugh, and Wetwang, Edward Finch, as representatives of the Chapter; also, John Wakefield and William Walker as Proctors for the Cleveland clergy. After this date the strength of the Whigs began to increase; the importance of Dean Osbaldeston and Prebends like Jacques Sterne and George Legh grew, and although one or two Opposition men were in place

in 1734, by 1741 fifteen of the twenty elected Proctors from Yorkshire were Whigs.⁵³⁹

Unfortunately only one poll list for Convocation elections has been located for the early eighteenth century for Yorkshire,⁵⁴⁰ but this covers the East Riding in 1727 and indicates the growing strength in this part of the diocese for the Whigs. The usual pattern for such elections seems to have been to 'summon the several clergymen' of each rural Deanery in each Archdeaconry, 'and theire to elect two sufficient proctors to appeare for them'.⁵⁴¹ In June 1734, Thomas Jubb informed the Archdeacon of the East Riding, Heneage Dering, that the clergy of his Archdeaconry were to meet at Bridlington between eight and twelve in the morning 'to Nominate, Elect and Constitute two sufficient Proctors for the clergy'.⁵⁴²

The Archdeaconry of the East Riding had been a Whig stronghold throughout this period, despite the fact that the Archdeacon was a nominal Tory. Only the beneficed clergy from ninety-two parishes were entitled to vote and of those only thirty-six went to Beverley - although five of these were pluralists. The Archdeacon was not present, either because he was at Ripon or had no interest in the outcome, which as only two prominent Whigs, Richard Osbaldeston and Jacques Sterne, were nominated, was a rubber stamping of that party's local dominance. Langford has noted for other sees that the Archdeacons 'were in a critical

⁵³⁹ Ibid..

⁵⁴⁰ Ibid., Archdeaconry of the East Riding, Convocation Papers 1685-1857, ER.Conv, Archdeaconry of the East Riding Convocation Poll List, 7 Nov. 1727, St Mary's Beverley.

⁵⁴¹ Ibid., Archdeaconry of York, Convocation Papers 1685-1857, Y.Conv, Holmes to ?, 4 Nov. [1698].

⁵⁴² Ibid., Archdeaconry of the East Riding, Convocation Papers 1685-1857, ER.Conv, Thomas Jubb to Archdeacon [Dering], June 1734.

position to direct its [the ordinary clergy's] business and manipulate its politics.'⁵⁴³ However, this was not true for the East Riding, where Dering was increasingly isolated and faced with a Whig hierarchy in the diocese, and his Archdeaconry. His problems would have been exacerbated by the fact that the next Dean of York, Richard Osbaldeston, was a power in that area, due to his family's landholdings.

Of the thirty-six clerics who made the journey to Beverley in November 1727, twenty-four had polled, or would poll, in at least one shire contest; eighteen of them were Whigs and only two Tories or Opposition supporters. The latter two were George Sheffield, nominated by the Tory Duke of Leeds to Seamer, and Joseph Richardson, the Rector of Wharram Percy on the presentation of the Tory Prebend of Wetwang, Edward Finch. They may have gone to Beverley in the hope of putting up some resistance to the Whigs, but this was clearly impossible. This pattern may have been repeated in the other Archdeaconries, for as with the East Riding the rest of the shire became more Whiggish in its nomination of Proctors as the century wore on. In fact an election to Convocation was a useful tool to reinforce the fabric of Whig Anglicanism.

The cleric and his locale

The one major facet of the politics of the clergy that has so far been overlooked in this chapter is the relationship of the cleric to his locale. The 'de Coverley Papers' in Addison's essays

⁵⁴³ See Langford, in Cruickshanks *et al* eds, The Jacobite Challenge, p. 114.

in *The Spectator* provided a view of the Church in rural areas as a place where 'the whole village meets...the whole parish-politics being discussed.' Moreover, in that particular caricature the parson 'is everyday Solliciting me for something in Behalf of one or other of my Tenants his Parishioners.'⁵⁴⁴ Here there is a connection between the well-being and outlook of the parish and the views of its clergy and gentry. Certainly, in some cases in Yorkshire, there was such a close tie; for instance, the Tory Sir Michael Warton left £4,000 in a perpetual fund for the good repair of the Minster at Beverley.⁵⁴⁵

In certain instances the local population demanded the right to nominate a clergyman favourable to them. For example, in 1707 the Vicar of Long Preston was under pressure to 'relinquish all pretensions to the place', whilst the parishioners looked 'for a minister of their own election.'⁵⁴⁶ Quite what the problem was is unclear, but at the following year's poll, the township voted in step with their Whig Vicar, John Sparke. It would seem that the support of the locale could prove vital to the continued presence of a particular cleric, especially of a stipendiary curate. At Winkersley, where the Dean and Chapter of Ripon were the patrons, the curate 'usually subsisted by the contributions of the inhabitants.' However, in December 1740 it was reported that the hired curate 'is grown so very scandalous and they have withdrawn I believe all their subscriptions', and called for John Wilson, a

⁵⁴⁴ P. Smithes ed., *The Spectator*, I (1970), no. 112, 9 July 1711, 341; *ibid.*, no. 106, 2 July 1711, p. 325.

⁵⁴⁵ B.I.H.R., Bishopthorpe Papers, Beverley Minster Papers, Bp. C&P XVII/8, John Midgley to Mr Waller, 9 Nov. 1725.

⁵⁴⁶ Gloucestershire County Record Office, Lloyd-Baker-Sharp MSS., D3549/6/1/29, Sam. Bromfield to Sharp, 19 Mar. 1707.

Vicar-Choral of Ripon to officiate.⁵⁴⁷ At Huttons Ambo in 1695, forty-seven men gave between one shilling and one pound to the Vicar, who despite being nominated by the Archbishop, may have relied on the support and confidence of his parishioners, in both spiritual and political matters.⁵⁴⁸

There were 159 townships and villages which had more than one cleric serving in them between 1708 and 1742; either in terms of two or more priests who served consecutive terms, or a perpetual and stipendiary cleric who were resident, in or near the benefice, at the same time. Of these townships, eighty-seven had the resident cleric(s) and overall township votes in accord for any election.⁵⁴⁹ Three of these parishes were in York and make assessment of township-cleric voting links difficult to establish as the York freeholders were not distinguished by parish. Of the other sixty-nine, twenty-six were places where voting patterns changed after Anne's reign and where the clerical and township votes became aligned after the accession of the House of Hanover. Another forty were townships with no clear-cut voting pattern during this period, many of them large towns with competing interests, such as Doncaster, Leeds and Pocklington. It is difficult to see the effect that a cleric could have in a town like Sheffield with a very large population and yet with only two Anglican Churches, one of which was closed between 1721 and 1740 in a

⁵⁴⁷ Leeds University, Brotherton Library, Archive of the Dean and Chapter of Ripon: MS. Dep. 1980/1/260.4, Heneage Dering to Mr Hayter, 5 Dec. 1740.

⁵⁴⁸ B.I.H.R., Bishopthorpe Papers, Archbishop Sharp's papers, Bp. C&P I/8, Huttons Ambo.

⁵⁴⁹ This takes party majorities in a particular township to be where six out of ten of freeholders had polled one way.

dispute over presentation. Here the role of the local gentry may well have had more influence socially and politically.

In other towns some men felt that the role of the local cleric was hardly a blessing. Lord Malton upon sending ale to Horbury noted that it was 'a bad Town, made worse by an ungrateful Curate.'⁵⁵⁰ In some places there was no gentleman to take a lead in local affairs; at Guiseley the cleric Henry Wickham was a staunch Tory. In 1727 he stood out almost alone in his parish, being a Tory whilst twenty-six out of thirty of his parishioners polled Whig. However, at the next poll only two out of thirty were Whigs and in 1742 only two out of twenty-six polled for Turner. Of the nineteen who polled in 1727 and 1734 four gave consistent Tory votes and fourteen switched to the Tories; in 1742 eighteen men who voted in 1734 returned and all of them were in opposition to the Whigs on both occasions. This was a phenomenal about turn in voting behaviour and in part was due to the conviction of Wickham.⁵⁵¹

Only three towns of the 159 had clerics who voted in opposition to the general pattern within the town. At Skipton in 1734 and 1742, the township was overwhelmingly Tory, but the Vicar in 1734 and the curate in 1742 both voted Whig. Given that the Vicar was presented by the whiggish Dean and Chapter of Oxford this may not be quite so startling; however, it represents a clear-cut political schism within the town. Similarly, Halifax was strongly in the favour of the Tories despite all that the Whig,

⁵⁵⁰ Wentworth Woodhouse Muniments, WWM, M1, Mr Wilton to Malton, 24 Dec. 1733, mic. A66.

⁵⁵¹ See Chapter 6, pp. 330-5, for a more in-depth investigation of Guiseley.

George Legh, could do. At times there was little alteration that a resident cleric could make to the local balance of power.

Of those towns which were served by more than one cleric, thirty-five (22.0 per cent) had Tories in place, seventy-one (44.6 per cent) had Whigs in place and fifty-three (33.3 per cent) had clerics whose voting behaviour differed. In the latter case thirty-seven towns were served by clerics who had different voting behaviour because their patrons changed. For example, the Rectory of Badsworth was served by two Whigs, one Tory and a split voter; their patrons were four different Earls of Derby. Despite cases like this there was a large degree of consensus between towns and their clerics; indeed this consensus was growing during these years, and the number of Tory towns and clerics was a reminder that, although on the back foot, the opposition to the government still had some vitality.

Linking townships with the clergy and gentry who were noted in the shire pollbooks gave a total of 175 towns which had a resident cleric and gentleman at any election.⁵⁵² In 1708 there were thirty such towns, and in twenty cases the township votes matched those of their social superiors. Of the other ten, six towns had split votes where the gentleman and cleric disagreed and these were mainly large towns like Leeds, Otley, Ripon and Tickhill; at Sprotbrough the Tory gentleman and Whig cleric were the only voters; in four towns the gentleman agreed with the cleric but not with the populace. In certain places a powerful lay figure could prevent a cleric from polling; for example, in 1710

⁵⁵² Not every gentleman would have been noted as such in a pollbook, and this technique for identifying the gentry ignores lesser gentlemen; however, it is relatively useful as a rough guide to the corroboration of gentry and clergy. The gentry were identified as 'Bart', 'Esq', 'Gent' or 'Sir'.

Rector Clayton of Wensley, 'pretends no interest, being all thereabouts under the D[uke] of Bolton.'⁵⁵³ Bolton was a staunch Whig at this time and there is no recorded vote for Clayton at the 1708 or 1727 poll; however, at the 1734 poll, after the Dukedom had passed to Bolton's Opposition-inclined son, Clayton did give a double vote for the Opposition candidates.

From the 1727 poll, twenty-seven places fit the criteria of townships with resident clergy and gentry; of these, twenty-one had place and social superiors in accord, with fourteen of them Whig. Of the other six, Pontefract had a united clergy and gentry in opposition to the town, and the other five towns had no unity at the polls. Three of these were small townships, perhaps indicating the opposing pull of the resident cleric and gentleman; alternatively the freeholders may have had other local influences acting on them. The other two towns were Leeds and Pocklington; the latter had a Tory Prebend until 1728 in Henry Finch, Dean of York, and the Vicar he appointed voted Tory in 1734 and 1742. However, at these last two elections the new Prebend and Dean, Richard Osbaldeston gave a rival Whig bias as did the Headmaster of the Grammar School, whom he had appointed.

In 1734 and 1742 the Whigs came to dominate many townships; out of 122 townships at these two polls, fifty-eight had a Whig unity at the polls, whilst sixteen were Tory and forty-eight had no convergence between clergy, gentry and township. Again these tended to occur in large towns like Beverley where many different influences were at work, whilst a few, like Strensall, had fewer than ten voters. In general it was only large towns like Doncaster, Halifax, Ripon and Scarborough where

⁵⁵³ B.L. Add. 24612, f. 14, 'Notes from a Canvassing Book...'.

township votes differed from the unity shown by the resident clergy and gentry. Moreover, as the eighteenth century progressed, if clerical and gentry votes were unified, many places tended to see a correlation between the voting behaviour of these men and the place where they lived. This was not surprising for small villages like Bishop Burton where the Lord of the Manor, Sir Thomas Gee, was a strong resident force. In other places the local gentleman owned the advowson and harmony was promoted that way; for instance, at Escrick the local Whig, Beilby Thompson, presented his Whig namesake William Thompson to the Rectory.

Even where clerics and gentry fell out socially, this did not tend to influence wider political events. For example, in the early 1730s, James, Lord Darcy, a Whig who lived in Sedbury, squabbled with William Wharton of Gilling Wood and his nominee at Gilling, William Thompson, both Whigs. Accusations were made by both sides about damage to the church fabric, obstruction of pews and locking the chancel door during the service.⁵⁵⁴ However, at the elections of this period Gilling and Sedbury were constant in their support of the Whigs. Similarly, in 1709, upon replacing John Hall as Vicar of Ainderby Steeple, William Dennison attacked his predecessor for leaving the vicarage 'very much out of repaire.'⁵⁵⁵ Again, both men and town were solidly Whig, and in these cases social discord did not weaken adherence to the cause.

⁵⁵⁴ B.I.H.R., Transmitted Cause Papers, Trans.CP, 1729/3, 1730/2-4.

⁵⁵⁵ Ibid., Trans.CP, 1709/1.

To an extent the political cause was an important part of the social outlook of the Yorkshire clergy by 1742. Langford wrote that 'many parsons were faithful servants of squires. It was not necessary for the first rank of county elites to officiate in order to secure its interests.'⁵⁵⁶ Certainly the number of Whig clerics increased and would have added to the local control which that party enjoyed in the shire. Indeed, the ratio of Government or Whig clergy to Government or Whig voters in 1734 and 1742 was higher than the ratio of Opposition or Tory clergy to Opposition or Tory voters. The Whig party control of the advowsons belonging to the Crown and Anglican hierarchy, coupled to the strong association between the voting behaviour of lay patrons and their nominated clergy, ensured their strength at this time. Alongside this was the new whiggism of the Chapter and a vigorous Dean, and the pro-government stance of those elected as Proctors in Convocation. This all adds weight to the theory of the clergy as time-servers.

Despite this, the only information we have for Yorkshire under Anne suggests a low turnout in 1708 and a low number of joint Tory voters among the clergy. Those clerics who did poll were favourable towards Viscount Downe; however, even the Dean and Chapter, nominally Tory, did not overtly support the Tories. Speck has written that the results of the 1710 poll and the levels of Tory support among the clergy in the pollbooks meant that 'the tory party truly was the Church party in 1710.'⁵⁵⁷ There is no pollbook for Yorkshire in 1710 and so any account of that poll

⁵⁵⁶ P. Langford, Public Life and the Propertied Englishman (Oxford, 1991), p. 434.

⁵⁵⁷ W.A. Speck, The Birth of Britain: A New Nation, 1700-1710 (Oxford, 1994), p. 191.

rests on supposition; it is likely, however, that few Whig clerics would have made it to York to poll in the face of the Tory backlash in support of Sacheverell. It is difficult, therefore, to substantiate any suggested level of toryism or whiggism among the Augustan clergy in Yorkshire.

It took the development of party organisation during and after the 1727 poll to increase the numbers of clerical voters. However, by this time twelve years of Hanoverian rule had not worn away much of the fabric of the Anglicanism, and many clergy probably became more able to live with the established view. Even so, those in opposition were far from wiped out after 1727; about a third of all clerical voters were antagonistic towards the Whigs in 1734 and 1742. The figures also mask the fact that to many men the Whig M.P., Cholmley Turner, was decent, independent and faithful and they may have voted for him because of these qualities rather than his political allegiance. Despite the fact that many clerics came to profess loyalty to Hanover and the Whigs this does not necessarily mark them out as grasping. The terminology covers up the wider implications of a re-alignment of clerical patronage; it also marginalises a large number of the clergy who were critical supporters of the Whigs. Whilst there was no extension of Toleration, for example a further Declaration of Indulgence or removal of the Test Act, men like Thomas Bowman could happily be Whigs. Few, if any, of the Tories were Jacobites, and most clerics were satisfied with loyalty to Hanover. The main difference between the Whig and Tory clerics lay in the purity of Anglicanism they would allow.

In terms of the politics of the age the clergy can be seen as a microcosm of the shire. The growth of party organisation

increased turnout and highlighted certain features of the electorate, like voters who only polled once. The importance of patronage and ideology and the survival of a section of Tory voters, indicates a healthy vitality about this section of the voterate. As political Lieutenants, foot soldiers and cannon-fodder the clergy played an important role in Yorkshire elections well into the eighteenth century.

Chapter 6

Community and Voting Behaviour: The Local Context of Politics

Thus far this thesis has focused on two related points: firstly, the structure of electioneering has been discussed in order to highlight the problems that the local managers had in locating possible voters; secondly, the outcome of this electoral manoeuvring has been investigated in an aggregate analysis of voting behaviour. These two factors have been developed for a particular sub-section of the electorate which was and is easy to define and locate, the clergy. These analyses of the motivations of the politicians and the electors have shown how important elections were for both sets of people. They gave both groups a sense of belonging and of worth in a wider community. However, beyond this there is a need to enlighten the debate on who exactly had the franchise and to investigate the socio-economic background of the voterate.

Several recent commentators have posited that pollbooks need to be linked to life-cycle and landholding sources 'to create a multi-dimensional picture of these "freeholders" and so relocate them within the contemporary socio-economic context in which they lived.'⁵⁵⁸ The analysis of the factors that affected voting in the early eighteenth century have been dominated for too long by the lack of a contemporary context. Despite the fact that few would subscribe to Namier's dictum that most freeholders 'could seldom exercise a free choice',⁵⁵⁹ there has been little work done

⁵⁵⁸ Baskerville *et al*, PH, 12, Part 2, 126; see also O'Gorman, Voters, Patrons and Parties, pp. 199-223.

⁵⁵⁹ Namier, The Structure of Politics, p. 87.

by political historians in order to reconstruct any communities that could vote in county elections.⁵⁶⁰ An over-reliance upon the time-honoured dichotomy of independence versus deference tends to underestimate the level of complexity and widespread local divergence between voters and voting communities in this period.

The over-riding view of the county electorate has been that the most men voted by right of forty shillings worth of land held in fee simple, after taxes and local charges were accounted for; but leases for lives, rent-charges, mortgages and annuities, and certain offices were also a means of enfranchisement. As has already been pointed out above,⁵⁶¹ matters were somewhat more complicated than this within Yorkshire, and the parties had to work alongside a franchise that was clouded by historical usage. Thus, there is a need to develop a reconstruction of the lives of individuals and to tie this into their voting behaviour as far as is possible. As Beales has pointed out, 'It is not the constituencies that historians have neglected, nor the paper electorate, but the individual voters'.⁵⁶² What was the structure of the shire electorate and how does it inform the debate over deference and independence?⁵⁶³

Any underpinning of the voting behaviour of individuals and communities with economic information can only divulge a fragment of the motivational make-up of those particular men and places. One can only judge whether an individual possessed

⁵⁶⁰ See below, Appendix IV, pp. 391-9.

⁵⁶¹ See Chapter 3, pp. 163-4.

⁵⁶² D. Beales, 'The Electorate Before and After 1832: the Right to Vote and the Opportunity', *PH*, 11, Part 1 (1992), 150.

⁵⁶³ It is possible to undertake some occupational analysis as well, from information contained in the sources. See Appendix V, pp. 400-9.

enough social or economic independence to allow him political freedom at the polls. Without diaries and correspondence it is impossible to judge wider motivations. In fact there would be a tendency to imply that only where a tenant voted in-line with his landlord was there a measure of control - even this can be a dubious assertion. The lack of qualitative material for the lives of the individual electors must qualify any socio-economic survey.

The greatest problem in dealing with the Yorkshire electors is the sheer size and heterogeneous nature of the constituency. One eighteenth century commentator noted that Yorkshire was 'the island in miniature'.⁵⁶⁴ There is no way in which landholding data and local motivations can be compared for more than a few townships across the four polls. It was therefore decided to focus this examination on nine topographically different townships and villages which displayed unusual voting behaviour.⁵⁶⁵ The first type of voting behaviour was that of permanently divided townships which had no simple party majority at any election.⁵⁶⁶ The second type was a town with a majority which was lost over time, either to no majority or to the opposition.⁵⁶⁷ Also included in this were split townships which became partisan over time. This analysis accepts that in those towns where there was a consistent, simple party majority at all four polls there was a motivational consensus, be it imposed by a landlord, or evoked by a sense of community. It was felt that these nine towns would

⁵⁶⁴ W. Marshall, The Rural Economy of Yorkshire, I (1788), 10.

⁵⁶⁵ See Figure 6.1, p. 312, for the location of selected townships and villages.

⁵⁶⁶ For the purposes of this analysis it is contended that where six out of every ten voters polled the same way, then there was a simple party majority in that township.

⁵⁶⁷ It was pointed out above that 330 townships switched allegiance or split in 1734. See Chapter 4, p. 187.

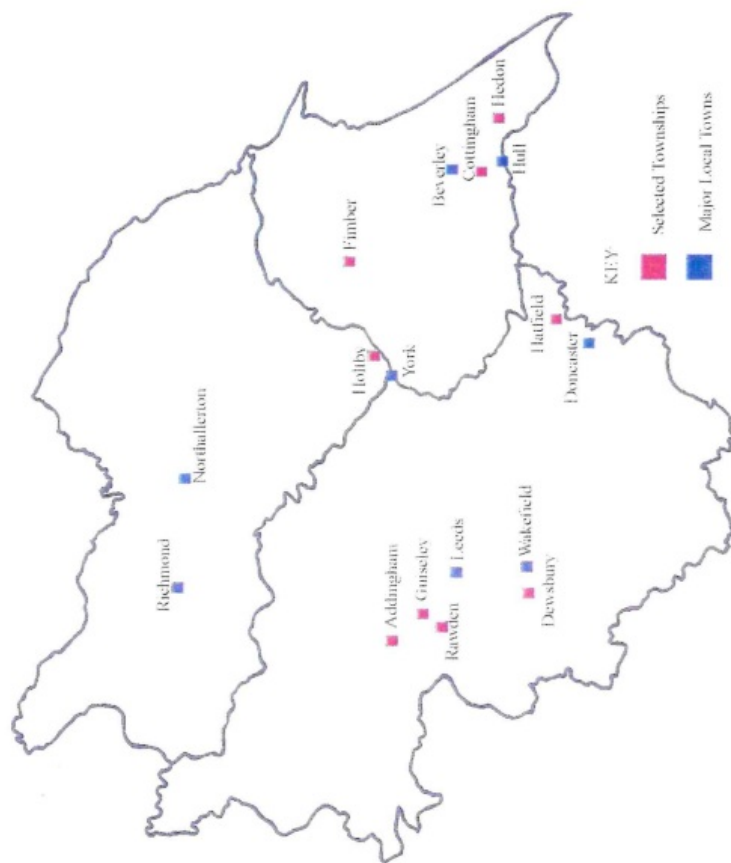


Figure 6.1: Location of selected towns

offer a chance to look at the nature of apparently fractured politics at a local level, and to attempt to divine what forces were at work in those towns.

Five townships were chosen from the West Riding as this area had a wide topographical and economic diversity and also had many towns which fitted the criteria of voting behaviour. These townships were Addingham, Dewsbury, Guiseley, Hatfield, and Rawden. Addingham, Guiseley and Rawden were townships in the worsted manufacturing region of the shire. Addingham was a mainly agricultural town lying on the River Wharfe, in the gateway to the dales. It stood thirteen miles north-north-west of Bradford and fifteen miles north-west of Leeds, on land which lay below 500 feet. The presence of the Wharfe made the use of water mills vital to the economic life of the township.

Guiseley and Rawden were geographically close, lying on the watershed between the Rivers Aire and Wharfe, but they had different manorial and tenorial jurisdictions. Both places stood on low-lying agricultural land approximately six miles north-north-east of Bradford and nine miles north-west of Leeds. The lack of a strong water supply meant that they would never develop into major cloth producing towns. Dewsbury was a heavy woollens producing township, lying on the undulating lowlands near the Pennines. It was five miles east of Wakefield and seven miles north-east of Huddersfield, and was served by the River Calder. Hatfield was a lowland agricultural township eight miles north-east of Doncaster. It bordered on Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire and had a large area of common land which had been drained by Dutch immigrants in the seventeenth century.

Joseph Hunter noted that the land was 'level almost as the sea itself.'⁵⁶⁸

Of these places, Guiseley and Addingham both had over thirty voters in 1727, 1734 and 1742 and both switched allegiance from Whig at the first of these polls to Tory thereafter.⁵⁶⁹ Rawden had between four and seventeen voters and, apart from in 1727 when it was Whig, the village was always split in its voting behaviour. Dewsbury had twenty-six mainly Tory voters in 1708, and split its voting thereafter, when over thirty men polled. Hatfield numbered between twenty and thirty voters who were split at all four polls.

In terms of population two sources provide approximate data at either end of the years under survey for most of the townships under review.⁵⁷⁰ They show a substantial growth in the size of these places, which may have had an influence on the numbers of voters and how they voted. Hatfield was the largest township in 1672 with 211 households; in 1743 it had 350 families.⁵⁷¹ Addingham had eighty-five households in 1672 and around 100 families in 1743.⁵⁷² For the three main towns in the cloth producing area the figures are mixed. Rawden increased from

⁵⁶⁸ Hunter, South Yorkshire, I, 150

⁵⁶⁹ Where Addingham is recorded as having thirty-four voters in 1742, this means that there were thirty-four men who lived in Addingham and polled or who owned land in Addingham for which they polled.

⁵⁷⁰ The hearth tax returns for 1672 and Archbishop Herring's 1743 visitation returns provide some useful information about population. The hearth tax measures number of households and the visitation the number of families. This is not meant to indicate an equivalence between household and family, it is aimed at giving an indication of the order of size of the towns. This is more so given that these sources are prone to errors; for instance, the hearth tax returns under-estimate the number of exempt houses for the West Riding. See, J.D. Purdy, 'The Hearth Tax Returns for Yorkshire', M.Phil., University of Leeds, 1975; Herring's Visitation Returns, LXXI, LXXII, LXXV.

⁵⁷¹ Purdy, thesis, p. 311; Herring's Visitation Returns, LXXII, 50.

⁵⁷² Purdy, thesis, p. 288; Herring's Visitation Returns, LXXI, 11.

fifty-five households to ninety families, whilst Guiseley boomed from thirty-two households to over 500 families.⁵⁷³ Whether this boom was due to inward migration, a lower age of marriage or increased fertility is unclear, but even accounting for source-errors there was a huge increase. Unfortunately there is no information for Dewsbury in 1743, although there were 103 households in 1672.⁵⁷⁴

Clearly these approximate figures show an increase in population in almost every township over these years. If the information in Herring's visitation returns is reasonable then the ratio of voters in 1742 to number of families was: Addingham, one voter for every four families; Rawden, one for every ten families; Guiseley, one for every seventeen families; Hatfield, one for every twenty-two families.⁵⁷⁵ There will be errors in these deductions; the population data are very approximate and voters' abodes were often given in loose terms and may not have been coterminous with the places in the visitation returns. However, they show that the voters do appear to have been a privileged group, probably the more affluent section of society.

Unfortunately, there is a paucity of landholding information for the North Riding, which meant that no firm conclusions could be drawn about the voters in that area.⁵⁷⁶ A single township,

⁵⁷³ Purdy, thesis, p. 283; Herring's Visitation Returns, LXXII, 2; *ibid.*, LXXV, 16.

⁵⁷⁴ Purdy, thesis, p. 233.

⁵⁷⁵ This only includes those voters who lived in these townships. Hence, a voter from Fishlake who polled by right of land in Hatfield is ignored.

⁵⁷⁶ The fact that the Deeds Registry in the North Riding was only set up in 1738 meant that there was no underpinning of the landholding information that had survived. For the townships that had switched or split over time, such as Barningham, East and West Witton, and Kirby Fletham, there was surprisingly little material. This is more perplexing when one considers that these towns all had strong

Holtby, is included in the analysis which follows. This was an agricultural township only five miles east of York, on the main Bridlington road, in the low lying Vale of York. The Agar family, who were relatively minor local landowners were the Lords of the Manor. Only in 1727, when the Whigs dominated, was there any party control amongst the voters who numbered between fourteen and seventeen men. In 1672 there were twenty-eight households, whilst in 1743 twenty-one families were recorded; thus, there was one voter for every two and a half families in 1742.⁵⁷⁷

From the East Riding, Cottingham, Hedon and Fimber were chosen. Cottingham lay four miles north-west of the town of Hull and five miles south of Beverley. The town was also two miles west of the main Beverley-Hull road, although it had a link to the River Hull through the local beck. Drainage of the area was a problem in the eighteenth century as the bulk of the lands in the town were low-lying.⁵⁷⁸ Hedon was a medieval market town six miles east of Hull, which was also a parliamentary borough in the interest of William Pulteney, later the Earl of Bath. The major influence, however, was exerted by the Corporation. Economically Hedon was becoming the poor relation of Hull in terms of its market and commerce, and because of this agriculture was becoming the primary industry.⁵⁷⁹ Fimber was a small agricultural village high on the wolds near the township of Wetwang, about

manorial or tenurial lords; for example, the Milbankes of Barningham, the Earls of Bruce at East Witton, the Dukes of Bolton at West Witton and the Smelts of Kirby Fletham.

⁵⁷⁷ Purdy, thesis, p. 174; Herring's Visitation Returns, LXXII, 67.

⁵⁷⁸ E.R.C.R.O., Commissioners of Sewers Reports, CSR/4/177, 221, 229, 251-2; /6/4, 6, 10, 24-37; /9/9, 13-16, 21; /12/55, 58; /16/7-11, 15,34; /19/62-3, 68; /20/139.

⁵⁷⁹ K.J. Allison ed., The Victoria History of the East Riding, V (1984), 176.

twenty miles east of York. Despite being only a mile from the York-Bridlington road, it was a relatively isolated village. The topography of the area was quite harsh and it has been noted that it was 'open [land with] scarce a bush or tree...for several miles.'⁵⁸⁰ There were also a number of tenurial and manorial jurisdictions over-lying the township's boundaries.

The number of voters in each of these towns varied immensely. Cottingham had seventeen voters in 1708 and fifty in 1734. In 1708 and 1727 the town was overwhelmingly Whig, whereas in 1734 there was an even split of Government and Opposition voters and in 1742 a Tory majority. Hedon had seven voters and no party majority in 1708; in 1727 the majority of its thirty voters were Whigs; in 1734 its forty-five voters were split between Government and Opposition; in 1742 the thirty-eight voters consisted of a majority of Whigs. Fimber had a minimum of five voters in 1708 and a maximum of eleven in 1734. Its voting behaviour swung from no party in 1708 to Whig in 1727, then Tory in 1734 and finally Whig again in 1742.

In terms of population, Fimber was a very small settlement in the late seventeenth century when it had sixteen households.⁵⁸¹ Unfortunately, the town does not feature in Herring's visitation returns, except as a part of Wetwang parish.⁵⁸² Cottingham had 289 households recorded in 1672 and 277 families in 1743, whilst Hedon had 117 households in 1672 and in 1743 100 families were

⁵⁸⁰ A. Harris, The Rural Landscape of the East Riding of Yorkshire (Wakefield, 1969), p. 14.

⁵⁸¹ Purdy, thesis, p. 108.

⁵⁸² Herring's Visitation Returns, LXXV, 252.

noted.⁵⁸³ This gave Cottingham an average of one voter per fifteen families and Hedon one per four families.

Clearly there are a mixture of places represented in this sample of nine townships and villages. The largest manufacturing area of the West Riding is included; several distinct agricultural areas are also included and, within these, highland and lowland areas are represented. There are townships which seem to have had no ties to large local landowners as well as those that did, and there are several towns which were within the immediate influence of large social centres like Hull and York. There is a large town with an important corporation, Hedon, and several towns like Dewsbury and Hatfield where manorial ties were still strong.

Despite these factors, there are still spatial problems which are exacerbated by the lack of townships from the North Riding or from the dales west of Addingham. Other types of economy, for instance a port, and major social centres, such as Beverley, are not included. There is no large town from any Riding; for instance Bradford, Bridlington or Richmond. Six of the towns had between twenty-five and forty voters between 1727 and 1742 and this is equally unrepresentative. However, this list of missing types of town could go on *ad infinitum*; an inclusive sample is difficult to obtain as the shire was so large and heterogeneous.

To an extent these problems do not matter because the aim of this chapter is to enlighten our view of the shire electorate and the different social and economic imperatives and motivations that the voters responded to. A study of this relatively diverse set of

⁵⁸³ Purdy, thesis, pp. 124, 132; Herring's Visitation Returns, LXXI, 150; *ibid.*, LXXII, 13.

towns, where voting behaviour over time was not predictable, is a profitable line of enquiry. Thus one can investigate the nature of the franchise in these areas and ask why these towns altered allegiance between the parties.

The first point to make is that because there are and were so many variations in terms of geography and economy among the sample towns, this study uncovered a massive local diversity in terms of the background to voting behaviour. What could be elicited was clouded by what could not - in terms of voters for whom there was no evidence in tenurial or manorial records. The nine townships yielded a total of 544 voters across the four polls; of these, 234 (43.0 per cent) only voted once. Of this latter group, 129 (55.1 per cent) could not be located in time and space as having bought, sold or inherited land, or as freeholders or tenants in any of the tenurial sources.⁵⁸⁴

In all, information about land conveyances or sales, and tenancies and manorial jurisdictions, was located for 400 (73.5 per cent) individuals. Within this group there was a large subset of men who were tenants of individuals or of manorial courts.⁵⁸⁵ Manorial jurisdiction covered 149 (27.4 per cent) voters, 111 of whom were from the West Riding. Thirty-four were tenants of

⁵⁸⁴ It is possible that this number of unknowns could have been decreased by widening the chronological search for individuals in the landholding records. However, this would have reduced the confidence in the linkage between the pollbook name and the landholding name.

⁵⁸⁵ The main manorial court records utilised were: B.C.A., 21D88/3, Guiseley and Esholt Court Roll; H.U.L., Sykes of Sledmere Papers, DDSY/18/15, /63/281, Sledmere and Wetwang Courts; L.C.A., Dibb Lupton (Solicitors) Records, DB205, Boxes 14-19, Hatfield Court Rolls; N.Y.C.R.O., Misc. Papers, ZSG/1, Holtby Manorial papers, mic. 2163; ZUE, Holtby Manor Court Book, 1608-1835, mic's 1346, 1350; Y.A.S., DD167/28-31, /33, /46, /53-59, /68-77, /97; MD393/1-2, Dewsbury Rectory Manor.

Hedon Corporation and a total of 113 (20.8 per cent) were tenants of other men.⁵⁸⁶ Of this latter group tenures were mixed and often one man had taken up leases from several sources, usually in order to create a larger, more unified block of land. However, only forty-three (38.1 per cent) of these men voted in step with their landlord. There were a number of reasons for this; some of the landlords did not vote at the same election as their tenant;⁵⁸⁷ many landlords had no clear political affiliation; certain tenants were large enough landowners themselves to have the economic strength to act independently. Indeed, many of these men seem to have had a large measure of political autonomy. Why this should be so was largely caused by local considerations that are best highlighted by specific examples.

The importance of local considerations was nowhere stronger than at Hatfield. The Lords of the Manor of Hatfield, which included eight other townships, were the Viscounts Irwin and the manorial framework was important to the functioning of local society.⁵⁸⁸ These men were strong in the Whig cause throughout the period and were active at every election except that of 1708 when the new Lord was a minor. At this poll, the thirty-one voters cast their votes in eleven different combinations. However, not until 1742 did the influence of Irwin appear to tip the balance in favour of the Whig party. In 1727 the Tories had sixteen voters to

⁵⁸⁶ E.R.C.R.O., DDHE/5/1; /8/4; /13/20, 94; /16/2, 63; /19/B; /30 f.122; /33 f.70, Hedon Corporation Records.

⁵⁸⁷ This is not to say they had no political affiliation, but that none could be divined from the extant sources.

⁵⁸⁸ See L.C.A., Dibb Lupton (Solicitors) Records, DB205, Boxes 14-19, Hatfield Court Rolls. There are a well preserved set of court rolls for this period.

the Whigs' fourteen; in 1734 there were fifteen Opposition voters, thirteen Government and four split; only in 1742 did the Whigs win out by seventeen votes to ten.

This split voting may have had much to do with the franchise in this town which was through common right. The independence which this gave appears to have bolstered the widespread antipathy in the area towards the interference of Irwin in social and economic matters. Prior to the 1695 election Abraham de la Pryme noted that the common at Hatfield 'is freehold unto us, and the Lord has nothing to do with it.' Moreover, 'the common-free inhabitants that made above forty shillings a year of their common did, according as formerly, swear themselves worth above forty shillings a year freehold and accordingly polled.'⁵⁸⁹ In a case of trespass which occurred in 1737 it was noted that 'time out of mind [there] hath been an antient custom to wit that the respective Tenants and occupiers in west field...have inclosed and separated such of their part of the sd common field...and to hold and enjoy the same...free from any common of pasture.'⁵⁹⁰ This is a fascinating insight into local electoral right with its basis resting in the drainage of the area in the late 1620s and early 1630s.

In May 1626 the Crown and Cornelius Vermuyden came to an agreement about draining the level. By 1629, after a series of disputes and riots, which indicate that the area had a history of direct action against and opposition towards the local landlord, Vermuyden covenanted 'that he will convey to the tenants of the

⁵⁸⁹ Jackson, Surtees Society Publications, 54, 26 July 1695, 185.

⁵⁹⁰ Temple Newsam MSS., TN/HC/B/17, Papers concerning a case of trespass; *ibid.*, TN/HC/B/18, 'The Plaintiff's Case'.

said manors such portions of the recovered lands as had been assigned to them in respect of their common'. There then followed a further series of disputes concerning the upkeep of the drainage and the lands conveyed, beyond the ruling of the Council of the North in support of the tenants' rights.⁵⁹¹

This acrimonious history of fighting for common rights continued in the eighteenth century, and the focus in the later period fell upon certain local Tories. In an argument running from 1726 until 1758, which focused upon the common land, Irwin questioned the rights of the inhabitants.⁵⁹² This led to him erecting a turnpike on the common, which then provoked a riot and subsequent prosecution that exacerbated the splits within the township. Dr Perkins felt that the riot 'was a jest'; moreover, he believed that no grand jury would have supported the rioters 'had not Sir William Wentworth been foreman (he...did it out of party principle)'.⁵⁹³ An opposite and amazing outburst came from Thomas Perkins after certain inhabitants of the manor signed a submission to Irwin. He wrote, 'what power he may now have I can't tell...His Majesty K: Charles ye Ist wd not at least...have done a contrary thing.' This was a powerful analogy to make and clearly tempers were fraught. However, Perkins felt confident as 'we are very well assured that ye common is ours by Deed.'⁵⁹⁴

⁵⁹¹ Hunter, South Yorkshire, I, 161, 163-6.

⁵⁹² See Temple Newsam MSS., TN/HC/B/17, papers concerning a case of trespass; *ibid.*, TN/HC/B/18, papers in a suit between Lord Irwin and the rioters at Stainforth; *ibid.*, TN/HC/B/19, papers concerning payment of a modus in lieu of tithes; *ibid.*, TN/HC/B/20, 'The Case of Lord Irwin concerning the Manor of Hatfield'.

⁵⁹³ *Ibid.*, TN/HC/B/18, papers in a suit between Lord Irwin and the rioters at Stainforth, Francis Simpson to Robert Hopkinson, 7 Oct. 1727.

⁵⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, TN/HC/C/1, Thomas Perkins to Hopkinson, 10 Dec. 1729.

There was a perception that the riot, which took place around the time of the 1727 by-election, was being used as a political tool. Certainly, the three men from Hatfield who were prosecuted alongside the Stainforth rioters all returned to cast Opposition votes in 1734 and two cast for Fox in 1742. Beyond this, certain Whigs were upset by the fact that the Constable of Stainforth, one of the rioters called John Green, was attempting to include the defendants' costs in the Constables' Accounts. Cornelius Dickinson was charged £3 instead of his usual 5s. per annum because he stood against 'the Combination and Confederacy' of 'the whole town'.⁵⁹⁵

There was a strong sense of community action and local loyalty that appeared to be beyond deference to the local squire or local landlord. Although aware that because Irwin leased lands on yearly leases '[he] may take the advantage to deprive us of 'em', this did not alter the actions of the community. In 1739, Jonathan Parish, who hoped to be made the local schoolmaster, had written to Irwin asking for his favour. Parish reported that 'by making Lord Irwin my friend [I] had made all my Neighbours my enemies.'⁵⁹⁶ Concerning the schoolmaster's appointment, the local curate Marmaduke Drake, hoped that 'they were wiser than to be led by ye nose by a Lord.'⁵⁹⁷

This confident air was induced by the strength of the community's common right, which was far from the novelty that Irwin implied it was. One seventeenth century commentator noted

⁵⁹⁵ Ibid., TN/HC/B/18, papers in a suit between Lord Irwin and the rioters at Stainforth, Simpson to Hopkinson, 7 Oct. 1727.

⁵⁹⁶ Ibid., TN/HC/B/17, papers concerning a case of trespass, Jonathan Parish to Hopkinson, 10 Nov. 1739.

⁵⁹⁷ Ibid..

'by often iteration and multiplication of the Act, it becomes a custom: and being continued without interruption time out of mind, it obtaineth the force of a law.'⁵⁹⁸ Similarly, one agrarian historian has written that common field government 'held the village together,⁵⁹⁹ so that the support for local common-rights gave the community a sense of security. In the case of Hatfield this common usage was a form of social, and possibly political, cement. Agrarian usage impinged upon the shire franchise and would have added to the difficulties and differences of political control. This may have been more so if those who enjoyed the vote by common right saw Irwin's actions as an attempt to impoverish them.⁶⁰⁰

Across the township there was some fealty towards Irwin and the Whigs. Timothy Moor was a tenant of the Manor House in the 1690s and declared that he would never 'undervalue his lordships interest.' Moor's life-long whiggery was not a means of escaping censure, however, and in 1725, after he failed to answer for debts outstanding to Irwin, he was told he would be sent for 'in a manner as shuffering and deceitful men ought to be'.⁶⁰¹

Other inhabitants were major landowners in their own right and could probably have got away with political disobedience in any context. John Hatfield leased 265 acres from Irwin in 1729, paying £67.0s.0d rent, whilst Cornelius Dickinson rented 131 acres, paying £25.0s.0d. Such twenty-one year leases were also

⁵⁹⁸ Carter, quoted in E.P. Thompson, Customs in Common (1991), p. 97.

⁵⁹⁹ J.A. Yelling, Common Field and Enclosure in England, 1450-1850 (1977), p. 215.

⁶⁰⁰ An important discussion of common right is to be found in Neeson, Commoners.

⁶⁰¹ Temple Newsam MSS., TN/HC/C/1, Tim. Moor to John Rhodes, 22 Apr. 1693; *ibid.*, Rhodes to Moor, 22 Sep. 1725.

taken up by five other voters who rented between 7 and 36 acres.⁶⁰² However, it is noticeable that the two leasees who were Tories in 1727 did not vote at the next two polls. Whether this was due to coercion from above is impossible to say, but with the inhabitants of the Manor enjoying the common right of 3,217 acres the bulk may not have relished such pressure.⁶⁰³

In 1736, six inhabitants of the town, three Whigs, two Tories and a split voter owned between 100 and 300 acres.⁶⁰⁴ As two also rented from Irwin, these men were clearly substantial local figures, able to improve their own lands and to act for themselves. Their immediate local importance may have been mirrored by a level of political influence. It has been noted that in such villages as Hatfield 'the squire and parson had unshakeable authority'.⁶⁰⁵ Although Irwin was loathed in certain sections of the community, with these other major landowners in the locale there was plenty of scope for social fractures to impinge upon politics.

The splits at each election tended to reflect individual social and political imperatives. Nineteen men called themselves 'Gentleman' in one source or another,⁶⁰⁶ and several more may have felt themselves economically and socially independent. Even so, very few of those who voted appear in the Deeds Registry as having purchased other lands. In fact, the only land transactions

⁶⁰² Ibid., TN/HC/C/5, 'A Particular of the Right Honourable Henry Viscount Lord Irwin's Estate' (n.d., 1748).

⁶⁰³ Ibid., TN/HC/B/20, 'The Case of Lord Irwin concerning the Manor of Hatfield', gives a total of 3,217 acres in thirteen parcels.

⁶⁰⁴ Ibid., TN/HC/B/19, papers concerning payment of a modus in lieu of tithes, 'To the Right Honourable, Sir Robert Walpole...', 3 Jan. 1736.

⁶⁰⁵ J. Thirsk, The Agrarian History of England, 1640-1750, I (Cambridge, 1984), 81.

⁶⁰⁶ The Deeds Registry transcripts and manor court rolls include occupation data.

confirmed were between large landowners and they named fifteen tenants or occupiers. These tenants were men who owned substantial acreages in the area anyway and four also rented from Irwin.⁶⁰⁷ In 1707 a rental of Irwin's lands showed eight men who had polled in 1708 or thereafter.⁶⁰⁸ All except one cast at least one Whig vote although the split nature of the votes is noticeable. With party organisation weak at this election these men could satisfy themselves and any local opinion leader by splitting their votes. Any measure of self-assurance was tied to the fact that the bulk of the voters in the township polled by right of their common land, and had a sense of communal strength gained through adversity in their disputes with Irwin.

There is little evidence about the value of the land in the township, although in the 1690s much of Irwin's land was valued at 20s. per acre.⁶⁰⁹ In 1707 Irwin's rental included eight voters who were paying out a minimum of £14.0s.0d. a year in rent. His rental for 1748 gives an average value of land in the town as 5s.6d. per acre.⁶¹⁰ If the common land was as valuable as this rented land then the voters would not have had to be particularly large landowners in order to poll. However, bearing in mind the size of the township population only a small number of men polled and these still may have been the most economically important inhabitants.

⁶⁰⁷ W.A., Deeds Registry, Volume U Page 550 Number 731, 1 May 1725; X 409 532, 1/2 Dec. 1726; Y 372 485, 7 Mar. 1727; Y 419 548, 15 June 1727; Y 596 782, 7 Mar. 1727; EE 46-7 42-3, 16/17 Mar. 1732. These deeds all mention tenants in Hatfield.

⁶⁰⁸ Temple Newsam MSS., TN/HC/C/5, 1707 rental.

⁶⁰⁹ Ibid., TN/HC/C/1, Moor to Rhodes, 22 Apr. 1693.

⁶¹⁰ Ibid., TN/HC/C/5, 1707 rental; *ibid.*, 'A Particular of the Right Honourable Henry Viscount Lord Irwin's Estate' (n.d., 1748).

That the franchise was set at forty shillings ought to have enfranchised a substantial number of men, but without an estate map of the common land this is impossible to judge. In terms of occupations one is left little more enlightened. Of the 121 Hatfield voters, occupations were found for fifty-three and thirty-two of these were gentlemen, or called 'Mr' or 'Cleric'. Thirteen were yeomen or husbandmen and a further eight were retailers or manufacturers.⁶¹¹ As a yeoman in one context would have been a gentleman in another it is impossible to judge the local social and economic importance of these men. However, the land was clearly important and that they actually voted may have given these men a certain self-assurance.

The nature of the franchise for this town was questioned in 1742 when the voters were said to be 'all copyholders'.⁶¹² Previous to this there had been few queries; in 1727 six voters' rights were questioned but only three reasons given, one voter's land was 'not worth 40s.', one had not paid the necessary taxes and one was said only to have common land.⁶¹³ In 1734 six voters were objected to because of a lack of a freehold worth forty shillings and a lack of assessment.⁶¹⁴ The Tory objection in 1742 may well have been because the town now had a Whig majority.

⁶¹¹ There were three butchers, and one each of carpenter, innholder, malster, mercer and shopkeeper.

⁶¹² Spencer Stanhope MSS., SpSt/11/5/3/20, objections to the 1742 poll.

⁶¹³ N.Y.C.R.O., Kirkleatham Hall Estate, ZK, 'Manuscript Pollbooks', mic. 1041, 'A Book taken Alphabetically of all freeholders as voted at the Crown End for Sir John Kaye Bart...'.
⁶¹⁴ L.C.A., Nostell Priory MSS., NP D3/4/2, 'List of Objections of Sir Miles Stapylton to Sir Rowland Winn's voters'; Spencer Stanhope MSS., SpSt 11/5/3/12, 'List of Objections of Sir Rowland Winn to Sir Miles Stapylton's voter's'.

Several important points about the franchise and political action are raised by this study of Hatfield. The importance of community at this time emphasises the difficulties involved in pin-pointing the political driving force behind individual voting actions. Similarly, there was the strength of custom and usage in terms of the variations in the franchise. As Langford has pointed out 'faith in local procedures was deeply entrenched.'⁶¹⁵ These factors become more central to the theme of this chapter when one considers the townships of Holtby and Guiseley.

At Holtby, the manorial jurisdiction of the Agar family was strong, with all the freeholders being customary tenants.⁶¹⁶ There is little else in the way of tenurial information extant for this period, however one surviving piece of information links in with that found for Hatfield. It was noted that in around 1720 'the several allotments of the said Common allotted to the said copyhold Tenants in right of their cottages should be at all times thereafter conveyed by freehold deed but be subject to a fine to the Lord...upon every descent, Demise or alienation...'.⁶¹⁷ It was noted in 1738 that one Jeremy Tindall died 'seized in his Demesin as of fee by copy of Court Roll' and that his son was to hold 'for ever at the will of the Lord'.⁶¹⁸

In essence this appears no different to any other form of copyhold by inheritance and as only three men who polled in 1708 returned in 1727 it is difficult to know whether the new voters

⁶¹⁵ Langford, Public Life, p. 162.

⁶¹⁶ N.Y.C.R.O., Misc. Papers, ZSG/1, Holtby Manorial papers, mic. 2163; *ibid.*, ZUE III/2 Holtby Manor Court Book, 1608-1835, mic's 1346, 1350.

⁶¹⁷ *Ibid.*, ZUE III/2, Holtby Manor Court Book, 1608-1835, an undated case noted on 28 Feb. 1827, mic. 1346.

⁶¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 13 Oct. 1738, mic. 1350.

were considered enfranchised by this apparent ruling. There was no Act of Parliament conveying such a right, although it has been noted that such copyholders had rights in the land 'virtually equivalent to a freehold.'⁶¹⁹ That only one voter was ever objected to, and that for a lack of a forty shilling freehold and assessment, suggests that the bulk of these men voted by right of fee simple. Also, the fact that in 1742 there was around one voter for every two and a half families indicates that Holtby was an affluent village, or an area where land values were high enough to mean that most landowners were enfranchised. The proximity of York was probably crucial in raising the value of the land.

Beyond this, other considerations are important. Four of the six men who polled for the Opposition in 1734 had not voted in 1727, when everyone had cast for the Whigs. This compares with the fact that six of the eight Government supporters in 1734 had polled Whig in 1727, whilst the other two did not vote. The fact that the Lord of the Manor, Thomas Agar, never voted, and that his brother, John, split his votes in 1734 and voted Whig in 1742, may have indicated to the rest of the town that they had a free hand. The proximity of York would also have meant that expenses were negligible and that the necessity of a local landlord willing to pay was negated.

There were also a fair proportion of men who were not from Holtby yet who polled because of land held in the township. In 1727, seven of the fourteen voters were such 'outvoters', three of whom lived in York; in 1734 six out of sixteen were not from Holtby; in 1742 only three of the eleven voters were 'outvoters'.

⁶¹⁹ G.E. Mingay, English Landed Society in the Eighteenth Century (1968), p. 7.

These men do appear to have skewed the voting figures in 1734 towards a more even split; if they are removed there is a swing towards the Tories or Opposition. There appears to have been a new trend in local opinion in favour of the Opposition Party in 1734 that had repercussions for Fox in 1742. Local social or economic factors, such as the proximity of Sir Miles Stapleton's estates at Myton and those of his fellow Tory Richard Harland at Sutton on the Forest, were also possibly important in forging a local consensus. Whatever the reasons, the community which actually lived in Holtby shifted towards opposition.

The issues involved at Holtby underline the difficulties inherent in attempting to divine political reasoning across time. They also point up the difficulties involved in dealing with the shire franchise, which from our perspective appears confusing. The sense of community action in this small village is likewise difficult to judge. However, the usage and custom of the common right in Hatfield contrasts with that alleged for Holtby because of the different manorial and tenurial jurisdictions and the proximity of York to the latter village.

A stronger sense of community and political action can be seen at Guiseley throughout the period in question, which distinguishes it from the other cloth producing townships. There was something of a seismic shift in the politics of the Manor of Esholt and Guiseley which occurred in 1719 upon the death of the Lord of the Manor, Sir Nicholas Sherburn of Stonyhurst in Lancashire. Sir Walter Calverley should have bought the Manor for around £32,000, however he fell very ill whilst treating Lady

Sherburn in London and the 'Tenants at Esholt and Guiseley stept in and bought Esholt and Guiseley...'.⁶²⁰

Prior to this, Sherburn had owned lands in nine West Riding townships. In Esholt, Shirburn's twelve tenants held leases for years; however, in Guiseley twenty-five held for lives, whilst twelve held for years and seven held at will.⁶²¹ None of the leaseholders for lives voted at the election of 1708, when only three Guiseley residents did so. This offers an interesting counterpoint to the evidence of objections made in 1734 to the voters of Farnley Tyas, Lingarths and Slaithwaite. Allegedly, these townships had good votes because they had 'sufficient freehold by leases for life by Sr Arthur Kaye made thirty years ago.'⁶²² In 1708 either the men of Guiseley did not perceive themselves as enfranchised or they could not get to the poll.

However in 1719 four of the tenants, all called 'yeoman', purchased the above Manor for £13,800 'upon and subject to such Trusts to convey to the respective Tenants of the said Duke [of Norfolk, the executor] the severall farmes and Tenements by them Respectively occupyed...'. This stimulated a frenetic period of purchasing, as thirty-eight men registered acquisitions of land.⁶²³ It is difficult to work out an average size of holding as some deeds do not register the number of acres, simply the number of closes or nothing at all. However, those that did record acreages

⁶²⁰ L.C.A., Guiseley Parish Records, /138, 'A Rentall and Valuation of the Estate late Belonging to Sr Nicholas Sheirburn...'. Why Calverley's estate agent did not carry through the transaction is unknown.

⁶²¹ Ibid..

⁶²² S.C.A., Wharnccliffe Muniments, Wh.M 106-1a-6, 107-29-34, various material concerning the 1734 election.

⁶²³ L.C.A., Guiseley Parish Records, /138, miscellaneous papers of Sir Nicholas Shirburn; Wakefield Archives, Deeds Registry, N 463 671, 18 June 1719; O 74 114 to O 99 151, all dated Sep. 1719.

varied from Hugh Marshall who bought 50 acres to Francis Pigot who bought 3.5 acres. In all, twenty of the thirty-one voters at the 1727 by-election were involved in this first wave of purchases, and by the time of that poll all except five of the voters had registered purchases of land.

The level of community involvement that was generated by this socio-economic upheaval probably explains the voters' unity at the polls in 1727, when twenty-seven men cast for the Whigs. Of the other four, one was a tenant of the local Tory, Sir Walter Calverley, one was the Tory Rector, another a local Gentleman, and the last remains unknown. In all, sixty-one different men polled at the four elections, and when one considers that at each of the last three there were at least thirty-one men who polled each time, then the low turnover of voters becomes an issue. This was a close-knit community - all except one of the voters lived in, or within five miles of the town. Also important was the fact that several families appear to have dominated the voting; in 1727 the Baileys, Barrets, Marshalls, Myers, Popplewells, Rhodes and Walkers provided nineteen out of thirty-one voters. In 1734 they provided seventeen out of thirty-nine and in 1742 seventeen out of thirty-eight voters.

This level of stability amongst the voters of the town may account for the consistency of the Guiseley voters at the polls. At the latter two elections the town switched to the Opposition then the Tory cause, so family and neighbourhood conceivably shaped local loyalties. Certainly, of the sixty-one voters, forty-five had purchased their land or received it from their fathers. Even lesser freeholders appeared capable of holding their own and they translate one commentator's belief that 'for most estate families

the purchase of property was a major avenue of productive investment' to this lower social level.⁶²⁴

In fact, as King states for the Parish of Calverley which lay next door to Guiseley, the most important men in that township were the freeholders and middling clothiers. These were men who owned 15 acres or more of land and paid at least £2 worth of tax.⁶²⁵ Small landowners would be classed as those holding between 5 and 15 acres and paying between 8s. and £2 in tax. Although much of the landholding information does not include actual acreages, the impression that the deeds give is that the bulk of the voters in Guiseley were in these primary status groups. Moreover, eleven men were classed as clothiers or involved in cloth manufacture, whilst twenty were husbandmen or yeomen.⁶²⁶ These men had a high demand for land and may have been involved in dual occupations. This demand for land certainly met supply and between 1719 and 1742 the voters of Guiseley were involved in at least 153 land transactions. Thus, despite the low turnover of voters, the market in land was very dynamic and landholding appears to have been a patchwork of interests.⁶²⁷ In this climate, any measure of political control may have proven difficult.

⁶²⁴ P. Roebuck, *Yorkshire Baronets* (Hull, 1980), p. 316.

⁶²⁵ S. King, 'The Nature and Causes of Demographic Change in an Industrialising Township: Calverley 1681-1820', Ph.D., University of Liverpool, 1993, pp. 106-8.

⁶²⁶ There were three carpenters, one blacksmith and one tanner; four gentlemen, two clerics and a parish clerk; the occupations of eighteen men could not be located. Just as landownership appears to have been important for the clothiers, a dual economic status may have existed among the yeomen.

⁶²⁷ Due to this dynamic land market and the fact that land transfers were often given in closes rather than acres, it becomes difficult to estimate the average size of holdings.

However, the switch away from the Whigs needs explanation. Sir Walter Calverley had a great influence in the area; in 1710 he noted how he 'had the Freeholders of Yeadon, Guyeslay, Menston, Hawkesworth, Baildon, Shipley, Idle, Eccleshall, Bolton and Calverley-cum-Farsley, at an entertainment...'.⁶²⁸ Two of the voters in 1734 were tenants of Calverley, William Myers renting £21.5s.0d. worth of land and James Brown renting £12.10s.0d. worth.⁶²⁹ However, that each owned land in Guiseley *and* was spending substantial sums on rents indicates a personal economic freedom that would have negated the influence of Calverley.

In all, ten voters rented land in these years and seven of these did so from their neighbours. The acreages that they rented possibly affected their political perceptions. David Rhodes was renting £20.0s.0d. per annum from the Whig Sir Walter Hawkesworth, and this appears significant in pushing him towards the Whigs in 1734. However, upon Hawkesworth's death in 1739 his lands passed to trustees, including Sir Walter Calverley, and Rhodes' vote in 1742 consequently switched to the Tories.⁶³⁰ Of the other nine voters, five rented lands worth between £4.5s.0d. and £10.16s.0d. per annum from a local landowner called Hugh Marshall.⁶³¹ He polled Whig in 1708 and for the Opposition in 1734 and 1742; in 1727 four of the five tenants polled Whig, whilst in 1734 the four who polled all gave Opposition votes. This convergence suggests a unity of thought which Marshall, as an important local figure, possibly focused.

⁶²⁸ Margerison, *Surtees Society Publications*, 77, 13 Oct. 1710, 126.

⁶²⁹ Y.A.S., Miscellaneous Papers, MS 527/86b, 'A Rental of Sr Walter Calverley's Estate'.

⁶³⁰ W.A., Deeds Registry, MM 537 743, 20 Oct. 1739.

⁶³¹ Ibid., EE 8 12, 17/18 Feb. 1732.

A local observer at the 1742 by-election canvassed forty-three possible voters.⁶³² Of these men, eight were said to be under the influence of Calverley, whilst six were under that of the local Whigs, Sir Walter Hawkesworth and Mr Hitch. These latter men did indeed gain four votes for Turner in 1742. However, there were two other important factors; firstly, the presence of the local cleric, Henry Wickham, who was said to have influence with sixteen men, thirteen of whom polled for the Tories; secondly, a wider community feeling that the Opposition, and then Fox, would best represent the needs of the town. Given the almost wholesale switch of votes in 1734, the clannish continuity in terms of landholding and the level of community action in terms of purchasing the Manor, the over-riding sense of political behaviour is one of local autonomy, upholding a community of integrity and interest.

Matters were slightly different in the other towns of the cloth-manufacturing district. Again there were vast differences in manorial jurisdictions and landholding across a small area. As Hudson has noted, in this area there was 'a complex plurality of manorial rights and estate ownerships.'⁶³³ This complexity and the shifting nature of landholding makes any inferences about the influences acting upon the voters difficult to assess. However, Hudson goes on to state that the family was 'the most powerful agent of social control and discipline.'⁶³⁴ Indeed, if one looks at the fact that Rawden only had one voter who voted by right of

⁶³² Temple Newsam MSS., TN/PO/10/10, 'An Account of the Freeholders within the wapentake of Skyrack...', 17 Sep. 1741.

⁶³³ P. Hudson, 'From Manor to Mill', in M. Berg, Manufacture in Town and Country before the Factory (Cambridge, 1983), p. 127.

⁶³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 129.

land that was more than two miles from the town, the effects on these voters would probably have been locally generated.

Certainly in Rawden the Marshall family appear to have been of major social importance. They owned land in Bingley, Guiseley and Yeadon as well as Rawden. Hugh Marshall purchased 50 acres as well as 43 closes in Guiseley between 1719 and 1728,⁶³⁵ and held at least 19 closes and 12 acres in Rawden.⁶³⁶ Despite being the most active 'Marshall' in the land market, he was still styled yeoman, clearly a rather generic term. However, given that his sons, Hugh and Jeremy, were in different political camps at each election, the nature of his wider influence can easily be overstated.

Again, Sir Walter Calverley had a measure of importance, as three voters in 1708 were his tenants. All three men were paying rents of between £19.4s.0d. and £36.0s.0d. per annum, which were significant sums. These three, along with another of Rawden's ten voters, paid free rents to Calverley, and being free tenants of the Lord may have been their entitlement to vote.⁶³⁷ Whilst all three who rented land cast one Tory vote, for Lord Downe, they also gave one vote for the independent Whig, Thomas Watson Wentworth. Whether they felt sufficiently independent to cast one vote for Downe and one for their own choice is uncertain.

⁶³⁵ W.A., Deeds Registry, N 82 153, 23 Sep. 1723; N 194 294, 20 Nov. 1719; N 231 363, 1 Dec. 1719; N 234 368, 23 Sep. 1719; N 402 629, 22 Feb. 1720; N 508 779, 22 Apr. 1720; P 622 803, 24 Feb. 1721; U 281 347, 9 Nov. 1724; W 222 282, 5 Feb. 1725; Y 528 694, 9 May 1727; Y 528 695, 2 Feb. 1728.

⁶³⁶ L.C.A., Badgery Papers, Emmott Papers, 16, 1056/438/8, /18, Rawden papers; W.A., Deeds Registry, N 160 245, 7 Feb. 1718; Q 455 606, 28 Oct. 1721; Y 529 696, 29 Dec. 1727; CC 483 642, 1/2 Apr. 1731; MM 568 792, 12/13 Nov. 1739.

⁶³⁷ B.C.A., Guiseley Parish Records, DB5/C11/3, Rawden deeds.

Calverley favoured the joint-Tory campaign and would not have sanctioned such a split vote.

One of these men was a woolstapler, one a yeoman and the other of unknown occupation. These appear to be relatively minor men, however the occupational information available masks wider social and economic pretensions. That such men were of enough local worth to have made up their own minds politically is given extra impetus by a piece of information relating to the land tax. An undated source includes the names of four of the voters at the 1708 poll, including the three Calverley tenants.⁶³⁸ They were assessed at £1.10s.0d., £2.0s.0d., £5.10s.0d. and £10.10s.0d.. With the rate of taxation running at 4 shillings in the pound, this made these men appear more than self-sufficient, in which case it is no surprise that they may have given one vote for Calverley's first choice and kept one for themselves.

Beyond this jurisdiction, Calverley also owned a quarter of the Manor of Rawden after 1718. The remaining parcels ended up in the hands of William Robinson of Rokeby, William Smith, the Rector of Melsonby and Daniel Foxcroft of Cambridge, Massachusetts.⁶³⁹ The different political stances of these men and that of Thomas Strother, a local gentleman who was the estate steward of the Whig, Sir Walter Blackett, added to the close-knit nature of the community.⁶⁴⁰ This split in the manorial jurisdiction may have influenced the voting behaviour of the town, which

⁶³⁸ Ibid., undated but late seventeenth or early eighteenth century land tax assessment. This had nine men who were assessed at £2 or more and was the only example of such a source for the nine towns under investigation.

⁶³⁹ L.C.A., Badgery Papers, Emmott Papers, 16, 1056/438/8-21, Rawden papers.

⁶⁴⁰ Spencer Stanhope MSS., SpSt/5/9/22, miscellaneous estate papers.

although favouring the Tories always had a large minority of Whig votes. Quite what was the influence of this on John Holden, a local woolstapler, is interesting. Not only did he rent from Calverley, but he farmed land in each of the four quarters of the manor as well as renting 75 acres of Sarah Dixon.⁶⁴¹ Renting this amount of land attests to a personal wealth and drive that would have allowed Holden to feel quite able to vote as he desired, which was Tory.

As every voter in the town except four was involved in a land purchase in these years, a defined and split local ideology, rather than landlord-tenant influence appears to have been at work. This is more so when one considers that the canvass of 1742 only pointed to one influence in Rawden, that of Calverley. He was said to hold the votes of three men, two of whom polled Tory and one Whig. That this one dissentient was Hugh Marshall's son shows that a measure of local economic security engendered local political independence and that 'influence' was a very subjective concept.

These myriad local influences were mirrored in Addingham where there were several major landowners, notably John Stanhope, Sir John Jennings and the Earl of Thanet. All these men showed some partiality to the Tory or Opposition cause generally, however, there is no evidence that they did so specifically in Addingham. In fact this is the problem with much of the evidence for these towns in this period; for whilst certain men like Sir Walter Calverley were socially and politically active, there is little information to suggest that they were of major political

⁶⁴¹ W.A., Deeds Registry, S 418 541, 1/2 Mar. 1726; LL 30 41, 21 Jan. 1738.

importance in these places. This tends to push any analysis towards local, community-based factors.

Hence, Addingham again appears to demonstrate a complex series of economic and social factors. In all there were sixty-one voters from this township, thirty-five of whom only voted once. Thirty-six of the voters were located as having purchased land and four others were located as tenants. George Myers, a local gentleman held some sway in the township. He made several purchases of land before 1709 when he began to be noted as 'Gentleman' rather than 'yeoman' and in 1715 he purchased the Manor of Long Addingham and 120 acres of the common.⁶⁴² By this time he had also purchased the mill and kilne 'and also all the token tolls, customes dues duties suites and services of all the freeholders and inhabitants'.⁶⁴³ Myers polled Whig in 1727, when two of his tenants, John Fieldhouse and William Bell did not poll.⁶⁴⁴ In 1734 when Myers did not vote, these men polled for the Opposition. Possibly, they were no longer tenants or they may have reacted to the fact that their landlord was no longer politically active.

The level of landlord politicisation is difficult to assess. A rental of Miss Coates includes six voters who rented on average £4.19s.8d. of land from her.⁶⁴⁵ In 1734 all six men were Opposition supporters and in 1742 the five who polled were all Tories. However, four of these men also purchased their own land prior to these elections and, with the tenor of the town switching

⁶⁴² Ibid., H 357 444, 30 June 1715.

⁶⁴³ B.C.A., Addingham Parish Records, 124D77/90, Roger Heber to Geo. Myers, 5 Oct. 1713.

⁶⁴⁴ W.A., Deeds Registry, T 167 230, 4/5 Apr. 1722.

⁶⁴⁵ Y.A.S., Miscellaneous Papers, DD61, 'A rentall of Miss Coates estate' (n.d.).

towards the Tories in 1734 and 1742, the votes of these men may not have depended upon any fealty towards Miss Coates.

The fact that many of these voters purchased their own land points towards a measure of independent thought and deed. One woman who wished to sell her property in the late seventeenth century noted that 'Those that knows it doth say that ther is not better land for quantaty betwixt [here] and Yorke'.⁶⁴⁶ Whether it was of equally high quality and therefore value is unclear. However many of these freeholders were middling landowners, holding between 12 and 26 acres.⁶⁴⁷ Of the sixty-one voters only two were noted as gentlemen, although twenty were yeomen. Despite the fact that twenty-eight occupations were unknown, the bulk of the land was held by farmers. A few of these were also tenants and a few may have shown loyalty towards a local landowner like Myers or a major non-resident landowner like the Earl of Thanet. Once again, however, these men were all small or middling landowners, far from being mere forty shilling freeholders or in a penurious situation. The turnover in landholding, the number of men polling only once and a local feeling which worked against the Whigs, were all important. Certainly, despite that party's protestations in 1742 that 'not more than seven will be [Tory]', they lacked a major local organiser and any sense of support within Addingham.⁶⁴⁸

This was also the case in Dewsbury and yet the Whigs were more successful there throughout this period. Akin to Hatfield,

⁶⁴⁶ Spencer Stanhope MSS., SpSt/5/2/5, Estate correspondence, 1617-1714, Ann Currer to Mr Thornton (n.d.).

⁶⁴⁷ W.A., Deeds Registry, Q 603 798, 23/4 Jan. 1722; S 64 80, 21 Jan. 1723.

⁶⁴⁸ Fitzwilliam (Malton) MSS., R. Hitch to Malton, 13 Sep. 1741.

Dewsbury was a town where manorial influences, rather than guilds or a corporation, were the important feature. This was primarily due to the fact that Dewsbury was a town which was growing on the back of the expansion in the cloth industry. In this way it provides a useful comparison with Hedon in the East Riding, where the Corporation was important. It has been noted that there was 'more freedom in towns which had persisted under manorial control and so avoided the companies and guilds and corporation control of medieval towns.'⁶⁴⁹

Certainly, the influence of the Rectory Manor of Dewsbury tended to give more freedom for action because in 1718 it passed from the Murgatroydes, who were local Tories, to the Richardsons, a London based family.⁶⁵⁰ Nineteen of the twenty-three men who are known to have been copyholders of the Manor under Murgatroyde gave Tory votes in 1708. After that election, however, of the sixteen who polled again, only seven were still Tory voters, whilst six had altered to the Whigs and three split their votes in 1734.

Each manor had its own system of usages and customs which could not be ignored. One copyholder, Thomas Webster, attempted to 'reduce the same [his copyhold] into a perfect Estate of Inheritance in Fee Simple', but his land was seized as this was against the custom of the Manor. In 1712 he had land seized when attempting to make a twenty-one year lease of his land, which was then forfeited.⁶⁵¹ Clearly, in Dewsbury the creation of freeholds or

⁶⁴⁹ M.J. Downton, 'Towns and Economic Growth in Eighteenth Century England', in P. Adams and E.A. Wrigley eds, Towns and Societies (1978), p. 261.

⁶⁵⁰ Y.A.S., Dewsbury Rectory Manor, DD167.

⁶⁵¹ Ibid., DD167/54, 1 Dec. 1712; /56, 20 Mar. 1714.

copyholds by inheritance from the Manor could not be done and any right to vote would have to be by land held in fee simple.

Local political control was not aided by the fact that seventy-six of the 126 voters from Dewsbury only polled once. Furthermore, the major local figures who were also customary tenants of the Manor, Sir Joseph Armitage and later his son George, and George Savile, appear to have had no tenants in the town.⁶⁵² In fact, twenty-seven men *were* also tenants of nine local men, and sixteen of these tenants voted the same way as their landlords.⁶⁵³ One of these landlords, John Murgatroyde, was a major local figure who owned at least 444 acres in seven other local townships besides his Dewsbury lands.⁶⁵⁴

In all eleven voters were free tenants of the Manor and these men were split between the two parties.⁶⁵⁵ The average rent for the eight free tenants who polled in 1742 was low, at £0.3s.5d..⁶⁵⁶ Clearly, without knowing the rental value of the lands or the value of holdings, it is difficult to estimate political and economic independence, although these free tenants also owned other lands. That few specific political organisers mentioned Dewsbury points towards a town where political control would be difficult. The Tories noted that five ill or old men in 1742 could

⁶⁵² W.A., Dewsbury Parish Records, D9/169, miscellaneous church rents, 1681-1823.

⁶⁵³ See Y.A.S., Dewsbury Rectory Manor, DD167/46, /58; W.A., Deeds Registry, N 239 366, 17 Sep. 1718; T 510 672, 18/19 June 1724; R 1 1, 28 Feb./1 Mar. 1722; Q 179 228, 13 Nov. 1724; W 406 518, 28 Nov. 1725; Y 31 43, 19 May 1727; AA 130 149, 21 Mar. 1729; BB 181 246; BB 606 816, 13/14 Apr. 1730; EE 180 264, 5/6 Sep. 1731; FF 224 315, 6 Nov. 1733; GG 110 153, 5 Oct. 1734; GG 166 234, 4/5/ Oct. 1734; HH 346 417, 15/16 Dec. 1735; KK 626 821, 16/17 Jan. 1738; 3 Feb. 1730; OO 670 951, 16 Feb. 1741;

⁶⁵⁴ Ibid., N 239 366, 17 Sep. 1718.

⁶⁵⁵ Y.A.S., Dewsbury Rectory Manor, DD167/74, Rental.

⁶⁵⁶ Ibid..

be got out by a 'Mr Turner', a local gentleman, which again highlights the importance of controls maintained by a knowledge of the local context.⁶⁵⁷

The importance of any landlord in Dewsbury was tempered by the fact that nineteen voters were noted as 'clothier', fifteen as 'yeoman' and thirteen as 'Mr' or 'gentleman'. This latter denominator implies that there were a number of prosperous men in the area, possibly clothiers or merchants made good. The number of clothiers hints that many such men were renting land, possibly to ward off the problems of trade fluctuations, and their dual occupations may have added to their sense of autonomy at the polls. This does not imply a sense of shared belief amongst these occupational groups, but the low number of yeomen and the high rate of purchase of land in the town indicates that areas like Dewsbury may have had a demand for land from urban groups. Certainly, Roebuck has noted that farmland adjacent to urban areas tended to be more profitable than that in rural districts, and alongside the fact that freehold land prices were rising at this time, the market in land points towards a wider personal independence.⁶⁵⁸

Local knowledge allowed both sides to claim to have located bad votes in 1734. The Opposition found seven, although only two owned land in Dewsbury, whilst the Government party alleged that five votes were illegal.⁶⁵⁹ Despite this latter fact, Wortley's

⁶⁵⁷ Spencer Stanhope MSS., SpSt/11/5/3/17, a list of Dewsbury voters unpolled.

⁶⁵⁸ Roebuck, *Yorkshire Baronets*, p. 36; C. Clay, 'Lifeleasehold in the western counties of England, 1650-1750', *Agricultural History Review*, 29 (1981), 291.

⁶⁵⁹ L.C.A., Nostell Priory MSS., NP D3/4/2, 'List of Objections of Sir Miles Stapylton to Sir Rowland Winn's voters'; Spencer Stanhope

lieutenants attempted to back up seven accused voters. Of these men they were unsure of four, whilst they could not find one and another held a long lease; this last man's land 'was worth 50s. which is in proportion with other lands of 50s. which shows the value.'⁶⁶⁰ Although a borderline case, this small freeholder was vital to his party in 1742. That the elections of this period were so close probably gave such men a greater importance to the parties, which would then have increased their own sense of self-worth. In this way these men had a great political value within their own community and this may have given them a strong bargaining position with the politicians.

The low number of objections and the occupational data which shows that many of the freeholders were clothiers, gentlemen or yeomen, is important in examining the make-up of the Dewsbury electorate. That the bulk of the voters held lands in the town, and that only nine did not, indicates that they were a close-knit community at this time. As an independent group of lesser or middling freeholders, they will have felt different local influences upon them, be they manorial, tenorial or ideological.

One final influence was that of the local cleric. During Vicar William Bowman's suspension, for printing a tract that the Archbishop found offensive, the Vicar of Batley, Mr Rhodes, was given the living. However, he was far from being a paragon of Whig virtue himself, for although he 'promised his own vote' to the Government party, it was reported that he 'makes all the

MSS., SpSt 11/5/3/12, 'List of Objections of Sir Rowland Winn to Sir Miles Stapylton's voter's'.

⁶⁶⁰ S.C.A., Wharnccliffe Muniments, Wh.M 106-1a-6, 107-29-34, various material concerning the 1734 election.

interest he can against them.'⁶⁶¹ To Malton and the Whig hierarchy this was intolerable after he had been presented on the Archbishop's favour. However, it also indicates the importance of controlling all the possible avenues of influence in a town. In this case, just how much sway the Vicar had is unclear, but he had the politicians a little worried.

That the voters were a more affluent section of the community is highlighted by a report of a riot which took place in April 1740 against a local miller. Apparently, 'about 400 Persons got together in a tumultuous and riotous Manner to redress (as they call'd it) some Grievances...occasion'd by the Dealers in wheat flower...'. These merchants' control of the market meant that 'the poor People could not have their corn ground without a Bribe to the Miller.'⁶⁶² That over 400 people were allegedly involved implies that the voters of the town were a small minority of the population and hence more likely to be the most affluent section of the town. This is more so given that there were very few sales of land by those who polled noted in these years, a factor which accords with Mingay's view that 'The vast majority of them [the lesser landowners], were able to hold their own...it was only a small minority whose debts eventually compelled sales of land.'⁶⁶³

Hedon in the East Riding provides an interesting counterpoint to Dewsbury, as a town where the major influence was the Corporation. Of the seventy-seven men who polled in the four elections, forty-two were corporators, and at least nine had

⁶⁶¹ Wentworth Woodhouse Muniments, WWM, M1, Mr Wilton to Malton, 10 Dec. 1733, mic. A66.

⁶⁶² Lumb, TSM, XXVI, no. 742, 22-29 Apr. 1740.

⁶⁶³ Mingay, English Landed Society, p. 80.

been Mayors who were elected by the burgesses. This tends to point up the close-knit nature of this body of men. Moreover, of the voters of the town, eighteen were called esquire or 'Mr', or were gentlemen, whilst one was Governor of the Garrison at Hull. Beyond the thirty-four men who were tenants of the Corporation, very few also rented land from other inhabitants.⁶⁶⁴ Clearly, the bulk of the voters were relatively substantial men although the nine men mentioned in the rental of 1726 were paying an average half-yearly rent of £1.14s.0d..⁶⁶⁵ In all, thirty-seven men had purchased an estate and two received land from their fathers or father-in-law. A further ten men were freeholders of the Corporation, although in all at least twenty-two men owned such freeholds.⁶⁶⁶

The occupational information for the township tends to be misleading. Of the fifty-eight occupations that are known, there were only eight who were yeomen. Beyond the nineteen who regarded themselves as gentlemen, there was one merchant and a plethora of local trades. Whilst these represented major manufacturing and retail groups, there was some shifting of descriptors over time.⁶⁶⁷ For example, Stephen Read, who would become the Mayor in 1729, was a tailor at the 1727 poll, yet by the end of 1727 was a merchant tailor and by 1729 was calling

⁶⁶⁴ For records of the Corporation, see E.R.C.R.O., Chichester Constable MSS., DD CC/45/47, /56; Hedon Corporation Records, DDHE/5/1; /8/4; /13/20, 94; /16/2, 63; /19/B; Miscellaneous Papers, DDIV/5/4-13; /20/14; /48/1; DDX/133/3.

⁶⁶⁵ E.R.C.R.O., Chichester Constable MSS., DDCC/45/56, 'Hedon Corporation book'.

⁶⁶⁶ Ibid., Hedon Corporation Records, DDHE/16/63, '1716 Call Roll'.

⁶⁶⁷ There were one each of: apothecary, baker, bricklayer, cooper, mason, plumber, surgeon and tailor. There were two each of: butchers, carpenters, felmongers and websters. Finally, there were three innholders and three tanners, but four cordwainers.

himself 'Gentleman'.⁶⁶⁸ Within this set of voters there does appear to have been a recognition that they were an important group. In some instances, as with Read, they improved their socio-economic position, or at least their own perceptions of that position.

With the Corporation being the major landowner and economic agent in the town, it is little surprise that the town had a party majority from 1727-42. What is more interesting is the fact that this Whig majority was accompanied, in 1734 and 1742, by large Opposition and Tory minorities. Also that despite the fact that the town's Parliamentary representatives were influenced by William Pulteney, an Opposition Whig, he appears to have had little sway at the shire elections. In fact there was little in the way of outside interference with the shire voters. Pulteney wrote to the Lord of the Manor, Cuthbert Chichester, in 1734 to 'recommend [Mr Berkeley] to the Corporation [for the borough election]'. Berkeley was a man 'who will ever maintain the Power privileges, and Independency of Parliaments.'⁶⁶⁹ His recommendation of this man to sit in Pulteney's place, alongside Sir Francis Boynton, another East Riding Whig, may have been accepted by the Corporation as there were no other nominations and because these were well-connected candidates. However, in terms of the county election, Pulteney seems to have left well alone. His agent, Henry Waterland, a significant local figure who was Mayor five times, split his votes in 1734 as he had in 1708. The several important local Whigs who were free burgesses, Hugh Bethell, Sir Francis Boynton and Hugh Cholmley, may have influenced

⁶⁶⁸ E.R.C.R.O., Deeds Registry, I 350 780, 22 Feb. 1726; K 340 701, 11 Nov. 1727; L 18 31, 28 Mar. 1729.

⁶⁶⁹ Ibid., Chichester Constable MSS., DDCC/144/3, Wm Pulteney to Cuthbert Chichester (n.d., 1734).

ideologies in the town but this was never explicitly acknowledged.⁶⁷⁰ Nash has noted that, 'Far from being the governor's of their town, the corporators were normally pawns in a wider political arena.'⁶⁷¹ That the political interference from Pulteney was so cautious indicates that the influence of the local gentry was of secondary interest to the middle-ranking gentlemen of the town, who made up the electorate of Hedon.

The reasoning behind the increase in Opposition supporters in 1734 does not appear to have been due to Tory abstainers in 1727 polling in 1734. Of the thirty-one freeholders in 1716, twelve did not poll in 1727 but did so in 1734 and eleven of these were Government party men at that poll. Seven voters switched from the Whigs to the Opposition, or to split their votes and there were only six new voters who did not poll for the Government. The Whig switchers were all members of the Corporation, two of whom went on to be Mayors. Clearly, there was little hostility shown to these men, which indicates that individual economic or political factors were accepted as forging diverse political sensibilities. Moreover, that these voters were split at the polls in 1734 and 1742 was probably incidental to the wider policies of the Corporation and its need to show a united front. For instance, the Tory Samuel Watson petitioned the local Commission of Sewers on behalf of the Corporation in June 1742 about the need

⁶⁷⁰ Ibid., miscellaneous papers, DDIV/48/1, Hedon Court, record of minutes.

⁶⁷¹ P.J. Nash, 'Doncaster, Ripon and Scarborough, 1640-1760', Ph.D., University of Leeds, 1983, p. 438.

to dress Hedon Haven. On the same issue, the Corporation as a whole had petitioned that same body two years earlier.⁶⁷²

Overall, the voting behaviour of Dewsbury and Hedon does suggest that the Manor gave more political freedom than the Corporation. However, one must be wary of ascribing too much freedom or control either way. In both towns the voters were relatively affluent men, with a number of different economic and social factors acting upon them. Despite the fact that the Rectory Manor of Dewsbury and the Corporation of Hedon were both notionally politically neutral, the fact that the latter looked for unity in its local policies possibly forged a level of political concert.

One other important point was the proximity to Hedon of Hull, and to an extent of Beverley. This also affected politics and the land market in Cottingham. In 1734 five voters from Hedon came from Hull, including the Governor of the Garrison, John Jones; by 1742 this number was seven. Apart from Jones, there were two gentlemen, an apothecary, an innholder and a merchant, as well as one man of unknown status. The sole voter from Beverley, in 1727, was a gentleman. In 1734, nine Cottingham voters out of fifty were from Beverley or Hull, which implies the importance of these smaller townships for the inhabitants of their larger neighbours. Between 1727 and 1742 eleven men from these two towns polled for land held in Cottingham. These men consisted of an esquire and a gentleman; an apothecary, a baker, a chapman, a cooper and two merchants; there were two yeomen and one unknown. This appears to have been a mix of men, however

⁶⁷² E.R.C.R.O., Commissioners of Sewers Reports, CSR 12/49, /71, petitions of the Mayor, Aldermen and Burgesses of Hedon, 15 Oct. 1740, 23 June 1742.

occupational descriptors were incredibly subjective terms and tend to mask the actual status of individuals.

Hedon and Cottingham possibly met the growing demand for land from the booming port of Hull and it is likely that this would have had a wider socio-economic effect on them. In fact the Vicar of Cottingham noted that the alehouses of the township were popular with men from Hull 'who come hither, as I suppose, for a walk, and to regulate themselves.'⁶⁷³ Moreover, in 1722 the several Manors of Cottingham were purchased by one William Cogan, Alderman of Hull.⁶⁷⁴ That Hull was less than three miles away did have a social and economic affect on Cottingham.

The influence of Beverley upon the land market is less certain. Unlike Hull, this town was not in such a dynamic phase of population growth, although it was still the major social centre in the East Riding. As the meeting place for the Justices of the Peace and Commissions of Sewers, Beverley provided the major meeting point for the local gentry. However, investment in land appears to have been less important than for the gentlemen of Hull. Thus, Beverley only provided one of the Cottingham voters in 1727 and a further two in 1734. Whilst the implicit social pull of Beverley may have affected the votes of the Cottingham freeholders, Hull was more important in providing actual voters.

The fact that men from outside these townships were active in the local land-market indicates the fractured state of landholdings in this period. One of the reasons for this was the death in 1724 of Sir Michael Warton of Beverley Parks who left

⁶⁷³ Quoted in VCH East Riding, IV, 65.

⁶⁷⁴ See E.R.C.R.O., Deeds Registry, G 449 964, 7 July 1722. The manors were called Barnard Castle, Richmond, Sarum and Westmoreland; there was one other manor called Rectory Manor.

six manors, four advowsons and over 10,700 acres of land in forty-nine townships to his three daughters.⁶⁷⁵ One of his daughters, Elizabeth Tadman, sold the Manors of Cottingham to William Cogan who then sold them on to the local Whig gentleman, Hugh Montgomery, along with 11 oxgangs, 170 sheepgates and 10 acres of land.⁶⁷⁶ The Rectory Manor appears to have passed to Sir James Pennyman, Dame Susan Newton and Charles Pelham, again indicating the splintered nature of holdings.⁶⁷⁷ This feeling is accentuated by the appearance of several other important, yet non-resident, men in the deeds for the town. Thomas Duncombe of Helmsley in the North Riding owned the fee farm rents of three of the Manors; William Burton of Beverley purchased over 6 oxgangs and 24 acres in the years 1713-14, and by 1741 his son Richard had spent £4,770.15s.0d. on twenty-nine purchases in the township.⁶⁷⁸

From the extant deeds, it becomes clear that there was a mix of large and middling landowners in Cottingham. In 1715, William Crowle, a merchant of Hull, purchased 224.5 acres in Cottingham Sarum from Hull Corporation.⁶⁷⁹ In 1727 Mr John Baccus owned 162 cords length of land next to Newland Beck, and Jacob Robinson owned 62 acres adjacent to it.⁶⁸⁰ Again the mixture of

⁶⁷⁵ Ibid., Hotham of South Dalton Papers, DDHO/48/50, 'Abstract of Title of Sir Michael Warton'.

⁶⁷⁶ Ibid., Deeds Registry, G 449 964, 7 July 1722; K 438 925, 1/2 May 1728.

⁶⁷⁷ Ibid., Miscellaneous Papers, DDX/206/1, Cottingham Rectory Manor Court Rolls, 1660-1773. In fact there is a paucity of manorial evidence for Cottingham in these years, despite the fact that there were five manors.

⁶⁷⁸ Ibid., Deeds Registry, H 34 71; D 153 251, 5 Aug. 1713; D 205 337, 12 Mar. 1714; E 300 533, 4 Nov. 1715; H.U.L., Miscellaneous Papers, DSJ/18.

⁶⁷⁹ E.R.C.R.O., Deeds Registry, D 336 563, 28 Feb. 1715.

⁶⁸⁰ Ibid., Commissioners of Sewers Reports, CSR 4/177, 6 June 1727.

records in acres, closes, cords and oxgangs, or where no specific measure was used, makes an approximation of holdings impossible. However, only seven of the conveyances which were recorded featured land of less than 10 acres. With this in mind, even those twenty-five men who were noted as husbandmen, gardeners or yeomen, were important landowners in their own right. Whilst thirty-two occupations remain unknown, there was an abundance of local trades or crafts, and it appears that this section of society, alongside the yeomen, were the most important section of voters in the town.⁶⁸¹

There were very few men who were also tenants, and those that were appear to have been large landowners. For instance, the four men who rented of Captain Dawson and who polled were all substantial local gentlemen.⁶⁸² The fractured nature of landownership and the many and varied tenurial and manorial interests blurred the political lines within the town. Although there was not a great turnover in voters, there was no clear focus of local opinion for any party and this possibly reflected the fact that relative economic independence was feeding political divergence.

This level of local economic independence was also found at Fimber on the wolds of the East Riding where landownership was a little less confused. The bulk of the lands were held by six families who provided seventeen of the twenty-one voters from the town at the four elections. These men were solidly Whig in

⁶⁸¹ Whilst there were two apothecaries, there were one each of: baker, butcher, carpenter, chapman, cooper, cordwainer, malster, tailor, papermaker and weaver. One labourer voted in 1727 and 1734.

⁶⁸² H.U.L., British Records Association, DRA/41, 'An Account of the Lands in the severall fields of Cottingham and Eppleworth being Capt Dawson's'.

1727 and tended to support the Opposition in 1734. However, in 1734 six of the eleven voters lived elsewhere and in 1742 four of the six did so. The fact that the five men who lived in Fimber in 1734 all polled for the Opposition and the two in 1742 voted for the Tory indicates a local ideological shift away from the Whigs.

The major landowners were the Horsley family, whose interest widened upon the death of Matthew Horsley in 1692. From this man lands passed to his sons; Matthew, the eldest, received 8 oxgangs and 4 acres; William inherited 3 oxgangs; John received 5 oxgangs; finally Christopher was demised 1 oxgang. All of these men voted at some point.⁶⁸³ The amount of land in an oxgang was estimated at 20 acres and if the order of this size of holding is correct then these men were major landowners.⁶⁸⁴ Certainly, this is reinforced by the fact that in 1731, Christopher Horsley, the grandson of the first Matthew, took up a 10 year lease at £13.0s.0d. per annum for a further 14 oxgangs of land.⁶⁸⁵

The Callis, Clarkson, Cole, Hardy, Holtby and Linton families also owned land in the village at this time and the conveyancing of land between father and son tended to keep the land market and hence voters reasonably static. The following memorandum of lands in Fimber gives a breakdown of landownership in the village in the late 1730s:⁶⁸⁶

⁶⁸³ Ibid., Sykes of Slemere MSS., DDSY/18/14, 'Probate of Matthew Horsley', 3 Jan. 1692.

⁶⁸⁴ Ibid., DDSY/18/178, 'Abstract of title of John Horsley', note 2 gives the value of 1 oxgang as 20 acres.

⁶⁸⁵ Ibid., DDSY/18/171, Lease of 20 Mar. 1731. Although this was no insignificant sum, this means that the land was worth under £1 per oxgang per annum in rent - less than 1s. per acre per annum.

⁶⁸⁶ Ibid., DDSY/18/12, memo re-lands in Fimber. This memorandum was undated but was probably from late 1737 or early 1738 given that Ralph Yoward purchased his 10 oxgangs in July of that year and purchased 7 more in June and September 1738; see E.R.C.R.O., Deeds

<u>NAME</u>	<u>OXGANGS</u>	<u>% OF LAND</u>	<u>RENT (£.s.d)</u>
Mr Langley	19	14.8	16.5.0
Mat Horsley	6	4.6	5.0.0
Thos Layton	9	7.0	7.0.0
Ed Edmund	2	1.6	3.0.0
Chr Newlove	5	3.9	5.0.0
Rd Sykes	10	7.8	10.0.0
Wm Callis	12	9.4	12.0.0
Wm Holtby	10	7.8	10.0.0
Ra Yoward	10	7.8	9.0.0
Jno Hardy	12	9.4	11.0.0
Chr Horsley	27	21.1	25.0.0
Rd Holtby	6	4.6	4.10.10
Jno Coal	0.5	0.4	2.0.0
Mary Horsley	X	X	2.1.10

Table 6.1: landownership in Fimber in the 1730s.

Whether the rental values shown are free rents of one or other of the manors in the vicinity is unknown. However, these people were the bedrock of the local community and were the major political players. Other men did hold land in the towns; for instance, the Newloves and Wharrams of Wetwang. Similarly, Mark Kirkby, a major East Riding landowner with a rental of over £4,100 per annum, owned land in Fimber with William Holtby as his tenant.⁶⁸⁷ Despite the fact that Kirkby voted for the Government in 1734, and that Holtby himself also owned 10 oxgangs, this tenant did not poll at any election.

The major landowners appear to have been politically split. Whilst the Horsleys supported the Opposition in 1734, John Hardy

Registry, P 62 155, 11 July 1737; P 226 590, 25/26 June 1738; P 227 591, 6/7 Sep. 1738.

⁶⁸⁷ E.R.C.R.O., Hotham of South Dalton Papers, DDHO/71/54, 'Copy Deed of Partition of the Estates of Mark Kirkby Esq.'.

was a Government man in 1734 and a Whig in 1742; Ralph Yoward was also a Whig at the last poll. The bulk of the landowners called themselves 'yeoman' and it was only John Cole, the smallest landowner, who did not. Whilst his son was a tailor, he was apparently a carpenter, who kept a parcel of around 10 acres to work for extra income or in order to be more self-sufficient. If he was the only local carpenter and his son the only local tailor, then they may have had a level of political independence allowed by their economic and social utility.

Other important jurisdictions appear to have been the Manors of Sledmere and Wetwang. The Lord of Sledmere was Richard Langley who polled Whig in 1727, then Opposition and Tory in 1734 and 1742. He owned 19 oxgangs in the village and at least three of the voters, who polled as Langley did, were his customary tenants.⁶⁸⁸ The Prebendary Manor of Wetwang was sold to Nicholas Suger of York in 1732 by the Prebend Edward Finch, a brother of the Earl of Nottingham.⁶⁸⁹ Suger only polled in 1727 when he gave a Whig vote, and of the four men who were his customary tenants voting was mixed. The two who were also tenants of Langley at Sledmere Court voted for the Opposition, whilst one other split and one polled for the Government.⁶⁹⁰ All four men had their own land and so may have been capable of making an independent decision. However, of the two men who were customary tenants of both courts, one, John Clarkson, rented from the other, Matthew Horsley. They both polled the same way,

⁶⁸⁸ H.U.L., Sykes of Sledmere MSS., DDSY/18/1, lease of 4/5 Jan. 1702; *ibid.*, DDSY/62/281, extracts from Sledmere Manor Court.

⁶⁸⁹ B.I.H.R., Records of the Prebend of Wetwang, CC.P/Wet 10/1-2, lease of 6 Mar. 1732.

⁶⁹⁰ H.U.L., Sykes of Sledmere MSS., DDSY/18/15, Wetwang Manor Court.

and in 1742 when Horsley had sold his land Clarkson did not vote.⁶⁹¹

Only four voters' lands could not be located and so one can build up an interesting picture of the make-up of their holdings.⁶⁹² Clearly, the bulk of the voters owned freehold land, and whilst a few were also customary tenants only one was a tenant of another man. Some owned land outside the village; for example, John Cole the younger appears to have polled for a freehold in Frydaythorp in 1742 but had not sold his property in Fimber. There was some alteration in landholding by 1742, for Yoward, a gentleman from York, made purchases of 17 oxgangs by September 1738. Much of this land derived from the land sales of the Clarksons who did not poll after 1734.⁶⁹³ Whether they had to sell up due to economic pressures is unknown, however Yoward created a substantial block that could rival the Horsleys and Richard Langley. In this way the comments of one nineteenth century commentator that 'landed property is less divided in the East Riding than in other parts of the county', although difficult to agree with for Cottingham and Hedon, certainly accords with the evidence for Fimber.⁶⁹⁴

Thus, whilst the bulk of the freehold land appears to have been held in substantial units, the decisive motivators for political action remain unclear. Although there were particular local influences, for instance Langley as landowner and Lord of

⁶⁹¹ Ibid., DDSY/18/20, 1/2 Mar. 1742.

⁶⁹² That there is good coverage for these voters and that there are few of them, and yet still four voters proved elusive, indicates the difficulties associated with reconstructing voting communities.

⁶⁹³ E.R.C.R.O., Deeds Registry, N 295 658, 22 Jan. 1736; N 489 999, 27 Nov. 1736; O 80 184, 5 Apr. 1735; P 62 155, 11 July 1737; P 226 590, 25/26 June 1738; P 227 591, 6/7 Sep. 1738.

⁶⁹⁴ H.E. Strickland, The Agriculture of the East Riding of Yorkshire (York, 1812), p. 31.

the Manor, there were no resident gentry and most of the voters were substantial enough to have some political freedom. Moreover, the division of the land and the fact that several voters lived outside the village boundaries imply that there were different pressures on the voters. This was reflected in the voting behaviour of the village in these years.

Overall, any socio-economic overview of the shire electorate has to acknowledge the disparate local contexts that affected the voters. This chapter has only focused upon certain townships and has offered some reasonings for political actions. Other economic or demographic factors may have been at work; for example, what was the importance of credit facilities in the purchase of land and did this have a knock-on political effect? Was the increase in the size of the electorate due to lower marriage ages in the later seventeenth and early eighteenth century, or increased inward migration and a rise in the value of freehold land, as much as improved organisation? Equally, little is known of the actual size of the freeholders' holdings; this, alongside the nature of dual occupations for some voters and hence their susceptibility to trade fluctuations or economic downturns, needs more investigation.

Some conclusions can be drawn from the investigation undertaken. The first point is to underline the importance of community and local context in political action. In the West Riding cloth towns and in Fimber, kinship ties and community action were crucial economic and political motivators. The example of Guiseley illustrates the importance of social and cultural factors in politics. If one removes the outvoters from the Holtby analysis, that town also had a strong sense of electoral

solidarity. In fact community also appears to have played a part in Hatfield in opposing Lord Irwin, however that township was heavily divided at the polls. Possibly, the unusual franchise, born of custom, lead to the creation of rival blocks at the polls.

In the West Riding and suburban East Riding towns, the proximity of freehold land to the townships stimulated demand for land in those areas. The need for men from places like Hull to obtain land for investment had an influence on the political development of these towns. Whether landownership helped to alleviate the problems of trade fluctuations is unclear, however, that the West Riding textile townships included many clothiers for whom the ownership of land appears to have been important, indicates that these were independent men of relatively substantial means. Moreover, the dynamism of the land market in some areas and the static nature of the voterate in places like Guiseley, indicates the importance of freehold land both socially and economically.

Despite the fact that 113 of the 544 men were tenants of individuals, whilst 149 were covered by manorial jurisdictions and thirty-four were tenants of Hedon Corporation, very few men were compelled to poll as their lords did. That so many owned their own lands, and that landownership was so fractured, made political control awkward. Yet perhaps the most important point raised is that many of the voters at these elections were substantial men. The evidence suggests that many owned over ten acres of land; also, if any voters rented they were often wealthy and influential enough to act independently of their landlord. These men were far from being mere forty shilling freeholders and were not subservient actors on the local stage. They appear

conscious of their own local worth. With this in mind it is hardly surprising that the politicians had to expend so much energy and money to gain an election. That a level of autonomy existed for many of the 544 men examined indicates the strength of political self-regulation and freedom in the early eighteenth century. Even the fact that landholding information could not be found for a large subset of the sample alludes to the problems the politicians had in finding, let alone in swaying, the voters.

Clearly, there was a diversity of local contexts and customs in the early eighteenth century. Many towns and villages will have been affected by landlord influence, but from the nine places in this study one can see the importance of different social and economic pressures impinging upon the motivations of the voters of the shire at any given election in the early eighteenth century. This acts as a brake upon the deference-independence model of political behaviour and indicates that matters were much more complex. The voters were generally affluent men, but men who often felt a strong sense of community. Through corporation, manor and landownership, it was custom tied to local rights and expectations that affected both the franchise and the voting behaviour of particular townships.

Conclusion

' The voice of the people has been said to be the voice of God; and however generally this maxim has been quoted and believed it is not true in fact. The people are turbulent and changing, they seldom judge or determine right. Give therefore to the first class a distinct, permanent share in the government. They will check the unsteadiness of the second, and as they cannot receive any advantage by a change, they therefore will ever maintain good government.'

- Alexander Hamilton.⁶⁹⁵

The basis of this thesis has been to cast light upon the relationship between the politicians and their electors in the early eighteenth century. Through a mass of correspondence, memoranda and polling lists it becomes clear that the politicians, and especially the Whigs, undertook a massive overhaul of their electoral mechanisms which bore fruit in and after 1727. The *ad hoc* and locally based campaigning of 1708 gave way, and the massive increase in voters at the polls thereafter attests to the strengths of the party machinery that was in place. The breakdown of the shire into separate and yet cohesive units, utilising the wapentake divisions, gave the Whigs the edge in 1727 and forced their opponents into similar action.

The expansion in electioneering in this period mirrors many of the electoral changes detailed by O'Gorman, in terms of the role of agents, canvassing, looking for absentees and the wider

⁶⁹⁵ Quoted in The Penguin Dictionary of Political Quotations (1984), p. 70.

infrastructure of polling.⁶⁹⁶ Thus, one of the three areas that this thesis sought to illuminate, the nature of political organisation, showed clear lines of advance. To an extent this was forced upon the parties by the individual drive of Thomas Watson Wentworth which made him and Cholmley Turner the focal points for the electors of both sides. Watson Wentworth sought to boost his own standing within the shire, which then saw the Tories reply to his apparent attempt to dictate to the county. The importance of Turner in all this cannot be underestimated. He was a popular candidate for the Whigs and the fact that he was in place for the whole of the period from 1727-42 gave the Tories and Opposition something to rally against.

This then brings one to the question of how the electorate reacted to the increase in energy, for their response indicates the nature of their relationship with the politicians - a second area this thesis was concerned with investigating. Clearly the voters' impressions of the canvass and petition had important implications for both parties. It is crucial to recognise that after the initial canvass of 1726, which was very accurate and comprehensive, the parties had trouble in mobilising alleged supporters. Many men who polled were not found - unlike in the 1726 canvass - and many who were located did not poll or could not be relied upon. These canvasses were crucial for the functioning of local political mechanisms and in providing a link between the political high-command and its subordinates on the ground, but they indicated that many local agents lacked any solid understanding of the voters. This was exacerbated by the petition which underlined the lack of awareness shown by the politicians.

⁶⁹⁶ O'Gorman, *Voters, Patrons and Parties*, pp. 67-105.

It antagonised rather than created links with the local community and showed the futility of post-election interference with that body. The parties were dogged by grey areas in the franchise and the sheer numbers of voters. That Fox refused to petition after his defeat in 1742 meant that he had learned from Malton's mistake in 1734; furthermore his refusal suggested that he had developed a measure of respect for either the voters or the cost of a petition.

Whether the use of these political mechanisms fostered an arrogance within the higher political community of the shire is unclear. However, the parties' overhaul of electoral organisation created tensions with the voters. O'Gorman has noted that 'it is the *weakness* of the patronal classes in their attempts to control the electorate which is so striking.'⁶⁹⁷ It has been noted that 'even the best organisation, built around significant local interests, could not overcome solid and determined local opposition.'⁶⁹⁸ What ought to have been added was that, paradoxically, precisely because the parties had to improve their electioneering in order to get more voters out, they tended to offend others who were enfranchised. Despite this, it is a moot point as to whether the vicious circle of interference feeding negative reactions from some of the voters, which then fuelled a need to get more 'friends' to the polls, really mattered to the politicians.

At every election there were substantial numbers of new voters, alongside a vast number of floaters and waverers, which suggests that neither party could ever rest easy. Between the 1727 and 1734 elections, and between those of the 1734 and 1742, over a quarter of those who returned altered their allegiance;

⁶⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 385.

⁶⁹⁸ Hall, thesis, p. 125.

moreover, the return to poll was never more than 56 per cent. These disparate and volatile groups were also moulded within different electoral contexts. For the 1727 and 1742 polls were by-elections fought by Tory and Whig parties, whereas the 1734 poll saw some re-alignment of forces and a major issue in the excise. These factors added to the problems of control and provide a separate line of reasoning as to why electioneering needed more resources. The state of flux in the shire meant a constant drain on energy, money and time.

This brings one to the crux of this thesis, the nature of the electorate. One section who were a known and constant body were the Anglican clergy. Their political alignment with their patrons was a major factor in this era, although patrons tended to recommend like-minded men to benefices in their gift. The clergy provided a separate layer of organisation and political direction within county society and they were part of a wider-connection and community. In the political sphere this helped fuse the two-way deference that existed between estate-owners and their locale.

Although the township and longitudinal voting patterns do show certain areas coming in wholesale for particular parties, many places never saw a party majority let alone unanimity. Through the analysis of certain voting communities, it becomes clear that a subset of the electorate had the socio-economic standing to show a great degree of political independence. It simply was not possible for local landowners to brow-beat such men to the polls. The trouble that Lord Irwin had at Hatfield indicates that where territorial magnates, especially non-residents, attempted a heavy-handed approach they would be opposed. To an extent this depended upon the local context, for in

Hatfield common right was strong. However, the electorate did include a caucus of men who were far from being mere forty shilling freeholders. Those that rented often did so from several sources; furthermore, these men often rented substantial acreages and hence were major local figures in their own right. There was little chance that they could be easily controlled.

This is not to say that some were not compliant out of ideological or socio-economic need. There is also a point to be made about the fact that politics was nothing without a clash of interests from above, that the voters were pawns in the 'Great strife about the Election.'⁶⁹⁹ Despite this, once the politicians drew the battle lines they were involved in a wider nexus of responsibilities. To an extent this gave the forty shilling freeholders a measure of political power. Many of the voters recognised their own worth as political actors and expected to be treated with respect; in this way shire elections were useful ways to show legitimate opposition within Hanoverian society. It was little wonder that the voters often took umbrage at the interference of the politicians. This was emphasised when those who went soliciting votes were never sure exactly who could vote or why. The shire franchise was, to a degree, flexible and based upon local custom and usage. Thus, a lack of awareness about the rights of the electors could hamstring a campaign. No matter how many deferential voters existed, there were always many who needed the politicians to recognise a different set of motivations.

The petition showed that, in the last instance, the party agents could find out who was enfranchised, but, given the

⁶⁹⁹ P. Roebuck ed., Constable of Everingham Estate Correspondence, YASRS, CXXXVI, (1976), John Potts to Sir Marmaduke Constable, 27 Apr. 1734, 72.

developing local nature of electioneering, it was their lack of knowledge and their lack of control that is so remarkable. This lack of control allowed the voters more autonomy and was based on the fact that landownership in general was so fractured and that many men were far from being mere forty shilling freeholders; they were not subservient actors on the local stage and appear well-aware of their own local worth. In fact, the many men in the petition lists who appear to have been on the borderline between being enfranchised and being unenfranchised may also have recognised their importance to the parties in a close-run contest. It was crucial that these men were mobilised, and with this in mind it is hardly surprising that the politicians had to expend so much energy and money to gain an election victory. Again this indicates the strength of political self-regulation and freedom in the early eighteenth century.

Those landowners who had direct control over many voters were few and in general it was as local opinion leaders that these people were made or broken. Only by reacting to and reflecting the whims of their locale and in representing a wider community of local beliefs, could the politicians forge a positive relationship with the electorate and make any headway at the polls. It was these local factors tied into the politicians' need to win a shire election that allowed the voters to impact upon the politics of Hanoverian Yorkshire.

Appendix I: Election Results, 1708-42

The following are the election results as declared at the time of the polls, and unless stated they are general elections.

1708⁷⁰⁰

Viscount Downe (Tory)	:4,737
Sir William Strickland (Whig)	:3,452
Conyers Darcy (Whig)	:3,257
Sir Arthur Kaye (Tory)	:3,136
Thomas Watson Wentworth (Whig)	:958

1710⁷⁰¹

Viscount Downe (Tory)	:6,659
Sir Arthur Kaye (Tory)	:6,412
Sir William Strickland (Whig)	:2,910

1713/1715/1722

Viscount Downe and Sir Arthur Kaye elected unopposed.

January 1727 by-election⁷⁰² (upon death of Kaye)

Cholmley Turner (Whig)	:7,683
Sir John Lister Kaye (Tory)	:4,264

⁷⁰⁰ See Bodl., MS Willis 6, f. 156; *The Postman*, 25-7 May 1708.

⁷⁰¹ Bodl., MS Willis 9, f. 159.

⁷⁰² Bean, *Parliamentary Representation*, p. 650; see also Sedgwick ed., *The Commons*, I, 357.

1727

Cholmley Turner and Sir Thomas Watson Wentworth (Whigs) elected unopposed.

1728 by-election

Sir George Savile (Whig) returned unopposed on Watson Wentworth's elevation to the Lords as Baron Malton.

1734⁷⁰³

Cholmley Turner (gmt Whig)	:7,896
Sir Miles Stapylton (Opposition)	:7,879
Sir Rowland Winn (gmt Whig)	:7,699
Edward Wortley (Opposition)	:5,898

1741

Sir Miles Stapylton and Lord Morpeth (Tories) elected unopposed.

1742 by-election⁷⁰⁴ (on death of Morpeth)

Cholmley Turner (Whig)	:8,014
William Fox (Tory)	:7,049

⁷⁰³ Bean, Parliamentary Representation, p. 651; Sedgwick ed., The Commons, I, 357.

⁷⁰⁴ Bean, Parliamentary Representation, p. 656; Sedgwick ed., The Commons, I, 357; Fitwilliam (Malton) MSS., Wm Buck to Malton, 20 Jan. 1742.

Appendix II: Biographies of the Main Protagonists

The following are short biographies of the main politicians on the Yorkshire stage at this time,⁷⁰⁵ which are meant to give a basic outline only.

Government Whig

The 1st Earl of Malton: son of the Honourable Thomas Watson Wentworth who inherited the estates of William, 2nd Earl of Strafford in 1695. Both father and son were M.P.s for Malton; the former from 1713-22 and the latter from 1715-27. Malton, then Sir Thomas Watson Wentworth, proceeded to become the doyen of the government Whigs in the shire after resurrecting their standing following sixteen years of Tory representation. Elected unopposed with Cholmley Turner as a shire M.P. at the 1727 general election, he was subsequently raised to the Lords as Baron Malton in May 1728 and elevated to an Earldom in November 1734.

Cholmley Turner: M.P. for Northallerton from 1715-22, then for Yorkshire from 1727-41 and from January 1742-47. He was a wealthy gentleman from Cleveland with land and mining interests. He followed Walpole into opposition in 1717 and was thereafter noted for independent action, as he voted against the government over the Hessians (1730), the army (1732) and the excise (1733); however, he supported them against the repeal of the Septennial

⁷⁰⁵ For the bulk of this information see Sedgwick, The Commons, I-II.

Act. His popularity meant he was courted by both sides in the run up to the 1734 election.

Sir Rowland Winn (3rd Baronet): a deputy-Lieutenant of the West Riding. He was a landowner with an estate-base near Wakefield and a developing influence at the Parliamentary borough of Pontefract. The 1734 campaign was his first foray into politics and coincided with a massive re-building of his home, Nostell Priory. The cost of these two projects may well have prevented him standing again.

Viscount Irwin: several successive generations of Viscounts, from the 2nd to the 7th, either represented the shire or took a major interest in its politics. The 6th Viscount, Arthur, was a pivotal figure in organising the 1734 election and petition. As a major landowner, the 3rd and 6th Viscounts were Lords Lieutenant of the North and West Ridings. Their estate base was at Temple Newsam, near Leeds.

The 3rd Earl of Carlisle: the first of his family to take an active role in the politics of the shire, he was never whole-heartedly in favour of the petition of 1734. His son and successor went into opposition, although *he* never took a major role in the Tory campaign of 1741-2. The family had a substantial estate-base in the North and East Ridings, around Castle Howard.

Sir William Strickland (3rd Baronet): the grandson of a leading Parliamentarian, he was a steadfast Junto Whig who represented the shire from 1708-10. He also represented Malton, as did his son

from 1708-15. The 4th Baronet went on to become a Privy Councillor, but had no major involvement in the politics of the shire, despite representing Scarbrough from 1722-35. Their major estates were around Boynton in the East Riding.

Opposition

Lord Bruce, 3rd Earl of Ailesbury: a major landowner in Wiltshire with Yorkshire estates in Wensleydale, he ran the 1734 and 1742 campaigns after a modest involvement in 1727.

Sir Miles Stapylton (4th Baronet): a North Riding gentleman; he became the Opposition candidate in 1733 after his father fell from his horse and died on his way to the initial Opposition election meeting. As a Yorkshire M.P. from 1734-50 he was in opposition to Walpole and the government until the Jacobite uprising of 1745. His grandfather married the daughter of the Tory shire M.P. Sir John Kaye - who was also the M.P. Sir Arthur Kaye's father - and Stapylton maintained his links with the Kaye family. However, he was never wholeheartedly pro-Fox in 1742. His estate base was in Bulmer wapentake in the North Riding and at Aldborough and Boroughbridge in the West.

The 2nd Viscount Downe: represented Yorkshire from 1708-27 and from 1710-26 this was in tandem with Sir Arthur Kaye. A popular West Riding landowner with estates in Osgoldcross wapentake, he lost his seat in 1727 when he refused to stand a poll - primarily this was because the Tories' organisation was poor.

George Fox: stood at the 1742 by-election against Turner. He was an Irish landowner who had inherited the Yorkshire estates of Lord Bingley at Bramham Park by marriage to Bingley's widow. It was widely felt that his Irish interests ran counter to the woollen interests of Yorkshire. Although he lost the by-election, he won that of June 1742 for York. Sir John Lister Kaye was due to replace Edward Thompson at this poll, but upon falling ill he was replaced by Fox.

Edward Wortley: an anti-excise Opposition candidate who declared his candidacy in the last few days before the 1734 poll. He had estates near Sheffield and in Wensleydale where he was most active in the Opposition cause, but less enthusiastic about Fox's campaign.

The 2nd Earl of Strafford: a neighbour and relative of Malton who acted as a focus for the Opposition around Sheffield in 1734. Although active during the election campaign, he left Bruce to take control of the electioneering. He gained the title of Strafford from his uncle, although Malton (as Watson Wentworth) inherited the estates.

Sir John Lister Kaye: a member of the Lister family who inherited the Kaye estates after the death of Sir Arthur - the shire M.P. from 1710-26. Stood in his uncle's stead at the January 1727 by-election, but lost heavily. Mentioned as a possible candidate in 1734, he instead fought and won the York constituency; he then lost this seat by ten votes in May 1741. His estate base was at Woodsome in Morley wapentake.

William Pulteney: M.P. for Hedon from 1705-34 with an interest in that town inherited from Henry Guy along with an income of £10,000 per annum. Nominated his brothers to the borough from 1721-34 and 1739-41. He was in opposition at the 1734 and 1742 elections although reticent to contribute much in the way of energy and money to the cause. He became Earl of Bath in 1744.

Appendix III: The Nature of the Sources and Nominal Record

Linkage

"The incidence of contested elections in the early modern period is a methodological minefield." ⁷⁰⁶ - W.A. Speck

An investigation of voting behaviour in the shire is a positive avenue of research; there are recorded votes for a large section of the Yorkshire electorate over time stored in canvass returns and pollbooks. Moreover, the records of these contests can be analysed using improved computer software. The survival of pollbooks, as a vast store of data on many individuals, makes it possible to query the role of the voters - where they came from, how they voted and to attempt to ask why they polled as they did. The surviving records for Yorkshire are quite good; there is an incomplete pollbook for the 1708 election, a short canvass from 1710, a canvass and a pollbook for the 1727 by-election, and printed lists collated from the sheriff's copies for the 1734 and 1742 ballots.⁷⁰⁷ However, these sources need to be evaluated in their own right to justify any in-depth examination of their contents.

The provenance of the 1708 record was perplexing because there was a difference between the final number of votes given for each candidate and the votes recorded by an analysis of the contents of the pollbook. When the election result was declared the totals were given as follows:

⁷⁰⁶ Speck, The Birth of Britain, p. 196.

⁷⁰⁷ See Chapter 4, p. 171, n. 1, for the references to these sources.

Lord Downe	:4,737
Sir William Strickland	:3,452
Conyers Darcy	:3,257
Sir Arthur Kaye	:3,136
Thomas Watson Wentworth	:958
Total	:15,540

The totals from the database analysis were:

Lord Downe	:4,347
Sir William Strickland	:3,402
Conyers Darcy	:3,206
Sir Arthur Kaye	:2,336
Thomas Watson Wentworth	:1,429
Total	:14,720

The difference between the two vote totals was 820 - a large disparity that would have meant around thirty pages of the pollbook were missing. Other independent witnesses also noted the result as given in the front of the pollbook; Browne Willis recorded them thus, and he possibly got the result from *The Postman* of 27 May 1708.⁷⁰⁸

The fact that the pollbook is a copy may account for the difference. The first page of the volume has the name James Raine inscribed on it and a nineteenth century source noted that Reverend James Raine, Canon of York, 'has a perfect copy of the

⁷⁰⁸ See Bodl., MS Willis 6, f. 156; *The Postman*, 25-7 May 1708.

Poll Book for 1708 which has not yet been printed.'⁷⁰⁹ However, it was not known who made Raine's copy or whether indeed it was 'perfect'. This leads one to question the validity of the pollbook, especially since the votes for Viscount Downe, Sir Arthur Kaye and Thomas Watson Wentworth are so different; Downe and Kaye lost 390 and 800 votes respectively, whilst Watson Wentworth gained 471. Only the totals for the two Whigs, Sir William Strickland and Conyers Darcy, are reasonably close to what was noted for them. The fact that the pollbook is a copy of the original may account for lost votes, however the fact that Wentworth increased his total is perplexing; there is no reason why a copier should have added almost 500 votes to his total.

A closer analysis of the results generated by the database does give some hints as to the provenance of the record. The totals for Downe, Strickland and Darcy are over 90 per cent of their pollbook-generated totals. For Kaye this proportion is closer to 75 per cent, as it is for Watson Wentworth if one assumes that whoever recorded the final result missed out a '1' from in front of the 958 attributed to him. Thus, his total should have been 1,958 and not 958. The source for the copy may well have been an agent's record of the poll, or an incomplete sheriff's list. The fact that those who polled are listed in township order points to the record being a canvass or a list sorted after the event.

Compiling a sorted copy would have been very time consuming and would not account for the votes that are missing from the final count. However as not all of the candidates declared themselves early in the campaign when a canvass would

⁷⁰⁹ W. Smith, ed., Old Yorkshire, Old Yorkshire Original Series, V (1884), 241.

be taken, this idea has a limited appeal. Also one column in the original is headed 'hundred', but these divisions were called 'wapentakes' in Yorkshire, giving evidence that this may have been compiled by an outsider - perhaps the clerk of the independent Whig candidate, Thomas Watson Wentworth. He would have been unfamiliar with the county if he was bought in from Northamptonshire, where the bulk of the Watson Wentworth estates were at this time. As the source was hand-written and set out in a sorted township order, this may denote that it was for private rather than public consumption. An incomplete agent's book compiled at the time of, or shortly after, the election is perhaps the best explanation.

The 1726 canvass was a different affair entirely. The canvass is in one hand and as such was probably a compilation of other books, perhaps taken by wapentake, as the final record is broken down by these divisions. The use of wapentakes was crucial at this time; they were recognised divisions of manageable size and made possible practicable political organisation. The canvass took in all the areas of the East and North Ridings, however several wapentakes in the West Riding were not recorded; whether through lack of time, money or personnel, although equally the missing information may have been lost or never transcribed.

The pollbook that was generated by the election itself comprises nine individual books taken by Whig party clerks appointed by Lord Malton. The nine books did not represent nine voting booths as seven booths were recorded as being used for

taking the poll.⁷¹⁰ Each of the nine clerks may have been given a section of the sheriff's book of the poll to copy as a tool for canvassing and organising at the next election, which was scheduled for 1729. The final books were taken away and scrutinised soon after the ballot as there are some questions written into the originals about the right of certain of the Tory candidate's supporters to vote. A separate book, perhaps extracted from the original for the purposes of further questioning, notes those voters who polled for the Tory, Sir John Lister Kaye, at one particular table 'at the Crown End' of the Castle Yard in York.⁷¹¹ Again this book may have informed later electioneering or aided the organisation of a scrutiny or a petition.

The final two sources for 1734 and 1742 were compilations of other books, possibly sheriff's books recorded at the poll, and these also survive as printed sources. Each side at the election raised a subscription and had a copy of the poll printed.⁷¹² These lists would have enabled each side to organise for a petition against the result, or for the next election. In fact eight damaged original volumes of the sheriff's books for the 1742 poll do exist;⁷¹³ these include information about whether the voters had sworn the necessary oaths and whether any had affirmed or were rejected. They show that some clerks and agents at the poll were

⁷¹⁰ York Minster Library, Hailstone Collection, Box 4.7/39, a list of the officers of the poll, 1727.

⁷¹¹ N.Y.C.R.O., Kirkleatham Hall Estate, ZK, 'Manuscript Pollbooks', mic. 1041.

⁷¹² There are many printed copies of the 1734 and 1742 polls; for example, N.Y.C.R.O., Stapylton of Myton MSS., ZLQ, 'Yorkshire County Pollbook for the 1734 Election', mic. 1160; Wentworth Woodhouse Muniments, Pamphlets, Elections, 2, 'Yorkshire County Pollbook for the 1742 By-Election'.

⁷¹³ Temple Newsam MSS., TN/PO/10/6, Sheriff's books for the 1742 by-election. All eight have some damage including five which appear to have had parts eaten by rodents!

particularly fastidious, making every voter swear the oaths. Volume 6 included nine men who had 'long oaths administered', two who had the 'bribery oath administered', seven who were referred to the sheriff, four who affirmed and forty-two who were rejected, out of 1,639 voters. Only two voters had no mark in the column headed 'sworn'. This level of dedication contrasts with the clerk who compiled volume 2; he noted whether a voter had sworn up to page 6 out of 85 and then stopped doing so. The creation of these pollbooks was clearly a haphazard process.

At the 1727 and 1734 polls the totals given at the end of the contest and recorded in the secondary literature do not match those from the databases and hence the pollbooks. In 1727 Turner's recorded victory was by 7,683 votes to 4,264; the pollbooks give it as 7,351 votes to 4,234.⁷¹⁴ In 1734 the result was as follows:⁷¹⁵

Cholmley Turner (Gmt Whig)	:7,896
Sir Miles Stapylton (Opposition)	:7,879
Sir Rowland Winn (Gmt Whig)	:7,699
Edward Wortley (Opposition)	:5,898

However, from the pollbook it should have read:

Turner	:7,968
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⁷¹⁴ Bean, Parliamentary Representation, p. 650; see also Sedgwick ed., The Commons, I, 357.

⁷¹⁵ Bean, Parliamentary Representation, p. 651; Sedgwick ed., The Commons, I, 357.

Stapylton :8,001

Winn :7,819

Wortley :6,018

Only in 1742 did the published result and pollbook figures match-up. Whether these discrepancies were due to copying errors between the sheriff's copy and the published pollbooks is not known. Other errors in counting may have occurred; however, whereas Turner's margin of victory was huge in 1727, in 1734 the odd misplaced or neglected vote could have proved crucial. From both the published results and the analysis of the pollbook Stapylton lead Winn at the close of the poll by around 180 votes, however according to the pollbook results he headed the poll. Such knowledge spread across the shire would have been a major psychological boost to the Opposition, and so the difference between the reported result and that gleaned from the pollbooks is more mystifying.

The growth in organised electoral activity did not alter the make-up of the information in each source. The 1708 pollbook had the following information about a voter: name, abode, wapentake, Riding, vote and additional information about status. Thus, when it came to inputting the pollbook to a machine-readable form, information was recorded as follows:

BAYLES, WILLY, CHR, ABERFORTH, SKIRACK, YOR, W, D--K-

This tells us that William Bayles, a clergyman living in Aberforth in Skirack wapentake in the West Riding, voted for Downe and

Kaye. The data about county of abode was added so that outvoters could be analysed; here YOR refers to Yorkshire.

This template was followed in the 1726 canvass, but not in the 1727 pollbook which swapped the Riding and wapentake information for freehold information. A record of the relevant freehold was required by law in any shire pollbook after 1710, and this gives the possibility of enquiring as to who owned forty shillings of freehold land and why they voted in the way they did. The canvass records were listed thus:

JOHN, MAUD, ESQ, ALLERTHORP, HARTHILL, E, YOR, T

So John Maud Esquire, of Allerthorp in the wapentake of Harthill in the East Riding, promised to poll for Cholmley Turner. Again a county column was added to the database format. The 1727 pollbook was recorded in this style:

RICHARD, ABBEY, X, LEEMING STREET, LEEMING STREET,
YOR, T

Richard Abbey of Leeming Street in Yorkshire voted for Turner by right of a freehold in Leeming Street.

The 1734 record also includes freehold and wapentake information; the final source, for 1742, mirrors the 1727 pollbook. Records from these last two pollbooks were entered thus:

HEN, ABBEY, X, DONCASTER, DONCASTER, STRAFFORD,
YOR, WT--

JAMES, AARON, X, SNAITH, RAWCLIFFE, YOR, FOX

In 1734, Henry Abbey of Doncaster in Strafford wapentake voted for Winn and Turner by right of a freehold in Doncaster. In 1742, James Aaron of Snaith polled for Fox by virtue of a freehold in Rawcliffe. Again a county field was added.

As the extant versions for the 1734 and 1742 ballots are second generation sources at best, the possibility that ascription errors exist in the pollbooks makes any later analysis that much more difficult and fraught with possible dangers. This becomes a problem when attempting to locate and analyse the actions of voters over time. Changes in placename or givenname spelling over 34 years, and the fact that so many people were involved in creating the original records, means that conventional computer software cannot hope to deal with the electorate in absolute terms.

Furthermore, the fact that there are few fields that allow one to define a voter's uniqueness increases the number of problems that exist. Much of the information is very loose, especially in the 1727 pollbook, where the generic name for a township or freehold was recorded by the clerk; for example, 'Carlton in Bradford Dale' tended to be given as 'Carlton', which makes linkage difficult. Another problem was the confusion of places in the 1726 canvass. Adam Harker was noted as living at Lestingham, whilst in the pollbook he was said to be living at Lowscale which was less than ten miles away. Were these men the same person? The canvasser may have referred to people coming from the largest local township rather than their hamlet. A wider problem is exemplified by the case of Christopher Benson, noted in the

1727 canvass as living in Conisthorpe in Bulmer wapentake. However, in the pollbook he was given as living at Clareton in Claro wapentake; this township was in the same parish as Coneysthorpe. It was the placing of Benson in Bulmer wapentake in the canvass that leaves a measure of uncertainty in one's mind as to whether these men are one and the same person.

The main virtue of the post-1708 pollbooks is their inclusion of freehold information; however, with the bulk of the electorate owning land where they lived this tends to limit its utility in divining, for example, which of the six James Burtons of Dent, owning land in Dent in 1734, should be linked to the three who polled in 1727. If one links those with similar voting behaviour, for instance Tory/Opposition, one would be biased in favour of a predictable pattern of action. It has been shown that the bulk of those who returned to poll were consistent in their behaviour, however this does not mean that the Burtons were.

It has been noted that 'given the provenance of the sources and the different error types characteristically associated with each', the scope for utilising computer-aided linkage mechanisms may be limited.⁷¹⁶ This is all too true, but despite such problems these sources are our major link directly to the eighteenth century electorate.⁷¹⁷ Thus, an attempt was made to research longitudinal patterns of voting in the years 1727-42. Initially the original

⁷¹⁶ See, P. Adman, S.W. Baskerville & K.F. Beedham, 'Computer-Assisted Record Linkage: or How Best to Optimize Links Without Generating Errors', *HC*, Vol 4 No 1 (1992), 13.

⁷¹⁷ For the problems of utilising pollbooks see, S.W. Baskerville, P. Adman, K.F. Beedham, 'Manuscript Pollbooks and English County Elections in the First Age of Party: A reconsideration of provenance and purpose', *Archives*, XIX (1991), 390.

pollbooks were transcribed into a machine readable form and put into the commercial software package Paradox for Windows. Linking the canvass and pollbook for the 1727 poll was attempted using this software; the links were made on standardised forename, original surname and standardised abode, and yielded 5,200 links, or 59.8% of the canvass. The standardisation of the abode field was only made when a placename was clearly identifiable; thus, Sedbergh, Sedberrow, Sedbrough, Sedber, were all rewritten in a new table as Sedbergh. For a commercial package dealing with the vagaries of this eighteenth century data, with its vast differences in spelling in the linked sources, Paradox did remarkably well.

As Herschberg has noted, 'no automated record linkage system...can with absolute certainty determine that every pair of records is truly linked.'⁷¹⁸ In fact this would also be true of a hand-linked set of data, although to hand-link two 15,000 name pollbooks would be impossible. Thus, of greater utility was the software package known as CARL (Computer Assisted Record Linkage), designed by Peter Adman of the University of Hull.⁷¹⁹ The mechanics of this system have been detailed elsewhere,⁷²⁰ however for the exercise of linking the sources for Yorkshire the system had a number of factors in its favour. It allowed the utilisation of an algorithm that could be successively loosened off to allow linkage of records at lower levels of confidence that the operator could control. By doing this, it enabled links to be made

⁷¹⁸ T. Herschberg, 'Record Linkage', Historical Methods Newsletter, 9 (1976), 158.

⁷¹⁹ I am very grateful to Dr Peter Adman for his help and kind assistance throughout this project.

⁷²⁰ See, Adman *et al*, HC, Vol 4 No 1, 2-15 .

that would never normally have been considered. For instance, in the 1727 canvass several men were noted as coming from 'Wensley', whilst they were noted in the pollbook as living in 'Whiteaside' which is in Wensleydale. Linking records with the abode field being compared and with firstname and surname the same uncovered this possibility. Using normal database software these comparisons would never have been made because linking on firstname and surname alone would have been so loose a comparison as to create hundreds of possible links. Overcoming this 'too loose' or 'too tight' problem with regard to the algorithm used also allowed comparisons of freeholds rather than abodes; this allows one to look at the mobility of the electorate.

The mechanics of this linkage process involved standardising, as far as possible, all forenames, abodes and freeholds without damaging their uniqueness. Thus, all the versions of William were contracted to 'WM'. Problems existed with names like 'Jer', 'Jere', 'Jeremy', 'Jeremiah', but such names were relatively few in number and could be hand-linked afterwards. More problems existed with 'Js', 'Jos', 'Joseph', 'Josh', 'Joshua', however it was found that almost all who were noted as 'Js' or 'Jos' were, in fact, 'Joseph'. Indeed linking on surname and abode as identical in two sources and comparing forenames threw up the fact that, in some cases, 'Js' was confused with 'Isaac'. Looking at these names in isolation could allow the standardisation of them to take place.

Once the standardisations were made, the sources, newly sorted, were compared on surnames, with identical firstname and abodes, as it was more likely that the surname varied than the abode. In fact in 1734 there were 2,290 variations of abode, which

Anthony,Carlton Coverdale,Buckle,Carlton Coverdale,Yor,X,K,Buckel,
Carlton,Yo

As such, comparison with the original pollbook was required to find out the vote of Anthony Buckel in 1734. This was a problem for around 20 per cent of the linked records and was exacerbated when three pollbooks were linked.

The only other major problem was whether to link the 1708 and 1727 pollbooks together. These sources were separated by nineteen years and were the weakest of the four pollbooks in terms of the information which they contained. The 1708 pollbook included wapentakes but its township data were as imprecise as that for the 1727 source which itself had freehold information but no wapentake record. It was felt that the level of confidence that would exist about any links that were made would be too low to adduce any concrete conclusions from them. Enough differences could exist between two lists a few years apart let alone between two separated by almost twenty years. The three pollbooks covering the fifteen years from 1727-42, were felt to have more coherence to them and to allow better and more confident linkage. The 1708 source was used as a stand-alone record and in comparison with the partisanship exhibited in the 1734 pollbook.

The problems of migration, deaths, generational errors and the like, plus various ascription differences still exist between the 1727, 1734 and 1742 records, but not in such depth as those between the 1708 and 1727 pollbooks. Without the 1734 pollbook as a bridge, linkage between the 1727 and 1742 pollbooks may have been equally untenable. However, the existence of three

consecutive pollbooks allows some conclusions to be drawn about the Yorkshire electorate at this time. Thus, with all possible links to be viewed by the historian, it was felt that CARL created the basis for a relatively confident longitudinal study based upon links made between the voters in the three latter sources.

A separate methodological note concerns the comparison of township voting patterns. The utilisation of wapentakes and townships, which provided the parties with geographical divisions for electoral organisation, can be positively employed to look at local voting patterns. Quinn utilised the 1726 canvass in a basic manner when he looked at nineteen large townships and compared them with the 1734 and 1742 polls.⁷²¹ However, there is scope beyond this to look at all the townships of the shire, not merely those large centres with forty or more voters.⁷²² Where were the strengths of each party? How partisan and how divided was the electorate within different areas?

The first point to make about this area of study is that the sources do not easily give up the information required. For example, the 1734 pollbook contained information about wapentakes, hence it was relatively easy to place townships in the correct Riding. Unfortunately there was often more than one occurrence of a township name in more than one wapentake; popular names were Aldborough or Oldborough, Bolton and

⁷²¹ Quinn, thesis, pp. 512-21, Tables 2-8.

⁷²² In fact Quinn looked at a mix of towns; large regional centres like Bridlington, Beverley, Dent, Sedbergh and Whitby; growing market or industrial towns like Leeds, Malton and Sheffield. However, of the nineteen, only Aisgarth in the North Riding had fewer than forty votes in 1727 and seventeen had seventy-five or more. Thus, his analysis could not be representative of the shire as a whole (although it was never claimed to be so).

Marton or Martin. In some cases all the possible wapentakes for a given town were stated in the original. However, by utilising the 1708 pollbook which has wapentake and Riding information, the 1727 canvass which has similar data, and the returns of the 1851 census which contains wapentake and township figures,⁷²³ it was possible to create a derived table of standardised township names. In this way one can account for 98 per cent of the votes in 1734 in terms of their Riding.⁷²⁴ Although certain townships could not be distinguished between two in different wapentakes, these different wapentakes often fell into the same Riding. In terms of wapentakes the proportion of the voters that could be accurately placed was slightly lower because these confused townships in the same Riding had then to be discarded.

The same system was followed for the 1727 and 1742 pollbooks by linking their townships with these other sources. In the latter source the position of a township was often described relative to its locale, so it was relatively easy to ascribe a wapentake to it. For example, a township noted as 'Thornton Bradford Dale' could be placed in Morley wapentake; if it had been written as 'Thornton' it would have been ignored for the purposes of further analysis. In the 1727 pollbook there were few such detailed descriptions of places and hence the percentage of ascribed townships was less. Thus 86 per cent of the townships could be placed in their wapentake and 88 per cent in their Riding. Working from the 1734 pollbook alone Adman *et al* were

⁷²³ British Parliamentary Papers, The 1851 Census, Population 7, II (Shannon, 1970), 216-309.

⁷²⁴ This was an increase from the 92 per cent that Adman *et al* found for the 1734 poll. See Adman *et al*, NH, XXI, 172.

able to locate 66 per cent of the Riding votes in 1742.⁷²⁵ Utilising these other sources this was increased to 92 per cent, whilst 91 per cent could be placed in the correct wapentake. Thus, a reasonably accurate assessment of Tory or Opposition, and Whig or Government strengths in the various divisions of the shire throughout the period 1708-42 was possible.

In order to do this it was accepted that if 6 voters out of 10 in a particular township were inclined to one party then that place was of a party hue. Of course there are problems with this; for example, a town with only one voter will not necessarily have its loyalty indicated by that man although to a degree he was all that mattered; there is also the much greater issue of determining where an influence lay - in a voter's home town or where his freehold lay. A further methodological problem was that not every voter from a particular town could be placed in that town in any breakdown of voting. For example, certain voters from 'Carlton in Bradford Dale' may have been noted as being from 'Carlton' in any one election. Therefore these towns had to be discarded from the analysis, as it was impossible to determine which Carlton was which when there was no wapentake information (this was especially true for the 1727 poll). However, working with the knowledge of these problems still allows a general picture of the flux and stability of voting behaviour to be investigated.⁷²⁶

⁷²⁵ Ibid., 173.

⁷²⁶ See Chapter 4, pp. 248-308.

Appendix IV: Voting Community Reconstruction

Chapter 6 of this thesis has highlighted the importance of a socio-economic analysis of the voterate. Such an investigation highlights the methodological problems of linking pollbooks together, for it is able to point out false links that were made between them, for example where a voter had died and been replaced by a relative of the same name. However, one also has to be aware of the methodological implications of life-cycle and landholding reconstitution.⁷²⁷ Clearly, care is necessary when dealing with a mass of early eighteenth century deeds, indentures, leases, manor court rolls, rentals, wills and the like. For example, the problems of spellings, of confusions made between family members of the same name and of men who altered their occupations are all 'magnified by the need to link lives across sources'.⁷²⁸ Problems are created because of the very nature of the sources in use; for instance, certain individuals stated different occupations, status levels or abodes for whatever reason in different records.

This kind of study, which focuses upon particular townships, also tends to introduce a bias in favour of those who were relatively immobile and who are therefore easier to trace. It also tends to look at voters' landholding in a particular place, or its immediate hinterland, and again this ignores the possibility of a more widespread landownership and therefore of more divergent

⁷²⁷ For more information on these problems see E.A. Wrigley ed., Identifying People in the Past, (1973); Adman *et al*, HC, Vol 4 No 1, 2-15; S.A. King, 'Historical Demography, Life-cycle Reconstruction and Family Reconstitution: New Perspectives', HC, Vol 8 No 2 (1996), 62-77.

⁷²⁸ King, HC, Vol 8 No 2, 63.

influences. Beyond this, there are problems in dealing with those individuals who are recorded as having voted but who cannot be located within a particular community.

Luckily for the historian of Yorkshire in the early eighteenth century there are two well-stocked Deeds Registries which give a fuller picture of the local freehold land market. The West Riding Registry was set up in 1704, the East in 1708 and the North in 1736. Unfortunately, the fact that the North Riding Registry came into existence much later than the other two means that there is less information available for that area in the years under investigation. Similarly, there is a paucity of extant manorial and township records for that Riding in the early eighteenth century, a factor which tends to skew the socio-economic view of the shire towards the other two Ridings.

Despite these problems, the Registry volumes are of great importance in locating particular voters and their estates. The preamble to the act to set up a Registry in the West Riding declared that:

The West Riding of the county of York is the principle place in the north for the cloth manufacture and most of the traders therein are freeholders and have occasion to borrow money upon their estates for managing their said trade, but for want of a registry find it difficult to give security to the satisfaction of the money lender...by means whereby the said trade is very much obstructed and many families ruined.⁷²⁹

Clearly, it was in the best interests of many to record land transactions, which makes locating voters that much easier. However, not all transactions were recorded because legally they

⁷²⁹ Quoted in P. Hudson, *From manor to mill*, in M. Berg, Manufacture in Town and Country before the Factory (Cambridge, 1983), pp. 139-40.

did not have to be; similarly, intra-family conveyances were not recorded. Also, there is little that can be gleaned about those who polled in 1708 if their land was purchased before the relevant Registry was set up.

The volumes contain information about whether the transaction was a bargain and sale, a lease and release, or an indenture, which were all ways of conveying freehold land;⁷³⁰ they also contain wills and mortgages. Other information includes the names and occupations of both vendor and vendee, any occupiers of the land - who may or may not have been leasees, and what was being conveyed. Often the acreage of land was noted, but usually the property was simply a messuage or set of closes that was being transferred. Thus, it is difficult to estimate the size of landholdings for particular people.

This problem is exacerbated because the land market was relatively dynamic and so the turnover of land was high. English has noted that in the East Riding in 1709 there were 292 transactions, whereas in 1723 there were 500.⁷³¹ For the five West Riding towns under consideration in Chapter 6, there were 304 land transactions which involved men who voted out of a total of 479 conveyances for these towns between 1704-42.⁷³² For the same period, the three townships under scrutiny in the East Riding had a total of 471 transactions recorded and of these 188 featured voters.⁷³³ The lower number of East Riding voters in the totals for

⁷³⁰ See D.M. Walker, The Oxford Companion to the Law (Oxford, 1980).

⁷³¹ See English, Great Landowners of the East Riding, p. 70.

⁷³² See W.A., Deeds Registry, Indexes 1-7, Volumes A-PP. For the early eighteenth century there are indexes which are alphabetical by place; these are a great boon to the historian.

⁷³³ See E.R.C.R.O., Deeds Registry, Indexes 1-2, Volumes A, D-Q. Again there are alphabetical place indexes.

each town reflects the importance of Cottingham and Hedon as sources of land for men from Beverley, Hull and York, who may have voted for land held elsewhere. The communities dealt with in the West Riding tended to be more tightly-knit.

However, the land registries do allow one to develop a picture of the nature of landholding within specific communities and to follow the ownership of particular parcels of land over time. The occupational information included in the deeds also allows the development of a wider socio-economic view of the electorate. In this way these records are a valuable companion to the pollbook data in creating a sensitivity to the varying local contexts.

The shire pollbooks contain only basic information - essentially name, address, freehold and vote - and are not particularly good identifiers of individuals. The ascription errors which may have occurred at the poll, compounded by the voter's wish to be selective or general about the place of abode and freehold given, tend to cloud our perceptions of an elector's individuality. These problems in themselves create a backdrop of insecurity about any record linkage and any aggregate analysis of voting behaviour. As King has rightly pointed out in his community reconstruction there is 'a tendency to generate spurious links because of the way in which the process accepts a link between records where there is no obvious competition.'⁷³⁴ This bias is compounded if we take pollbooks in isolation. The temptation, for example, to link Matthew Horsley of Fimber with a freehold in Fimber in 1727 with the only Matthew Horsley who returned in 1734 is almost irresistible.

⁷³⁴ King, HC, Vol 8 No 2, 63.

In some respects the only way to add clarity would be to link in socio-economic data. Certainly this may counter the pertinent point made by Adman *et al*, that the major issue is *not* the notion of whether the computer technologies that are available to link pollbooks can do so sufficiently well, but the question of whether it is right and proper to do so given the information contained in those pollbooks.⁷³⁵ Clearly, the philosophical problem of record linkage involving pollbooks alone, in terms of correctly identifying individuals across sources with distinct error-types, is a serious one. The level of socio-economic interpretation does depend on the survival of sources and their quality. Furthermore, particular townships may have better records than others because of chance, a dedicated estate agent, or the fact that there was an active local market in land. Despite these problems, utilising landholding records to cross-examine the voters who are noted in the pollbooks is the only way in which we can develop any notion of the make-up of the shire electorate.

This still leaves the problems of correct identification between a voter and a man of the same name in a separate document. How can one be sure that they were the same person? With so little information contained in the pollbooks it is a thorny problem. Vincent has asserted that one 'cannot prove the accuracy of any particular pollbook on any particular detail - this just cannot be done'.⁷³⁶ However, logic dictates that the bulk of the voters were the relatively well-off or local figures who were important enough to have left nominal records such as leases. In

⁷³⁵ Adman *et al*, HC, Vol 4 No 1, 13.

⁷³⁶ J.R. Vincent, Pollbooks: How Victorians Voted (Oxford, 1967), p. 8.

many smaller townships it was also unusual for more than one man of the same name to exist without those men being related. Usually family members could be differentiated by the use of wills, or occupational data in deeds. Even here, however, there are major problems, for King has noted how 20 per cent of links made using wills as a definitive statement of kinship were false for Colne in Lancashire.⁷³⁷

As the individuals in the pollbooks are 'fleshed out' one should be able to overcome the problem of false links being made between records in the pollbooks. This still leaves King's dilemma of linking where there is no competition. However, as long as new information is incorporated into a review process of the reconstruction these errors should be minimised. For example, utilising wills may distinguish which of a father and son was alive to poll at a particular election. As Winchester has written, 'History is speculation about the past controlled [or modified] by record linkage.'⁷³⁸ Clearly this speculation should be governed by the use of all possible sources and by considering every possible link. Thus linkage becomes increasingly a matter of probability.

There are still problems in creating a picture of the socio-economic background of the voters. It is possible that the survival of information may bias our view of the voters. For instance, the records of the deeds registries give good coverage about freehold land. If little leasehold information survives for a particular township then this will create a view that very few voters actually leased other lands. Little can be done to overcome such problems

⁷³⁷ King, HC, Vol 8 No 2, 67.

⁷³⁸ I. Winchester, 'On Referring to Ordinary Historical Persons', in Wrigley, Identifying People, p. 40.

of chance, but an awareness of the consistency of records and a constant review process can minimise mistakes.

An example of the problems faced when reconstructing such communities is shown by the township of Fimber on the wolds of the East Riding. This was a small agricultural village which in 1672 had sixteen houses and which never had any more than eleven voters.⁷³⁹ The landholding of the town appears to have been rather simply broken down between several major families, for whom there is a good survival of records.⁷⁴⁰ However, the confusion of men with the same names makes identification awkward. The Horsley family provided one voter in 1708, three in 1727 and three in 1734. The bulk of the Horsley family land appears to have derived from Matthew Horsley, whose probate was confirmed in 1692.⁷⁴¹ He left five sons, each of whom held some lands in fee simple. The eldest of these men was called Matthew and he had three sons including a third Matthew. Either of these two latter Matthews could have been the voter who appeared in 1708, but only the younger could have voted in 1727, as the father died in 1725.⁷⁴²

Similarly, there is confusion over the Christopher Horsley who polled in 1727 and 1734. This man could have been the son of the Matthew who died in 1692; equally he could have been Christopher's son, also named Christopher. In essence one could

⁷³⁹ Purdy, thesis, p. 108. Unfortunately Herring's visitation returns for 1743, which gave the number of families in each ecclesiastical area, included Fimber in the returns for Wetwang parish. See, Herring's Visitation Returns, LXXV, 252.

⁷⁴⁰ See H.U.L., Sykes of Sledmere MSS., Estate Papers, DDSY/18/1-22, 51-3, 74, 85-9, 99-100, 116-8, 158-61, 165-78; /63/281; /72/7, 15, 40; /107/18, 24; /108/3-5.

⁷⁴¹ Ibid., DDSY/18/14, Probate of Matthew Horsley, 3 Jan. 1692.

⁷⁴² Ibid., DDSY/18/18, Probate of Matthew Horsley, 4 Jun. 1725.

argue that the motivations at the polls of these men were the same, or that their ideologies and sensibilities were similar. However, this neglects other important factors, such as the fact that only one Christopher Horsley, the younger, was also renting land. In this case he was the tenant of several local men despite holding substantial amounts of property himself.⁷⁴³ Whether he was creating a larger, more unitary block of land is unclear. However, he may have felt rather more self-confident than his father and this may have affected his voting behaviour. Similarly, the Matthew Horsley who died in 1725 was a customary tenant of the Prebend of Wetwang, whilst his son was a customary tenant of the manor of Sledmire. These factors may have had differing influences on these men and make familial generalisations difficult to substantiate.⁷⁴⁴

Other problems of utilising pollbooks are highlighted here. In the 1727 pollbook Chas Horsley is noted as voting, however no Charles Horsley lived in Fimber at that time. This was most likely to be Christopher mis-spelt, or perhaps this Christopher preferred to be called Chas. There is also the uncertainty concerning whether the Christopher in 1727 is the same as the man of that name in 1734. This is important in divining the number of men who returned to poll, as well as their motivations. If a well documented family creates uncertainty, how much more is created concerning the voting population at large?

One final problem is those men who could not be located at all other than in the pollbooks; this affected three voters from

⁷⁴³ Ibid., DDSY/18/51, Lease between John Ledson and Christopher Horsley, 20 Mar. 1731; E.R.C.R.O., Deeds Registry, D 465 1004.

⁷⁴⁴ H.U.L., Sykes of Sledmere MSS., DDSY/18/15, Wetwang Manor Court; DDSY/62/281, Extracts from Sledmere Manor Court.

Fimber. Unfortunately one of these, Edmund Barstow, polled in 1708 when the freehold was not recorded in the pollbooks and so it is difficult to find out where he owned land. There is no mention of him in the Deeds Registry documents where a transfer of land out of his family may have been recorded. He may have passed his land onto his children without registering it; equally, he possibly sold up without recording the transfer. The other two men, named Thomas Ostler and Henry Rigton, voted in 1742, however they were not residents of Fimber and again do not feature in any Registry transactions.

Thus, even for a relatively small village, where the land was dominated by a few yeoman families, it is difficult to know who was returning to vote and hence what were the different influences impacting upon different men. In essence this may not matter as the driving force for this investigation was to divine the general influences at work within each voting community. At a more micro-level, however, these issues are important as they alter our perceptions of what was affecting electoral motivations in particular areas. In this way the difficulties of identifying people in the past become clear.

Appendix V: Occupational Analysis

One final methodological point of importance concerns occupational analysis.⁷⁴⁵ For many of the borough elections of the eighteenth century such a study has been facilitated by the occupational information included in the pollbooks. However, this information was not included in eighteenth century shire pollbooks and thus one requires the use of landholding information in order to gain an impression of the structure of the voterate.

There are methodological implications for the classification of occupations. O'Gorman has noted that his categories were not self-conscious social or status groups, and that craftsmen, for example, were grouped together because '[they] had many social values in common.'⁷⁴⁶ But is this justified for shire electorates, where there were numerous different pressures acting upon different men?⁷⁴⁷ The agricultural pressures upon a yeoman like Hugh Marshall in Rawden, who owned much land in a prosperous area, may well have differed from those affecting the life of the smallholder, John Cole, in Fimber. If specific local tensions and pressures affected different areas, then any analysis based on broad occupational groupings is not easy to justify.

Beyond this, there are problems in creating categories for study. There were large and small yeomen, whose status and income may have affected their ideological outlook. Moreover, what of men involved in dual occupations? This is important in

⁷⁴⁵ See especially O'Gorman, Voters, Patrons and Parties, pp. 199-223.

⁷⁴⁶ Ibid., pp. 201, 202.

⁷⁴⁷ In fact Beales has commented on this. See Beales, PH, 11 Part 1, 142.

dealing with the cloth towns of the West Riding where 'the possession of land as a buffer against poor trade' was important for clothiers.⁷⁴⁸ Indeed, the description 'clothier' could hide important status and income differences which may have altered a man's political outlook. Such a problem is highlighted by the number of voters who altered their occupational descriptor across the sources. In all twenty-three men did so and nineteen of these became 'Mr' or 'gentleman'; this suggests that many voters aspired to a higher social status and that there was occupational movement that may have been fed by an individual's need to be more important than he actually was. With the family and local context being so important, occupation is not necessarily a good indication of status and economic level, let alone of social perception and political behaviour.

There are also several source-based problems; firstly, transitions in terminology, not function, such as cordwainer to shoemaker; secondly, confusion over the occupation of a person, for example, clothier and weaver; thirdly, where a person has changed occupation. In this last case, John Barker of Hull was a carpenter in 1727 but by 1742 he was an innholder. As King has noted, 'Even where an occupational ascription was applied consistently over the life course, the label could mean different things to different people', which brings us back to Hugh Marshall and John Cole.⁷⁴⁹ One has to be sensitive to a voter's individual context and work experience, however any categorisation is liable to disregard certain distinctions between and within occupations. Even a multi-dimensional approach which takes into account

⁷⁴⁸ King, thesis, p. 55.

⁷⁴⁹ King, thesis, p. 83.

social as well as economic standing will not overcome these problems, or those of analysing socially aspirant voters who were, for instance, haberdashers at one poll and gentlemen at the next.

Despite these problems, O'Gorman undertook an analysis of the unreformed voters' occupations. His classification was:⁷⁵⁰

1. Gentlemen and Professionals;
2. Merchants and Manufacturers;
3. Retailers;
4. Skilled Craftsmen;
5. Semi/Unskilled Labourers;
6. Agriculturalists.

Unfortunately, any early eighteenth century comparisons with O'Gorman's work are unlikely to be profitable as his only county analysis was of Lincolnshire in 1818 and 1823.⁷⁵¹ However, his occupational structure will be looked at in terms of the Yorkshire data available. Similarly, other comparisons will be made between the textile areas of the West Riding and the agricultural areas of the East and North Ridings, as well as between the relatively urban areas of the East Riding and those of the West. These should give an interesting comparison between the different areas under study, and emphasise the local contexts of electoral research.

⁷⁵⁰ See, O'Gorman, Voters, Patrons and Parties, pp. 199-223.

⁷⁵¹ Ibid., p. 206.

For all the townships investigated in Chapter 6, the breakdown of occupations, utilising O'Gorman's categories, was as follows:⁷⁵²

<u>Category</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Gent/Professional	95 (120)	17.5 (22.1)
Manuf/Merch	24 (19)	4.4 (3.5)
Retail	24 (16)	4.4 (2.9)
Craftsmen	50 (44)	9.2 (8.1)
Semi/Unskilled	4 (3)	0.7 (0.6)
Agricultural	113 (108)	20.1 (19.9)
Not Known	234 (234)	43.0 (43.0)

Table AppV.1: voter occupation analysis.

The figures in parentheses refer to the new totals where a man changed his occupational descriptor between sources. In twenty-five instances the change takes the voter into the 'Gentleman or Professional' category, although two of these involve 'apothecaries' who fit into the 'Professional' and 'Retail' groups. How useful these groupings are for this data is unclear. They do suggest that many of the voters saw themselves as gentlemen but were not recorded thus in the pollbooks. Similarly, they indicate the importance of agriculture as a primary occupation of the county electorate at this time.

Unfortunately, the totals cover up certain local qualitative differences in occupations because the 'latent' occupational structures in each town will have varied. For example, one can

⁷⁵² 'Gent/Professional' included the 'respectable classes'; 'Manuf/Merch', all manufacturers of goods and merchants; 'Retail', all vendors of products; 'Craftsmen', all skilled workers, such as cordwainers; 'Semi/Unskilled', all workers whose work was not a skilled profession, like felmongers; 'Agricultural', all those who worked the land. See O'Gorman, *Voters, Patrons and Parties*, pp. 394-9.

alter the breakdown when investigating the clothing towns of Dewsbury, Guiseley and Rawden. The categories in this analysis are altered to 'Retail', 'Textile' - to cover the manufacture of cloths, 'Merchant', 'Local Manufacturer' - to cover anyone who provided a creative service within the towns, 'Gentleman' - which incorporated clerics and finally 'Agriculture'.⁷⁵³ Clearly, local nuances are missed in this process; the 'Textile' grouping assumed that all clothiers had the same local social and economic pressures acting on them; also, the merchant may have been a cloth merchant, and perhaps would have faced similar influences to those in the 'Textile' category. Any of the local manufacturers could have been retailers of the goods which they produced, but such information is not known. The 'Gentleman' category ignores the fact that many of these local men were also involved in agriculture. However, recognising the shortcomings of these groups, the make-up was as follows:

<u>Category</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Gentleman	21	12.5
Textile	21	12.5
Local Manufacturer	15	8.9
Retail	2	1.2
Merchant	1	0.6
Agriculture	31	18.5
Not Known	77	45.8

Table AppV.2: occupations of voters in West Riding cloth towns.

⁷⁵³ 'Retail' included malster and Chandler; 'Textile' covered clothier, stapler, weaver and woolman; 'Merchant' included a man called simply 'merchant'; 'Local Manufacturers' were blacksmith and fuller, carpenter and joiner, cordwainer, mason, salter and tanner; 'Gentleman' included esquires, gentleman, 'Mr', as well as clerics and parish clerks; the 'Agricultural' category covered grazier, husbandman and yeoman.

The importance of landholding to those in the textile industry and in local manufacture is shown from these figures. However, it is unclear just how many of those involved in textiles and agriculture and those called 'gentlemen', cross the boundaries between each group.

As far as the votes of each group were concerned the totals, which ignore the changes to 'gentleman', were as follows:

<u>Cat</u>	<u>Tory</u>	<u>Whig</u>	<u>Split</u>	<u>Change</u>
Gentleman	10	7	1	3
Textile	8	2	0	12
Local Man.	5	5	2	3
Retail	1	1	0	0
Merchant	1	0	0	0
Agric.	11	7	1	12

Table AppV.3: vote analysis of West Riding cloth town occupational groups.

Clearly, the textile and agriculture sections were important to the Tories, however, the fact that the community of Guiseley was solidly Whig in 1727 and then changed to the Tories or Opposition thereafter, sways the totals towards a 'Change' of allegiance.

For the East Riding townships of Cottingham and Hedon, which both felt the effects of the proximity of Beverley and Hull and which were sub-urban places, the following results were found:⁷⁵⁴

⁷⁵⁴ 'Gentleman' included those noted in n. 9 above, plus the profession of surgeon and the Governor of the Garrison of Hull; 'Local Manufacturer' included carpenter, cooper, cordwainer, felmonger, mason, papermaker, plumber, tanner, tailor, weaver and webster; the 'Retail' occupations were apothecary, baker, butcher, innholder and malster; 'Labourer' included a labourer and 'Agriculture' included those descriptors in n. 9.

<u>Category</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Gentleman	40 (52)	24.7 (32.1)
Local Manufacturer	25 (20)	15.4 (12.3)
Labourer	1 (0)	0.6 (0.0)
Retail	12 (10)	7.4 (6.2)
Agriculture	33 (29)	20.4 (17.9)
Not Known	51 (51)	31.5 (31.5)

Table AppV.4: occupations of voters in Cottingham and Hedon.

The figures in parentheses indicate any movement of descriptors over time and show how more men saw themselves as 'Gentlemen' as the period wore on. Furthermore, the increase in the number of 'Gentlemen' reflects the fact that many of the Hedon voters were burgesses and members of the Corporation who saw themselves as upwardly mobile. There were also a large number of local manufacturers, although whether one should classify papermakers alongside plumbers is a moot point; one provided a manufacture and one a service. With this in mind, how does one decide which category a tailor or webster should fall into? For instance, one Jeremy Berry, a cordwainer, purchased a shop in 1717; similarly, Robert Birks, a yeoman, purchased a messuage with an attached shop in 1715.⁷⁵⁵ Were these men involved in a dual employment of the manufacture of a product and its retail? This blurs the edges of these categories. However, the table does indicate that agriculture was as important in these two towns as it was in the West Riding cloth townships.

The following table records the voting behaviour of these groups:

⁷⁵⁵ E.R.C.R.O., Deeds Registry, E 314 549, 7 Nov. 1715; F 166 360, 25 Oct. 1717.

<u>Cat</u>	<u>Tory</u>	<u>Whig</u>	<u>Split</u>	<u>Change</u>
Gentleman	8	22	2	8
Local Man.	2	15	2	5
Labourer	0	0	0	1
Retail	1	7	1	3
Agric.	7	13	2	11

Table AppV.5: vote analysis of occupational groups in Cottingham and Hedon.

The Tories fared particularly badly amongst all sectors of society which mirrors their poor performance throughout the East Riding in this period. Only in the agricultural sector did they pick up votes during the backlash to the excise, whilst the other occupational groups appear to have stayed loyal to the Whigs.

The final areas to be analysed were the two agricultural towns of the East and North Ridings, Fimber and Holtby.

<u>Category</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Gentleman	10	17.9
Local Manufacturer	3	5.4
Agriculture	21	37.5
Not Known	22	39.3

Table AppV.6: occupations of voters in Fimber and Holtby.

Clearly, the lack of data for almost two-fifths of the sample is a problem. Of the thirty-four voters who are left, two-thirds were engaged in agriculture, a proportion that increases when one considers that the bulk of the 'Gentleman' category were also substantial landowners. However, this again blurs the distinction between large and small owners and without this level of qualitative information any conclusions based on occupations are very limited.

The voting behaviour of those men whose groupings can be adduced from the relevant sources was as follows:

<u>Cat</u>	<u>Tory</u>	<u>Whig</u>	<u>Split</u>	<u>Change</u>
Gentleman	0	6	1	3
Local Man.	1	1	0	1
Agric.	7	6	3	5

Table AppV.7: vote analysis of occupational groups in Fimber and Holtby.

The information gathered indicates the strength of the Whigs amongst the gentry in these areas, although not in the wider 'agricultural' sphere. With these sectors being so important it is possible that these men also influenced the retailers and local manufacturers of these towns.

What becomes clear from any attempt to look at the occupational or status structure of a county in the early eighteenth century are the difficulties entailed. The lack of descriptors for almost half the sample, coupled to the problems of altered and dual occupations, makes any conclusions tentative. However, what is noticeable was the large number of voters of all occupations who altered their party allegiance over time. In the West Riding cloth-producing townships, thirty men, or 32.6 per cent of the voters with known occupations, did so. In Cottingham and Hedon the number was twenty-eight, or 25.5 per cent. Whilst both groups had a larger number of partisan voters, with more Tories in the cloth area and more Whigs in the suburban East Riding, there were still many men who did not see themselves in a particular party mould throughout these years. Possibly trade and economic pressures upon occupations caused these behavioural

changes. However, the very fact that there were such wide disparities across any of the occupational categories that one takes, plus the differing local contexts, make this difficult to adduce.

Gentry voting behaviour

The voting behaviour of the 975 men who called themselves 'Esq', 'Gent' and 'Mr' in the pollbooks is notionally easy to analyse. However, there are problems in dealing with the gentry as a group, for they tend to be ill-defined. There is no easy way of denoting a gentleman, and although property was crucial in the eighteenth century, the amount that gave gentry status was very subjective. Thus, merely utilising the descriptors given in the pollbooks is not particularly satisfactory in terms of investigating these men in absolute terms, but there is no reason to suggest that an analysis of them will not be representative of that group as a whole.

Hence, taking the gentry descriptors at face value means that 742 (76.1 per cent) only voted once, whilst 233 (23.9 per cent) polled twice or more. In 1708 253 such men polled and 157 (62.1 per cent) cast a party vote; of these, eighty-four (53.5 per cent) gave doubles. In all, doubles were cast by 181 (72 per cent) of the gentry. However, these men showed a consistency with the rest of the electorate at this poll, in terms of the high number of singles and split votes given. Over the following three elections, there was a high turnover of voters. This reflected the lacklustre voting habits of the gentry, or a feeling that electioneering was a reasonable pursuit, but to mix with the voters and actually poll

was not. Of the 219 who polled in 1727, 111 (50.7 per cent) were doing so for the only time and 198 (90.4 per cent) were new voters. In 1734, there were 306 (74.3 per cent) new voters in a pool of 412 gentlemen, whilst 205 (49.8 per cent) only polled at this election. At the last poll there were 387 gentlemen who voted, 218 (56.3 per cent) of whom were new and hence who only voted once. These values for turnover are higher than the corresponding ones for the voterate as a whole and reflect the features of this element of the electorate which Holmes found.⁷⁵⁶

Of the 534 men who only voted once between 1727 and 1742, 335 (62.7 per cent) were Whigs whilst 185 (34.6 per cent) were Tories. The Whigs had much more success in marshalling the votes of these men. But what of consistency amongst those who polled at more than one election? Of the 233 who did so, 136 (58.4 per cent) were consistent Whig or Government supporters, fifty-one (21.9 per cent) were Tory or Opposition men, and forty-six (19.7 per cent) gave mixed votes. Clearly, the proportion of waverers was slightly lower than in the voterate at large, but it was of the same order, around one-in-five voters. Of these forty-six men, only fifteen (less than 2 per cent of the total population) switched votes.

The fact that five candidates stood in 1708, plus the disorganised state of party politics at that time meant that there were many different voting types at that poll. Ignoring the 1708 votes gives the following figures for voting behaviour across the Ridings from 1727-42:

⁷⁵⁶ G.S. Holmes, 'The Electorate and the National Will', in his Politics, Religion and Society in England, p. 21-2.

<u>VOTE</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>ER</u>	<u>NR</u>	<u>WR</u>	<u>OUT</u>	<u>YORK</u>
1X-T	184	19	27	101	17	20
1X-W	349	75	92	126	20	36
1X-?	14	2	4	4	0	4
2X-T	49	6	6	32	3	2
2X-W	134	23	29	60	3	19
2X-?	26	3	8	12	1	2
TOTAL	756 ⁷⁵⁷	128	166	335	44	83

Table AppV.8: gentry voting behaviour, 1727-42.

Key:

1X-T=Voted once for Tory or Opposition; 1X-W=Voted once for Whig or Government; 1X-?=Split in 1734;

2X-T=Voted twice or thrice for Tory and Opposition; 2X-W=Voted twice or thrice for Whig and Government; 2X-?=Voted twice or thrice but split in 1734.

Thus, the Whigs dominated the votes of the gentry. Of these 756 voters, 209 (27.6 per cent) polled more than once and whilst only 12.4 per cent of these were split voters in 1734 or altered their voting behaviour totally, only 23.4 per cent were Tories. Indeed, of the 756 gentry voters, 63.9 per cent were Whigs and these men were spread throughout the shire, to the extent that in the West Riding the Whigs had a majority of voting gentry at each poll. This may reflect that parties drive to get as many voters out as possible.

However, there is a problem with these figures. The nominal record linkage of the three pollbooks revealed another 234 possible links between men noted as a gentleman in one or more sources and with no such descriptor in another. Taking on board these findings from the record linkage would reduce the number of

⁷⁵⁷ Of the 975 gentlemen there were eleven men whose Riding could not be ascertained and 208 who polled in 1708.

men who only polled once to 541 (55.5 per cent), whilst 434 (44.5 per cent) would have polled twice. Of the latter 434 men, 226 (52.1 per cent) were Whigs, and the Tory and floating vote split the rest of the returning gentry voterage by 105/103. In fact the addition of these men does little damage to the relative values of the consistency of these voters when the 1708 election is discarded; the Whigs secured 455 of the 767 voters, whilst the Tories had 218 and there were ninety-four waverers.

Whether these men ought to be considered is a moot point. The inclusion of the suffix denoting a gentleman would depend upon circumstances that changed over time, and which would have had plenty of time to alter in the seven years that separated each election. For example, an ongoing process of gentrification may have had an effect. Similarly, the notation of 'Esq' or 'Gent' or 'Mr' was relatively flexible and often subjective. A man like Bacon Morritt of York, voting Tory by right of land in Sherwood in 1727 and 1742, and noted as 'Esq' at both polls, can be linked to one Bacon Morret of the same abode and freehold in 1734, but with no status given. William Burton of Hotham in the East Riding became Lord of the Manor of Hotham after 1727, and at the polls of 1734 and 1742 he was noted as 'Esq'. Is it right to link him to William Burton of Hotham, who polled in 1727, but lacked any denominator of gentleman status?

Clearly, these are major problems and they do affect the overall view of the gentry. To accept these links means that the turnover of gentry voters decreases markedly. The comparison of experienced voters becomes:

1727 voters : 56.0% polled in 1734
 1727 gentry : 69.4% polled in 1734
 1734 voters : 54.8% polled in 1742
 1734 gentry : 60.6% polled in 1742

Table AppV.9: the return to poll of gentry and voters, 1727-42.

The unadjusted figures for the gentry showed that 48 per cent who polled in 1727 did so in 1734 and that 41 per cent who polled in 1734 returned in 1742. For turnover, the comparison of voters and gentry is as follows:

1727-1734 voterate : 57.7% turnover
 1727-1734 gentry : 61.7% turnover
 1734-1742 voterate : 46.3% turnover
 1734-1742 gentry : 28.6% turnover

Table AppV.10: the turnover of gentry and voters, 1727-42.

If one ignores the 234 additions, then 74 per cent of the 1734 gentry voters were inexperienced and 56 per cent of the 1742 gentry voterate had not polled before. With the additions, there are marked changes, and although the relative levels of partisanship or the number of floating voters are not affected, these men make a difference to the perception of the gentry as a group. Thus it is difficult to judge the true state of the gentry at this time; without an in-depth study of the 234 voters who may or may not have voted at a second or third poll, making definitive statements about their voting behaviour has to be guarded.

The methodology of locating clerical voters

The study of the clergy also has wider methodological implications for any analysis of the voterate in the early eighteenth century. It is clear that in the heat of the poll, where problems of ascription as well as oral/aural confusion existed for the clerks who were to keep a record of the votes, mistakes concerning names and places could be made. With a number of clerks at work in several booths the possibilities for errors in a compiled pollbook were large. The micro-level investigation of the clergy uncovered problems in all the pollbooks used. The 1708 poll only had information about abode contained in it; if a cleric did not live on his benefice it was more difficult to locate him. With no freehold information available one would have to work on the basis that the most important factor in voting behaviour on a township scale was place of abode. At least the clergy could have their clerical freeholds ascribed to them if this information could be located. This assumes that each cleric was voting because of his benefice which was equivalent in law to a freehold. It was quite possible that these men could have owned freehold land in another township and voted by right of that land.

Later pollbooks often appear to have mixed up freehold and abode information. For example, the following is from the 1734 pollbook:

SAM BREAREY MIDDLETON MIDDLETHORP HUNSLEY
BEACON CL SY.

Based on the other records in the pollbook, one would assume that Samuel Brearey held freehold land in Middlethorp whilst living in Middleton in the Hunsley division of Harthill wapentake. However, this man was the Rector of Middleton; are the abode and freehold information confused or did Brearey vote by right of land in Middlethorp? If the place information has been mixed-up it is unlikely to have occurred for the clergy alone. If this factor was extrapolated into the Yorkshire voting public at large it has implications for any nominal record linkage of the pollbooks.

In fact, once the pollbooks had been linked another conundrum arose. Certain clerics who were incumbent during more than one election and who were recorded at one poll as 'cl' were linked to men in a subsequent or previous poll who had no clerical suffix. For instance, David Matmarry, the Perpetual Curate of Garsdale in Richmond Archdeaconry, voted for Winn and Turner in 1734 and was called 'cl'. A David Matmarry of Garsdale also voted for Turner in 1742, but this time he was not called 'cl'. Was this the same person? The fact that both Matmarry's first and surnames were unusual for Yorkshire, and that errors may have been made at the polls, means that one can be relatively confident that these men were the same person. The number of clerics affected by this appeared to be 115, however recourse to the sources for incumbency revealed that at least ninety-three held their benefices at the polls in question.⁷⁵⁸ Without studying all the estate records of each locale it would be impossible to say whether the men noted as 'cl' in one pollbook but not the next

⁷⁵⁸ See B.I.H.R., Institution Act Books 10-12; Herring's Visitation Returns, LXXI, LXXII, LXXV. There may have been more who were beneficed clerics, however some of these men could not be located in a specific parish.

were the same; they could have been two men who were related, or who had the same name. However, in terms of voting behaviour these men are no different from the bulk of the voting clergy and they do not alter one's perceptions of the role of clerical patronage in this period.

There are also cases where personal names have been confused. The Vicar of Bradford in 1708, Farrand Frodgate, was noted in the pollbook as Bradgate Ferrand. Although this is a simple error to rectify at this micro-level, it is impractical to go through a pollbook containing 15,000 individuals checking the names of all the voters from baronets to the meanest freeholder. A nominal linkage of the 1734 and 1742 pollbooks would also have linked the following men:

FIELD DUNN HULL WISTOW CL WT

FIELD DUNN HULL WESTOW CL F

There would be no reason to assume that these two men were father and son, with the son appointed to the same benefice as his father after the latter's death. It is only because the clergy are more easily identifiable as individuals than the population at large that such problems come to light; thus, any results of a wider record linkage must be tempered by the design of the extant records that are being handled.

Clearly there are methodological problems based on the sources being utilised for all occupations. When inaccuracies occur for the clergy or gentry they can be relatively easily overcome, because these groups tend to be less amorphous than

the voters as a whole. Also the clergy, especially, can be recognised from the many other records in which they feature. When the problems that are emphasised by a study of these groups are amplified for the voting public as a whole, confidence in record linkage begins to look weak. However, as Vincent argues, pollbooks 'do suggest that broad generalisations may safely be made from large collections of these figures, each one of which taken on its own would be entirely open to question.'⁷⁵⁹ The beauty of such an analysis weighed in the balance of the methodological problems asserted has to be the way in which it opens a door upon the lives of the forty shilling freeholder. That pollbooks allow one to enter into their lives, to discuss their motivations and their relationship with the politicians, provides the crux of their utility.

⁷⁵⁹ Vincent, Pollbooks: How Victorians Voted, p. 8.

Appendix VI - Votes Cast

Much of what follows is raw data culled from the pollbooks or from the record linkage of those sources. It is intended as a companion to the explanations given in Chapter 4.⁷⁶⁰

Wapentake	1708	1727	1734	1742
Buccross	35T 123W 54?	13T 126W	57T 118W 16?	60T 84W
Dickering	15T 287W 20?	13T 442W	25T 421W 11?	80T 468W
Harthill	192T 265W 217?	101T 464W	313T 387W 105?	269T 396W
Holderness	27T 113W 27?	25T 218W	108T 263W 23?	57T 249W
Howden	20T 39W 24?	28T 95W	60T 100W 22?	52T 84W
Hullshire	X	5T 75W	4T 100W 5?	10T 76W
Ouse/Der	41T 103W 81?	44T 68W	81T 44W 26?	44T 68W

Table AppVI.1: wapentake voting in the East Riding.

⁷⁶⁰ In Tables 1, 2 and 3, T represents the Tory (or Opposition) party and W represents the Whig (or Government) party; ? represents support for cross-party voting or an independent candidate.

Wapentake	1708	1727	1734	1742
Allerton	27T 105W 20?	13T 92W	59T 205W 27?	26T 84W
Burdforth	47T 109W 111?	47T 130W	82T 72W 24?	125T 135W
Bulmer	222T 128W 232?	146T 172W	315T 187W 52?	223T 228W
Gilling East	9T 62W 9?	7T 97W	45T 117W 8?	14T 90W
Gilling West	16T 122W 26?	40T 173W	125T 210W 27?	72T 157W
Hallikeld	24T 69W 47?	27 T 68W	91T 55W 11?	71T 27W
Hang East	12T 101W 27?	35T 126W	84T 151W 21?	51T 109W
Hang West	31T 134W 32?	122T 277W	296T 241W 30?	161T 308W
Langbargh	90T 113W 67?	62T 330W	111T 353W 137?	68T 391W
Pickering Lyth	20T 64W 62?	60T 508W	288T 436W 28?	210T 561W
Rydall	21T 131W 34?	85T 142W	153T 175W 24?	139T 108W
Whitby Strand	1T 53W 1?	0T 133W	7T 163W 3?	11T 180W

Table App VI.2: wapentake voting in the North Riding.

Wapentake	1708	1727	1734	1742
Agbridge	325T 119W 125?	561T 132W	547T 321W 96?	697T 292W
Ansty	62T 67W 44?	31T 81W	73T 56W 22?	64T 61W
Barkston Ash	76T 94W 133?	86T 148W	132T 148W 60?	183T 150W
Claro	216T 353W 247?	266T 367W	555T 278W 68?	428T 330W
Morley	522T 180W 222?	450T 247W	613T 398W 79?	841T 350W
Osgoldcross	233T 76W 139?	223T 155W	147T 338W 76?	173T 334W
Skirack	186T 255W 135?	307T 248W	482T 275W 60?	543T 312W
Staincliffe	109T 175W 78?	390T 390W	934T 394W 78?	824T 401W
Staincross	89T 47W 106?	147T 86W	152T 173W 34?	164T 176W
Strafford	254T 204W 340?	240T 512W	389T 764W 107?	419T 633W

Table AppVI.3: wapentake voting in the West Riding.

Partisan voting, 1727-34

Across the shire, for the 6,490 who polled in 1727 and 1734, the next table indicates the breakdown of voting.

VOTE	YORKS.	ER	NR	WR
T-OPPN	1,840	113	362	1,338
T-GMT	414	28	83	297
W-GMT	2,846	671	1,077	1,015
W-OPPN	831	156	293	360
T-SPLIT	199	11	39	147
W-SPLIT	360	62	146	138
TOTAL	6,490	1,041	2,000	3,295

Table App VI.4: partisan voting, 1727-34.

Key:

T=Tory in 1727; W=Whig in 1727; OPPN=Opposition in 1734;

GMT=Government in 1734.

For the 1727 poll 88 per cent of the voters could be accurately placed in their correct Riding; if one extrapolates the numbers of voters from each Riding, then the projected numbers were: 1,959 from the East Riding; from the North, 3,418; from the West, 5,870.⁷⁶¹ Extrapolating from those voters who could be placed in the correct Riding gives the Tory support in the East as 247 voters, in the North as 765 voters, and in the West as 3,132

⁷⁶¹ These figures are predicted from the relative proportions for each Riding that are actually known from the pollbook; thus, the totals are extrapolated from those voters who could be placed.

voters. Of these projected figures, 152 (62 per cent) Tories returned from the East Riding and 113 (74 per cent) remained in opposition in 1734; twenty-eight (18 per cent) switched to the Government. From the North Riding, 484 (63 per cent) polled in 1734; of these, 362 (75 per cent) were again in opposition, whereas eighty-three (17 per cent) switched allegiance. In the West Riding, 1,782 (57 per cent) returned, with 1,338 (75 per cent) voting for the Opposition and 297 (17 per cent) switching. Overall, the Tory return to poll had no major regional variations and despite their strength in the West Riding they were no more able to rally their troops there than in either of the other two Ridings.

The extrapolated values give the Whigs 1,712 voters in the East, 2,653 in the North and in the West 2,738. Thus, in the East Riding, 889 (52 per cent) returned and 671 (75 per cent) were consistent at both polls, with another 156 (18 per cent) altering their allegiance. In the North, of the 1,516 (57 per cent) who returned, 1,077 (71 per cent) remained loyal and 293 (19 per cent) voted for the Opposition. In the West Riding, 1,513 (55 per cent) Whigs returned to poll in 1734; of these 1,015 (67 per cent) were Government voters, whilst 360 (24 per cent) altered their allegiance to the Opposition.

Partisan voting, 1734-42

VOTE	YORKS.	ER	NR	WR
OPPN-T	2,847	209	557	2,010
OPPN-W	747	122	301	300
GMT-T	679	125	178	365
GMT-W	3,240	603	1,102	1,425
SPLIT-T	371	51	67	235
SPLIT-W	364	57	161	133
TOTAL	8,248	1,167	2,366	4,469

Table App VI.5: partisan voting, 1734-42.

Key:

OPPN= Opposition in 1734; GMT=Government in 1734; T=Tory in 1742; W=Whig in 1742.

The number who returned to poll in each Riding is dependent upon extrapolating from the 92 per cent of votes in 1742 that could be confidently ascribed to their correct Riding.⁷⁶² This gives an East Riding total of 2,177 voters; in the North it was 3,987 and in the West 8,107 voters. Thus, in the East, the 1,167 who returned to poll were around 54 per cent of that Riding's voterate. Of these 1,167 men, 812 (70 per cent) remained true to one party, or ideology, whereas 247 (21 per cent) switched allegiance. In the North 2,366 voters returned and formed 59 per cent of the voters there. There were 1659 (70 per cent) voters who were consistent and 479 (21 per cent) who switched. For the West the value of

⁷⁶² The figures for the Ridings are based on the derived totals of voters that were drawn from an analysis of the electorate.

4,469 voters meant that 55 per cent of voters had polled in 1734. Moreover, 3,455 (77 per cent) voted consistently and only 665 (15 per cent) switched.

In the East Riding, Fox received 385 votes from men who had polled in 1734. These accounted for around 62 per cent of his projected 621 supporters from this region at the 1742 by-election. In the North, 802 (62 per cent) of Fox's projected 1,297 voters were experienced. Of these, 557 (70 per cent) were true to the Opposition/Tory cause and 178 (22 per cent) switched from the Government. From the West Riding, 2,610 (55 per cent) of a projected 4,765 Tory voters had polled in 1734. Of these men, 2,010 (77 per cent) polled Opposition/Tory at the two elections, and 365 (14 per cent) switched to the Whig fold.

Meanwhile, in the East Riding, the 603 who had previously polled for Turner and Winn and in 1742 supported Turner were around 41% of those who were in the Government interest at the first poll. They now made up around 39% of Turner's 1,553 projected votes in 1742; alongside the 179 voters who opposed him or split in 1734 and who now supported him, 50% of his East Riding support was experienced. In the North Riding, Turner received the votes of 1,102 former friends; this was only 41% of his overall support, projected as 3,342 votes, at this poll. However, a further 462 who had split or opposed him in 1734 supported him at the by-election, which meant that 47% of his support had polled before. In the West Riding, 433 men opted for Turner when they had opposed him or split before; this was around 13% of the 3,342 who polled for him. Alongside the 1,425 (43% of his projected level of support in 1742) who were loyal to him at both elections in the West Riding, this meant that the

relative level of support that he elicited there from experienced voters was no worse than that gained by Fox.

General voting behaviour, 1727-42

VOTE	TOTAL
PARTY	2,193 (61.8%)
SWITCH1	427 (12.0%)
SWITCH2	365 (10.3%)
SWITCH3	246 (6.9%)
SPLIT1	214 (6.0%)
SPLIT2	105 (3.0%)

Table App VI.6: general voting behaviour, 1727-42.

Key (based on the relationship 1727-1734-1742):

Party=Either Tory-Opposition-Tory or Whig-Government-Whig;

Switch1=Either Tory-Government-Whig or Whig-Opposition-Tory;

Switch2=Either Tory-Opposition-Whig or Whig-Government-Tory;

Switch3=Either Tory-Government-Tory or Whig-Opposition-Whig;

Split1=Either Tory-Split-Tory or Whig-Split-Whig;

Split2=Either Tory-Split-Whig or Whig-Split-Tory.

Specific voting behaviour, 1727-42

1727	1734	1742	TOTAL
TORY	OPPN	TORY	912 (25.7%)
WHIG	GMT	WHIG	1,281 (36.1%)
TORY	GMT	TORY	66 (1.9%)
WHIG	OPPN	WHIG	180 (5.1%)
TORY	GMT	WHIG	154 (4.3%)
WHIG	OPPN	TORY	273 (7.7%)
TORY	OPPN	WHIG	134 (3.8%)
WHIG	GMT	TORY	231 (6.5%)
TORY	SPLIT	TORY	83 (2.3%)
WHIG	SPLIT	WHIG	131 (3.7%)
TORY	SPLIT	WHIG	30 (0.8%)
WHIG	SPLIT	TORY	75 (2.1%)

Table App VI.7: specific voting behaviour, 1727-42.

Appendix VII: Examples of Canvasses and Pollbooks

[illegible]

Conisburgh in the Map of Bradford :		Dalton in the Map of	
Wm. Guest	7.	Thos. Hunt	
Wm. Jaff	7.	Thos. Conley	
Ben. Flower	7.	Wm. Milburn	
John Heyland	7.	James Eastwood	
James Bightred	7.	John Horsfall	
Thos. Winge	7.	Rich. Tordis	
James Lee	7.	Rich. Lockridge	
John Birch	7.	Thos. Dyeon	
Rich. Kallam	7.	Geo. Beaumont	
St. St. Guest	7.	Joseph Norris	12.
Thos. Pattison	7.	Edm. Richmond	
John Pattison	7.	Rich. Cooper	
John Michelson	7.	Paul Brown	
Thos. Tardis	8.	Lake Plummer	
Edm. Clavinsburgh St.	7.	Thos. Buckton	
Crookhill		Wm. Bell	
Wm. Wedgway Op.	7.	James Swanning	
Cuthworth		John Brown	
Wm. Wighton Op.	8.	Wm. Raper	20.
Crookmoor		John Archer	
James Lawrence	9.	Joshua Hare	

An example of four pages from Fitzwilliam (Malton) MSS.,
'Canvassbooks for the 1727 By-Election'.

The Names of f ^r Freeholders with the Allotments of f ^r since last Election	Who for	By whose Judgment	Objections to Votes of either party and other Reasons for not declaring standing Member
Abberford			
Brown John -	f	Mr Ingram	I will not vote
Brown John Dutcher	f		
Abner Thomas	f		
Boulton the Rev ^d	f		
Daub's Thomas	f		
Gillingworth John	f		
Proffman Valentine	f		
Proffman James	f		
Trickett Joseph	f		
Wilkinson W ^m	f		
Laitherton			
Mr Brantley	f	Total 9 Is. 4d	
Addle with Ecup & Colridge			
Bretham Abraham	f	Mr Jacobson & Rector	
Burnett Martin	f		removed to Newborough
Clough William	f	Mr Hoffield	
Driscoll John	f	the same	
Hanlon W ^m	f	by Mr Darlington	
Jacobson the Rev ^d	f		
Hopkinson Daniel	f		removed to pool
Mingley Robert	f	Mr Hoffield	
Mingley Joseph	f	the same	
Wood George	f	the same	
Total	10 5 3		

An example of a page from Temple Newsam MSS., TN/PO/10/10,
'An Account of the Freeholders within the wapentake of
Skeyrack...', 17 Sep. 1741.

List of the Freeholders that have
promised Mr. Pulleyn to take for Mr. Currier
there march with the Colours will be brought in
by Mr. Pulleyn without charge - there march time
to have their charges born them.

Burton

1	Wentland Joseph	-----	20
2	Wentland Richard	-----	20
3	Wentland John	-----	20
4	Wentland Jonathan	-----	20
5	Wentland Major	-----	20
6	Wentland William	-----	20
7	Wentland William of the Drilling	-----	20
8	Wentland Thomas	-----	20
9	Wentland Captain	-----	20
10	Wentland Henry	-----	20
11	Wentland Henry	-----	20
12	Wentland Thomas	-----	20
13	Wentland Edmund	-----	20
14	Wentland Christopher	-----	20
15	Wentland Benjamin	-----	20
16	Wentland Abraham	-----	20
17	Wentland John	-----	20
18	Pulleyn Esq. Esq.	-----	20
19	Wentland Francis	-----	20
20	Wentland William	-----	20
21	Wentland William	-----	20
22	Wentland Thomas	-----	20
23	Wentland Captain	-----	20
24	Wentland William	-----	20
25	Wentland Joseph	-----	20
26	Wentland Richard	-----	20
27	Wentland William	-----	20
28	Wentland William	-----	20
29	Wentland George	-----	20
30	Wentland James	-----	20
31	Wentland John - Mr. Currier's Gent. of Carley	-----	20
32	Wentland John	-----	20
33	Wentland William	-----	20

33

There to have their charges born
at 15 a piece if there
be no entertainment here if intended he

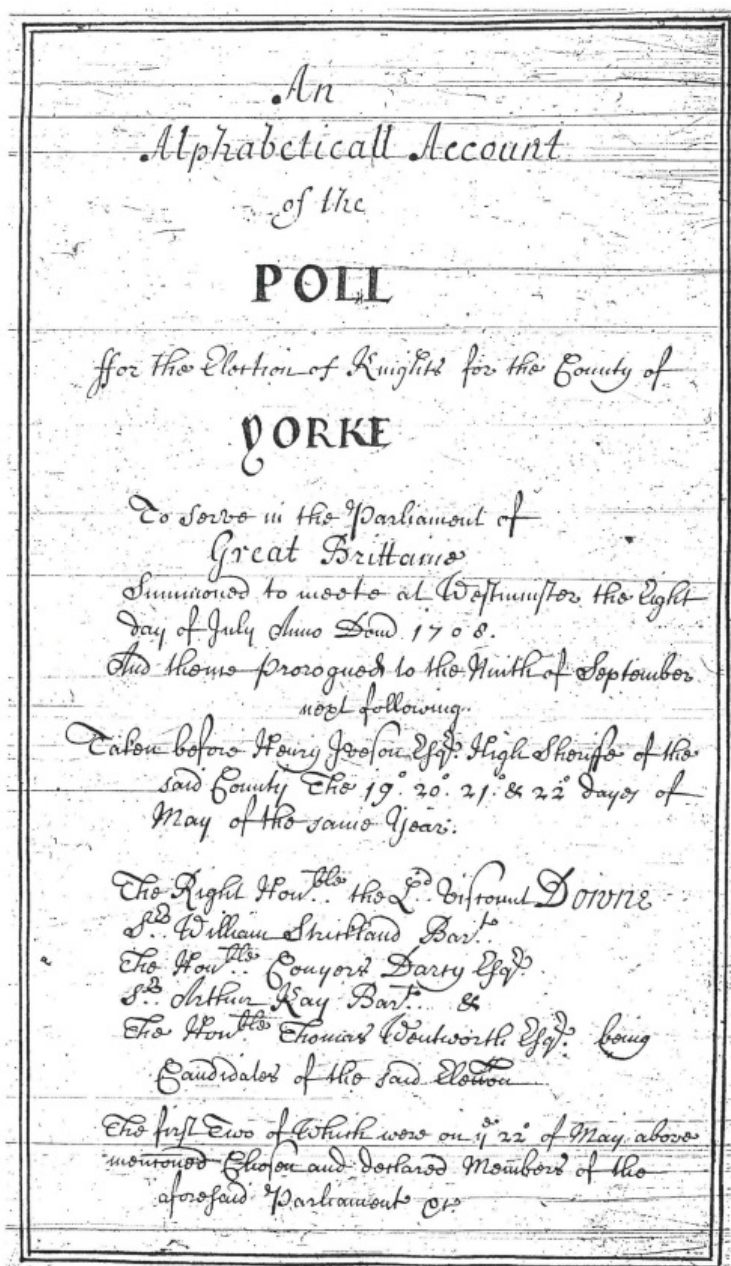
An example of a page from Temple Newsam MSS., TN/PO/10/11,
 'Mr Pulleyn's Account', 4 Jan. 1742.

FREEHOLD.	ABODE.	HEADS OF OBJECTION.
Turner William		No such Person; but if William Terlas was the Vote, we object to him for not having a Freehold of 40 s. a Year there.
<i>Winfredale.</i> Scarf Robert	Thoruton Ross	Not a Freehold of 40 s. a Year there.
<i>Wiff. Ardy.</i> Broadhead Robert		Not assis'd, nor a Freehold of 40 s. a Year there.
Awry William		Ditto.
Scot William		Ditto.
Hudson Thomas		Ditto.
Aulterbury Robert		Not a Freehold of 40 s. a Year there, nor assis'd.
<i>Wetherby.</i> Robinson Thomas		Not a Freehold of 40 s. a Year there.
Walker Thomas, jun.		No Freehold there.
<i>Wharfe.</i> Jackson Richard	Clapham	No Freehold there, nor assis'd.
<i>Wheby.</i> Wood Alexander		Not a Freehold of 40 s. a Year there.
<i>Whiffy.</i> Smith William	Hiptonfall	No Freehold there, nor assis'd.
<i>Whitafide.</i> Townsend Richard		Not a Freehold of 40 s. a Year there.
<i>Whitafide, Par. of Crispam.</i> Bonson Robert		Not 40 s. a Year Freehold there, exclusive of what the Voter purchased within a Year of the Election.
<i>Whitely.</i> Brook John		Not a Freehold of 40 s. a Year there.
<i>Wiginton.</i> Lund Benjamin	City of York	Not a Freehold of 40 s. a Year there.
<i>Wigton.</i> Clark Matthew	Preslon Little	Not assis'd, nor a Freehold there.
<i>Wike.</i> Chertham John	Skipton	No Freehold there, nor assis'd.
Bollard William	North-Byerly	Not a Freehold of 40 s. a Year there.
Bolland William		
<i>Wigill.</i> Duckworth Christ.		No Freehold there.
<i>Wilson, Parish of Balton.</i> Carr John	Hask, in Gisburn Parish	Not assis'd, nor a Freehold there.
<i>Wixley.</i> Scotts Richard	Stavely	Not a Freehold of 40 s. a Year there, which was assis'd.
Jackson William, Cl.		Not assis'd, nor any Freehold there.
<i>Wison.</i> Crowther Thomas		No Freehold there, nor assis'd.
<i>Withernwick.</i> Dzy Peter	Hofam	No such Person, nor assis'd.
<i>Witton Wiff.</i> Dawson Richard	Melmerby	Not assis'd.
Bell John		Not assis'd, nor any Freehold there.
King Henry, jun.		Ditto.
Lewis Edmund		No Freehold there, nor assis'd.
<i>Woodhouse.</i> Thornton John	Morton	Not assis'd, nor a Freehold there.
Lyon William		Not assis'd.
<i>Great.</i> Wilkinson John		Not a Freehold of 40 s. a Year there.
<i>Woodkirk.</i> Armstrong John		Not assis'd, nor a Freehold there.
<i>Woodkirk.</i> Smithwaite Joseph	Roades	No Freehold there.

Wally.

An example of a page from Spencer Stanhope MSS., SpSt/11/5/3/12, 'List of Objections of Sir Rowland Winn to Sir Miles Stapylton's voter's', 1734.

An example of a page from Spencer Stanhope MSS.,
SpSt/11/5/3/20, objections to the 1742 poll.



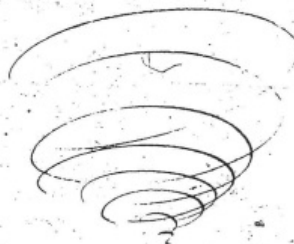
A copy of the frontispiece of the 1708 Yorkshire pollbook, York Minster Library, Liber Miscellanea, Cat.22, Add. MSS. 235.

The Names of the Candidates And the Number
of the Votes belonging to Each

1109

The Right Hon ^{ble} & L ^d . Viscount Downe	4737
S ^r . Wm. Strickland Bart.	3452
The Hon ^{ble} Comyns Barry Esq.	3257
S ^r . Arthur Kay Bart.	3136
And The Hon ^{ble} Tho: Worsworth Esq.	0958

Total of y^e whole 15540



Note that the County in this Book
after which y^e Ridings and Hundreds are
not set downe The Reader is desired to
look for Lists in y^e Judges Willard of
Yorkshire there being more than one of
the Name and in several Hundreds

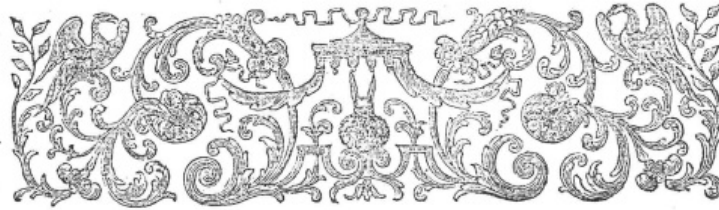
A copy of the second page of the 1708 Yorkshire pollbook, York Minster Library, Liber Miscellanea, Cat.22, Add. MSS. 235.

Somme & Names		Hundreds.		Shillings.		Pence.	
Parish		Tithable		Tithable		Tithable	
Berforth		St. Mary		St. Mary		St. Mary	
Bayles William		1		4		4	
Broome John		1		4		4	
Dollingwood John		2		3		3	
Dawson David		1		2		2	
Hirst Thomas		2		3		3	
Hirst Robert		2		3		3	
Sodgwick James		2		3		3	
Silverwood Dr		2		3		3	
Woodall Henry		2		3		3	
Arafton		St. Mary		St. Mary		St. Mary	
Chambers John		3		5		5	
Knowles Anthony		2		3		3	
Smith Robert		2		3		3	

An example of a page from the 1708 Yorkshire pollbook, York Minster Library, Liber Miscellenea, Cat.22, Add. MSS. 235.

No.	S ^r John Hey	Household Names	Place of Trade.	Household Names
	John Litten	x Gifford	2 ^o	
	Jo ^e Clark	x Plashy	Pole	
	John Lonsdale	x Stonehall	2 ^o	
	Jo ^e Lonsdale	x Fish Halliford	2 ^o	
	John Lague	x Lenden	2 ^o	
	2 ^o Hesketh	x Hesketh	2 ^o	
	Thos Lingsley	x Fish Linton	2 ^o	
	Jo ^e Lingsley	x Gifford	Lough Linton	
	Thos Thackerley	x Lough	Barnes	
	Don'te Henry Smith	x City of York	Pickering	
	Don'te Henry Smith	x City of York	Wethering	
	Sam Linsley	x Middlethorpe	2 ^o	
	Thos Linsley	x York	Linsleybrough	
	Jo ^e Linsley	x York	Linsley Moor	
	Thos Linsley	x Linsley	2 ^o	
	Jo ^e Linsley	x York	Stavelly	
	Jo ^e Linsley	x Leeds	2 ^o	
	Wm Linsley	x Long Marston	2 ^o	
	Jo ^e Linsley	x Linsley Linsley	Linsley	
20	Jo ^e Linsley	x Gifford	2 ^o	
	Jo ^e Linsley	x Linsley	2 ^o	
	Thos Linsley	x Linsley	Linsley	
	2 ^o Linsley	x Linsley	2 ^o	
	James Young	x Linsley	2 ^o	
	Jo ^e Linsley	x Linsley	2 ^o	
	Edw Linsley	x Linsley	2 ^o	
	Edw Linsley	x Linsley	2 ^o	
	Edw Linsley	x Linsley	2 ^o	

An example of a page from Fitzwilliam (Malton) MSS., 'A Bag of Pollbooks for the 1727 By-Election'.



T H E N A M E S

Of all those PERSONS who Voted jointly for
Sir ROWLAND WYNNE, Bart.
 AND
CHOLMLEY TURNER, Esq;

N. B. Where the Place of Abode is not mentioned, it is in the same Place where the Freehold lies.

Freehold.	Place of Abode.	Freehold.	Place of Abode.
<i>Abberforth.</i>			3
C Ollingworth John		Hewit Thomas	<i>Ragby</i>
		Kipling John	
<i>Acaster Malbis.</i>		Maugham Thomas	
Swale Joseph	<i>Healey</i>	Norton James	
		Pearson Thomas	
<i>Acklam.</i>		Ayres Edmund	<i>Brookhouse</i>
Harrison Francis	<i>Ottringham</i>	Grinder George	
Richards Nicholas		Scatchard John	
Hutler James, Esq.		Cattiff Stephen	
Barber Thomas		Greenfield J. John	
Hudson William		or Driffeld	
Hudson Thomas		Walker Joseph	
Harrison John		Torton John	<i>Watter Fryson</i>
Hutler William		Hatterley Robert	
Jacks Turner	<i>Hutton Ambo</i>	Thompson Jonathan	
	<i>Leeds</i>	Patrick Joshua	
		Pinder John	
<i>Ackworth.</i>		Pearson John	
Heptenstall John	<i>East Hardwick</i>	Norton James	
Pickering Cornelius		Austwick Thomas	
		Mitton Michael	
		Cals John	<i>Dringhouses</i>
		Norton John	
		B	Top-

A copy of the frontispiece of the printed 1734 pollbook containing the Government's votes - Spencer Stanhope MSS., SpSt/11/5/3/14.

Y324.1

(1)

NAMES of the FREEHOLDERS

Who voted for
GEORGE FOX, Esq; 1741.

N.B. Where the Place of the Freehold is not expressed, it is the same with the Place of Abode.

Freeholders Names.	Place of Freehold.
B acchus Jol.	Leeds.
Bentham Thomas, Clerk	
Bloom Thomas	Beal-Hall.
Brown John, junr.	Thurston.
Longley George	Outon.
Trickett John	Uykef.
Wilkinson William	Tastwib.
Carat William	
Harrison Richard	Levening.
Wray Thomas	
Coydon John	Waddington.
Dickinson George	Weginton.
Barnforth Edward	
Calley John	Wakefield.
Cyler Clement	
Dixon Jol.	
Hepworth Arthur	Ashton.
Howard Robert	
Maynard Thomas	
Norton John	
Norton James	
Pearson John	
Pindar John	
Seaton Jonathan	
Greenfield John	
Aikinton George	Lincoln in Craven.
Bell William	

Y324.1

(1)

NAMES of the FREEHOLDERS

Who voted for
GEORGE FOX, Esq; 1741.

N.B. Where the Place of the Freehold is not expressed, it is the same with the Place of Abode.

Freeholders Names.	Place of Freehold.
B acchus Jol.	Leeds.
Bentham Thomas, Clerk	
Bloom Thomas	Beal-Hall.
Brown John, junr.	Thurston.
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Wilkinson William	Tastwib.
Carat William	
Harrison Richard	Levening.
Wray Thomas	
Coydon John	Waddington.
Dickinson George	Weginton.
Barnforth Edward	
Calley John	Wakefield.
Cyler Clement	
Dixon Jol.	
Hepworth Arthur	Ashton.
Howard Robert	
Maynard Thomas	
Norton John	
Norton James	
Pearson John	
Pindar John	
Seaton Jonathan	
Greenfield John	
Aikinton George	Lincoln in Craven.
Bell William	

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