

Party Representation in English and Welsh Constituencies, 1690-1740

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Abstract

The Whig and Tory parties played an important role in British politics in the decades following the Glorious Revolution. Scholars have used *The History of Parliament* series as a key source for data on political parties, yet most editions omit tabular data on the party affiliation of individual MPs. In this paper, we introduce newly created data on the political affiliation of all MPs serving in England and Wales between 1690 and 1740. We then measure the strength of Whig Party representation across English and Welsh constituencies and for the first time present maps of party representation. The Whigs are shown to be more strongly represented in municipal boroughs compared to counties and they were stronger in small and oligarchical boroughs compared to large and more democratic boroughs. We also find that the Whigs were stronger in southeastern boroughs and counties. The patterns are broadly similar during the Rage of Party (1690 to 1721) and the Walpole Era (1722 to 1740). The main difference is that the Whigs lost strength in the North during the Walpole Era and they were weaker in constituencies with contested elections under Walpole.

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Britain's transition to more representative government following the Glorious Revolution of 1688-89 exposed divisions within society. The most poignant example is the conflict between the Whigs and Tories. Political parties emerged in the 1670s and 80s during the Exclusion crisis. The Whigs favored excluding James Duke of York from taking the throne because of his Catholicism. The Tories formed to oppose exclusion because it represented too great an incursion into royal authority. After the Glorious Revolution, the Whigs and Tories were engaged in a frequent and close struggle for control over the House Commons. Between 1690 and 1714, a period known as the 'Rage of Party', there were ten elections and the majority party in the Commons changed six times. Party conflict was fueled by differences in economic and social interests. The Tories represented a significant portion of the landowning interest and on national issues they favored privileges for the Church of England and lower taxes. The Whigs generally represented larger landowners and financial interests. They favored religious toleration for dissenters from the Church of England and an aggressive foreign policy supported by a well-funded army. The two parties also differed in leadership. The Tories best known leader was Robert Harley who served as Lord Treasurer from 1711 to 1714. The Whigs were led by a small group known as the 'Junto' who dominated the king's ministry for much of the 1690s.

There was a significant turn in British politics after 1715 when the intensity of party competition weakened and changed in character. The Tories posed less opposition to the Whigs. The Tories were damaged by their links with the failed Rebellion of 1715, which aimed to overthrow the Hanoverian succession and reinstall James Stuart to the throne. Religious tensions also weakened giving less salience to the Tory critique of 'Church in Danger'. The emergence of Robert Walpole as the leader of the Whig party was another important development. Walpole used the 1715 Jacobite Rebellion to portray the Tories as a threat to the Revolutionary settlement

of 1689. Such cries united the older generation of Whigs. Walpole also courted a new group of Whigs by offering government offices and other perks. Walpole was successful in that he helped to maintain a Whig majority in the Commons from 1721 to 1743. However, Walpole could not keep all Whigs tied to his government. Some became dissatisfied and formed a group known as the Opposition Whigs. By 1740, British political parties were beginning to disintegrate into the factions that became commonplace in the mid eighteenth century.

There is a large literature arguing that the shifting fortunes of the Whig and Tory parties were crucial for the evolution of Britain's policies.² In their comprehensive studies of politics under King William and Queen Anne, Horowitz (1977) and Holmes (1967) show how the relative influence of the two parties played a role in the fate of key bills in the Commons. Pincus (2009) extends this view and argues that the Whigs and Tories had fundamentally different visions of political economy, leading the Whigs to favor a manufacturing economy and the Tories an agrarian economy. David Stasavage (2003) has made a similar argument that Whig majorities signaled a more credible commitment to protect the rights of government bondholders compared to Tory majorities.

Much of the recent literature on Britain's political parties makes use of *The History of Parliament*, a series of volumes devoted to the histories of individual Members of Parliament, constituencies, and parliaments. The most recent edition, *The House of Commons: 1690-1714*, edited by Cruickshanks, Handley, and Hayton (2002), makes a number of key contributions to our knowledge of politics during the Rage of Party. First, it estimates party strength across parliaments. Second, it provides a narrative of electoral politics in each constituency. Third, it

² Following Namier (1965) and Walcott (1956) there was a time when historians did not believe that parties were relevant even in the early 1700s, but such views have been discredited at least prior to 1740. See Holmes (1993) and Holmes and Szechi (1993) for a review of the debate.

gives a biography of every Member of Parliament (henceforth MP) in the House of Commons from 1690 to 1715. While an impressive piece of work, there is a significant limitation in the data they provide. In the introduction survey, Hayton (2002) gives the total number of MPs in each party but does not provide tabular data on the party affiliation of each MP. In other words, nowhere in their volume can one find a list of MPs by name and by party. The same data limitation applies to the subsequent edition, *The House of Commons: 1715-1754*, edited by Sedgwick (1970). Total counts of Whig, Tory, and opposition MPs are given in each parliament from 1715 to 1741, but not in tabular form for individual MPs. Speck's (1970) study of party politics in English and Welsh constituencies also suffers from the same problem. Speck gives electoral totals for each party from 1701 to 1715 and provides a list of safe seats for each party, yet no data on individual MPs is given to reconstruct these figures.

Another limitation in these studies is methodological. The main sources—division lists—sometimes contain conflicting information on MPs party affiliation. Division lists indicate how an MP was seen by party leaders or how they voted on major bills. However, MPs may not always fit the Whig or Tory model of voting for or against certain bills. Hayton (2002) and Sedgwick (1970) do not clearly address how they classify MPs into parties when there is conflicting information.

Having an accurate and accessible measure of party affiliation for individual MPs is important. With such data historians can measure party strength at the constituency-level and test various theories on where parties were most strong. For example, it could be used to test whether the Whigs did better in less democratic boroughs. One could also test whether Whig strongholds changed from the Rage of Party to the Era of Walpole. Such analyses would yield insights into the electoral support underlying each party.

In this paper, we introduce newly created data on the political affiliation of all MPs serving constituencies in England and Wales between 1690 and 1740. Specifically the data codes whether the MPs in a constituency were part of the majority party in each parliament. Like previous studies analyzing party, we draw together information from a variety of division lists spanning the period from 1690 to 1740. We then develop an algorithm for combining varied and sometimes conflicting information from division lists to classify MPs party affiliation. The aim is to make this data accessible to all scholars so that it can be used and improved.

Another contribution is to provide a summary statistic for ‘Whig Party Strength’ in every constituency between 1690 and 1740. Whig party strength is measured by the fraction of MPs in each parliament affiliated with the Whigs. Tory party strength is assumed to be the opposite of Whig strength so our measure of Whig strength reveals the relative strength of the two parties in any constituency. To our knowledge, our measure of party strength is the first of its kind in the literature on early eighteenth century politics.

After outlining our data and methods, we perform difference-in-means tests to identify whether Whig strength was different across constituency types. The results show that the Whigs were stronger in municipal boroughs and especially those with small and narrow electorates. The Tories were stronger in county constituencies and in boroughs with large and more democratic electorates. There are some differences in these patterns across time. The Whigs were especially strong in boroughs with small electorates in the Era of Walpole (1722 to 1740). During the Rage of Party (1690 to 1721) we find that the Whigs were stronger in constituencies that had contested elections, but not so under Walpole. Overall our data supports the view that the Whigs maintained their power by controlling more oligarchical boroughs and that the Tories were closer to the average voter in Britain.

Our data is particularly useful in identifying spatial or regional patterns. We present the first maps of party representation across counties and boroughs. The maps reveal that the Whigs were stronger in constituencies located in the Southeast. The Tories were stronger in Wales and the Midlands. We also find some differences in Whig party strength over time. During the Rage of Party the Whigs were stronger in northern constituencies, but not under Walpole. There was a clear north south divide during the Era of Walpole with the Whigs being strongest in the Southeast and Southwest and weaker in the Midlands, Wales, and North.

I.

In the introductory volume to *The House of Commons: 1690-1714*, Hayton (2002) gives total counts of Whig MPs, Tory MPs, and MPs not classified for each parliament from 1690 to 1713. The figures are drawn from data presented in all the volumes edited by Cruickshanks, Handley, and Hayton (2002). We refer to these party counts as Cruickshanks, Handley, and Hayton's (henceforth CHH) estimates. Sedgwick (1970), editor of *The House of Commons: 1715-1754*, gives similar counts for Whig MPs, Tory MPs, and opposition Whigs in each parliament from 1715 to 1734. Together these statistics are extremely important because they identify which party had the majority in any parliament and by how much. The following table gives their counts at the beginning of each parliament.

Table 1: Classifications of Party Strength, 1690-1740

Parliament by starting year	Number of Tories	Number of Whigs	Number of Unclassified	Opposition Whig	Majority Party
1690	243	241	28		Tory
1695	203	257	53		Whig
1698	208	246	59		Whig
Feb. 1701	249	219	45		Tory
Dec. 1701	240	248	24		Whig
1702	298	184	31		Tory
1705	260	233	20		Tory
1708	225	268	20		Whig
1710	329	168	14		Tory
1713	354	148	11		Tory
1715	217	341			Whig
1722	178	379			Whig
1727	128	415		15	Whig
1734	149	326		83	Whig

Sources: see Cruickshanks, Handley, and Hayton (2002), pp. 218-233 and Sedgwick (1970), pp. 33-57.

CHH and Sedgwick also provide a biography of every MP that sat in the House of Commons. The biography describes each MP's politics, education, profession, positions held, and other characteristics. Unfortunately, the biography does not give an indicator for party affiliation that would correspond to the totals given in table 1. A researcher interested in a disaggregated analysis of party representation must read every biography and infer party affiliation from the description. For example, the biographical entry for Thomas Lamplugh, representing Cockerthorpe from 1702 to 1708, contains over 1000 words. Towards the end of the Lamplugh entry it is stated that 'an analysis of the Commons in early 1708 classed him as a Whig.'³ On the basis of this biographic entry, a researcher could classify Lamplugh as a Whig, but as a general approach it is not ideal. The difficulty is that the relevant passages in CHH and

³ See <http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1690-1715/member/lamplugh-thomas-1656-1737> authored by Eveline Cruickshanks and Richard Harrison.

Sedgwick are not always easy to find and once identified the inferences based on their text could lead to judgment errors. Moreover a researcher is tied to CHH and Sedgwick's description of an individual MPs party affiliation. If their classification was not accurate there is little a researcher can do to identify the error unless they return to the primary sources.

Our aim in this paper is to create new and comprehensive data on the party affiliation of MPs by re-examining division lists. Division lists come in two types. The first are lists drawn up by contemporary party leaders to organize their legislative agenda. They describe whether MPs were affiliated with the Whigs or Tories. The second type of division list shows how an MP voted or was likely to vote on a key piece of legislation. For example, there was a division list that forecasted whether an MP was likely to support the court, likely to oppose the court, or was doubtful on the council of trade bill in 1696. The bill was promoted by Whig party leaders known as the court group. It is reasonable to argue that supporting the court here meant that an MP was affiliated with the Whig party or at a minimum that an MP acted in a manner that was consistent with the Whig party's agenda.

We follow the tradition in the literature of using division lists to classify the party affiliation of MPs. Many division lists have survived and are printed. Others can be consulted in archives. Fortunately, we do not need to locate and collect all division lists for the period from 1690 to 1715. The archivists at the History of Parliament trust have retained a red ledger in which CHH reproduce the data contained in numerous division lists.⁴ The red ledger is similar to a spreadsheet with the voting records of each MP or their classification as Whigs or Tories in the columns. After 1715 we use printed division lists in sources identified by Sedgwick (1970). We also use the secondary literature to identify party affiliation. Studies by Synder (1972), Speck

⁴ We thank Stuart Handley for kindly bringing to our attention the existence of the ledger.

(1964), and Horowitz (1977) classify many MPs as Whigs or Tories. These studies are based on division lists and provide useful summaries and so we incorporate their information.

Methodology

Namier (1965) in his classic work on British parties c.1760 identified a key methodological problem in classifying party strength. Namier pointed out that a division list could classify an MP as being with a party, but in reality they have a weak connection to party leaders. Suppose for example an MP is thought to be a Whig but they voted against Whig leaders on some key bill. Should the historian still classify them as a Whig? The methodological problem is most acute when there are multiple division lists in a parliament. In such cases, there are at least two metrics by which to judge the party affiliation of an MP and it is not obvious whether one list should be favored or all should be treated equally.

We propose a solution to the methodological problem based on our goal of measuring each MP's affiliation to the majority party in every parliament. Our approach begins by identifying the majority party, either Whig or Tory, in each parliament. As shown in table 1, CHH and Sedgwick give the majority party between 1690 and 1734. Next we adopt a general rule for classifying an MP as being with the majority party in each parliament. The MP has to vote with or be listed with the majority party and they cannot vote against a bill promoted by majority party leaders in any division list for that parliament. In other words, one vote against the majority party disqualifies an MP from being coded as a majority party MP. An MP can be absent on some vote and still be classified as a majority party MP if they consistently vote with the majority party on other bills and/or they were classified as being with a party. In our approach MPs can switch parties across Parliaments, but not within Parliaments. In other words, an MP

can vote with the Whig majority in one parliament and get classified as being with the Whig majority, but in the next parliament they can deviate from the Whig majority on some vote and hence are not classified as with the majority party.

It was not uncommon for MPs to go unclassified in all division list published during a given Parliament. Here we feel that the best approach is to use classifications or voting records in nearby Parliaments, usually the previous parliament. If nearby parliaments fail to produce any information then we consult the biographies in CHH and Sedgwick. If the biographies do not give clear information on party affiliation, then we label the MP as not being with the majority party.

It should be noted that our approach to classifying MPs is generally ‘conservative.’ If an MP voted with the majority party on most but not all bills then they are not classified as being with the majority party. Thus we provide an indication of whether an MP was closely connected to the majority party. As we show below, our counts of majority party MPs are lower than CHH suggesting they used a less conservative method.

The following sub-sections describe how we determine political affiliation in each parliament using the available division lists. When it is useful we refer to the columns in the red ledger provided by CHH.

1690 Parliament

CHH find that the 1690 Parliament started with a Tory majority, although as they emphasize there is some uncertainty about party alignments from 1690 to 1694. There is a division list attributed to Lord Carmarthen, the President of the King’s council and a prominent Tory, in March 1690 (column 1 in the red ledger). The Carmarthen list gives MPs a numerical coding:

1=Whig, 2=Tory, and 3=Doubtful. There is another list attributed to Carmarthen (column 3 in the red ledger) which labels some MPs as probable supporters of Carmarthen. There were 38 MPs we could not find on the Carmarthen list, but for which we were able to code as being with the Tories based on their voting in the 1695 session. There were 26 MPs for which we could not determine their political affiliation based on voting in other sessions, so here we referred to the biographies in CHH. Keep in mind that a typical parliament before 1700 had at least 513 MPs and usually more as some died or vacated their seat before the next election.

1695 Parliament

The 1695 parliament saw a clear shift in the majority to the Whigs who also became known as the Court party based on their close link with King William. CHH argue that party lines become clear from 1695 based on several division lists. One division (column 18 in the red ledger) concerned the bill of attainder for Sir John Fenwick in November 1696. Fenwick was accused of an assassination attempt against King William. The Whig leaders supported the attainder of Fenwick and the Tories did not. P indicates a vote for the attainder and C against. A second division concerned the proposed council of trade in January 1696 (column 15). The council of trade bill revised the navigation laws and was supported by the Whig leadership. P indicates an MP was likely to support the court on the trade bill and C likely to oppose the court. A third division concerned whether an MP signed or refused to sign the association of the first (column 16). The association was a document pledging to take revenge against William's enemies. The Whig leaders supported the association and signed quickly. The Tories did not. P indicates the MP signed the association of first and C indicates they did not. As there are three divisions, we had to decide how to aggregate the information. Following our conservative approach, we identified an MP as a Whig if they always voted with the Whig leaders, meaning

they supported the Fenwick attainder, the council on trade bill, or signed the association of the first. We allow Whig MPs to be absent on one or two of these divisions, meaning if they voted with the Whigs on any one and were absent for the rest they were still classified as a Whig. There were 22 MPs which are not reported in any of these divisions, but were classified based on voting in 1690 or the 1698 session. There were 6 MPs where we had to consult the biographies in CHH.

1698 Parliament

The Whigs maintained a majority in the House of Commons in the 1698 session. There is a division list that distinguishes between the court party and the country party in September 1698 (column 27 in the red ledger). MPs are given an 'x' if they were a court supporter and 'check' if they were a country supporter. We define an MP as a Whig if they were listed as a court supporter. There were 32 MPs that could not be found in the 1698 division list but we were able to establish whether they were a Whig based on voting in previous legislative sessions. For 21 MPs we consulted the biographies in CHH to establish whether they were a Whig.

1701, February and December Parliaments

In February of 1701 a new Parliament was formed, in which the Tories had a majority. In December of 1701 there was another Parliament, in which the Whigs had a narrow majority. We use four sources to establish party in these two sessions. First, there is a division list in February 1701 being a probable list of those who would support the court on a supply bill (column 31 in the red ledger). Second, there is an analysis by Robert Harley in December of 1701 listing MPs as with the Whigs ('A'), with the Tories ('B') or doubtful ('C') (column 35 in the red ledger). Third, Horowitz (1977) in his study of Parliamentary politics classifies MPs as Tory, Whig, or

mixed. Fourth, Snyder (1972) lists MPs in the February 1701 parliament and the December 1701 Parliament which Lord Sunderland regarded as a gain or loss for the Whigs. Some MPs are found in all sources and others in only one or two. We used the following rule. If an MP was listed as a Whig (or Tory) in only one source they were classified as a Whig (or Tory). If they were classified as a Whig in one source and as a Tory or doubtful in another then we did not classify them as Tory in the February 1701 parliament or Whig in the December 1701 parliament. In other words if an MP was listed in multiple sources to be with the majority party they had to be consistently classified as such. For 56 MPs in the two sessions we had no information from the sources in 1701 so we inferred their party affiliation from classifications in earlier sessions. For 128 MPs we had no information in the 1701 sources and prior classifications were absent or unclear so we consulted the biographies in CHH.

1702 Parliament

The 1702 parliament had a large Tory majority. As many MPs in 1702 were in Parliament in 1701 we use the same sources as 1701 to classify party here. We also use one additional division list indicating whether MPs voted for or against the ‘Tack’ in November 1704 (column 51). The Tack was the occasional conformity bill (pushed by Tories favoring the Church of England) and was tacked onto the land tax bill in 1704. We started with the Tack. If an MP voted for the Tack then they were a Tory and if they voted against they were not classified as a Tory. Next we used Sunderland’s list of gains and losses for the Whigs (Synder 1972). If an MP was classed as a loss to the Whigs they were a Tory and if a gain to the Whigs they were not. If an MP did not vote on the Tack and was not in Sunderland’s list we used our classification from the 1701 Parliaments to determine whether they were a Tory. There were 35 MPs for which we could not find any information in the Tack or previous Parliaments so we consulted the biographies in CHH.

1705 Parliament

The Tories maintained a majority in the 1705 parliament. Speck (1964) gives the voting record for many MPs in the 1705 session. They are assigned 1T, 2T, 3T, and 4T if they voted one, two, three, or four times for Tory positions between 1702 and 1714. MPs are assigned 1W, 2W,...7W if they voted one, two, and up to seven times for Whig positions. Speck also indicates if MPs voted for some Whig and some Tory positions and how many. Lastly, Speck gives MPs an 'N' if they do not occur on any list he consulted. We classify an MP as tory if they always voted Tory. If they always voted Whig they were not classified as Tory. Lastly if they had a mixed voting record they were classified as Tory if they voted Tory on at least half of bills according to Speck. If any MP was listed as N by Speck we consulted the biographies in CHH to establish whether they were Tory. For 91 MPs we also inferred their voting record from previous classifications.

1708 Parliament

The 1708 parliament saw the return of the Whigs as the majority party in the Commons. Here we use four division lists. First, there are two analyses of Parliament in early 1708 indicating MPs as either Whig or Tory (columns 58 and 59 in the red ledger). The two lists overlap with respect to most MPs but not all. Second, there is a division list indicating whether MPs supported the naturalizations of Palatines (column 61 in the red ledger). Support was taken to be a Whig position. Third, there was a division list indicating whether an MP voted for or against the impeachment of Dr. Sacheverell (column 62). Voting for was a Whig position. If an MP was labeled a Whig in the two analyses of Parliament and voted for the impeachment then they were classified as a Whig. If the MP was labeled a Tory then they were not classified as a Whig. If the

MP was not labeled in the first two lists and either supported the naturalization of palatines or voted for the impeachment they were labeled a Whig. If they voted against the Whig position on naturalization or against the impeachment of Dr. Sacheverell they were not labeled as a Whig. For 12 MPs not on any list we consult the biographies in CHH.

1710 Parliament

In the 1710 parliament the Tories returned to the majority. Three division lists are used to classify MPs in the 1710 session. First, the Hanoverian list in 1710 describes MPs as Tory, Whig, or doubtful (column 67 in the red ledger). Second, the White List identifies ‘Tory Patriots’ in 1711 (column 68). Third, there is a division list concerning the French Commerce bill (column 75). A vote for the French Commerce bill indicated a Tory position. If an MP was identified as a tory on the Hanoverian list and the White list and they voted for the French Commerce bill they were classified as a Tory. If they were not identified on the first two lists but did vote for the commerce bill they were also classified as a Tory. For 95 MPs there was no information on these three lists, but we were able to label their political affiliation based on prior voting. For 27 MPs we consult the biographies in CHH because they were not identified in any division list.

1713 Parliament

The 1713 parliament continued to have a Tory majority. We use the Worsley list to classify MPs in the 1713 session. The Worsley list identifies whether an MP was a Tory or Whig and is reprinted in Sedgwick (1970). Worsley also identified whether MPs sometimes voted against their party. We classified an MP as a Tory if they were listed as such by Worsley and they were not identified as an MP that would sometimes vote against their party. There were 3 MPs that we

needed to consult prior voting to determine party. For 8 MPs we had to use the biographies in CHH.

1715 Parliament

The Whigs gained a majority again in the 1715 Parliament. They would hold the majority in all remaining parliaments through 1740. The Worsley list provides an indicator for every MP's party affiliation at the start of the 1715 parliament. The Worsley list becomes less useful after 1718 when there is a split in the Whig leadership due to quarrel between the King and the Prince of Wales. Whig leaders like Sunderland, Stanhope, and Cadogan remained as ministers while Townhend and Walpole left the ministry and formed a Whig opposition. The Whig opposition voted against the government on several key bills. One bill was meant to repeal a provision of the Occasional Conformity Act requiring public office holders to take the sacrament. A list of MPs voting for and against the so-called Protestant Interest bill is given by Cobbet, *Parliamentary History*, vol. vii, pp. 585-88. A second bill was to prevent the Prince from expanding the peerage upon succession. It is known as the Peerage bill and a list is reprinted in Chandler, *History and Proceedings of the House of Commons*, vol. viii, pp. 285-295. Both the Protestant Interest bill and the Peerage bill were supported by the Whig-led Sunderland-Stanhope-Cadogan ministry. Our aim for this parliament is identify Whigs that supported the Whig ministry throughout. Thus we classify an MP as being a Whig if they were not classified as a Tory in the Worsley list and if they did not vote against the repeal of the Occasional Conformity Act or the Peerage bill. For 86 MPs we had to consult the biographies in Sedgwick.

1722 Parliament

Identifying party affiliation for the 1722 parliament is more difficult than other parliaments as there were no new division lists from 1722 to 1727 according to Sedgwick (1970). Here we use the voting records from the previous Parliament whenever possible. MPs that were Whig in the 1715 parliament were classified as Whig again if they sat in the 1722 Parliament. Whigs that supported the Sunderland-Stanhope ministry also supported the Walpole ministry that formed in 1721 and continued in the 1722 parliament. If an MP was classified as a Tory in the Worsley list from 1715 then they were not classified as a Whig if they sat in the 1722 parliament. Tories rarely switched to the Whig side. The more difficult group are MPs that were not classified as Tory in the Worsley list but also were not classified as Whig in the 1715 parliament. Robert Walpole is in this group for example because he split from the Sunderland-Stanhope-Cadogan ministry. Here we consult the biographies in Sedgwick to see if they were considered to be Whigs throughout the 1722 parliament. We also consult the biographies in Sedgwick if the MP served in the 1722 parliament for the first time. In total we used the biographies in Sedgwick to classify 208 MPs serving in the 1722 parliament.

1727 Parliament

There is a rich set of division lists to identify party affiliation in the 1727 parliament where the Whigs again held the majority. The first involved a bill to make good on the arrears to the Civil List in 1727. The Civil List funded the King's household and thus was crucial to the government and the Whigs. A list of MPs voting for and against the Civil List is reprinted in Chandler, *History*, vol. viii, appendix. The second was a supply bill to fund Hessian soldiers. Like the Civil List, voting for the Hessian bill represented a vote for the Whig position. A list of the MPs that voted for and against the Hessian bill was printed in 1730 (Great Britain, 1730). The third was a bill to repeal the Septennial Act in 1731. The Septennial Act dictated that

Parliaments could sit for 7 years before an election. The Whigs were perceived as benefitting from the Septennial Act, so a vote against the Repeal represented a vote for the Whig position. A list of MPs voting for or against the Repeal is printed in Cobbett, *Parliamentary History*, vol. ix, pp. 479-482. The fourth division list involved the excise bill which proposed to increase excise taxes. The excise tax was proposed by Walpole and would improve the fiscal position of the government. Voting for the excise bill represented a vote for the Whig position. A list of MPs voting for and against the Excise bill is reprinted in Chandler, *History*, vol. viii, appendix. As all these bills were quite important to the Whig leaders we adopted a strict standard for classifying Whigs in the 1727 parliament. If an MP voted with the Whigs on at least one of these four bills and never voted against the Whigs on any of these four bills they were classified as a Whig. Thus a vote against the Whig position automatically meant an MP was not classified as a Whig. There were 102 MPs in the 1727 parliament that are not identified on any of the 4 division lists. Here we consult the biography in Sedgwick to classify party affiliation.

1734 Parliament

There are two main division lists for the 1734 parliament and both are printed in Chandler, *History*, vol. vii, appendix. The first is a division on a motion to address the Spanish Convention in 1739. The Spanish Convention was an agreement between the Spanish King and English merchants who were accused of violating trade agreements in the Americas. Walpole proposed the agreement but it was not popular among many MPs. Voting for the motion to address the Spanish Convention represented a Whig position. The second is a division list describing whether MPs voted for or against the Place bill of 1740. Voting against the Place bill represented a Whig position. There were 105 MPs in the 1734 Parliament that could not be identified in either of the two division lists. In these cases, we consult the biographies in Sedgwick. Note

there were also 50 MPs classified as opposition Whigs by Sedgwick. Opposition Whigs are not classified as Whig in our methodology.

Summary of Majority Party Classifications

By way of summary, for each MP we create an indicator variable for majority party affiliation in every parliament starting in 1690 up to and including the 1734 parliament. We intend to make available a spreadsheet which lists every MP by constituency in each Parliament. It also gives our party classification, their identity in any division list, secondary sources, and in some cases the party classification in CHH or Sedgwick. Table 2 gives a summary of our estimates for the size of the majority party and compares them with CHH and Sedgwick's figures. We find that the majority party had an actual majority (more than 50% of MPs) in only 5 of the 14 parliaments. The majority is especially small in the December 1701 parliament. CHH also find the majority to be relatively small in this parliament reflecting the mixed position of the two parties. December 1701 is also relatively unique in that most of the King's ministers were Tory. We also find the 1715 parliament to have a small majority. In part, this follows from our classification that Whigs who split from Sunderland and Stanhope were not part of the Whig majority in that parliament. Our estimates imply large majorities in 1708, 1710, 1713, and 1722. However, our majorities in these parliaments are smaller than CHH and Sedgwick. The difference is likely to be due to our conservative methodology of assigning MPs to the majority party.

Table 2: Summary of Majority Party Representation, 1690-1734

Parliament	Percent of MPs with Majority Party	
	This study	Cruikshanks, Handley, and Hayton and Sedgwick
1690	43.6	47.5
1695	48.9	50.1
1698	49.9	48
Feb. 1701	49	48.5
Dec. 1701	42.3	48.4
1702	52	58.1
1705	47.3	50.7
1708	56.1	52.2
1710	55.1	64.4
1713	59.5	69
1715	42.2	61.1
1722	55.1	68
1727	49.9	76.4
1734	47	68.6

II.

Aside from introducing the data, our other aim is to establish in which types of constituencies the Whigs and Tories were more strongly represented and whether it changed from the Rage of Party (1690 to 1721) to the Walpole Era (1722 to 1740). The strength of Whig representation in a constituency is measured by a variable called ‘WHIG STRENGTH’ defined as follows. In parliaments where the Whigs were in the majority, WHIG STRENGTH equals the average fraction of MPs with the majority party (i.e. the Whigs) measured monthly within each parliament. In parliaments with a Tory majority, WHIG STRENGTH equals one minus the average fraction of MPs with the majority party (i.e. the Tories) measured monthly within each parliament. For example, at the beginning of January 1713 the borough of Chester had one MP with the majority Tories and one MP that was not with the majority Tories. The same two MPs

represented Chester throughout the 1713 parliament so Chester's value for WHIG STRENGTH is 0.5 in the 1713 Parliament. In the 1695 Parliament, Chester started with one MP with the majority Whigs and one MP that was not. In January of 1698 one of Chester's MPs died. The new MP was not classified as a Whig so the fraction of MPs with the Whigs fell to zero in that month. Across all months in the 1695 parliament, the average fraction of MPs with the majority party was 0.406 for Chester which is the value for WHIG STRENGTH.

An analogous variable for Tory strength could be calculated, but it provides little new information. A natural definition of Tory strength is one minus WHIG STRENGTH in any constituency and so it is the mirror value of WHIG STRENGTH. For example, a Tory strength variable would be 0.596 for Chester in 1695 and 0.5 in 1713.

Readers should note that in calculating WHIG STRENGTH an assumption is made. In a parliament with a Tory majority an MP that is not a Tory is identified as a Whig. However, some MPs may have been independent rather than being Whigs. Thus the existence of independent MPs will bias WHIG STRENGTH upwards when the Tories are in the majority. When the Whigs are in the majority there is no bias as independent MPs will be correctly identify as not Whig. Below we average WHIG STRENGTH across all parliaments to study the general patterns. Arguably the bias from independent MPs should be small as few constituencies should have had independent MPs throughout.

Table 3 gives our measure of WHIG STRENGTH for each constituency averaged across all parliaments from 1690 to 1734. At one extreme Lyme Regis, a borough in Dorsetshire, had Whig MPs in all parliaments except 1727. The other extreme was Denbigshire in Wales. It had Tory MPs in all parliaments.

Table 3: Constituency Whig Strength averaged over all Parliaments, 1690 to 1734

Constituency	Whig Strength	Constituency	Whig Strength
Lyme Regis	0.961	Westmorland	0.478
Lymington	0.9	Lancashire	0.478
Eye	0.893	Wallingford	0.477
Heytesbury	0.893	Pontefract	0.477
Berwick-Upon-Tweed	0.879	West Looe	0.473
Plympton Erle	0.878	St. Ives	0.47
Bletchingley	0.875	Leominster	0.466
Bere Alston	0.871	Calne	0.464
Kingston-Upon-Hull	0.857	Marlborough	0.464
Wilton	0.855	Thetford	0.461
Malton	0.854	Lancaster	0.457
Malmesbury	0.848	Newton IOW	0.455
Hastings	0.846	Pembroke	0.455
Winchester	0.835	Great Grimsby	0.453
Seaford	0.83	Great Marlowe	0.451
King's Lynn	0.821	Shaftesbury	0.45
Tiverton	0.82	Dunwich	0.447
Lewes	0.798	Newcastle-Upon-Tyne	0.444
New Windsor	0.797	Saltash	0.442
Hampshire	0.794	Boston	0.44
Sandwich	0.789	New Radnor	0.437
Colchester	0.788	Chichester	0.434
Castle Rising	0.788	Northumberland	0.43
Winchelsea	0.778	Monmouth	0.429
Whitchurch	0.776	Norwich	0.429
Cockermouth	0.772	Shropshire	0.429
Northallerton	0.767	Brecon	0.429
Andover	0.758	St. Albans	0.423
Arundel	0.757	Merioneth	0.421
Chipping Wycombe	0.757	Essex	0.416
Scarborough	0.753	Bewdley	0.413
Bristol	0.75	Derby	0.406
Tewkesbury	0.749	Clitheroe	0.405
Poole	0.748	Lincolnshire	0.405
Carmarthenshire	0.747	Abingdon	0.405
Dover	0.744	Dartmouth	0.393
Bedfordshire	0.74	Middlesex	0.392
Morpeth	0.737	London	0.392
Guildford	0.737	Reigate	0.389

Horsham	0.731	Ilchester	0.388
Bishop's Castle	0.726	Wigan	0.388
Rye	0.719	Liskeard	0.387
Much Wenlock	0.71	Newport	0.386
Westminster	0.709	Penryn	0.386
Brackley	0.705	Higham Ferrers	0.381
Wendover	0.702	Bridgnorth	0.378
New Shoreham	0.697	Cambridge University	0.376
Bedford	0.697	Lichfield	0.374
Milborne Port	0.692	Great Bedwyn	0.373
Thirsk	0.69	Old Sarum	0.362
Liverpool	0.69	East Grinstead	0.356
Plymouth	0.682	Rutland	0.355
Tregony	0.682	Hereford	0.354
Gloucestershire	0.68	Tamworth	0.353
Southwark	0.678	Appleby	0.353
Cambridgeshire	0.672	Great Yarmouth	0.345
Carlisle	0.669	Ripon	0.341
Newark	0.667	Ludlow	0.341
Queenborough	0.667	Durham City	0.34
Bury St. Edmunds	0.657	Camelford	0.335
Loswithiel	0.655	East Looe	0.334
Richmond	0.65	Hindon	0.331
Huntingdon	0.644	Stafford	0.331
Sussex	0.643	Kent	0.326
Newport IOW	0.639	Midhurst	0.323
Wareham	0.632	Carmarthen	0.322
Huntingdonshire	0.631	Leicester	0.322
Beverley	0.618	Cambridge	0.321
Truro	0.617	Dorchester	0.313
New Romney	0.612	St. Mawes	0.309
Weymouth/Melcombe Regis	0.611	Haslemere	0.308
East Retford	0.61	Leicestershire	0.307
Downton	0.608	Cardigan	0.305
Aylesbury	0.607	Maldon	0.296
Bramber	0.607	Worcestershire	0.291
Grantham	0.604	Christchurch	0.288
Devizes	0.603	Berkshire	0.286
Tavistock	0.601	Breconshire	0.286
Reading	0.592	Caernarvon	0.286
Hythe	0.591	Radnorshire	0.286
Bossiney	0.589	Minehead	0.28
Bridport	0.586	Orford	0.279

Rochester	0.584	Newcastle-Under-Lyme	0.273
Mitchell	0.582	Durhamshire	0.273
Cricklade	0.577	St. Germans	0.272
Cheshire	0.576	Caernarvonshire	0.271
Norfolk	0.571	Totnes	0.254
Northampton	0.57	Montgomery	0.235
Buckingham	0.567	Cornwall	0.232
Coventry	0.566	Wootton Bassett	0.23
Hedon	0.566	Corfe Castle	0.224
Monmouthshire	0.565	Flint Boroughs	0.223
Grampound	0.565	Cirencester	0.219
Surrey	0.564	Northamptonshire	0.214
New Woodstock	0.564	Suffolk	0.214
Hertford	0.559	Wiltshire	0.214
Bodmin	0.554	Ludgershall	0.208
Nottingham	0.552	Cardiff	0.198
Stockbridge	0.549	Callington	0.192
Knarborough	0.549	Anglesey	0.188
Buckinghamshire	0.544	Glamorgan	0.184
Gatton	0.541	Barnstaple	0.184
Droitwich	0.539	Stamford	0.183
Aldborough	0.537	Exeter	0.182
York	0.536	Fowey	0.181
Weobley	0.534	Hertfordshire	0.17
Petersfield	0.534	Aldeburgh	0.162
Harwich	0.532	Shrewsbury	0.155
Evesham	0.531	Lincoln	0.147
Canterbury	0.531	Flintshire	0.145
Bridgwater	0.529	Derbyshire	0.143
Salisbury	0.527	Banbury	0.143
Taunton	0.522	Wells	0.141
Steyning	0.522	Haverfordwest	0.139
Portsmouth	0.517	Westbury	0.133
Preston	0.517	Okehampton	0.118
Helston	0.517	Newton	0.112
Chippenham	0.516	Beaumaris	0.11
Ipswich	0.511	Launceston	0.109
Ashburton	0.505	Dorset	0.107
Sudbury	0.501	Warwick	0.105
Southampton	0.5	Chester	0.104
Cumberland	0.5	Staffordshire	0.084
Worcester	0.499	Oxfordshire	0.075
Peterborough	0.499	Oxford University	0.075

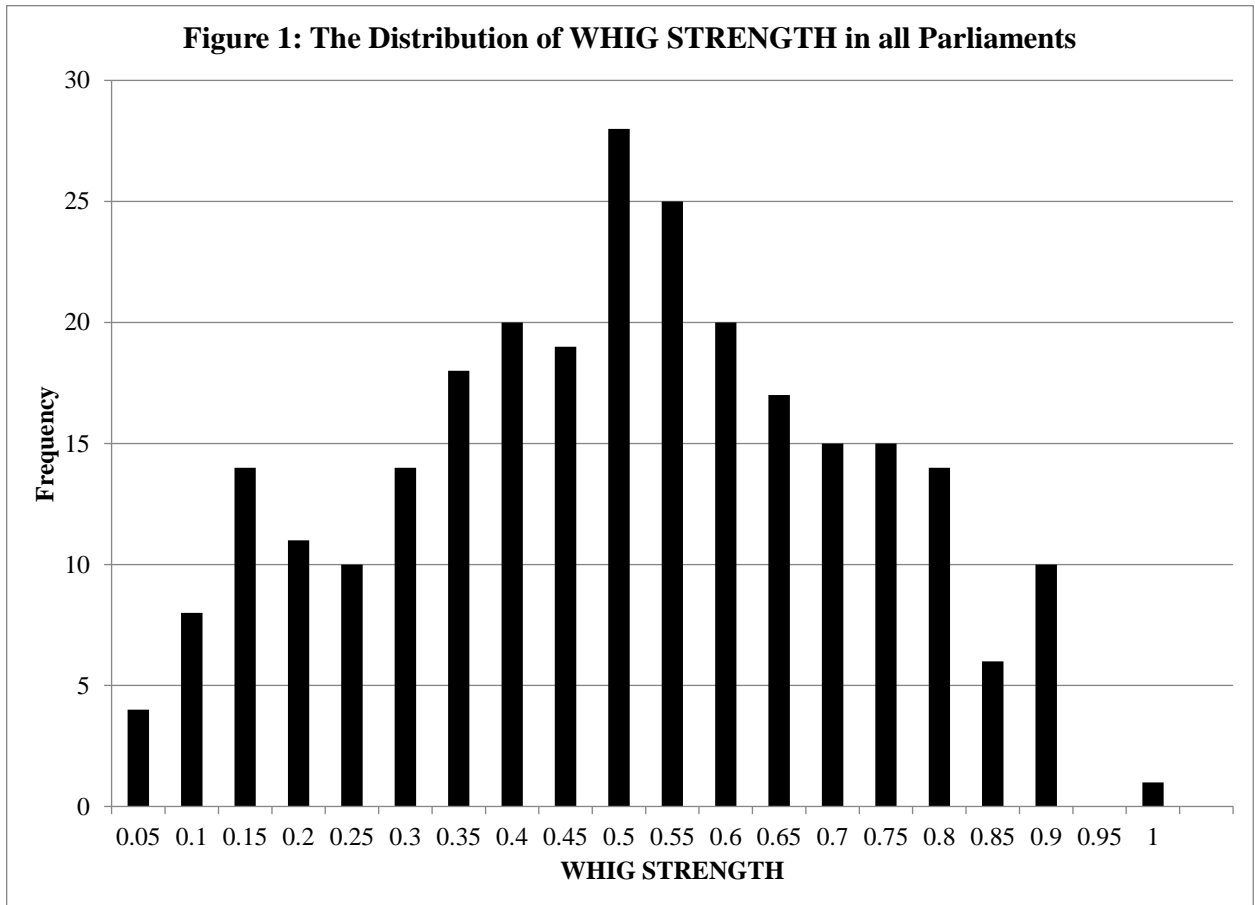
Bath	0.497	Somersetshire	0.075
Cardiganshire	0.496	Montgomeryshire	0.071
Pembrokeshire	0.494	Amersham	0.064
Honiton	0.488	Herefordshire	0.061
Boroughbridge	0.487	Devon	0.051
Maidstone	0.486	Warwickshire	0.036
Yarmouth IOW	0.482	Oxford	0.028
Yorkshire	0.48	Denbigh	0.002
Nottinghamshire	0.479	Denbighshire	0
Gloucester	0.479		
Overall Average			0.472

Source: see text.

Notes: In Whig majority parliaments, WHIG STRENGTH equals the average fraction of MPs with the majority party (i.e. the Whigs) measured monthly with each parliament. In parliaments with a Tory majority, WHIG STRENGTH equals one minus the average fraction of MPs with the majority party (i.e. the Tories) measured monthly within the parliament.

How many constituencies generally went Whig or Tory like Lyme Regis and Denbighshire?

Figure 1 gives the distribution and shows they were not the norm. 35 percent of constituencies had an average value for WHIG STRENGTH less than 0.3 or greater than 0.7. Note that the overall mean is 0.472. If we regard <0.3 and >0.7 as party ‘strongholds’ or ‘safe seats’ then around a one-third of constituencies were strongholds or safe. This figure accords with Speck’s (1970) estimate that around one third of English and Welsh seats were safe from 1701 to 1715. In terms of the two parties, the Tories had a slight advantage in terms of safe seats as can be seen by the ‘fatter’ tail near 0. The remaining 65 percent of constituencies had a WHIG STRENGTH between 0.3 and 0.7. One could label this group as ‘swing’ constituencies. Many had a history of mixed representation or shifting between the Whigs and Tories.



We now establish some key differences in WHIG STRENGTH by constituency types and locations. There were two general types of constituencies: counties and municipal boroughs. Counties generally represented rural areas and agricultural interests, while boroughs were cities and towns and therefore represented urban interests. How did WHIG STRENGTH differ across these two types? The first set of rows in table 4 report the means of WHIG STRENGTH for each type. The next set of rows shows the t-statistic and p-value testing for the difference in means. The means for counties and boroughs are based on the average value of WHIG STRENGTH for each constituency across all parliaments from 1690 to 1734. The differences over time are studied in the next section.

WHIG STRENGTH is 0.14 higher for municipals boroughs compared to counties. The difference is statistically significant. This finding is consistent with the view that the Tories were more popular in counties because of voter characteristics. In the counties any freeholder earning more than 40 shillings a year had the right to vote. As the Tories were generally supported by country gentlemen or small landowners, the typical county voter was a Tory voter. This electoral match appears to have translated into greater representation for the Tories. On the Whig side, the results are consistent with their greater connections with mercantile and financial interests as well as large landowners. These groups tended to be stronger in cities which meant the typical urban voter was a Whig.

Whig strength differed across boroughs according to their characteristics. One important characteristic is the size of the electorate. Smaller electorates were considered more corrupt and many were classified as ‘rotten’ boroughs in the early nineteenth century. Sedgwick (1970, pp. 116-122) defines boroughs as having small, medium, or large electorates based on the number of voters in the early eighteenth century. Using Sedgwick’s classification and comparing WHIG STRENGTH in boroughs with small electorates to boroughs with medium or large electorates shows that the Whigs were more strongly represented in the former. The difference in means is 0.06 and is again statistically significant (see the middle panel of table 4).

Table 4: WHIG STRENGTH by County and Borough Types

	Mean	St. Dev.	Obs.
County	0.357	0.211	52
Municipal Boroughs	0.502	0.21	215
	t-stat for difference in Mean		4.38
	P-value		0
	Mean	St. Dev.	Obs.
Municipal Boroughs, Small Electorate	0.519	0.211	153
Municipal Boroughs, Medium or Large Electorate	0.46	0.202	62
	t-stat for difference in Mean		-1.893
	P-value		0.059
	Mean	St. Dev.	Obs.
Municipal Boroughs, Franchise in Householder	0.437	0.18	12
Municipal Boroughs, franchise in Freeman or Freeholder	0.485	0.217	110
Municipal Boroughs, franchise in Scot and Lot	0.5	0.21	37
Municipal Boroughs, franchise in Corporation	0.562	0.186	26
Municipal Boroughs, franchise in Burgage holders	0.541	0.209	30
	Freeman and Freeholder vs. Corporation and Burgage		
	t-stat for difference in Mean		1.885
	P-value		0.061

We also use Sedgwick's (1970, pp. 116-122) classification of boroughs by franchise type to investigate the averages of WHIG STRENGTH across franchise types. Boroughs where the franchises were held by corporation members or burgage holders usually had a relatively narrow electorate. Corporation members could be restricted to a small group of families. Burgage holders were individuals who had the right to vote because they owned a specific piece of property in the borough. These properties were often scarce and were purchased almost entirely because they conferred the right to vote. By comparison, if the franchise was held by freeholders, freeman, or households the electorate was usually broader. Freeholders included small and medium landowners. Freeman often included shopkeepers and guildsman and thus a broader segment of the city. Households were the most encompassing category of all. Scot and Lot boroughs occupy a mixed category as the franchise was restricted to households who paid local taxes. In table 4, the categories of boroughs are arranged in order from more democratic to more narrow in terms of the electorate. WHIG STRENGTH is greater in the more narrow boroughs and by implication the Tories were more strongly represented in the more democratic boroughs. The t-statistic at the bottom shows that the difference in WHIG STRENGTH between freeman and freeholder boroughs compared to corporation and burgage boroughs is statistically significant.

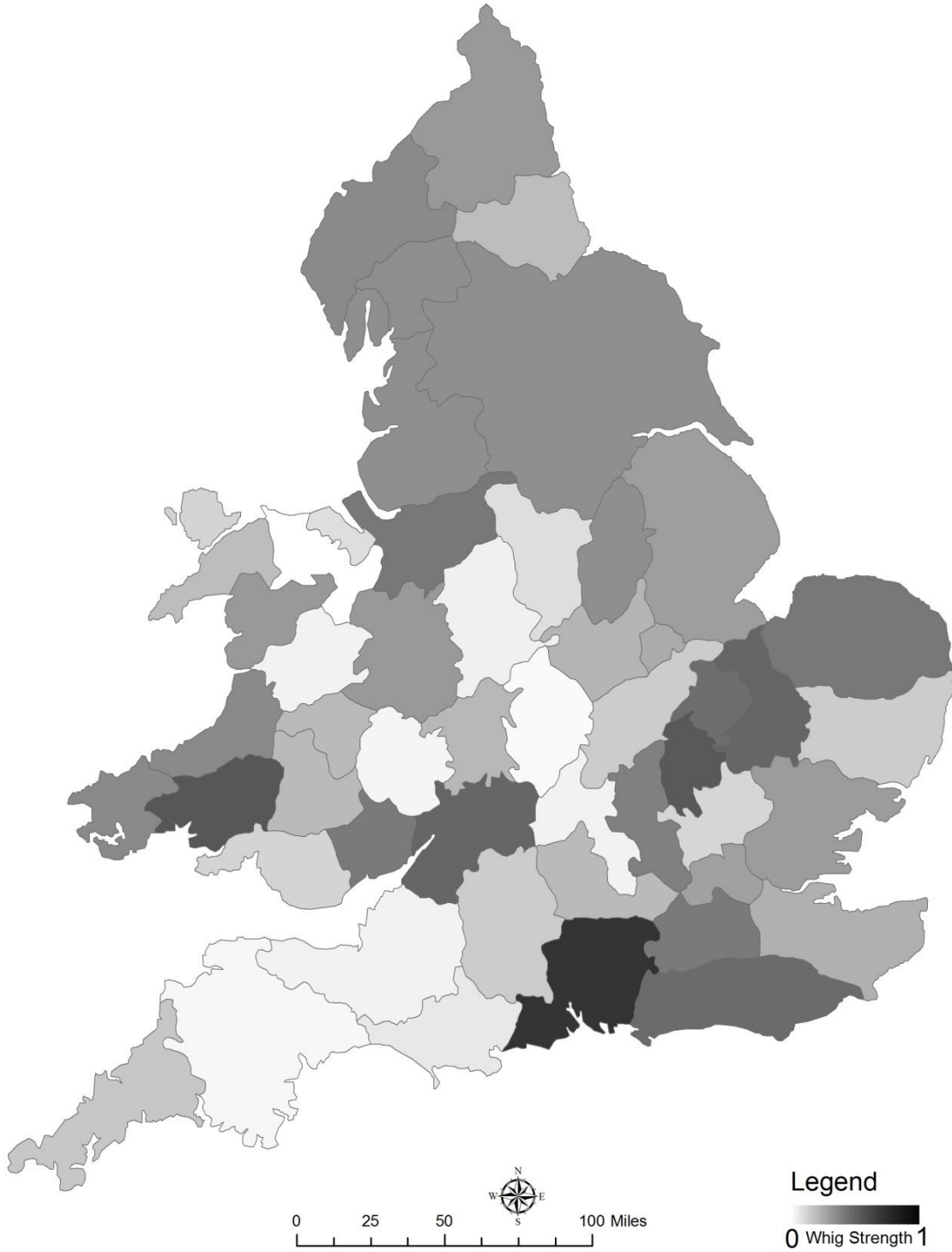
Based on the preceding figures there is some statistical support for the view that the Whigs maintained their power and influence by controlling more corrupt and more oligarchical boroughs. The Tories had greater support in larger and more democratic boroughs. It would appear that the Tories were closer to the average voter in Britain.⁵

⁵ See Speck (1970, pp. 47-63) for a discussion of the differences between Whigs and Tories in the boroughs.

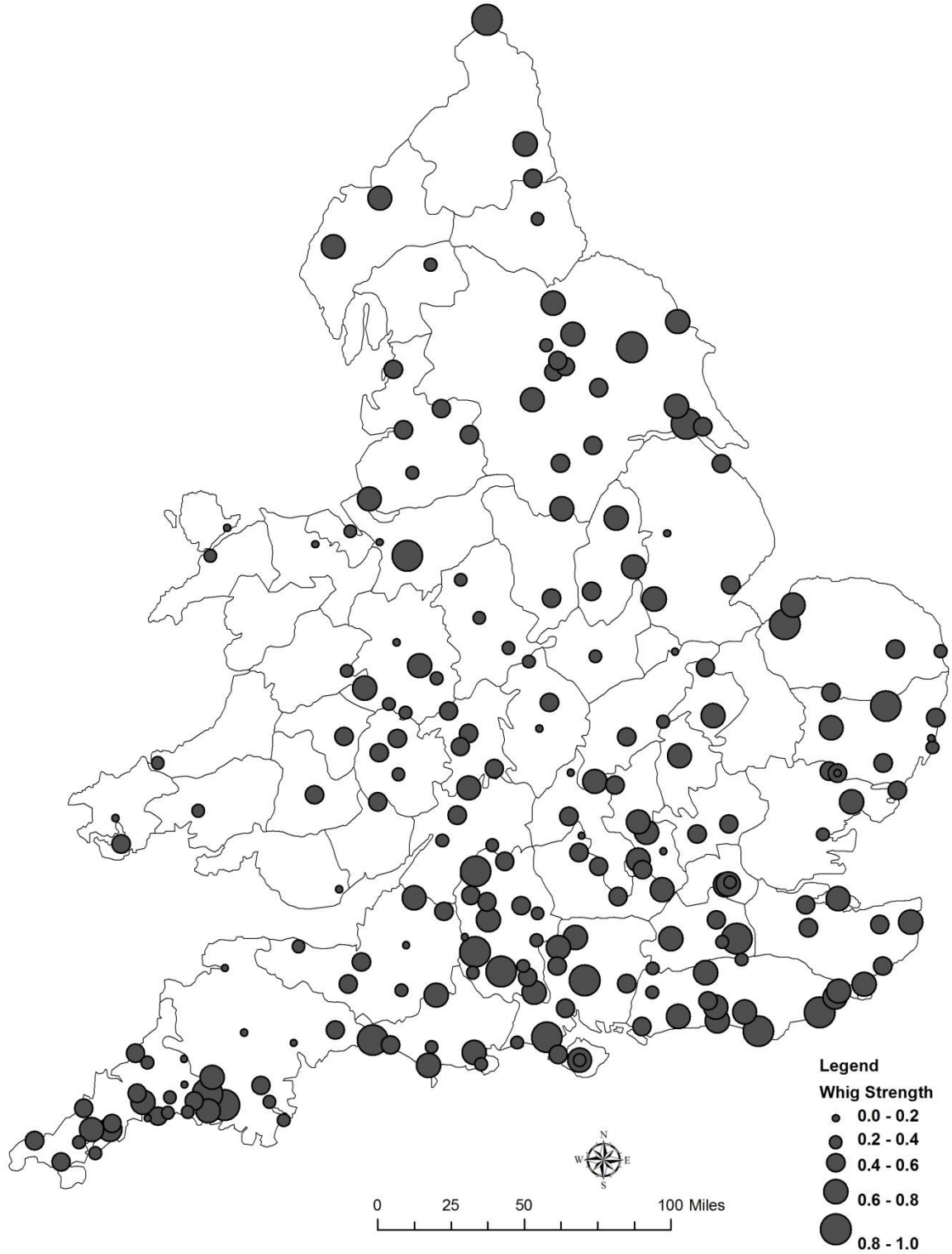
Contested elections are another characteristic of constituencies. Contested elections had a poll and often there would be two candidates from each party competing for two seats, resulting in a vote split among four candidates. We investigate whether WHIG STRENGTH was higher in constituencies with contested elections. The value of WHIG STRENGTH in each parliament is matched with contested elections which are reported for each constituency and in each parliament in CHH and Sedgwick. The results show that WHIG STRENGTH was 0.017 higher in constituency-parliaments with contested elections than without. The difference in means is not large and is not statistically significant. Throughout the period the Whigs were only marginally more successful than the Tories in winning close elections.

Perhaps one of the most important differences among constituencies was their location. Economic interests and political traditions varied across space and therefore the Whigs and Tories might have had different strengths in certain regions. Map 1 illustrates WHIG STRENGTH across counties. Darker shades correspond to values close to one and lighter shades are closer to zero. Map 2 illustrates WHIG STRENGTH in municipal boroughs. The larger circles correspond to values of WHIG STRENGTH close to one and smaller circles are close to zero. To our knowledge, this is the first time that maps of party representation have been created for the early eighteenth century.

Map 1: Whig Strength in English and Welsh Counties.



Map 2 Whig Strength in English and Welsh Boroughs.



The maps suggest a general pattern where the Whigs were stronger in southeastern and northern counties and weaker in midland, Welsh, and southwestern counties. The patterns are similar in boroughs. Whig strength was higher in southeastern and northern boroughs and lower elsewhere. The regional patterns are also evident after assigning constituencies to one of five exclusive regions: the Southeast, the Southwest, The East Midlands, the West Midlands, Wales, and the North. The averages for WHIG STRENGTH in each region are reported in table 5. WHIG STRENGTH is highest in the Southeast and the North across all parliaments. It is lowest in Wales and the West Midlands. The Southwest and East Midlands are close to the national average which is 0.472 but still below the Southeast. The bottom of table 5 shows that the difference between WHIG STRENGTH in the Southeast and other regions is statistically significant except for the North where they are nearly identical.

The greater representation by the Whigs in the Southeast fits with the Whigs close ties to financial and mercantile interests in London. Also a number of port and naval cities in the Southeast would have benefitted from the Whig's more aggressive stance on foreign policy. The Tories' greater representation in Wales and the West Midlands is consistent with these regions being more conservative in terms of foreign policy. The prominence of the gentry in the West Midlands might also explain the strength of the Tories there. Speck (1970, p. 67) also notes that Wales and the West were bastions of the Royalist cause during the Civil War suggesting a long term link to the Tories in this region. The reasons for the greater strength of the Whigs in the North could be linked with religion. The North might have had more dissenters from the Church of England, making the Whigs more appealing to religious voters in the North.

Table 5: WHIG STRENGTH by Region

	Mean	St. Dev.	Obs.
Southeast	0.551	0.211	72
Southwest	0.454	0.226	74
East Midlands	0.476	0.187	37
West Midlands	0.371	0.191	29
Wales	0.28	0.175	24
North	0.547	0.18	33
Southeast vs. Southwest			
t-stat for difference in Mean			-2.497
P-value			0.013
Southeast vs. East Midlands			
t-stat for difference in Mean			-1.837
P-value			0.069
Southeast vs. West Midlands			
t-stat for difference in Mean			-3.983
P-value			0
Southeast vs. Wales			
t-stat for difference in Mean			-5.666
P-value			0
Southeast vs. North			
t-stat for difference in Mean			-0.093
P-value			0.925

III.

Britain's party system arguably changed after the 1715 parliament. The Tories became a weaker party and were not a strong check on the government. On the Whig side, Walpole emerged as a charismatic leader, but his party began to splinter with the rise of the Opposition Whigs. Although there was certainly change, it does not necessarily follow that the constituencies where the Whigs were strong were any different during the Rage of Party compared to the Era of Walpole. Using our new data we can establish whether the pattern of party representation changed or not. We define the Rage of Party to be all parliaments from 1690 up to and including 1715. The Era of Walpole is defined by all parliaments from 1722 up to and including the 1734 parliament. Table 6 reports the means of WHIG STRENGTH by borough and county averaged across all parliaments in the two time periods. Some of the patterns reported above held in both periods. For example, WHIG STRENGTH is significantly larger in boroughs than counties during the Rage of Party and the Walpole Era. The Whigs continued to be the party with stronger representation among towns and cities. The Tories (and later the Opposition Whigs) continued to do better in rural areas.

There are other patterns which are stronger in one period than the other. In the Walpole Era, WHIG STRENGTH was significantly larger in boroughs with a small electorate compared to a large electorate. During the Rage of Party the Whigs were also stronger in small electorate boroughs, but the difference is less and is not statistically significant. Thus our confidence that the Whigs did better in boroughs with a small electorate is greater during the Walpole Era. One might then presume that under Walpole the Whigs did better in less democratic boroughs, but the results on franchise provide only mixed support. Under Walpole, WHIG STRENGTH is largest in boroughs where the franchise is held by corporation members. However, Householder

boroughs, where the franchise was largest, seem to have shifted to the Whigs under Walpole. Also WHIG STRENGTH in Burgage boroughs, which were less democratic, was not much larger than freeman or free holder boroughs in the Walpole Era. The t-tests at the bottom of table 6 suggest that we can reject the hypothesis that the Whigs did same in less democratic boroughs only in the Rage of Party and not in the Era of Walpole.

Table 6: WHIG STRENGTH by borough or county during the Rage of Party and the Walpole Era

	Rage of Party (1690 to 1721)			Walpole Era (1722 to 1741)		
	Mean	St. Dev.	Obs.	Mean	St. Dev.	Obs.
County	0.38	0.224	52	0.269	0.317	52
Municipal Boroughs	0.488	0.231	215	0.555	0.296	215
	t-stat difference in Mean		-3.017	t-stat difference in Mean		-6.134
	P-value		0.002	P-value		0
	Mean	St. Dev.	Obs.	Mean	St. Dev.	Obs.
Municipal Boroughs, Small Electorate	0.5	0.233	153	0.59	0.294	153
Municipal Boroughs, Medium or Large Electorate	0.458	0.226	62	0.467	0.286	62
	t-stat difference in Mean		-1.213	t-stat difference in Mean		-2.79
	P-value		0.226	P-value		0.01
	Mean	St. Dev.	Obs.	Mean	St. Dev.	Obs.
Municipal Boroughs, Householder	0.39	0.204	12	0.612	0.194	12
Municipal Boroughs, Freeman or Freeholder	0.472	0.244	110	0.534	0.316	110
	0.491	0.224	37	0.53	0.288	37

Municipal Boroughs, Scot and Lot						
Municipal Boroughs, Corporation	0.535	0.202	26	0.661	0.266	26
Municipal Boroughs, Burgage holders	0.539	0.219	30	0.548	0.283	30
Freeman and Freeholder vs. Corporation and Burgage						
	t-stat for difference in Mean			1.691	t-stat difference in Mean	
	P-value			0.0926	P-value	
						1.325
						0.186

The two periods also show a difference in party strength among constituencies with contested elections. During the Rage of Party WHIG STRENGTH was 0.03 greater in constituencies with contested elections. The difference is statistically significant (see table 7). However, in the Walpole Era, WHIG STRENGTH was 0.03 lower in constituencies with contested elections. During the Rage of Party the Whigs are thought to have had an organizational advantage over the Tories allowing them to respond more effectively to competition (Holmes 1967, pp. 248, 287, 318). For example, there are cases where the Whig leaders came to the aid of candidates facing competition (p. 291). Such actions are consistent with our finding that the Whigs were more strongly represented in contested constituencies. By the age of Walpole, there is less evidence suggesting that the Whigs had a more effective organization. Whig policies, like the extension of excises, were not always popular making it more difficult for them to win competitive elections where policy issues were likely to be more important.

Table 7: WHIG STRENGTH in Contested Constituencies

	Rage of Party (1690 to 1721)			Walpole Era (1722 to 1741)		
	Mean	St. Dev.	Obs.	Mean	St. Dev.	Obs.
Contested	0.481	0.38	1199	0.483	0.384	403
Not Contested	0.454	0.404	1760	0.512	0.407	404
	t-stat for difference in Mean			t-stat for difference in Mean		
			-1.856			1.058
	P-value			P-value		
			0.063			0.293

There was some continuity in party strength across regions (see table 8). WHIG STRENGTH remained high in the Southeast and low in Wales, the West Midlands, and East Midlands. The main regions that changed were the Southwest and the North. The Southwest went from being more Tory to more Whig. During the Rage of Party the Southwest had significantly lower WHIG STRENGTH than the Southeast, but in the era of Walpole they were nearly identical. The North went from being more Whig to being less Whig. WHIG STRENGTH is statistically indistinguishable in the North from the Southeast in both periods, but the difference in the means is larger under Walpole. After 1715 there is a southern divide in party strength. The Whigs were strongest in the South and weakest in the Midlands, Wales, and North. During the Rage of Party, there were two dividing lines. Whigs were strongest in the Southeast and North, and weakest in the Southwest, the Midlands, and Wales.

Table 8: WHIG STRENGTH by Region during the Rage of Party and the Walpole Era

	Rage of Party (1690 to 1721)			Walpole Era (1722 to 1741)			
	Mean	St. Dev.	Obs.	Mean	St. Dev.	Obs.	
Southeast	0.55	0.219	72	0.558	0.315	72	
Southwest	0.436	0.245	74	0.552	0.302	74	
East Midlands	0.478	0.2	37	0.468	0.317	37	
West Midlands	0.383	0.214	29	0.325	0.278	29	
Wales	0.236	0.168	24	0.439	0.427	24	
North	0.569	0.186	33	0.47	0.274	33	
Southeast vs. Southwest t-stat for difference in Mean			-2.948	Southeast vs. Southwest t-stat for difference in Mean			-0.114
P-value			0.003	P-value			0.9
Southeast vs. East Midlands t-stat for difference in Mean			-1.668	Southeast vs. East Midlands t-stat for difference in Mean			-1.406
P-value			0.09	P-value			0.162
Southeast vs. West Midlands t-stat for difference in Mean			-3.469	Southeast vs. West Midlands t-stat for difference in Mean			-3.461
P-value			0	P-value			0
Southeast vs. Wales t-stat for difference in Mean			-6.392	Southeast vs. Wales t-stat for difference in Mean			-1.456
P-value			0	P-value			0.148
Southeast vs. North t-stat for difference in Mean			0.431	Southeast vs. North t-stat for difference in Mean			-1.383
P-value			0.66	P-value			0.169

IV.

The History of Parliament series provides accessible data on every MPs' occupation, age, place of birth, source of wealth, and education, yet it omits an important variable: their party affiliation. In this paper, we present newly created data on the party affiliation of every MP in England and Wales in all parliaments from 1690 to 1734. As we note, there are several challenges in assigning MPs to parties. Perhaps the most difficult problem is that MPs might be ascribed to a party, but in reality they were largely independent. Our methodology draws on multiple division lists and sources in each parliament and aims to provide a conservative classification of party affiliation. By outlining our methods we encourage other scholars to refine or improve upon the approach used here.

There are many applications of our data. Here we use the data to establish the relative strength of the Whigs and Tories across different types of constituencies and over time. We find that the Whigs were more strongly represented in municipal boroughs rather than counties. The Whigs were more strongly represented in small and oligarchical boroughs compared to large and more democratic boroughs. The Whigs were stronger in the Southeast compared to the Midlands, Wales, and the Southwest. The North goes from being more Whig during the Rate of Party to less Whig during the era of Walpole. The data provide a quantitative foundation for several generalizations in the literature regarding the electoral support of the two parties. In future research the data can illuminate other issues in British economic, social, and political history in the wake of the Glorious Revolution.

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