Thesis Abstract -- The Management of the Tory Interest in Lancashire and Cheshire, 1714-1747

This thesis is concerned primarily with the political organization of the Tory party within the counties of Lancashire and Cheshire between the death of Queen Anne in the summer of 1714 and the General Election of 1747. I was attracted to the subject in the first place by the work done of late on the period 1688-1714; because the northwest was a traditional stronghold of Royalist and Tory sentiment; and because it was also an area with which I am personally acquainted. By demonstrating the reality of party differences at both the national and provincial levels for the years immediately prior to the Hanoverian Succession, Geoffrey Holmes, W.A. Speck and others had called into question the validity of Sir Lewis Namier's model as a satisfactory explanation of the structure of politics during the early part of the eighteenth century. It seemed a worthwhile exercise, therefore, to seek to illuminate the political developments of the first half of that century by means of a detailed local study, clearly set against the background of national events.

Professor Namier and his followers had argued that political parties as we should identify them were unknown before the nineteenth century, and that in the eighteenth century political differences were rooted for the most part in a factious quest for power, rather than in any clashes of fundamental principle. The names of Whig and Tory, they argued, were merely cant terms that had long since lost any significance that they might once have possessed. The real units of political conflict, it was claimed, were the groups of professional politicians who, through their control of private electoral empires, their mobilization of kinsmen, and their judicious use of the patronage at their disposal, sought to build

up a personal following or connection in Parliament. Around these groups gathered the rest of the political nation: on the one hand, the courtiers and efficient civil servants who bulked large in the majorities of any successful ministry; and on the other, the great amorphous mass of 'country gentlemen', large in numbers but 'of little efficiency in public business', whose unruly independence and unpredictability represented a major destabilizing force in the House of Commons.

Already this picture has been revised somewhat by the work of several historians interested in the principles and policies of the parliamentary Opposition to Walpole's administration, which grew up in the late 1720s and early 1730s, and which was centred around a new alliance between Tories and Country Whigs. However, so far the main interest of historians has been concentrated on Bolingbroke and his circle and in general on events at Westminster, where the tendency is to dismiss Tory M.P.s as inconsequential lobby-fodder. My own work sets out to demonstrate the hypothesis which became apparent in the course of research that the Tories in fact were far from inconsequential: that they retained throughout the period with which this study is concerned a committed constituency in the country as a whole, and that moreover they continued down to the 1740s to see themselves as a viable alternative party of government. In the northwest, at least, the basic organization of political life continued to focus around the old polarity of Whig and Tory, which two party denominations continued to evince characteristic sets of principles and policies. Even where differences of philosophical outlook were vague or blurred, the strength of party identification remained almost wholly unaffected, since the system to which it gave rise served as an all but indispensable organizing principle for the entire gamut of essentially non-political conflicts that were

always present in local society. To this extent, it seems that adherence to a party or to an electoral interest was as much an emotional as it was a rational activity: what party stalwarts looked to gain from an election victory was the visceral thrill of the victory itself, and the defeat of traditional opponents.

Thus I set out to trace the organizational continuity of one such electoral interest over a period of some thirty-odd years. The resultant study is not so much concerned with the mechanics of electioneering, as with the strategic management of election campaigns and other political activities. For practical purposes, it has been assumed that a restricted political nation existed in the provinces as at Westminster, and that political initiative, if not necessarily activity, was confined to the ranks of the aristocracy, gentry and clergy in the counties, and to the gentry and merchant oligarchies in the boroughs. I have also assumed, as did contemporaries, and as a study of the pollbooks seems to justify, that tenants voted as their landlords directed, unless released from their obligation to do so: cuius regio, eius factio would seem to have been the prevailing maxim for the lower orders in the eighteenth century.

Similarly, no attempt has been made to provide an in-depth treatment of the related subject of Jacobitism, except in so far as dynastic allegiances help to explain the internal divisions existing within the Tory camp at this time. This is a field of study which already possesses a large and still burgeoning bibliography, albeit chiefly of romantic rather than of scholarly interest; I do not propose to add to it.

The reconstruction of local politics is an undertaking heavily dependent on the aggregation of often meagre manuscript collections, principally of private correspondence, though such sources may usually be supplemented by the use of printed correspondence, diaries, and national archives. Many of the manuscript collections used in the present

study are uncatalogued, with political papers distributed at random among vast quantities of estate material. Eighteenth-century newspapers are in general not to be trusted to provide impartial accounts of political conflict in the provinces, and I have consequently refrained from placing undue reliance upon them, except where the details in question can be corroborated from other types of evidence. Pollbooks have yielded particularly useful information, and it is only a pity that more do not survive. The loss of the Lancashire county pollbook for the 1722 election is especially galling. This and other omissions notwithstanding, sufficient materials have survived to make an adequate reconstruction possible.

Having described the political situation in the northwest in 1714, the main body of the thesis, recounts the principal political developments thereafter. It shows how, having been divided among themselves over the Succession during the crucial years 1714-16, the Tories managed to avoid total disintegration, and began the laborious task of rebuilding their electoral power-base. The result was that during the 1730s they formed a new Country Coalition, seeking through it to get back into the respectable political life of the nation, and back into power. The latter goal was frustrated by the circumstances of Walpole's fall from power in 1742; but the former was in part achieved during the succeeding decade, aided by the conspicuous loyalty of many Tories during the 1745 Rebellion. The survival, indeed the revival, of the Tories and their allies during the period of this study, was aided by the government's maintenance of political proscription, and during the last years of this period the abolition of all party distinctions became a major element in the Tories' political platform.

The overriding conclusion to be drawn from these events is that party divisions remained at the heart of political life into the mid-

eighteenth century. Connections did exist, but as the substructure of party rather than as a substitute for it. The great landed magnates and borough-mongers were the only true independents of eighteenth-century politics; the country gentlemen representing, or voting for representatives in, the shires and larger boroughs were by contrast firmly locked into the complex web of rival electoral interests: partly from self-interest, partly for principle's sake, and partly from habit. Party identification was paramount: even those who had bolted their party in 1715 showed a widespread, if not universal, tendency to return to it by the 1730s. It is not the intention of this study to distil general principles for application outside the geographical area under scrutiny, although similar circumstances may indeed prevail elsewhere; it is merely to show that in the northwest it was the Tories and not their more favoured opponents who constituted the best-established interest.

THE MANAGEMENT OF THE TORY INTEREST IN

LANCASHIRE AND CHESHIRE, 1714-1747

by

STEPHEN W. BASKERVILLE

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MAP OF LANCASHIRE AND CHESHIRE

ABBREVIATIONS AND NOTES

Addit. MSS.	Additional Manuscripts
Bodl.	Bodleian Library
Brit. Mus.	British Museum [Library]
Chetham Soc.	Chetham Society
Commons Journals	Journals of the House of Commons
corr.	correspondence
D.N.B.	Dictionary of National Biography
G.E.C., Complete Peerage	G.E.C[ockayne], ed., The Complete Peerage (new edn., revised and enlarged by the Hon. Vicary Gibbs et al. 13 vols. London, 1910-59)
Hist MSS. Comm.	Historical Manuscript Commission
Journal of the Chester Arch Soc.	Journal of the Chester and North Wales Archeological Society
Lancs. & Chesh. Record Soc.	Lancashire and Cheshire Record Society
Lords Journals	Journals of the House of Lords
n.d.	no date(s)
N.L.W.	National Library of Wales
P.R.O.	Public Record Office
R.O.	Record Office
S.P.	State Papers
Trans. Hist. Soc. Lancs. & Chesh.	Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire
Trans. Lancs. & Chesh. Antiquarian Soc.	Transactions of the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society
Univ. Lib.	University Library
V.C.H. Lancs.	Victoria County History of the Counties of England: Lancashire, ed. William Farrer and J. Brownbill (8 vols. London, 1906-14)

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All other printed works are abbreviated after their first citation as follows: secondary sources to the author's surname and the short title of the book (e.g. Holmes, Age of Anne); primary sources to their short title only (e.g. Autobiography of William Stout). Articles, after their

initial citation, are abbreviated to the author's surname, their short title, and 'loc. cit.' (e.g. Cox, 'Sir Roger Bradshaigh and the Electoral Management of Wigan', loc. cit.)

All dates are in Old Style unless otherwise specified. In the text the year is taken as beginning on 1 January; but in the footnotes the dates between 1 January and 24 March inclusive are given as belonging to two years (24 Feb. 1732-3).

1. Lancashire and Cheshire on the Eve of the Hanoverian Succession.

One of the most enduring products of medieval thought, handed down to the political classes of seventeenth-century England, was the concept of the county community. In a period when intense provincialism still tended to outweigh feelings of national consciousness, for most Englishmen the shire remained the quintessential unit of social, cultural, and political life: the 'country' to which a man belonged. It was here, in the institutions of local government and in the courts of local justice, that the images of political theory were transformed into the realities of political practice. Unity and self-determination were the ancient ideals of county society; and though the established gentry families who dominated the provincial life of Stuart England had in time come to disagree about such fundamental issues as the origins and nature of authority in the State and the proper mode of establishing religion in the Church, they remained for the most part in agreement that the exercise of political power through the medium of local administration was, and should remain, their own irreducible preserve, to be guarded at all costs against the ambitions of landed magnates, the pretensions of social inferiors, and the encroachments of central government. It was in such a spirit of wary independence that the most prominent and respected members of each community were chosen by the gentry and freeholders to attend the King's Parliament at Westminster, there to represent the views of the nation in general, and the interests of their neighbours in particular.[1]

However, a century of civil war and revolution could hardly help

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1. For an excellent discussion of the medieval origins of community representation, see H.M. Cam, 'The Theory and Practice of Representation in Medieval England', reprinted in Historical Studies of the English Parliament, ed. E. B. Fryde and Edward Miller (2 vols. Cambridge, 1970), i. 236-78.

but undermine such traditional assumptions about the distribution and use of power in local society; moreover, it dealt a mortal blow to the ideal of county unity,[1] and established in its place a system of perennial antagonism that was to last for a hundred years or more. This general discord was perhaps at its height in the years leading up to the accession of the House of Hanover. As Queen Anne's reign drew to a close during the spring of 1714, national and local communities found themselves torn apart by bitter divisions of party allegiance; principle, prejudice and self-interest combined in a general process of polarization between the opposing battalions of Whig and Tory.[2] It was to this confrontation that the elderly Bishop Burnet had alluded in 1713, when he expressed the fervent hope that well-intentioned men in both camps could find some means of 'healing a breach, that has rent this nation from top to bottom.' These parties, he argued, were 'so stated and kept up, not only by the elections of parliament-men, that return every third year, but even by the yearly elections of mayors and corporation-men, that they know their strength; and in every corner of the nation ... stand, as it were, listed against one another.'[3] Though this was admittedly a sweeping generalization, the available evidence for Lancashire and Cheshire provides ample corroboration of its applicability in that area at least. Burnet's sentiments were

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1. For the relevance of this ideal in Cheshire during the Civil War and Interregnum, see J. S. Morrill, Cheshire, 1630-1660: County Government and Society during the English Revolution (Oxford, 1974), especially chapters 1, 2, 7 & 8.

2. A great deal has been written on this theme in recent years. The most useful works are: G. Holmes, British Politics in the Age of Anne (London, 1967), especially pp. 1-50, 405-18; The Divided Society: Party Conflict in England, 1694-1716, ed. G. Holmes and W. A. Speck (London, 1967); J. H. Plumb, The Growth of Political Stability in England, 1675-1725 (London, 1967), chapter 5; W. A. Speck, Tory and Whig: The Struggle in the Constituencies, 1701-1715 (London, 1970).

3. Gilbert Burnet, History of His Own Time (2nd enlarged edn. Oxford, 1833), vi.224.

faithfully echoed, for example, by Peter Shakerley,[1] a Tory politician long acquainted with the intricacies of political organization in both shires. In 1714 he wrote of Cheshire: 'The Divisions amongst Gentlemen in this County and others in this Kingdom concerning Elections of Members to serve in Parliam[en]t have Caused such heats and animositys that ye Ancient Hospitality, Friendship and good neighbourhood amongst them hath been Totally Destroyed.'[2]

For Burnet the most desirable solution was to reject the divisive nature of confrontation politics and attempt instead to consolidate what vestiges remained of the middle ground: 'to procure a better understanding and frequent meetings among the men of good lives and soft tempers in both parties, who, by a mutual conversation, will so open themselves to one another that jealousies may by this means be easily removed.'[3] As will be seen later,[4] Shakerley was an equally forthright advocate of similar measures at the local level, but as he himself had good reason to know,[5] it was a pronounced oversimplification to interpret local differences as merely the straight-forward reflection of Whig-Tory divisions in national politics; if anything, it was the other way about. After 1702 the comparative confusion of post-Revolution political society gave way to a more clearly defined order of affairs, and as the lines of cleavage began to harden out at the centre, so the legion forces of disunity ever-present in provincial society became subsumed beneath the general ground rules of

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1. Peter Shakerley (d.1726), of Hulme, Chesh. M.P. for Wigan, 1690-98; for Chester, 1698-1714. High Tory associate of the Earl of Nottingham. Identified as a Whimsical after 1712.

2. Eaton Estate Office, Grosvenor MSS.: Shakerley to the Mayor, Corporation and Citizens of Chester, 2 Dec. 1714.

3. Burnet, History of His Own Time, vi. 224.

4. See below, pp.48-54,64.

5. He was one of the principal architects of the Cheshire Compromise which split the Tory interest there during the election of 1714-15.

organized party conflict. Ancient family rivalries and political alignments of the previous century; old religious bigotries and the clash of new economic interests; the aggressive independence of corporate boroughs and the perpetual struggle between rival factions seeking their control; conflicts over rights of patronage and conflicts over spheres of jurisdiction: all of these were transformed and re-fashioned in order to serve their turn in the party battle. Sometimes distinct in origin from the fundamental differences of principle and policy upon which the party groupings were based, and sometimes integrally bound up with them, it was these details of local circumstance which in the final analysis dictated the individual structure of rival electoral interests as they formed up to do battle in the constituencies.

Therefore, before beginning to trace the fortunes of one of these interests through the vicissitudes of a generation or more of social isolation and political opposition, it is necessary first of all to understand the particular circumstances obtaining in Lancashire and Cheshire on the eve of the Hanoverian Succession, and thereby the local context into which events at the centre were of necessity translated for members of a society remote from the sophistications of the metropolis.

Writing shortly after the Glorious Revolution, the then Earl of Derby described the two County Palatines as having 'long time lived like Sisters, combyned in a complicated interest'.[1] Each, however, was a county community in its own right, with its own institutions and its own network of ruling families. Despite extensive ties of kinship, very few gentry families could boast of spreading acres in both counties, and

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1. Lancashire R. O., Kenyon MSS., DDKe/4/8: Derby to ?, n.d.[but early in 1689].

few in consequence could hope to appear as Justices in both Commissions of the Peace. Whilst in ecclesiastical terms Lancashire and Cheshire together made up the greater part of the Diocese of Chester, the staunch Anglicanism of the latter county contrasted sharply with the widespread Roman Catholicism of the former. For judicial purposes each possessed its own particular jurisdiction with a separate system of courts and legal officials. Above all, however, each county retained a distinct political identity; and if at election time there was a good deal of co-operation between like-minded gentlemen on both sides of the River Mersey, it must nevertheless be firmly emphasized that the electoral interests of each shire were primarily constructed on independent foundations. By dealing with both Lancashire and Cheshire, therefore, it is intended in the present study not only to illustrate the extent to which such county interests were indeed interlinked, but also in some degree to contrast the internal organization and motivation of two very different, though adjacent, political communities.

The most prominent family active in Lancashire politics were the Stanley Earls of Derby. The Hon. James Stanley[1] succeeded his elder brother as 10th earl in 1702. As a Member of Parliament during the reign of William III he had shown himself to be a man of decidedly Whiggish opinions,[2] but following his elevation to the peerage he assumed a more independent character, acting erratically in Lancashire elections throughout Queen Anne's reign, endeavouring to set up his own clients on his own interest wherever possible, regardless of their nominal party allegiances. Opinions

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1. James Stanley, 10th Earl of Derby (1664-1736), of Knowsley, Lancs. M.P. for Clitheroe, 1685-7; for Preston, 1689-90; for Lancashire, 1690-1702. For details of offices held see G.E.C., Complete Peerage, iv.

2. For his voting behaviour, see I. F. Burton, P.W.J. Riley and E. Rowlands, 'Political Parties in the Reigns of William III and Anne: The Evidence of Division Lists', Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research, Special Supplement no.7 (1968), p.45.

varied as to the strength of that interest. Canvassing in the county during the General Election of 1705, Sir Roger Bradshaigh[1] found that 'most gentlemen will be determined as my Lord Derby recommends';[2] but in the ensuing contest the High Tory Richard Shuttleworth was returned at the head of the poll, well in front of both the earl's nominees. After the election was over, one local Tory wrote with some satisfaction to Robert Harley that 'my Lord Derby hath not that interest in this county as is represented above and his haughty treatment of all the gentlemen will never be forgot.'[3]

In June 1706 Derby was appointed Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and made a Privy Councillor. Since he was already Lord Lieutenant of Lancashire, this endowed him with an effective monopoly of official influence over county elections and in borough constituencies where the Duchy interest was traditionally strong. Thus when a by-election came up at Preston later in the same year, Robert Harley was encouraged to cultivate the earl for his interest in the borough. '[M]y Lord may recommend whom he pleases to serve for that place,' an informant told Harley.[4] Six months later, however, the same correspondent was of a somewhat different opinion about Derby's usefulness to the ministry: 'I am told Lord Derby has little interest in Cheshire or Lancashire, though a great estate in those parts and Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, for he could not get a Parliament man lately made in a borough there [i.e. Preston], though he laboured it all he could....' The earl, he concluded, was unpopular

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1. Sir Roger Bradshaigh, 3rd Bart. (c.1675-1747), of Haigh, nr. Wigan, Lancs. A nominal Tory down to 1714 when he went over to the Whigs. M.P. for Wigan, 1695-1747, where he possessed a strong personal interest.

2. Hist. MSS. Comm., Kenyon MSS., no. 1086, p.434: Bradshaigh to G. Kenyon, 8 Feb. 1704-5.

3. Hist. MSS. Comm., Portland MSS., iv.183: Sir J. Bland to Harley, 20 May 1705.

4. Ibid., p.325: J. Netterville to Harley, 31 Aug. 1706.

there, being regarded as 'a close, covetous man'.[1] During the General Election of 1710, the Derby interest in Lancashire was even more embattled. The Duchy and Lord Lieutenancy had both fallen from the earl's grasp in September upon the formation of the Harley ministry, and being encouraged by the success of their friends at Court, the Tory gentry in Lancashire now determined to contest both the county seats and to drive out the earl's brother, Charles Stanley.[2] Finding that he could muster but little support among the country gentlemen who came to Lancaster for the election, Lord Derby was obliged to withdraw, leaving the field to his adversaries.[3]

At Westminster, Derby voted consistently with the Whigs throughout Queen Anne's reign, and is classed by Professor Holmes as a 'peer of vehement Whig principles' and a 'junior associate' of the Junto lords.[4] But if one examines his electoral conduct in Lancashire and the party allegiances of those closest to him, it becomes evident that he was far less partisan in the country than he was in Parliament. Like his elder brother before him, the 10th earl always maintained a small circle of personal associates on whom he relied greatly. Some, like Sir Alexander Rigby[5] and Sir Thomas Johnson,[6] were archetypical Country Whigs, who had risen to prominence in the 1690s during the Lord Lieutenancy of the

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1. Hist. MSS. Comm., Portland MSS., viii.280: Netterville to Harley, 14 Jan. 1706-7.

2. Hon. Charles Zedenno Stanley (d.1715), of Knowsley, Lancs. M.P. for Preston, 1702-5; for Lancashire, 1705-13; for Clitheroe, 1713, but unseated on petition Apr. 1714.

3. Hist. MSS. Comm., Portland MSS., vi. 578-9: Baron Price to Harley, 29 Aug. 1710.

4. Holmes, Age of Anne, pp. 241, 427.

5. Sir Alexander Rigby, Kt. (1663-1717), of Layton and Burgh, Lancs. M.P. for Wigan, 1701-2. Sheriff of Lancs., 1691-2; Clerk of the Crown at Lancaster, 1697-1702, 1706-10. Died a bankrupt, probably in the Fleet prison, having sold the Burgh estates to pay off his debts.

6. Sir Thomas Johnson, Kt. (1664-1728), of Liverpool, Lancs. M.P. for Liverpool, 1701-Feb.1723. Collector of Customs in Virginia, 1723-5.

Presbyterian Earl of Macclesfield.[1] Others, like George Kenyon[2] and Sir Roger Bradshaigh, saw themselves as part of a decaying Church party: Tories for convenience, but with little in the way of deep or enduring commitment beyond their Anglicanism. Bradshaigh's allegiances were especially fluid, his perennial indigence compelling him to profess unswerving loyalty to whichever party or patron seemed most inclined to pay his debts. For much of Queen Anne's reign, Lord Derby succeeded in maintaining a leasehold on Bradshaigh's fidelity, but in later years was obliged to share his 'property' with Lords Oxford and Rivers,[3] who found Sir Roger's venality and superficial Toryism to be useful assets.[4] Apart from members of the Stanley family, it was men of this stamp who constituted the backbone of Lord Derby's political connection in the northwest at the time of the Queen's death in 1714.

Down to the Revolution of 1688 and perhaps some little way beyond, there was no Cheshire family that could come near to equalling in that county the pre-eminent position enjoyed by the Stanleys in Lancashire. Two families, though, were beginning to emerge as rival aspirants to such an honour: the Cholmondeleys of Cholmondeley and the Booths of Dunham Massey. During the reign of James II, the Cholmondeleys found their ancestral Royalism sorely tested by events, and when William of Orange

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1. Charles Gerard, 2nd Earl of Macclesfield (1659-1701). A supporter of James II, 1687-8, he changed sides in 1689 to become the Whig Lord Lieutenant of Lancashire, 1689-1701. Noted for his patronage of Presbyterians. M.P. for Lancashire, 1679-81, 1689-94.

2. George Kenyon (1665-1728), of Peel, Lancs. M.P. for Wigan, 1713-14. Recorder of Wigan, 1698-1728; Vice Chancellor of the County Palatine of Lancaster, 1706-15.

3. Richard Savage, 4th Earl Rivers (c.1660-1712), of Rock Savage, Chesh. Professional soldier. A Whig, and former associate of Ld. Macclesfield, he went over to the Tories in 1710.

4. For Oxford's financial dealings with Bradshaigh, see the latter's letters in Brit. Mus., Loan 29 (Portland Papers)/127; for Rivers' influence over him, see Hist. MSS.Comm., Portland MSS., iv.578-9: Baron Price to Harley, 29 Aug. 1710.

landed at Torbay in November 1688, Lord Hugh[1] and his brother George[2] were among the first to pledge their allegiance to the new regime. Shortly afterwards, by way of reward, the former gratefully exchanged his Irish peerage for an English one, and took his seat in the House of Lords.[3] But support for the Revolution did not prevent the Cholmondeleys from continuing to favour their Tory friends and relations in Cheshire; indeed, in the first General Election held after the dissolution of the Convention Parliament, George Cholmondeley stood himself for the county on the Tory interest.[4] It was the discovery of the Fenwick Plot, early in 1696, which transformed Lord Cholmondeley from a Court Tory into a Court Whig; yet despite his vow on that occasion that he would never again give countenance to his former Tory associates,[5] by 1701 at the latest he was once more placing his interest at their disposal,[6] and continued to do so at every General Election of Queen Anne's reign save that of 1705, when support for two Tackers in Cheshire would clearly have prejudiced his

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1. Hugh, 2nd Viscount Cholmondeley [I] (1662-1725), of Cholmondeley, Cheshire. Created Baron Cholmondeley of Nantwich, 1689; created Viscount Malpas and Earl of Cholmondeley, 1706.

2. Hon. George Cholmondeley (c.1666-1733). Created Baron Newburgh [I], 1715; created Baron Newburgh [G.B.], 1716. Succeeded his elder brother as 2nd Earl of Cholmondeley, 1725. M.P. for Newton, 1690-5. For details of offices held, see G.E.C., Complete Peerage, iii.202.

3. G.E.C., Complete Peerage, iii.201

4. Chester R.O., [Earwaker (Original) Collections,] CR 63/2/691, Utkinton MSS., f.88: Sir W. Aston to Sir J. Crewe, 26 Nov. 1689. Before his creation as an English peer, Lord Cholmondeley had contemplated standing himself: see Cheshire R.O., Cholmondeley MSS., SCH/K/3/8: Ld. Cholmondeley to W. Adams, 29 Jan. 1688-9.

5. Cholmondeley MSS., DCH/K/3/10: Cholmondeley to Adams, 12 Mar. 1695-6.

6. Ibid., DCH/L/50: same to same, 20 Nov. 1701.

chances of advancement at Court.[1] This single instance apart, Lord Cholmondeley's support was granted without reservation to whomsoever the Tory gentlemen of the county chose to set up on their interest, provided only that his lordship could first be satisfied that they had not scrupled to take the abjuration oath.[2]

This electoral circumspection in 1705 paid dividends at the end of the following year when, on the recommendation of Lord Treasurer Godolphin, he was granted an earldom,[3] and in 1708 was made Treasurer of the Queen's Household.[4] Nevertheless, Professor Holmes's description of Cholmondeley as an 'assiduous courtier'[5] hardly seems appropriate. His relations with the Junto, and with Lord Wharton in particular, were always decidedly cool, and after Lord Cholmondeley's barely veiled support for the Cheshire Tories in 1710 they became positively glacial.[6] A few months before that election, he was confiding to his friend, the Tory Matthew Prior, his opinion that the times were 'as dangerous and uncertain for those that set their hearts upon holding places as ever were,' and that in such circumstances his books, his garden and the little room over his greenhouse were to be considered 'his best tenure'. He continued:

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1. Cholmondeley MSS., DCH/L/42: Cholmondeley to Adams, 16 Jan. 1704-5. Even here Ld. Cholmondeley had originally agreed to support the Tory candidates, but subsequently became worried by the prospect of consorting with Nonjurors and annoyed that the Tory gentry had chosen their nominees without consulting him first: see Cholmondeley MSS., DCH/K/3/16: Cholmondeley to Adams, 2 Dec. 1704; John Rylands Univ. Lib., Legh of Lyme MSS.: Sir G. Warburton to P. Legh, 23 Jan. 1704-5.

2. See, for example, his concern to make sure that Sir George Warburton had taken the oaths before espousing his interest in the election of 1701-2; Cholmondeley MSS., DCH/L/42: G. Cholmondeley to Adams, 25 Nov. 1701; ibid., DCH/L/50: Ld. Cholmondeley to Adams, 28 Nov. & n.d. December 1701.

3. Hist. MSS. Comm., Portland MSS., iv.362: Memorandum, 29 Nov. 1706.

4. Cholmondeley MSS., DCH/L/30: J. Meason to Adams, 24 Apr. 1708.

5. Holmes, Age of Anne, p.226.

6. Cholmondeley MSS., DCH/L/49: T. Hinckes to Adams, 15 Sept. 1710.

> For one that has neither superstition nor more religion than is absolutely necessary, a quiet mind is better than to embroil, plague, and trouble myself amongst the kn[ave]s and fo[o]ls about either Church or State, though I were sure to get by it -- especially since I am like to muster in the last class and not in the first.[1]

With Godolphin's removal from office a short while later, he professed himself glad to be 'quite out of the bustle, and having nothing but my own actions to answer for, which are in a very narrow sphere, about my private pleasures and concerns.'[2] Though he managed to retain his offices under Harley, to all intents and purposes he retired from the political scene, fixing his inclinations, as he told Prior, 'upon the quiet of my garden and a country life, from which I shall be with great difficulty drawn.' His 'hearty and sincere wishes' were that all might be done 'for the honour, glory and safety of the Queen', but while he readily admitted that such sentiments as these were 'a very impotent way of serving Her Majesty', a Treasurer as he was, 'without cash and with little or no credit' had nothing else apart from good wishes to offer.[3] By the summer of 1711, his position at Court was beginning to come under attack from those extreme Tories, both inside and outside the ministry, who were pressing for a clean sweep of all Whig office-holders like himself. His absences from Court were notorious, and rumours of his imminent dismissal were constantly circulating. During one of his rare sorties up to Town, at an audience with the Queen, his lordship was jokingly presented to his sovereign by the Duke of Buckingham, who told her: 'Madam, this is your Majesty's Treasurer of your household'. This, as one observant courtier

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1. Hist. MSS. Comm., Bath MSS., iii.438-9: Cholmondeley to Prior, 26 July 1710.

2. Ibid., iii.439-40: same to same, 16 Aug. 1710.

3. Ibid., p.442: same to same, 19 Sept. 1710.

reported, put Lord Cholmondeley 'much to the blush'.[1] In the spring of 1713, after reportedly disagreeing with the contents of the Queen's Speech, he was at last dismissed, not only from his Treasurership, but also from the Lord Lieutenancy of Cheshire, to which he had been appointed in 1703.[2] Thereafter, complaining that he was trusted by neither party, he refused to join the Whigs in uncompromising opposition to the Oxford ministry, preferring instead to retire to his Cheshire estates whenever possible.[3] In fact, throughout the period of Tory supremacy between 1710 and 1714, Cholmondeley was far more anxious to avoid the taint of Jacobite association than he was positively to acquit himself of all aspersions by rallying to the standard of the Junto lords.[4] At the General Election called in the autumn of 1713 he was still supporting Tory candidates in Cheshire,[5] feeling disinclined apparently to blame his friends and neighbours in the country for the misfortunes inflicted upon him by extremists in the Oxford ministry.

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1. The Wentworth Papers, 1705-39, ed. J. J. Cartwright (London, 1882), p.224: P. Wentworth to Ld. Raby, 14 Dec. 1711.

2. Ibid., p.330: same to same [by then Ld. Strafford], 28 Apr. 1713.

3. Calculating the likely outcome of the Lords' divisions on the French Commercial Treaty and the Schism Bill, Lords Nottingham and Oxford both reckoned that Ld. Cholmondeley would vote with the Whigs; but whether he did, and on what evidence these forecasts were based is not known: see Holmes, Age of Anne, p.426.

4. Witness his concern over the wording of the Cheshire Address to the Queen in the summer of 1712, wherein all reference to the Protestant Succession was omitted; the Cheshire Members and their Address were eventually introduced by Ld. Bolingbroke, much to Ld. Cholmondeley's relief: see Cholmondeley MSS., DCH/K/3/26: Cholmondeley to Adams, 5 & 24 July 1712; ibid.: M. Laroche to Adams, 22 July 1712.

5. Legh of Lyme MSS.: J. Henshall to ? , 15 Nov. 1714; Grosvenor MSS.: P. Shakerley to the Mayor, Corporation and Citizens of Chester, 2 Dec. 1714.

Therefore, whilst perhaps remaining suspicious of his Whig connections at Westminster and of his voting record in the House of Lords, the Cheshire Tories in 1714 had little cause to regard Lord Cholmondeley as a doctrinaire opponent; whereas, for their part, the Cheshire Whigs had every reason to look upon him as, at best, an unreliable exponent of true Revolution Principles.

The Booths of Dunham Massey, on the other hand, could boast an immaculate Whig pedigree, as supporters of the Parliamentary cause in the Civil War, as forthright advocates of Exclusion, and as militant opponents of King James in 1688. Having been fixed in their allegiance to the House of Stuart at the Restoration with the Barony of Delamere, they were confirmed in their adherence to the House of Orange in 1690 with the Earldom of Warrington and a pension of £2,000 per annum.[1] Having risen to the status of Privy Councillor and the post of Chancellor of the Exchequer, the 1st earl died in 1694, leaving his title and estates, but little of his political emminence to his younger brother. George, 2nd Earl of Warrington[2] retained the Lord Lieutenancy of Cheshire for only a single year before surrendering it to Earl Rivers. Thereafter, though on the whole less active in politics than his predecessor, he prided himself on his independence. '[I] have never tyed my self to any sort of Persons,' he boasted to Lord Oxford in 1713, 'but consider'd Things to the best of my small Reason; and then if I err 'tis more pardonable.'[3] Nevertheless

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1. L.M. Angus-Butterworth, Old Cheshire Families and their Seats (reprinted Manchester, 1970), p.169. For the 1st earl, see below p.21.

2. George Booth, 2nd Earl of Warrington (1675-1758), of Dunham Massey, Chesh.

3. Brit. Mus., Loan 29/127: Warrington to Oxford, 11 May 1713.

despite these protestations, by the middle of Queen Anne's reign he had unquestionably come to enjoy considerable credit with the Whigs in the ministry, and indeed exerted a greater degree of control than Lord Derby over the distribution of local patronage in Lancashire as well in Cheshire.[1] As a result of this, and in consideration of Lord Cholmondeley's pro-Tory sympathies, the Whig gentry of Cheshire naturally looked to Lord Warrington for leadership, and between 1705 and 1710 his younger brother, Langham Booth,[2] was one of those representing the county at Westminster on the Whig interest. Rivalry between the Cholmondeleys and Booths was to remain at the core of Cheshire politics throughout the period with which this study is concerned.

Two other aristocratic interests are worthy of brief mention here: that enjoyed in Lancashire by the Catholic Viscounts Molyneux of Sefton, and that built up in Cheshire by Richard Savage, 4th Earl Rivers. In the case of the former, their religious convictions effectively precluded them from holding office, except for the brief period of Catholic ascendancy, 1687-8. But if after 1688 the Molyneux were virtually impotent in the area of county administration, their electoral interest remained strong on two counts: because of their undoubted credit among the numerous Catholic gentry of Lancashire, and because of their own far from negligible interest in the borough of Liverpool. Taken together, these factors gave the family a powerful lever with which to help determine the political complexion of the county, and in the power vacuum left on the death of

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1. The Norris Papers, ed. T. Heywood (Chetham Soc., 1st series, ix, 1846), p.168: T. Johnson to R. Norris, 18 Feb. 1707-8. Lord Derby's reluctance to press his claims over patronage exasperated the Lancashire Whigs.

2. Hon. Langham Booth (1684-1724), of Dunham Massey, Chesh. Whig. M.P. for Cheshire, 1705-10, 1715-22; for Liverpool, Feb. 1723-May 1724. Groom of the Bedchamber to the Prince of Wales, 1718-24.

the Jacobite Duke of Hamilton[1] in 1712, enabled Lord Molyneux[2] to assume de facto leadership of the extreme Tories in Lancashire. As for Rivers' interest, it was almost wholly dependent upon the extensive properties he possessed in Cheshire and South Lancashire. He was Lord Lieutenant of Cheshire from 1695 to 1703, and briefly, from 1701 to 1702, of Lancashire as well. With the accession of Queen Anne, however, his power and prestige crumbled rapidly, due in no small part to the hostility of the Queen's favoured companion, Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, who reckoned him to be 'a man scandalous and vile in his character to a very low degree, of no better reputation than a common cheat or pickpocket....'[3] Having helped bring Harley to power in 1710,[4] he died two years later, leaving his son-in-law, Lord Barrymore,[5] to fight for his wife's share of the Rivers estates, against fierce opposition from the late earl's cousin, who was a Jesuit priest, and a second daughter, who was illegitimate.[6] It was this valuable inheritance which first brought Barrymore into northwestern politics, in 1713, and which was to provide him with a power-base there for the next thirty-five years.

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1. James Hamilton, 4th Duke of Hamilton (1658-1712). Jacobite Tory. Lord Lieutenant of Lancashire, 1710-12. See G.E.C., Complete Peerage, vi.266-9.

2. William, 4th Viscount Molyneux [I] (1656-1717), of Croxteth Hall, nr. Liverpool, Lancs.

3. The Private Correspondence of Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough (London, 1838), ii.137.

4. Holmes, Age of Anne, p.202.

5. James Barry, 4th Earl of Barrymore [I] (1667-1748), of Rock Savage, Cheshire. M.P. for Wigan, 1715-47. Hanoverian Tory; became a prominent Jacobite in the 1730s and '40s.

6. Hist. MSS. Comm., Kenyon MSS., no. 1134, p.448: Dr. R. Kenyon to Mrs. Kenyon, 6 Sept. 1712; G.E.C., Complete Peerage, xi. 28-30.

These then were the principal aristocratic interests operating in Lancashire and Cheshire in 1714. All were historically antagonistic to one another, and none was, of itself, powerful enough to dominate the political life of either county. Only in association with a large section of the county gentry was it possible for any of these noble lords to fabricate a successful electoral interest, and such arrangements were of necessity fragile, and heavily dependent upon the elasticity of partisan allegiances. Nonetheless, the families of Stanley, Molyneux, Cholmondeley, Booth and Barry represented the big battalions in the political warfare of northwestern society, and their importance in determining the outcome of its major battles cannot be overstated.

Quite separate from the political influence which these great magnates wielded as landlords and patrons was that which, on a more transient basis, they enjoyed as the representatives of central government. As an agent of the Crown, it was the Lord Lieutenant's task to maintain the Militia, recommend the appointment of suitable Justices of the Peace, and generally supervise the administration of county life. Closely associated with him were his Deputy Lieutenants and the Constables of garrison towns, over whose appointment he could exert considerable influence. Thus, taken in conjunction with the notice paid to his recommendations for clerical preferment and placement in the revenue services, the Lord Lieutenant had at his disposal an enormous fund of patronage that might be used to the political advantage of himself or his friends. In Lancashire, however, there was the additional, and in some ways rival, institutional authority of the Duchy of Lancaster.[1] While the Lieutenancy was

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1. For a short account of the Duchy administration, see R. Somerville, Office-Holders in the Duchy and County Palatine of Lancaster, from 1603 (London, 1972), pp.vii-xxxvii.

ordinarily filled by a prominent nobleman residing within the county, the Chancellorship was a more directly political appointment, going to a figure of national eminence with no necessary connections in the northwestern shires. This division of governmental authority was productive of longstanding disputes between the Lord Lieutenants and successive Chancellors, primarily relating to rights of nomination to parliamentary seats in Lancashire boroughs. In 1696 both the county and boroughs were said by one observer to be in the gift of the Duchy;[1] but this was most certainly a gross exaggeration, for despite large estates in the county and the concentration of the Duchy's courts and administrative functions at Preston, the only claim made to outright nomination by the end of the seventeenth century was for a single seat in Preston itself, and even here the pretensions of Duchy officials were hotly disputed by local party-men.[2] Local patronage too was a source of serious friction, especially where the offices in question carried with them some measure of electoral influence, as did those of the Ranger of the Five Forests and the Constables of Lancaster and Liverpool Castles.[3] Not all Chancellors, however, were merely concerned to see the patronage under their control disposed of for the best electoral advantage. Lord Berkeley of Stratton,[4] appointed to the Duchy by Harley in 1710, clearly had more noble, if

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1. Hist. MSS. Comm., Kenyon MSS., no. 1012, p.407: R. Edge to R. Kenyon, 12 Mar. 1695-6.

2. Brit. Mus., Addit. MSS. 33061 (Newcastle Papers), f.425: Memorandum, n.d.; Hist. MSS. Comm., Portland MSS., iv.576: Sir J. Bland to R. Harley, 25 Aug. 1710; also see below, pp. 61,63.

3. Some hundreds of votes were said to depend upon these offices: see Hist. MSS. Comm., 1st Rep. (Hatton MSS.), pp.20-1: Ld. Derby to ? , [2 letters] 1702; ibid.: H. Finch to Ld. Nottingham, [3 letters] 1698-1702.

4. William, 4th Baron Berkeley of Stratton (d.1741). Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, 1710-14; First Lord of Trade and Plantations, 1714-15.

perhaps more naive, objectives in mind when he told Sir Roger Bradshaigh: 'My chief aim, all parties lay'd aside, is to find out the fittest men for their offices, and y^{t} will doe the best service to their countrey.'[1] But since the Chancellor's office changed hands according to the fortunes of politicians and parties at Westminster, it was becoming increasingly difficult to maintain a separate Duchy interest, distinct from local or national party associations, and newcomers found that they had all too short a time to acquaint themselves with the potential strengths of their position.[2]

In Cheshire the power of the Lord Lieutenant was more absolute, though he shared a certain amount of legal patronage with the Chamberlain of the County Palatine of Chester. Both offices were normally filled by local noblemen, but after the Earl of Cholmondeley's dismissal in 1713, the Oxford ministry was obliged to import the Earl of Plymouth, having no Tory peer resident in the county on whom they could rely. Lord Barrymore was as yet too recent an arrival to have gained the confidence of the local Tory squires, and in any case his associations with the Earl of Nottingham made him persona non grata with the government.[3] Thus on the eve of the Hanoverian Succession the Tory interest in the county found itself unable to make effective use of its party's ascendancy in the nation. Institutional influence was evidently of little benefit unless it could be channelled into the hands of men already powerful in the county community by virtue of their own estates and prestige.

It was not, however, the great territorial magnates who constituted the essential fabric of political society in Lancashire and Cheshire, but

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1. John Rylands Univ. Lib., Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Berkeley to Bradshaigh, 30 Sept. 1710.

2. Ibid.

3. See below, pp. 28-9.

rather the country squires and clergy amongst whom they lived. It was from social, political and religious differences within these groups that party divisions had originated, and among them that the traditions of party loyalty remained most deeply rooted. It is therefore essential to set the political changes of the period 1714 to 1747 in the context of continuous local developments stretching back into the seventeenth century.

The Restoration in Cheshire saw a return to what Dr. Morrill has described as 'consensus government by the old county élite';[1] and though it has been less well studied, the same is probably true of Lancashire as well. Parliamentarian and Royalist gentry families came together in 1660 to serve in the institutions of county administration, determined to maintain their predominance within the shire and to stand united against the encroachments of the central government. Gradually, though, in the course of the following decade, the Anglican gentry families came more and more to monopolize all positions of authority in both county communities, whilst Presbyterians and those who had associated with them in the later stages of the Interregnum found themselves increasingly excluded from power.[2] Moreover, in Lancashire the situation was further exacerbated by the hostile and persecutory attitude adopted by most Anglicans towards the Catholic community after the return of the Stuarts. In a county where so many gentlemen of the first rank owed their primary allegiance to Rome, it was only natural that 'the Church-of-England-Men' should have come to

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1. Morrill, Cheshire, 1630-1660, p.328.

2. These developments can be clearly traced in contemporary correspondence and in surviving lists of Deputy Lieutenants and Commissions of the Peace. See, for example, those in Hist. MSS. Comm., Kenyon MSS.; and Hist. MSS. Comm., 10th Rep.VII (Kilmorey MSS.).

regard themselves as 'the King's truly (if not only) loyal subjects'.[1]

The Exclusion Crisis, therefore, did little more than clarify an opposition to the dominance of the Church party in both counties, which owed its origin to events and attitudes much older than those paraded with such renewed vigour between 1678 and 1683. It was this period of heightening political tensions which first gave rise to the names of Whig and Tory, but it most certainly did not create the differences in local society to which they became attached, and to which they stuck with such tenacity. In the short term, Exclusion and its immediate aftermath were a disaster for the Whigs. Not only did they suffer a severe loss of public credit as a direct consequence of their implication in the Rye House Plot and the Monmouth Rebellion, but in so doing they also laid themselves open to a period of rigorous and systematic harassment at the hands of the authorities. In the longer run, however, this too was turned to their advantage; for besides endowing them with a hearty and enduring dislike of their Tory neighbours, it also engendered amongst them a peculiar esprit de corps which was to last well into the 1690s.[2]

The most significant event for the future development of party affiliations, though, was undoubtedly the Glorious Revolution of 1688. By proving the Whigs to have been the more accurate prophets of James II's character and actions, the calamitous events of 1685 to 1688 went some way

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1. Hist. MSS. Comm., Kenyon MSS., no. 372, pp. 113-14 L. Oldfield to R. Kenyon, 21 Dec. 1679.

2. Sir John Crewe gave their mutual sufferings in 1683 as his principal reason for sticking by Sir Robert Cotton in the Cheshire election of 1695, rather than joining with those Whigs who sought to remove the latter for having voted against the Junto during the last session of Parliament: see Utkinton MSS., CR 63/2/691, f.184: Crewe to Cotton, 20 Sept. 1695.

towards healing the wounds inflicted by Exclusion, temporarily at least, so that in Lancashire and Cheshire the Revolution, once made, received the active or passive support of the great majority of Whigs and Tories alike. Moreover, it apparently did so without over-taxing the tender consciences of the latter party, whose agonizing dilemma of principle did not really materialize until it came to the delicate task of working out a new constitutional settlement.[1] In fact, the early days of the new regime were characterized in both counties by a strongly bi-partisan spirit and a re-assertion of the ideals of county unity.[2] Nevertheless, it was impossible to disguise the reality of a rapidly emerging Whig ascendancy in the administrative establishments of both shire communities. The old Earl of Derby[3] was stripped of his twin Lord Lieutenancies and replaced by Lords Brandon[4] and Delamere[5] -- soon to be the Earls of Macclesfield and Warrington respectively. Both were men of pronounced Presbyterian sympathies, and their appointments inaugurated a period of growing Whig domination in the northwest. Between 1689 and 1694, they pursued a determined policy of infiltrating their supporters, many of

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1. See, for example, Utkinton MSS., CR 63/2/691, f.66: Sir W. Aston to Sir J. Crewe, 16 Apr. 1689.

2. See P. J. W. Higson, 'The Willoughbys of Parham: A Neglected Revolution Family, 1640-1765' (Liverpool Ph. D. thesis 1969) [draft copy in Lancashire R. O.], pp. 117-46. Cf. the letters of Sir Willoughby Aston to Sir John Crewe in Utkinton MSS., CR 63/2/691, especially ff. 66-127.

3. William George Richard Stanley, 9th Earl of Derby (c.1655-1702).

4. Charles Gerard, Lord Brandon; succeeded father as 2nd Earl of Macclesfield in 1694. See above, p. 8 , note 1 .

5. Henry Booth, 2nd Baron Delamere (1652-1694); created 1st Earl of Warrington in 1690. M.P. for Cheshire, 1678-83. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Apr. 1689-Mar. 1690. Lord Lieutenant of Cheshire, 1689-94.

whom were themselves Dissenters, into the Deputy Lieutenancies and Commissions of the Peace in their respective counties.[1] A high proportion of the newcomers were of inferior social rank and low esteem, particularly in the eyes of the old Anglican gentry families whom they supplanted. 'Whilst ye noble Earls of Derby presided over ye 2 Counteys of Lancaster and Chester,' noted the young George Kenyon, 'wee had None but gent[leme]n of high quality amongst us set over us as Dep[u]ty Lieu[tenan]ts nor many save such were Justices of ye peace, but now wee have persons whose qualityes wee cannot for shame name.'[2] In Cheshire, despite the high level of nonconformist organization in the county,[3] the assault on the Anglican establishment was less radical, due to the premature death of Lord Warrington in 1694, and the concern shown by his ultimate successor, Lord Rivers, to encourage the adherence of sound Church-of-England men. In Lancashire, however, no such constraints were operative, and the advancement of the so-called Presbyterian party went on to reach its apogee, with Lord Macclesfield and his dissenting associates dominating the dispensation of official patronage down to 1698, and thereafter, to a lesser degree, until the earl's death in 1701.[4]

By the spring of 1694, bi-partisanship had all but collapsed, and the process of re-polarization was already well-established. Many Tories,

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1. Hist. MSS. Comm., Finch MSS., ii. 210-11: L. Oldfield to Derby, 28 May 1689; Hist. MSS. Comm., Kenyon MSS., no. 659, pp.212-13: Observations on Lord Brandon's Lieutenancy and the State of the County of Lancaster, 1688-9; Kenyon MSS., DDKe/4/9: Remarks on the Change of the Lieutenancy in Lancashire and Cheshire, n.d. [c.1689]; Higson, 'The Willoughbys of Parham', pp.117-46.

2. Kenyon MSS., DDKe/2/19/11: Note in the handwriting of G. Kenyon, n.d. [c.1695].

3. W. Urwick, Historical Sketches of Nonconformity in Cheshire (London & Manchester, 1864), pp.liv-lvi.

4. Higson, 'Willoughbys of Parham', pp. 147-240.

initially well-disposed towards the post-revolutionary order, found themselves gradually alienated from it, by the assertiveness of the Whigs, and by the witch-hunting of suspected Jacobites. They saw in these developments not merely the settling of old scores, but also the revival of more deep-seated antipathies deriving from the Civil War. In 1690, one Cheshire Tory wrote from his prison cell to acquaint Lord Derby with his opinion: 'that the old divisions in these parts were well known, and the original thereof was Cavalier and Rounded [sic]; ... that the root of animosities here, the old cause of new doeings, hath layn bare many years.'[1] However, the party divisions which re-emerged during the early 1690s were not exactly the same as those that had existed in 1688: a definite re-alignment of forces took place in the localities, just as it did at Westminster during these formative years.[2] The old Church party of Charles II's reign was now irrevocably split, and if most of its former adherents emerged as Tories, and some even as Jacobites, there were several, like Lord Cholmondeley in Cheshire, and Sir Alexander Rigby in Lancashire, who threw in their lot with the Whigs.

The accession of Queen Anne in 1702 produced a marked revival in the self-confidence of the northwestern Tories, and, coinciding as it did with the death of Lord Macclesfield, saw a dramatic decline in the fortunes of the Presbyterian party in Lancashire. Although there was a partial recovery between 1705 and 1710,[3] the Dissenters never again dominated the county establishment as they had done between 1694 and 1698. They did, however, continue to occupy an important position within the framework of Whig electoral interests in both counties, constituting

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1. Hist. MSS. Comm., Kenyon MSS., no. 742, p.245: L. Oldfield to Derby, 31 July 1690.

2. The best discussion of these re-alignments is still that in Sir Keith Feiling, A History of the Tory Party, 1640-1714 (reprinted edn., Oxford, 1950), 307-29.

perhaps a quarter of the Cheshire electorate in 1715,[1] and featuring prominently among Whig voters in the Lancashire election of 1722.[2] In the latter county, though, the Whigs' popular base was broadened to a considerable extent after 1702 as a consequence of the Derby group's closer involvement with the party. The Cheshire Whigs had never been reliant on Dissenters to anything like the same degree; there was always considerable support for the party after 1689 from a substantial section of the Anglican gentry, even during Lord Warrington's Lieutenancy. Yet without the support of the moderate, uncommitted voters of the centre, the Whigs, in Cheshire at least, would have remained the minority interest. It was the middle ground which they managed to control so effectively down to 1701, and which the Tories had to take from them if they were to regain their social and political pre-eminence. It is perhaps significant, therefore, that Cheshire was the only county, outside the south and east of the country, which faithfully reflected the national swing in all the elections of Queen Anne's reign.[3]

For those members of the old Church party who continued to profess a Tory allegiance, the years between the Revolution and the Hanoverian Succession were a period of suspended animation. There were among them few committed Jacobites, and many staunch Anglicans who found the idea of a Popish successor positively repellant. Yet the Tories were Royalists by instinct, temperament and antecedence, and continued to display a profound uncertainty as to where their allegiances lay: whether to 'the powers that be', regardless of their provenance, or to the legitimate

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1. This was a contemporary assessment; for details of the survey on which it was based, see the table reprinted in Urwick, Nonconformity in Cheshire, p.lx.

2. P.R.O., S[tate] P[apers], Series 35, vol. 31, f.272: Anti Rumpolian to Mr. Sharpe, 26 Apr. 1722.

3. Speck, Tory and Whig, p.77.

male heirs of the Stuart line. The reign of William III was punctuated by a series of Jacobite plots, some real, others imaginary;[1] but after 1702, the prominence of Nonjurors and the general level of overt disaffection diminished considerably, due in roughly equal parts to the re-introduction of Tories into county administration, the welcome accession of a Stuart monarch, and the patriotic indignation which met the French proclamation of the Old Pretender as James III of England. So long as Queen Anne remained alive and in good health, all but the most scrupulous Tory consciences were prepared to accept the status quo with reasonable equanimity. But as her reign progressed, it became more and more obvious that the dilemma of ultimate allegiance had been postponed rather than eradicated.[2]

Another important feature of these years was the growing rapport built up between many Tories and their Catholic neighbours. The former's proscription from office during the Whig supremacy of the 1690s gave them a common cause with those whom they had hounded for so long, and during Queen Anne's reign this understanding developed, in Lancashire at least, into a full blown political alliance with clearly Jacobite overtones. There was, however, a problem of leadership. Prior to his death in a duel in 1712, a large number of Lancashire and Cheshire gentlemen, both Catholics and Protestants, had come to regard the Duke of Hamilton as their chief, and with his demise a void was created which proved extremely difficult to fill. Several squires from Lancashire and Cheshire, almost all of decidedly High Tory principles, attended the late duke's widow at Wedicar

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1. A general picture of Jacobite activities in the northwest can be built up from the correspondence and papers surving in the Kenyon MSS. at Preston, and from those printed in Hist. MSS. Comm., Kenyon MSS. For the best discussion of this and other evidence, see Enid L. Lonsdale, 'John Lunt and the Lancashire Plot, 1694', Trans. Hist. Soc. of Lancs. and Chesh., cxv (1963), 91-106.

2. Holmes, Age of Anne, pp.89-90.

Hall in October 1713;[1] but such displays of respect were of little political value, and failed to disguise the complete dearth of alternative leadership. In this context, it is highly significant, that, after being returned as Tory Member for Lancashire in the General Election of 1713, John Bland[2] should have chosen to make the home of the Catholic Lord Molyneux one of his very first ports of call.[3]

On the eve of the Hanoverian Succession, however, the northwestern Tories were not only leaderless, but also deeply divided among themselves on fundamental issues of policy and principle. In the autumn of 1710, Robert Harley had endeavoured to form a broadly based government of political moderates, free from 'the mercyless men of both parties'.[4] Like Godolphin before him, he saw the need to hold the middle ground against men from either extreme of the party spectrum.[5] The General Election of that year, though, resulted in a Tory landslide which, while it returned to Parliament Tories of radically different views about the Succession and the Peace Proposals, made a long-term coalition of the centre impossible. The ministry's attitude on both these issues rapidly alienated a small but influential section of the parliamentary party, which, gathered around Lords Nottingham and Anglesey, and later Sir Thomas Hanmer, came to provide the nucleus of a separate Hanoverian Tory group.[6] By the time of the

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1. The Tyldesley Diary: Personal Records of Thomas Tyldesley during the Years 1712-1714, ed. J. Gillow and A. Hewitson (Preston, 1873), pp.120-1.

2. John Bland (1691-1743), of Hulme Hall, Lancs. and Kippax, Yorks.; succeeded father as 5th Bart. 25 Oct. 1715. M.P. for Lancashire, 1713-27. High Tory; arrested in Nov. 1715 on suspicion of treason; 1716, married Frances, daughter of 1st Earl of Aylesford.

3. Tyldesley Diary, p.113.

4. Holmes, Age of Anne, p.112.

5. Ibid., pp. 191-2.

6. Ibid., p.93.

vote in June 1714 on the question of a reward for the apprehension of the Pretender, the Tories at Westminster were divided into three distinct sections: those inclined towards securing a Stuart Restoration; those in favour of the Protestant Succession; and those, the largest group of all, who still refused to commit themselves either way.[1]

Similar differences had become manifest in the localities too, and in the General Election of 1713 a number of contests were fought out, not between Tories and Whigs, but between Tories of differing persuasions.[2] Such was the case in Lancashire, where the Oxford ministry found itself supporting, not a little incongruously, an informal coalition of Court Tories and Whigs brought together under the pragmatic leadership of Lord Derby. Ranged against this makeshift alliance was a formidable array of local Tories, some of them supporters of the late Duke of Hamilton, but the majority staunch Hanoverians identifying strongly with the Earl of Nottingham's parliamentary group. Indeed, Nottingham's personal connection was largely composed of Members who represented constituencies in Wales and the northwest of England:[3] a circumstance arising partly from a marriage-alliance between the Finch and Mostyn families, and partly from the active participation in Lancashire politics of three of the earl's brothers: Heneage,[4] Edward,[5] and Henry Finch.[6] These two Tory interests

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1. Holmes, Age of Anne, p.87.

2. Speck, Tory and Whig, p.8.

3. Holmes, Age of Anne, p.274.

4. Hon. Heneage Finch (?1647-1719). Created Baron Guernsey, 1702; created Earl of Aylesford, 1714. M.P. for Oxford Univ., 1678-9, 1701-2; for Guildford, 1685. Solicitor General, 1678-86; Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, 1714-16. His eldest son Heneage (d.1757) stood unsuccessfully at Wigan in 1708.

5. Hon. Edward Finch (1664-1738). Fellow of Christ's College, Cambridge; M.P. for Cambridge Univ., 1689-90. Ordained 1700; Prebend of York, 1704; Prebend of Canterbury, 1710; Rector of Wigan, 1707-15.

6. Hon. Henry Finch (d.1728). Rector of Winwick, Lancs., 1692-1725; Dean of York, 1702-1728.

clashed at Wigan, where Edward Finch was able to use his considerable influence as rector to try and secure the election of Lord Barrymore in place of the coalition's official Tory nominee, George Kenyon.[1] After the contest was over, Sir Roger Bradshaigh wrote to inform Oxford that he and Kenyon had been 'chosen by a very great majority, notwithstanding the opposition of Lord Barrymore and his friends the Finches. I have met,' he continued, 'with several letters sent from considerable persons above to their party friends here to do their utmost to throw me out.'[2]

This was Barrymore's first sortie into Lancashire politics. He had eloped with Lord Rivers' daughter in 1706,[3] and only came to the northwest on his father-in-law's death in 1712. He was a soldier by profession, and had already enjoyed a long and successful military career. What is more, he had managed to retain a good deal of credit with the Whig ministers between 1707 and 1710,[4] and remained closely attached to the Finches even after Nottingham went over to the Junto in 1711. It is possible that he wrote to his Cheshire tenants against the ministerial candidates there in 1713;[5] certainly George Kenyon's wife believed that Barrymore's relations with the Junto might be used to lessen his interest with the Cheshire voters.[6] There can be no doubt, however, that he was also on the best of

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1. There were in fact three contests at Wigan in 1713: a by-election, the general election, and a disputed mayoral election. For details of these, and of the rector's influence in the borough, see Marjorie Cox, 'Sir Roger Bradshaigh, 3rd Baronet, and the Electoral Management of Wigan, 1695-1747', Bulletin of the John Rylands Library, 37 (1954-5), 128-30, 133-6.

2. Hist. MSS. Comm., Portland MSS., v. 327: Bradshaigh to Oxford, 4 Sept. 1713.

3. Hist. MSS. Comm., Bath MSS., i. 88: Bradshaigh to Rivers, 8, 12, & 18 Aug. 1706; ibid.: J. Baynes to Rivers, 11 Aug., 1706.

4. Holmes, Age of Anne, p. 27.

5. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Barrymore to [his aunt?], 17 Nov. 1713.

6. Kenyon MSS., DDKe/9/104/9: A. Kenyon to G. Kenyon, n.d. [c.1713].

terms with many of the leading Tories in the northwest. In particular, he was a close friend of Richard Shuttleworth,[1] whose great personal prestige and influence among the Tory gentry of Lancashire was placed at his disposal during the electoral turmoils at Wigan.[2] In fact, despite their factious opposition to the Tory ministry at Westminster, it is hard to escape the conclusions that the Barrymore-Finch connection in Lancashire possessed far more respectable Tory credentials than those of the opposing interest.

This in brief then was the state of parties in Lancashire and Cheshire in the summer of 1714. The Tories, though divided among themselves, controlled the administrative establishments of both counties, whilst the Whigs, having lost something of their political momentum, seemed more anxious to reach an accommodation with their opponents than they were to oust them from power. Had the Queen been in good health, the Tories might have looked forward to a brighter future, and even through the spring and summer of 1714 were able to salvage something of their shattered unity by coming together in support of a High Church religious policy. As late as June, Sir George Warburton,[3] shortly to emerge as an advocate of political compromise in Cheshire, was eagerly anticipating the Schism Bill's successful passage through the House of Lords: 'to ye great mortification of ye Whiggs'.[4] But as the Queen's life ebbed away, the Tories' split over the Succession, and the refusal of many members of

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1. Richard Shuttleworth (1683-1749), of Gawthorpe Hall, Lancs. M.P. for Lancashire, 1705-49. High Tory and a reputed Jacobite. His son James, born in 1714, is said to have been named after the Old Pretender.

2. Kenyon MSS., DDKe/9/102/122: T. Marsden to G. Kenyon, 18 May 1713; ibid., DDKe/66 (5): Wigan pollbook, 3 Sept. 1713. Shuttleworth did not vote himself, but many of his Tory neighbours did. See Appendix A.

3. Sir George Warburton, 3rd Bart. (1675-1743), of Arley, Chesh. M.P. for Cheshire, 1702-5, 1710-22. High Tory. Stood as Compromise candidate in 1715.

4. Legh of Lyme MSS.: Warburton to P. Legh, 8 June 1714.

the party to commit themselves either way, began to loom larger in the political thinking of a good many people. For, as events were soon to make abundantly clear, it was the Succession and not the Church which was in the greatest danger, and it was a growing realization of this fact which, more than anything else, was to determine the political developments of the crucial eighteen months that lay ahead.

2. Jacobites and Hanoverians, 1714-1715.

Queen Anne died on 1 August 1714. For many Jacobite Tories it was an occasion for celebration, if not rejoicing, as they looked forward with growing optimism to the imminent restoration of the legitimate Stuart line. The Lancashire Catholic Thomas Tyldesley[1] noted in his diary that on hearing the news he and his friends 'spent 2s. each, being invitted to a pige feast.'[2] There were other Tories, however, who regarded the prospect of a Stuart Succession with less relish; who were greatly relieved to see the Elector of Hanover peacefully proclaimed as King George I, and the Protestant Succession effected with such apparent absence of dissent. 'After ye loss of our good Queen,' observed John Ward[3] to Peter Legh,[4] '& ye apprehensions w.ch were naturall on such a case, the unanimity & order w.ch all things proceed in gives great hopes of perfect peace & quiet.' Moreover, whilst orders had gone out for putting into execution the laws against

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1. Thomas Tyldesley (1657-1715), of Myerscough, Lancs. Catholic and active Jacobite.

2. Tyldesley Diary, p.164: 4 Aug. 1714.

3. John Ward (1670-1749), of Capesthorne, Chesh., and the Inner Temple. M.P. for Newton, Dec. 1703-1715; for Thetford, 1715-22. Q.C., 1711; Puisne Justice of Chester, 1711-14. Whimsical Tory, closely associated with Nottingham and Hanmer. Retired from active politics after 1722 to pursue his legal career.

4. Peter Legh (1669-1744), of Lyme Hall, Chesh., and Haydock, Lancs. A resolute Nonjuror, he was one of those tried and acquitted of treason at Manchester in 1694. Thereafter remained aloof from direct involvement in Jacobite intrigue. Possessed absolute power of nomination to both seats at Newton.

Catholics and Nonjurors, for the seizure of their arms and horses, he hoped that these provisions would be implemented in a fair spirit, and not 'in so unneighbourly a maner as formerly.'[1]

According to one Whig contemporary, the new King was at first thought to favour employing in his service 'those of both denominations [i.e. Whigs and Tories] whom he had heard a good account of, and believed true to the interest of his family, which he was well inclined to think of many a Tory, being a wise and just man, well acquainted with the nation and not of a violent temper.'[2] Some credence was lent to this opinion by the composition of the Commission of Lords Justices, appointed to manage the affairs of the nation until the King came over from Hanover. This plenipotentiary body was dominated by the nominally Whig triumvirate of Shrewsbury, Argyle and Somerset, three moderate Courtiers who had helped Harley to power in 1710, and who had controlled events at Court in the crucial last days of the Queen's life. There were in addition to these men four Tories, among them Nottingham and Anglesey, and a number of Whigs, all of decidedly temperate views. There was as yet no room for the 'merciless men' of either party.[3]

Although Lord Derby was appointed to the vacant Lancashire Lieutenancy within three weeks of the Queen's demise,[4] a further

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1. Legh of Lyme MSS.: Ward to Legh, 3 Aug. 1714.

2. The Divided Society, ed. Holmes and Speck, pp. 177-8: Sir J. Perceval to [D. Dering?], n.d., [Nov.? 1714].

3. D. Jarrett, Britain 1688-1815 (London, 1965), p.151; B. Williams, The Whig Supremacy, 1714-1760 (2nd edn., revised C. H. Stuart, Oxford, 1962), p.153.

4. P.R.O., C[Hancery Papers] 231/9, Crown Office Docquet Book, 1700-21, p. 312: 19 Aug. 1714.

two months were to elapse before Lord Cholmondeley replaced the Tory Earl of Plymouth as Lord Lieutenant of Cheshire and the several counties of North Wales.[1] As for the seals of the Duchy of Lancaster, they were allowed to remain in the competent Tory hands of Lord Berkeley until the beginning of November.[2] Thus, in these first weeks, it was by no means certain what kind of political future the Tories could expect to enjoy under the new dispensation. Nottingham was appointed as Lord President of the Council, and overtures were made, albeit unsuccessfully, to Hanmer and Bromley. Though the Whigs clearly held a temporary ascendancy at Court, as indeed their opponents had done in 1702, for the present, the Junto Lords, Somers, Wharton and Sunderland, were every bit as impotent as the late Tory ministers, Oxford, Bolingbroke and Ormonde. In the longer term it seemed that nothing was yet settled, and that with a General Election in prospect there was still everything to play for.[3]

Nevertheless, the differences that had become manifest within the Tory ranks during the life of the Oxford ministry were patently unresolved. Whereas Bolingbroke had laboured unsuccessfully during the last week of July to gather round him a viable Tory ministry able

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1. P.R.O., C. 231/9, p.320: 21 Oct. 1714. Cholmondeley was also re-appointed Treasurer of the Household and Governor of Chester Castle: see P.R.O., S.P., Series 44, vol. 117, p.6: Stanhope to Lansdowne, 9 Oct. 1714; ibid., vol. 176, p.25: Letters Patent, 18 Oct. 1714

2. Somerville, Office Holders in the Duchy of Lancaster, p.4.

3. Plumb, Growth of Political Stability, pp. 161-2.

to secure a working majority in Parliament, in the first weeks of August Dartmouth and Bromley were discussing with Oxford the possibilities of a moderate coalition, and Oxford himself was making approaches to the Whigs.[1] Now, seeing himself cheated of power, Bolingbroke came near to despair. 'The grief of my soul is this,' he told Atterbury,

> I see plainly that the Tory party is gone. Those who broke from us formerly continue still to act and to speak on the same principles and with the same passions. Numbers will be increased by such as have not their expectations answered, but where are the men of business that will live and draw together? 2

For their part, the Hanoverian Tories, among whom must be numbered many moderate Harleyites as well as the former Whimsicals, regarded Bolingbroke, Atterbury and their crypto-Jacobite circle as the true architects of faction inside the Tory party. 'Without doubt,' asserted Dr. William Stratford to Edward Harley, 'the late cabal are taking their measures, either how to make their court or stand upon their defence .... I believe they think their own game desperate, and will endeavour to draw the church party into an open breach with the present powers in hopes of leading them and being protected by them.'[3] Though willing to admit that Bolingbroke's primary aim was the reunification of the party, Stratford doubted whether his past record made him ideally suited to perform so delicate a task. 'Does he think after what has passed,' he

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1. Feiling, The Tory Party, 1640-1714, pp. 477-8 .

2. P.R.O., S.P. 35/1, no. 31b: Bolingbroke to Atterbury, n.d. [Aug. or Sept. 1714?] [per calendar in P.R.O.].

3. Hist. MSS. Comm., Portland MSS., vii. 199: Stratford to E. Harley, 10 Aug. 1714. Stratford was a Canon of Christ Church and chaplain to the Earl of Oxford. His father had been Bishop of Chester.

queried to Harley, 'they who are clear themselves will come in to save him; that is the meaning.' Atterbury's language, he added, was just the same: 'old quarrels must be forgotten, we must unite again, no doubt of it; and it is to be hoped the church party will unite, but exclusively of them. No one will ever have to do with such villains any more.'[1]

If the differences within the Tory party had been confined to the dispute between Nottingham's parliamentary following and the late ministry, or to the struggle between Bolingbroke and Oxford for the leadership, then the damage done to Tory unity might have been restricted to the M.P.s at Westminster. Indeed, with the Whigs in favour at Court, a General Election might have provided the perfect incentive for reconstructing the crumbling façade of Tory solidarity in the face of the common enemy. But such was not the case. Both of these squabbles were merely symptomatic of a much deeper malaise, which by the summer of 1714 once more threatened the corporate existence of the party as it had done in 1688. So long as the immediate safety of the Protestant Succession was in any doubt, the most important division in politics lay, not between Tory and Whig, but between Jacobite and Hanoverian: a division which, whilst it barely affected the Whigs, threatened to split the Tories down the middle. In such a situation, the consequences of an election were liable to prove calamitous rather than cathartic.

The 1706 Act of Regency demanded that the Parliament in being at the time of the Queen's death be dissolved within six months, and a

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1. Hist. MSS. Comm., Portland MSS., vii. 200: Stratford to Harley, 12 Aug. 1714.

new election held. The business of fixing interests for the forthcoming contest, therefore, began almost at once. When, early in August, the sitting Tory Members for Cheshire, Charles Cholmondeley[1] and Sir George Warburton, wrote to their 'Particular Friends in every hundred', in order to assess the chances of being re-chosen as their party's representatives,[2] the response was somewhat less than enthusiastic. Sir Richard Grosvenor,[3] for example, refused to express any opinion, believing himself to be 'but an Indifferent Judge w.t turn affairs may have on this Malancoly occasion;'[4] whilst Peter Legh and Sir Francis Leicester[5] declined to make any reply at all. The stumbling-block it appears was Cholmondeley, who had voted against the Oxford ministry on a number of occasions, and the news of whose marriage to Governor

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1. Charles Cholmondeley (1685-1756), of Vale Royal, Chesh. M.P. for Cheshire, 1710-15, 1722-Mar. 1756. 2nd cousin of the 1st and 2nd Earls of Cholmondeley. High Tory; member of the October Club; gained reputation as a Whimsical in the last year of Queen Anne's reign.

2. Grosvenor MSS.:C. Cholmondeley to Sir Richard Grosvenor, 5 Aug. 1714.

3. Sir Richard Grosvenor, 4th Bart. (1689-1732), of Eaton Hall, Cheshire. M.P. for Chester, 1715-32; Mayor, 1715-16; brother-in-law of Sir William Wyndham; High Tory, recommended to the Pretender in 1721 as a supporter. His influence extended over Cheshire and Denbighshire as well as Chester itself.

4. Grosvenor MSS: Grosvenor to Cholmondeley, 9 Aug. 1714.

5. Sir Francis Leicester, 3rd Bart. (1674-1742), of Tabley, Cheshire. M.P. for Newton, 1715-27; Sheriff of Cheshire, 1705-6. A moderate Tory and lifelong friend of Peter Legh and John Ward.

Pitt's daughter had just broken in the county.[1] Whereas he enjoyed a dubious reputation as a Whimsical, his colleague Warburton was regarded by the Tory backwoodsmen, ironically as it transpired, as a man of sound Tory principles.

By the end of August, Cholmondeley had still received no word from Legh or Leicester, and was unwilling to declare his candidacy without their concurrence. Thus John Ward wrote to Legh on his behalf: ' ... sure it is reasonable to let him, when he He [sic] has applied to you, know what he is to expect or depend upon.' Cholmondeley was perfectly willing to stand down himself if Leicester would offer his own services, and might easily be brought in for a borough seat by his Pitt relatives. Ward, however, was uneasy about the wisdom of forcing Cholmondeley into a close association with the Pitts. 'I confess,' he told Legh,

> I had rather he came in any other way then to create that obligation to y^t^ family tho there is among them in the eldest son ye greatest instance I know of a son voting ag^st^ his father & I verily believe Ch[arles] Ch[olmondeley] is as like to make another as any man & on ye Schism bill he gave a full proof.

Clearly, Ward also disagreed with the received opinion about the correct lessons to be drawn about Cholmondeley's character and principles from his recent political conduct:

> His not being free to be security for some of the late Ministry when Such a Vote was desired & not answering blindfold to some after such demands give me full satisfaction he is an upright man & if a^t^ man may be in any case allow'd to use his own judgm^t^. I'me sure ye particulars he can be charged with may easily be justified & he may remain as true a friend to the establishm^t^ in church & state, as ever he was.

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1. Legh of Lyme MSS.:J. Ward to P. Legh, 1714. Governor Pitt was a Whig and had a daughter married to James Stanhope; Cholmondeley married his other daughter on 22 July 1714.

Yet however the Cheshire Tories decided to interpret Cholmondeley's record, the need for decision was self-evident. 'You may think I've been too earnest in this,' Ward concluded, 'But ye reason is, I don't see without some speedy resolution for some Tory what this can end in except giving up ye County to ye Whigs.'[1]

The fissures in Tory solidarity evidenced in Cheshire as a whole did not fail to find an echo in Chester itself.[2] At the General Election of 1710, Sir Richard Grosvenor had contemplated putting up at Chester, but after some consultation was persuaded not to disturb the sitting Members, Sir Henry Bunbury[3] and Peter Shakerley. His friend and Grand Tour companion, Alexander Forrester, wrote to him from Geneva, rejoicing to hear of his 'so generously waving your present Interest in the City of Chester for the Publick Good. This, Sir,' he added, 'is an action w.ch

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1. Legh of Lyme MSS.:Ward to Legh, n.d. [but late Aug. 1714].

2. At Chester the right of election was vested in the freemen, who in 1715 numbered around 1,500. Although theoretically restricted to those resident within the city and its liberties, the electorate included large numbers of non-residents prior to 1747, when the franchise was determined by the Commons. The city's sheriffs acted as returning officers, but the mayor enjoyed the power of creating honorary freemen. After 1698, the corporation was dominated by the Tories who, under the patronage and leadership of the Grosvenor family, succeeded in re-establishing the system of co-option which the Whigs had set aside during their own period of ascendancy in the 1690s. For a more detailed discussion, see Joseph Hemingway, The History of the City of Chester (Chester, 1831), i. 255-65; ii. 386-96; Hugh T. Dutton, 'The Stuart Kings and Chester Corporation', Journal of the Chester Arch. Soc., new series, xxviii (1929), 180-210.

3. Sir Henry Bunbury, 3rd Bart. (c.1678-1733), of Bunbury and Stanney, nr. Chester; M.P. for Chester, 1701-27. Sheriff of Chesh., 1699-1700. Commissioner of the Revenue in Ireland, 1711-15. High Tory; member of the October Club.

has for ever establish'd the early good opinion and Esteem your Country has had for you and will do you honor to your dying day.'[1] Evidently, though, esteem and honour did not add up to an hereditary claim to a seat in Parliament, and Sir Richard had to be content with the promise of some future accommodation. He made no effort to intervene in the election of 1713, but less than a year later found himself encouraged by his friends to re-assert his family's traditional position as leaders of the Tory interest in the city by standing in person at the forthcoming contest. 'You must take care,' advised one correspondent, 'of being as good an husband as you can of your expences which I hope will not be very considerable amongst your friends.'[2] Thus, when Sir Henry Bunbury wrote to ask for his 'favour & interest' for the next Parliament,[3] Grosvenor wrote back informing him of his own determination to stand. He expressed his hope that both Bunbury and Shakerley would make good their engagement to him, that one of them would stand down if he should desire to offer his service, and further cautioned Bunbury to 'consider ye consequence of deviding an Interest that hath bin established att ye expence of my family.'[4] The following day he wrote in similar vein to Shakerley,[5] but found the latter disinclined to give way before the implied threat of a contest. He reminded Sir Richard that the terms

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1. Grosvenor MSS.:Forrester to Grosvenor, 19 Dec. 1710.
2. Ibid.: A. Trevor to Grosvenor, 12 Aug. 1714.
3. Ibid.: Bunbury to Grosvenor, 17 Aug. 1714.
4. Ibid.: Grosvenor to Bunbury, 23 Aug. 1714.
5. Ibid.: Grosvenor to Shakerley, 24 Aug. 1714.

of their agreement in 1710 had stipulated that Grosvenor should not be opposed at the next election thereafter. Since, therefore, he had not seen fit to offer himself in 1713, their engagement was no longer valid. 'Whether the Citty will accept of my Service again in a new Parliam.t is at their Election,' Shakerley told him, 'but if they do I hould my self obliged to serve them in it.'[1]

Both the sitting Members had represented Chester without opposition throughout Queen Anne's reign, and Shakerley in particular had been an assiduous champion of his constituents' interests at Westminster.[2] But whereas, in spite of his close relationship with Sir Thomas Hanmer,[3] Bunbury's voting record was impeccable, Shakerley, formerly a High Tory, had in the past year voted with the Whimsicals against the French Commercial Treaty and the expulsion of Richard Steele from the House of Commons.[4] There is no evidence, though, that Grosvenor, who was himself considered a High Tory, was able to make any electoral capital out of Shakerley's Whimsicality during the early stages of the campaign. Indeed, it seemed at first that the old charisma of the Grosvenor name might prove less than irresistable to the Chester electors. 'The old members having hitherto behav'd themselves like gentlemen,' wrote back one voter in reply to Sir Richard's application, 'I cannot finde any reason either to slight or reject them for whilst they endeavour to continue I hope you

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1. Grosvenor MSS.: Shakerley to Grosvenor, 25 Aug. 1714.

2. See, for example, R. C. Gwilliam, 'The Chester Tanners and Parliament, 1711-1717', Journal of the Chester Arch. Soc., new series, xliv (1957), 41-9.

3. Bunbury was Hanmer's brother-in-law, and through his intermediacy had been appointed a Commissioner of the Irish Revenue during Ormonde's Lord Lieutenancy; see Hist. MSS. Comm., Ormonde MSS., viii. 320: Hanmer to Ormonde, 23 Oct. 1710.

4. Burton, Riley and Rowlands, 'Political Parties in the Reigns of William III and Anne', loc. cit., p.57.

will excuse me, but if either decline I shall be att your service.'[1] Grosvenor's task was obviously a far from simple one.

In Lancashire, meanwhile, the pattern of political allegiances was in a state of utter confusion. In the General Election of 1713, Lord Derby's highly elastic political scruples had enabled him to remain as the nominal patron of the county's Whigs, at the same time that he was supporting the candidacy of ministerial Tories at Wigan against the endeavours of Lord Barrymore and the pro-Whig Finches. On the King's accession, Lord Derby's re-appointment as Lord Lieutenant was only to be expected, but the maintenance of Lord Berkeley in the Duchy and the success of the Finches at Court were sufficient indications to his lordship that he had been supporting the wrong side. Always an astute observer of changes in the political climate, he did not fail to draw the appropriate conclusions.

Nowhere were the consequences of this more far-reaching than at Wigan.[2] After the expense and trouble of the 1713 contests, George Kenyon was already in two minds whether he ought to stand again. Lord Barrymore's unsuccessful petition to the House of Commons and the

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1. Grosvenor MSS.: R. Crompton to Grosvenor, 7 Sept. 1714.

2. The right of election at Wigan was vested in the freemen, who in 1725 numbered 256: see Wigan R.O., Court Leet Roll, no. 133, Michaelmas 1725. The principal interest in the borough was that belonging to the Bradshaighs of Haigh, although Lord Barrymore and the Rector of Wigan also possessed considerable influence. For a full, if somewhat disorganized, discussion of the borough's political structure, see Cox, 'Sir Roger Bradshaigh and the Electoral Management of Wigan', loc. cit., passim.

subsequent legal action over the legality of the mayoral election had been enough to demonstrate, once and for all, the breadth of support which his Lordship and the Finches enjoyed among the Lancashire and Cheshire Tories. Two Lancashire Members, John Ward and Richard Shuttleworth, had backed the Commons petition, while the locally influential figures of Sir Thomas Standish[1] and Sir Edward Chisenhall[2] were among those challenging the mayoral election in the courts. Only Peter Shakerley, among the prominent local Tories, openly allied himself with Bradshaigh and Kenyon, and he had been a personal friend of both families for more than thirty years. Likewise Lord Berkeley, as the representative of the Oxford Ministry, had given his support to Kenyon, who was not only the official Tory candidate, but also Recorder of Wigan and Vice Chancellor of the County Palatine of Lancaster.[3] On 22 August, Bradshaigh wrote to the Earl of Oxford for advice. '[M]y antagonists,' he told the former Lord Treasurer, 'make it their business to reflect upon me as a friend of yours & think they make great court by that means .... L.d Bar[rymore] & his party are now very uppish, w.ch will make my expences verry considerable to oppose him, but if I can't compass what I would I must goe as farr as ye nature of ye thing will bear.'[4] Thus, without a Tory ministry to provide financial backing, Bradshaigh was inevitably forced into the arms of the Lancashire Whigs.

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1. Sir Thomas Standish, 2nd Bart. (d.1756), of Duxbury, Lancs. Tory.

2. Sir Edward Chisenhall, Kt. (alive 1726), of Chisenhall, Lancs. M.P. for Wigan, 1689-90; for Preston, Dec. 1690-95. Knighted 1671. Tory.

3. Cox, 'Sir Roger Bradshaigh and the Electoral Management of Wigan', loc. cit., pp.133-6.

4. Brit. Mus., Loan 29/127: Bradshaigh to Oxford, 22 August 1714.

Perceiving the strength of the interest that was likely to oppose him in any new contest, Kenyon sought the advice of his Jacobite brother-in-law as to how he should proceed. Dr. Roger Kenyon expressed his opinions without equivocation: 'tho a great many things happen in life when they are least expected; yet as far as I can see, there is no prospect of being of any significant use to the publick; you understand me; & whether there is any likelyhood of serving y.r own affairs by it, you will judge much better than I.' If, however, he should decide to give it up, he should aim not to be out of pocket, and make sure that he would be able to come in again if the political situation should mend. 'And as ye best way of makeing peace is by prepareing for war;' the Doctor observed shrewdly, 'so whatever y.r intentions are, methinks you should put on a countenance of standing and to come of [f] as you think fitt, & upon y.r own termes.'[1] Whether in response to this counsel or not, Kenyon now wrote to acquaint Lord Derby with his intention of being a candidate, provided he had the Lord Lieutenant's approbation.[2]

Considering the complete volte-face which it represented, the earl's reply was casual and matter-of-fact. He had, he explained, already been applied to on behalf of Lord Barrymore. 'I did not believe you would have stud at Wigan,' he told Kenyon, 'so I made no difficulty to let him know I should be glad it were in my power to serve him. I thought I could doe no less, sins I had refused him last time; you having

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1. Kenyon MSS., DDKe/9/102/136: Dr. R. Kenyon to G. Kenyon, 26 Aug. 1714.
2. Ibid.,DDKe/9/105/10: G. Kenyon to Derby, n.d. [Aug. or Sept. 1714].

spoken to me first, I hope you will think this a suffitiant excuse.'[1] During September, representations were made to Kenyon, offering to pay his expenses if he would stand down in Lord Barrymore's favour.[2] His immediate reaction was to affect an air of surprise and indignation, and to protest that he never acted without first consulting Sir Roger Bradshaigh. However, whilst he refused to send any direct answer to this offer, he kept his options open by reminding Barrymore's intermediaries of his readiness, often expressed, to join in any accommodation that might truly secure a lasting peace at Wigan.[3] Perhaps his protestations were genuine; but in the light of his brother-in-law's advice, his conduct seems more likely to have been calculated to secure a better price for his co-operation.

Wigan apart, though, there was little evidence of feverish electoral activity in Lancashire during the early months of the new reign. As far as the county was concerned, no one had yet worked out the likely repercussions of Lord Derby's change of heart, and in the other boroughs no one appeared at all anxious to undertake a lengthy campaign against such a fluid political background. Only at Preston[4] was Sir Henry

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1. Hist. MSS. Comm., Kenyon MSS., no. 1164, p.457: Derby to Kenyon, 14 Sept. 1714.

2. Ibid., no. 1165, p.457: Rev. J. Sumner to Kenyon, 19 Sept. 1714.

3. Ibid., no. 1165A, p.457: Kenyon to Sumner, n.d.

4. At Preston the right of election was in the resident freemen, around 700 in number. In 1715 the Rev. Henry Finch believed it 'as scandalously Corrupt a Burrough as any in England': see Chatsworth House, Finch-Halifax MSS., Box 3/82: Finch to Ld. Aylesford, 17 Jan. 1714-15. The Hoghtons were the mainstay of Whig influence in the town, but their power was effectively balanced by that of the local Tory squires.

Hoghton[1] quick to declare his intention of standing on the Whig interest, hoping thereby, since the other seat was safe for a Tory, to pre-empt the importation of an alternative Whig candidate by the Chancellor or Lord Derby.[2] At Newton,[3] John Bland wrote to Peter Legh early in September to recommend the Cumberland High Tory Sir Christopher Musgrave,[4] who was in danger of losing his seat at Carlisle.[5] Musgrave was not the only Tory, however, in need of a convenient bolt-hole, and Bland enjoyed no special claims on Legh's favour. The main question concerning the votes at Clitheroe[6] was a choice between the claims of rival Tory interests in the borough. The election of Lord Barrymore's friend Thomas Lister seemed beyond question, but the conflict between Edward

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1. Sir Henry Hoghton, 5th Bart. (c.1679-1768), of Hoghton Tower and Walton-le-Dale, nr. Preston, Lancs. M.P. for Preston, 1710-13, 1715-22; for East Looe, Feb. 1724-27; for Preston, 1727-41. Commissioner for Forfeited Estates, 1716-25; Judge Advocate General, 1734-41. A Whig, and a staunch Presbyterian.

2. For the success of Hoghton's ploy, see below p.61.

3. Newton was a burgage borough, wholly under the control of the Leghs of Lyme. See E. Legh, Baroness Newton, The House of Lyme (London, 1917), pp.165, 330-1; Bodl. MS. Willis 48, ff.360-1: T. Willis to B. Willis, 5 Aug. [1715?].

4. Sir Christopher Musgrave, 5th Bart. (1688-1736), of Edenhall, Cumb. M.P. for Carlisle, 1713-15; for Cumberland, 1722-34. Clerk of the Privy Council, 1710-16. Tory.

5. Legh of Lyme MSS.:Bland to Legh, 7 Sept. 1714.

6. Clitheroe was a burgage borough, with around 100 electors in 1715, and a reputation for venality. However, the wide dispersal of the burgages made it far from being a pocket borough on the eve of the Hanoverian Succession. See Bodl. MS. Willis 48, f.358: T. Willis to B. Willis, 23 July 1715.

Harvey[1] and Thomas Parker[2] was apparently incapable of satisfactory resolution. Harvey was the nominee of the lord of the manor, his kinsman the Duke of Montagu, while Parker stood on his own family's interest.[3] It would appear, however, that it was self-interest rather than principle which divided the candidates, and the confrontation at Clitheroe was of little importance outside the borough. About Lancaster[4] and Liverpool[5] at this time almost nothing is known. In April 1711, one of the Liverpool rectors, the Rev. Henry Richmond,[6] had started legal proceedings to get the so-called Whig Charter of 1695 set aside,

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1. Edward Harvey (1658-1736), of Coombe, Surrey. M.P. for Bletchingly, 1679; for Clitheroe,1705-13, 1715-22. Member of the October Club and staunch Jacobite; attempted suicide in Sept. 1715 after discovery of treasonable correspondence; recovered and released in 1716 on the bail of Lord Barrymore. Continued Jacobite activities at least till 1722.

2. Thomas Parker (n.d.), of Bradkirk Hall, Lancs. His cousin Christopher Parker represented Clitheroe in Parl., 1708-13.

3. Romney Sedgwick, ed., The History of Parliament: The House of Commons, 1715-1754 (London, 1970), i.269.

4. The right of election at Lancaster was in the freemen, who were at least 1,100 in number; yet in spite of this large electorate, the borough remained politically docile, power being amicably shared between the town's merchant oligarchy and the local gentry.

5. The right of election at Liverpool was in the freemen, whose numbers rose between 1710 and 1734 from 1,000 to 2,500. During the reign of Queen Anne, the Charter disputes of the 1690s gave way to a new conflict between the rival authorities of the Council and the Common Hall. See Sedgwick, History of Parliament, i.270.

6. Rev. Henry Richmond (d.1721?). Rector of Garstang, 1698-1712; Rector of Liverpool, 1706-21. High Anglican Tory.

and William Clayton[1] had endeavoured to enlist the support of the Oxford ministry behind the undertaking. He was unsuccessful. The dispute dragged on until September 1714, and thereafter gave rise to a retaliatory action against Richmond, arising out of the corporation's right of nomination over the rectorships. In view of the intense bitterness generated by this dispute, it is all the more surprising that the clash of party interests was not reflected in a contested election.[2] As for Lancaster, nothing at all occurred to disturb the tranquility of the inhabitants.

Towards the end of September, despite the lukewarm response to their earlier soundings, Cholmondeley and Warburton at last sent out circular letters to declare their intention of standing for Cheshire on a joint interest:

> As we hope you will believe we have to yet best of our Judgments serv'd our Country faithfully; so we assure you we are still (and shall always be) Ready to do so to our uttmost, & therefore we now take ye liberty by ye advice and com̄ on agreement of our friends, to desire ye favour of your vote and Interest In ye Ensuing Election. 3

The 'common agreement of their friends', however, was precisely what they did not possess, and the two months delay in declaring their candidacy

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1. William Clayton (d.1715), of Liverpool, Lancs. M.P. for Liverpool, 1698-1705, 1713-14. Originally a Whig, he went over to help create a new Tory opposition to the Whig-dominated Council in 1702.

2. J. Touzeau, The Rise and Progress of Liverpool (Liverpool, 1910), i. 389-93; Hist. MSS. Comm., Portland MSS., iv. 673: Clayton to R. Harley, 13 Apr. 1711; Sir J. A. Picton, City of Liverpool: Municipal Archives and Records (Liverpool, 1886), ii. 4-8, 66-9.

3. Grosvenor MSS.: Warburton and Cholmondeley to Grosvenor, 25 Sept. 1714.

had given ample time for others to lay alternative plans. On the last day of September, the High Sheriff of Cheshire, Randle Wilbraham,[1] himself wrote to the principal gentlemen of the county: 'Tis Intimated to me as the desire of severall persons of Quality of both Interests That there sh.d be a Generall Meeting of the Gentlemen of this County to Communicate their Sentim.ts with Relation to the Eleccon of Members for the ensuing Parliam.t.' The meeting was to be at Northwich on 11 November, and those whose affairs would not allow them to be present were asked to signify under their hands which persons they thought proper for the service; by this means, it was hoped, 'the Trouble of a poll' might be prevented.[2]

John Ward, for one, seems to have regarded this call for a county meeting as being in some way connected with the earlier efforts of certain Tories to get rid of Cholmondeley and to make room for a sounder candidate; for two days later he offered to stand down at Newton in favour of Sir Francis Leicester, thereby, as he believed, removing Cholmondeley's major Tory opponent.[3] In fact, the Northwich meeting had little or nothing to do with either Leicester or Legh. On the Tory side, its principal sponsors were a small group of Hanoverians, comprising the Earl of Barrymore, Peter Shakerley, Sir Thomas Brooke[4] and John Egerton of Oulton.[5] It was attended by gentlemen of

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1. Randle Wilbraham (1633-1732), of Nantwich, Chesh. A moderate Tory; brother-in-law of Sir Thomas Brooke, 3rd Bart., of Norton Priory.

2. Legh of Lyme MSS.: Wilbraham to Thomas Legh, 30 Sept. 1714.

3. Legh of Lyme MSS.: Ward to P. Legh, 2 Oct. 1714.

4. Sir Thomas Brooke, 3rd Bart. (c.1664-1737), of Norton Priory, Cheshire. Moderate Tory. Sheriff of Cheshire, 1720; Constable of Chester Castle, n.d.

5. John Egerton (1656-1732) of Oulton, Chesh. A moderate Tory, married to Cha. Cholmondeley's half-sister, Mary.

both parties, among whom a consensus soon emerged in favour of compromising the election. Indeed, the Tories were for an agreement to last for the next six Parliaments; but the Whigs objecting to such a long-term commitment, it was decided to limit the arrangement to the next two Parliaments only. By the terms of this agreement, Sir George Warburton was to put up jointly with a Whig candidate, Langham Booth. Charles Cholmondeley for the Tories and John Offley Crewe[1] for the Whigs were to stand down, but might expect to come in at the following election. The avowed purpose of the Compromise was to avoid the expense and bitterness of a contested election. However, in putting the idea across to the staunch Tory squireens of the county, a more compelling argument was employed. It was stated simply that many of the principal landowners who had lent tacit support to the Tories in 1713, including Lord Cholmondeley and the Duke of Shrewsbury, were now, in the circumstances of the new reign, determined to give their interest to the Whigs. This being the case, it seemed highly improbable that both of the sitting Members could be returned, and indeed just possible that both might be defeated. A set of complex psephological calculations[2] was circulated to prove the point, and every effort was made to stress the

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1. John Offley Crewe (1681-1749), of Crewe Hall, Cheshire. M.P. for Newcastle-under-Lyme, 1703-5; for Cheshire, 1705-10, 1722-7. A Whig in Queen Anne's reign, he stood as a Tory in 1722 and thereafter.

2. Legh of Lyme MSS.: Account of Electoral Interests in Cheshire, on the back of a letter from J. Henshall to ? , 15 Nov. 1714.

state of harmony that now existed between the hitherto rival interests. Seeking to vindicate the measures entered into at Northwich, John Egerton wrote confidently to Peter Legh about this new-found sense of neighbourly understanding: ' ... all this was done in the Friendliest manner imaginable not an indecent word or a reflecting speech offered on either side nor could any body guess we were 2 Parties but by our separation at Dinner Time.'[1]

However, the Compromise was not quite such a straight-forward transaction as its adherents maintained. In the first place, it was difficult to explain what the Whigs stood to gain by it, if, as was alleged, they were in a position to win both seats on their own interest. Furthermore, when Cholmondeley and his supporters refused to sign the Compromise agreement, it soon became evident that there were many people who regarded him as the man of sound principles, and his being set aside as an attempt on the part of self-styled moderate Tories to safeguard the Hanoverian Succession at the cost of their own party's electoral defeat. Such, it would seem, were the sentiments of William Shrigley,[2] when he wrote to Peter Legh from Manchester:

> Good God! how was ye Cheshire election sacrificed att Northwich - we are told many storys, of precontracts, Bargains, underhand agreements .... I am sorry to hear and unwilling to believe y^{t} ever so many gent[leme]n shou'd be Induced by a trifle to betray a cause, [which] has cost so much Labour & toil to carry on for some years past.3

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1. Legh of Lyme MSS.: Egerton to Legh, 12 Nov. 1714. See also ibid.: J. Henshall to ? , 15 Nov. 1714; Chester R.O., MF/131: Shakerley to the Mayor, Corporation & Citizens of Chester, 2 Dec. 1714.

2. William Shrigley (d.1739), of Manchester; prominent among the town's High Tories. A lawyer.

3. Legh of Lyme MSS.: Shrigley to Legh, 15 Nov. 1714.

Even those initially well disposed to the Compromise were uncertain of the reaction to be expected from traditional Tory supporters. '[H]ow it will take through ye County I know not,' Edward Vawdrey[1] admitted to John Ward, 'for a great many of [the] gent[lemen] were not there.'[2] Thus it was that the Tory sponsors of the Compromise found themselves in the unenviable position of having to justify their recent actions to those gentlemen and freeholders who had been absent from the Northwich meeting, and in particular to explain their seemingly paradoxical conduct in 'praefering a Whig to a Whimsical'.[3]

Although he had refused to sign this 'unaccountable Partition-Treaty'as he called it, Cholmondeley was nevertheless hesitant about standing single against the combined strength of both interests, and went out of his way to seek the re-assurance of his friends. Two weeks after the gathering at Northwich he went to stay at Lyme with Peter Legh, who afterwards related the details of the visit to Sir Francis Leicester:

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1. Edward Vawdrey (c.1664- ?), of Hale, Chesh. and Warrington, Lancs. Appointed Vice-Chancellor of the County Palatine of Lancaster, and Steward of Salford Hundred, Nov. 1714-16, on the recommendation of the Finches. Voted against the Cheshire Compromise in 1715.

2. Finch-Halifax MSS., Box 3/125: Vawdrey to Ward, 15 Nov. 1714. Dated from Sr. G. Warburton's house at Arley, Chesh.

3. Legh of Lyme MSS.: W. Shippen to P. Legh, 27 Nov. 1714.

> We had ye grand affair discussed over & over again w[it]hout Coming to any resolutions. thº' he has had a great slight put on him I can't find but yt. he values the interest of his Freinds (whom he has represented) beyond a resentment: This vertue I commend'd and so did My Coz: J[ohn] W[ard] & some more of my neighbours, but in the Conclusion he told us he had Printed his hardships & design'd to send em to all his Freinds & to the Freeholders, who are zealously bent to have him dispute it, thinking he has a better opportunity now, than at the 3 years end: You may planely see by this the Heats we are going into: how to prevent em I can't tell: [1]

Such reservations notwithstanding, however, he went on to relay Cholmondeley's earnest desire that Leicester would agree to stand with him on the Tory interest, which suggestion was put forward in the confident belief that Warburton would then retire without forcing a contest. Indeed, so anxious was Legh to see the Compromise broken that he was willing to accommodate Sir George with a seat at Newton, though he wisely refrained from telling Cholmondeley about the offer.[2]

By the middle of December, Warburton was evidently growing apprehensive of the measures being taken to undermine the Northwich agreement, especially since it now appeared that the assistance of the Lord Lieutenant was being invoked in support of his Tory cousin's candidacy. 'There has been severall messages between Vail Royal and the Lord C[holmondeley],' Warburton told Peter Shakerley, 'to what Effect I know not, but if what was don at Northwich be not supported what must Gentlmen think of themselves.'[3] He was troubled, though, by the role in which the Compromise had cast him, and uneasy about the ethics of his position. 'I am so much at a loss,' he confided to Peter Legh, 'I know not how to comport my self. I am sure you would

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1. Cheshire R.O., Leicester-Warren MSS., DLT/LL.7: Legh to Leicester, 30 Nov. 1714.

2. Ibid.

3. John Rylands Univ. Lib., Warburton MSS.: Warburton to Shakerley, 11 Dec. 1714.

not have me doe anything y^{t} should in ye least tuch my Honour & I hope allways to behave my self so as to mentain it, as being ye Dearest thing to me ....'[1] For his part, Shakerley, as one of the principal architects of the Compromise, was anxious not to see his handiwork go to waste, and therefore urged Warburton to tread warily. 'My advice to Sir George,' he told Leicester,

> was that hee should not give any the Least Caus of Jealousy on his part to Mr. Booth &c: but that at all meetings or Consults hee should be sure to have him, Sir Tho[mas] Brooks, and Henery Leigh[2] Present, and P[eter] Leigh of Lime allso if he acquiuiesses [sic] to ye Northwich agreem[en]t wch for ye Quiett of the Country 'tis hoped hee does. 3

Thus whilst both Cholmondeley and Warburton remained in some doubt about how they ought to proceed, Sir George at least contrived to make effective use of his time; for whereas his former colleague spent the greater part of December languishing at Vale Royal, and agonizing over the problem of how to construct a viable Tory interest without Leicester as his copartner,[4] Warburton went on a campaign tour through the Wirral, in an effort to 'convince ye Freeholders about his Conduct att Northwich'. However, his reception was so far from being a

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1. Legh of Lyme MSS.: Warburton to Legh, 13 Dec. 1714. Warburton may in fact be referring specifically to the dilemma of principle involved in accepting Legh's offer of a seat at Newton.

2. Henry Legh (1679-1757), of East Hall, High Legh, Chesh. Though perhaps initially a Tory, he became a staunch Whig after 1714.

3. Warburton MSS.: Shakerley to Sr. F. Leicester, 13 Dec. 1714.

4. Grosvenor MSS.: C. Cholmondeley to Sr. R. Grosvenor, 9 Dec. 1714 and 4 Jan. 1714-15. By this time Sir Francis Leicester had evidently made it clear that he would not join with Cholmondeley in order to break the Compromise.

sympathetic one that a local Tory stalwart wrote immediately to Sir Richard Grosvenor, urging him to appear there himself on Cholmondeley's behalf, in the belief that the latter's interest among the freeholders would be greatly strengthened thereby.[1] With these doubts weighing increasingly on his mind, Warburton appears to have endeavoured at last to extricate himself from the commitments which he had entered into. In an undated letter to Lord Barrymore, the former Tory Governor of Chester Castle, Thomas Assheton,[2] complained bitterly of Sir George's 'whym & irresolution', and urged the earl and Sir Thomas Brooke to make clear to him that 'since he signed w.th so great consideration, you will insist upon it, & y.^{t} you can't alter y.^{r} Scheme to please his fickle humoure, & y.^{t} ... you will entirely quit [him] if he persists.'[3]

While these events were unfolding in Cheshire, in Lancashire it was becoming plain that Lord Berkeley's function in the Duchy of Lancaster was simply that of caretaker, and on 4 November Lord Nottingham's brother, the recently created Earl of Aylesford,[4] replaced him officially as Chancellor: this in spite of persistent rumours that the place was earmarked for Lord Derby.[5] Local Tories

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1. Grosvenor MSS.: T. Glaseour to Grosvenor, 25 Dec. 1714.

2. Thomas Assheton (1678-1759), of Ashley, Chesh. Governor of Chester Castle, ?1710-1714. Tory.

3. Cholmondeley MSS., DCH/L/49: Assheton to Barrymore, n.d.

4. See above, p. 17, note 4.

5. Finch-Halifax MSS., Box 3/109: R. Assheton to E. Southwell, 17 Oct. 1714; Wentworth Papers, p.436: Berkeley to Strafford, 2 Nov. 1714.

lost little time in urging their claims upon the new incumbent, whom they regarded not unnaturally as their own man. Sir Christopher Musgrave, for example, strongly recommended the neglected virtues of his cousin Henry Fleetwood,[1] Tory Member for Preston;[2] and Lord Barrymore approached Aylesford through his brother Nottingham to secure his own appointment as Steward of the Salford and West Derby Hundreds, which posts carried with them a measure of influence over some of the electors at Wigan, and especially over George Kenyon, who, Barrymore assured the earl, 'If rightly managed may be of greate use in turning Sr. Roger Bradshaigh out ....'[3] Neither of these applications was successful: the new Chancellor did not sponsor Fleetwood's candidacy at Preston, and Lord Barrymore did not get the stewardships he desired. There were a number of important changes in the administrative establishments of both the Duchy and County Palatine of Lancaster: Edward Vawdrey succeeded Kenyon as Vice Chancellor and Steward of

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1. Henry Fleetwood (?1667-1746), of Penwortham, Lancs. M.P. for Preston, 1708-22. High Tory; attached himself to Lord Gower and the Duke of Hamilton during Queen Anne's reign. Member of Preston Jacobite Club, but no evidence of wider Jacobite connections.

2. Finch-Halifax MSS., Box 3/112: Musgrave to Ed. Southwell, 19 Oct. 1714; ibid., Box 3/113: Musgrave to ? , 19 Oct. 1714; ibid., Box 5, bundle 11: Musgrave to Ld. Guernsey [i.e. Aylesford], 19 Oct. 1714. Knowledge of Aylesford's appointment was clearly widespread at least two weeks before being made official.

3. Leicestershire R.O., Finch MSS., Box 4950, bundle 24: Barrymore to Nottingham, 29 Oct. 1714.

4. These can be traced in Somerville, Office-Holders in the Duchy of Lancaster, and in the Finch-Halifax MSS., especially from the correspondence in Box 3.

West Derby, and Edward Blundell[1] replaced Nicholas Starkie[2] as Serjeant-at-Law in the Duchy, and as Attorney General and Serjeant in the County Palatine. Yet these alterations did little or nothing to dampen Tory enthusiasm for the new order, since the majority of the existing Tory office-holders were retained in place; and in any case the newcomers were themselves Hanoverian Tories rather than Whigs. Indeed, in recommending Vawdrey and Blundell for preferment, the Rev. Henry Finch stressed that he knew both to be 'honest men & to have that Character from every body in our Country', and urged his brother to consult with John Ward about their qualifications and fitness for the job. On the other hand, his description of Kenyon and Starkie was somewhat less than flattering:

> The present Vice Chancellor of the Duchy, Mr. G[eorge] Kenyon is a person of such a Character as I suppose you will not think it fit to continue him in that office: no more than you will Mr. Starkey in the office of Attorney General; the Country having long groaned under their oppressions; whilst they by turning to all Sides as they found their Interest lay have made a Shift to keep their places under all Ministrys for many years.[3]

It was, however, the Whigs, and especially Lord Derby, who were most resentful of the turn which events were taking. At the end of October, Thomas Molyneux[4] wrote on the Lord Lieutenant's behalf to request that Sir Alexander Rigby be reinstated as Clerk of the Crown

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1. Edward Blundell (n.d.), of Prescot, Lancs. Serjeant-at-Law, &c., Jan. 1714-15 to Nov. 1717.

2. Nicholas Starkie (n.d.), of Huntroyd, Lancs. Serjeant-at-Law, &c., 1702-Jan. 1714-15.

3. Finch-Halifax MSS., Box 3/119: Finch to Guernsey, 18 Oct. 1714.

4. Thomas Molyneux (d.1727), of Preston, Lancs. M.P. for Preston, 1695- Dec. 1700; Dec. 1701 - 1702. Turkey merchant. Staunch Whig and close associate of Sir Henry Hoghton.

at Lancaster in place of John Thornton,[1] who having been Rigby's deputy had succeeded him in 1710, thereafter becoming a staunch supporter of the Oxford ministry, and 'Acting most violently for their Measures'. 'I[t] will be of great Service to his Maj[es]ties freinds,' added Molyneux, if the recipient of his letter should

> thinke fitt to informe my Lord Alesford y.t no persons in our Towne of Preston Acted with so much violence & arbitrary power as ye said Thornton Mr. Casson[2] Mr. Langton[3] two Chancery Clarkes & Mr. Ralph Asheton[4] ye late Seale keeper & clarke also who will be in towne with ye Seale to night or tomorrow -- which requires your Speedy discoursing ye L.d Alesford least he be prepossesed by ye said Mr. Asheton. it is for ye Kings Service y.t I interpose in this matter.[5]

Lord Aylesford, however, had already received a glowing recommendation of Thornton from Richard Shuttleworth,[6] and Ralph Assheton, being well-known to Nottingham's friend and confidant, Edward Southwell,[7] was in little danger of losing his place. In fact, Aylesford evidently continued to regard himself as a good Tory, although a Hanoverian, and

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1. John Thornton (n.d.), of Oxcliffe, Lancs. Gray's Inn, 1691. Clerk of the Crown at Lancaster, 1710 - Mar. 1716. Cousin of William Heysham, Tory M.P. for Lancaster, 1705-16.

2. Richard Casson (n.d.). Chancery Clerk.

3. Richard Langton (n.d.). Chancery Clerk. As a Nonjuror, he acted under the name of a Friend, Sir Richard Price.

4. Ralph Assheton (n.d.), of Cuerdale, Lancs. Sealkeeper and Chancery Clerk.

5. Finch-Halifax MSS., Box 3/116: Molyneux to ? , 22 Oct. 1714. For the importance which the Whigs attached to these Chancery Clerks, see below pp.

6. Finch-Halifax MSS., Box 3/106: Shuttleworth to Rev. H. Finch, 13 Oct. 1714.

7. Edward Southwell (d.1730), of King's Weston, nr. Bristol, Glouc. M.P. for Preston, 1713-14. Secretary to Ormonde as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, 1710-1714. Whimsical Tory.

consequently had no intention whatsoever of sacrificing 'honest men' on the altar of Whig prejudice. If co-operation were to be developed between his forces and those of Lord Derby, it would be on his terms. In the mean time, his partisan feelings could hardly have been lessened by his brother Henry's intelligence that, prior to his appointment, the Tory gentry of the county had been 'under very dismal apprehensions of L.d D[erby]s being made Chanc[ello]r again when they found he was made L.d Lieut[enan]t & immediately made very sad alterations in the Lieutenancy.'[1]

As far as the impending election for Knights of the Shire was concerned, it looked at first that Derby intended setting up his brother, Charles Stanley; for at a county meeting held at Preston on 28 October, the latter, though present, 'refus'd to be determin'd by that or any other meeting of ye Gentlemen: whereupon the Gentlemen present lay'd their Commands on Mr. Shuttleworth and [John Bland] to joyn [their] Interests; to w.ch [they] heartily agreed.' The following day they wrote to ask the Chancellor for his interest.[2] The extent of Lord Aylesford's response is uncertain; for whilst he definitely endorsed Shuttleworth's candidacy,[3] there is no record of his having done the same for Bland. Two years later, though, Bland was married to the Chancellor's daughter Frances, and this, taken in conjunction with the fact that he and

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1. Finch-Halifax MSS., Box 3/117: Rev. H. Finch to Aylesford, 25 Oct. 1714.

2. Ibid., Box 3/120: Bland and Shuttleworth to Aylesford, 29 Oct. 1714.

3. See, for example, Finch-Halifax MSS., Box 3/82: Rev. H. Finch to Aylesford, 17 Jan. 1714-15.

Shuttleworth were standing on a joint interest, would make it not unreasonable to assume that both candidates did in fact receive the earl's blessing. What is clear, however, is that the main contest was deemed to lie between Stanley and Bland, and that during December both were busy, canvassing votes and treating electors.[1] Yet by the end of the month, Stanley had cut his losses and withdrawn from the field, perhaps discouraged by a realistic appraisal of the early canvass returns, but more likely because of his failing health. Either way, his departure left the Tory candidates to be returned without opposition.

In the same month, Peter Legh learned that one of the sitting Members for Newton had declined to stand again in the new Parliament,[2] which was welcome news for one man at least. Hard pressed by the Duke of Wharton's interest at Saltash in Cornwall, William Shippen[3] had been urging Legh since 1712 to find him a seat in his Lancashire pocket borough.[4] Now at last it seemed that, provided Legh's brother

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1. J. Bromley, 'Extracts from the Commonplace-Books of the Rev. Peter Walkden', Trans. Hist. Soc. Lancs. & Chesh., new series, i (1885), p.132: T. Walkden to P. Walkden, 3 Dec. 1714; The Great Diurnal of Nicholas Blundell, 1702-1728, ed. Frank Tyrer (Lancs. & Chesh. Record Soc., cx, 1968; cxii, 1970; cxiv, 1972), ii. 118: 13 Dec. 1714.

2. Legh of Lyme MSS.: A. Blackmore to Legh, 9 Dec. 1714.

3. William Shippen (1673-1743), of Norfolk St., London. M.P. for Bramber, 1707-13; for Saltash, 1713-15; for Newton, 1715-43. Commissioner of Public Accounts, 1711-14. Originally from Stockport, Chesh.; related to Legh by marriage. Lifelong Jacobite.

4. Legh of Lyme MSS.: Shippen to ? , 2 Dec. 1712; ibid.: Shippen to Legh, 27 Nov. & 9 Dec. 1714, 4 Jan. 1714-15.

did not choose to stand, a suitable vacancy had occurred.[1] Also in December, having first consulted Sir Roger Bradshaigh, George Kenyon wrote to the Mayor of Wigan to announce his intention of withdrawing his candidacy, having been assured by his opponents that 'upon my declining to stand Candidate the next election, the suits against the Corporation shall cease; And that it will be the means to give peace and unity to the Towne.'[2] He remained suspicious, though, of Lord Barrymore's good faith, and reserved the right to re-enter the field if the assurances given him proved false. The need to trust in a gentleman's agreement, however, was pressed upon him by at least one interested observer, who thought fit to remind him of the difficulties which his lordship faced in relation to his own party, by coming to any sort of agreement with Bradshaigh and his associates.[3]

The general mood among many Tories in both counties was one of abject depression. Back in Cheshire, Charles Cholmondeley was still unsure about his candidacy well into the January of 1715. He was confident, though, that the Sheriff would call a second county meeting, and was prepared to wait upon the outcome of this before reaching a final decision.[4] The chances of re-uniting the Tory interest in

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1. Legh of Lyme MSS.: Shippen to Legh, 18 Jan. 1714-15.

2. Crawford MSS., 47/3/-: Kenyon to R. Hollinshead, 11 Dec. 1714.

3. See Cox, 'Sir Roger Bradshaigh and the Electoral Management of Wigan', loc. cit., note 2, p.137.

4. Grosvenor MSS.: Cholmondeley to Grosvenor, 4 Jan. 1714-15.

either county, however, looked bleak.

Still, early in the New Year, there was an unexpected development at Preston, when John Chetwynd,[1] lately restored as Receiver General for the Duchy of Lancaster, appeared in the lists on the Duchy interest. On 13 January, he reported to Lord Finch that he had managed to secure some 200 votes, but doubted whether he could hope to gain a majority, though he spared 'neither pains or expence'. In spite of the Chancellor's instructions to use their influence on his behalf, he had received a cool reception from both the Duchy officers and the local Tory gentry. Even Richard Shuttleworth, with Lord Aylesford's endorsement for the county, opposed his nominee for the borough. Chetwynd blamed his predicament on the early application of Sir Henry Hoghton, which had left the contest to lie between himself and Henry Fleetwood; and Preston 'being one of the greatest T[ory] or Ja[cobit]e Towns in Eng[lan]d,' he grumbled to Finch, 'makes them prefer Mr. Fleetwood, to me, but had ye dispute lain on ye other side, I should have had all possible assistance.'[2]

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1. John Chetwynd (c.1680-1767), of Fullerton, nr. Stockbridge and Ingestre, nr. Stafford. Whig M.P. for various constituencies 1715-47, in opposition 1728-44. Receiver General of the Duchy, 1702- ? ; and 30 Nov. 1714 to July 1718. Commissioner of the Board of Trade, 1714-28; enjoyed the patronage of M.me Kielmansegge. Succeeded brother as 2nd Visc.t Chetwynd [I] in 1736.

2. Finch MSS., Box 4969: Chetwynd to Ld. Finch, 13 Jan. 1714-15. See also Finch-Halifax MSS., Box 3/77, 79 and 85: R. Assheton to Aylesford, 7 & 16 Jan. and 1 Feb. 1714-15. Among the Duchy officials the outgoing Attorney General, Nicholas Starkie, and the Steward of West Derby Hundred, Dr. Valentine Farington, were particularly active on Fleetwood's behalf and against Chetwynd.

In Cheshire, on 21 January, a second county meeting was held at Middlewich, and there, with the full approval of those attending, Charles Cholmondeley at last declared himself a candidate. He denied that his refusing to sign the Northwich Compromise could be construed as a refusal in general of the county's service, and regretted that his indecisive behaviour since the previous November had allowed such a misconception to gain credence. He had gound 'a great Part of the Gentlemen of the County Dissatisfy'd with that Agreement, and that the Freeholders generally think it an Invasion of their Rights;' and so being urged to stand by so many of his friends at the Middlewich meeting, he now declared his readiness to serve them 'with all the Integrity, Care and Application' of which he was capable.[1] With less than four weeks to go before the poll, Cholmondeley's friends worked strenuously on his behalf,[2] and though some, like John Ward, expressed disapproval of 'these latter proceedings', they were more than willing to throw their interest behind a notional Tory ticket of Warburton and Cholmondeley.[3]

The elections came on during February. At Wigan, a public reconciliation between Lord Barrymore and Sir Roger Bradshaigh was followed by an electoral compact between their respective interests to support one another. Nevertheless, Bradshaigh later complained to Barrymore that 'notwithstanding ye large sum wch you gave Mr Kenyon upon his declining to stand, if I had not appear'd very heartily ye

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1. Grosvenor MSS.: Mr. Cholmondeley's Printed Address to the Cheshire Freeholders, 22 Jan. 1714-15.

2. N.L.W., Wynnstay MSS., Box "C(Tin)"/69/42: W. Williams to Sir W. Williams, 30 Jan. 1714-15.

3. Legh of Lyme MSS.: Ward to P. Legh, 3 Feb. 1714-15.

morning of ye Election for y.r Lordship you had not been chosen even at that time;'[1] and on his copy of Kenyon's letter to the mayor, Bradshaigh wrote: 'but sold ye Towne for 300 l. to L.d Barrymore.'[2] The elections at Wigan, Clitheroe, Newton and Liverpool all fell on the 7th, and only at Clitheroe was there a contest. Thomas Lister was returned as expected at the head of the poll, with Parker and Harvey tying for the second seat. A double return was made, and Harvey was eventually declared elected, when Parker refused to press the matter before the Commons Committee of Privileges and Elections.[3] At Preston, the following day, Chetwynd came bottom of the poll, and was less than philosophical about his defeat: 'no Chancellor's man,' he told Lord Finch, 'has ever been used with so little regard & civility as I have been.' The Duchy interest, he asserted, would be 'quite lost' if Lord Aylesford did not purge those office holders who had opposed him, and petition for a new election; 'for bribery will be so plainly proved on both sides, y.t it must be a void Election of course.'[4] The elections for the county and city of Chester began on 16 February. The poll for Knights of the Shire continued for three days, at the end of which the Compromise candidates were successful: Booth was returned at the head of the poll, with Warburton in second place, some 550 votes

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1. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Bradshaigh to Barrymore, 17 Nov. 1720.
2. Ibid., 47/3/-: G. Kenyon to R. Hollinshead, 11 Dec. 1714.
3. Sedgwick, History of Parliament, i. 269; Commons Journals, xviii.29,34.
4. Finch MSS., Box 4969: Chetwynd to L.d Finch, 8 & 14 Feb. 1714-15.

clear of Cholmondeley.[1] At Chester, though, matters went differently; a fortnight before the election, Shakerley was complaining to Sir Francis Leicester that Grosvenor had 'spent near 1000^{ll} among the Mobb ... so that ye Contest ... is Like to be betwixt Sir H[enry] B[unbury] and myself, and I would not willingly be a Competitor ag.st him.'[2] Moreover, Shakerley's reputation had been badly tarnished by his part in the proceedings at Northwich.[3] It was hardly a surprise, therefore, when Grosvenor and Bunbury were returned with a comfortable majority.

As the returns came in from elsewhere, however, it became obvious that the Tories had been disastrously beaten in the country as a whole. On 22 February, a friend of Grosvenor's must have summed up the feelings of many Tories when he wrote: ' ...altho' there will be some Good ones, yet tis plaine there will be too many Scab'd Sheep among you; poore Englands fate depends very much upon the proceedings of ye next Parl[ia]m[en]t and when shee has so many Vipers Within her own breast, her Condition must be dangerous.'[4]

In Lancashire, the Tories did not fare badly in this election. They lost William Clayton's seat at Liverpool, apparently by default, and Edward Southwell's at Preston, but elsewhere they preserved their strength intact, though they were perhaps fortunate that Lord Derby had been unable to test their solidarity by forcing a county contest. In Cheshire, however, in spite of only one net loss, the divided state of the Tory ranks was plain to see. Cholmondeley, like many another

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1. For a detailed analysis of those gentlemen and clergy who voted for the Compromise, see Appendix A.

2. Warburton MSS.: Shakerley to Leicester, 2 Feb. 1714-15.

3. Grosvenor MSS.: Election squib and notes, preserved among the papers of Sr. Rd. Grosvenor.

4. Ibid.: J. Suer to Grosvenor, 22 Feb. 1714-15.

defeated Tory, was not so much the victim of royal disfavour, or crude external manipulation by agents of the Whig ministry, as of defections within his own party and the volatility of the electorate. In 1715, as in 1708, it was fear of the Pretender that tipped the electoral balance in favour of the Whigs.[1]

The spring and summer of 1715 brought little cheer to the Tories. The ministry constructed by the King during the previous autumn had been decidedly more Whiggish than his selection of Lords Justices, and when the new Parliament met for the first time in March, the Address's condemnation of the 'secret practices' of the late ministers, and its pledge, 'to trace out those measures whereon [the Pretender] placed his hopes and to bring the authors of them to punishment', clearly betokened a radical change in the political climate.[2] On 27 March, fearing impeachment, Bolingbroke fled to France, though it did not become known for certain till later that he had joined the Pretender at St. Germains.[3] The immediate reaction of Tories in the provinces was summed up by a correspondent of Sir Richard Grosvenor:

> His L.^{d}ship's suddain flight occasion'd various Reflections in ye Country & it was ye opinion of most people that he had been guilty of something whereby he became obnoxious to ye Governm.^{t} But if his Innocence be such as he there [4] represents it, the Resolutions to destroy him must strike Horrour into ye Breast of every honest man. If any of ye late Ministry should be impeached I hope it is no harm to wish them a safe deliverance. [5]

If for many Tories, however, the general outlook was a source of

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1. Speck, Tory & Whig, pp. 113-4.
2. J.H. Plumb, Sir Robert Walpole (2 vols., London, 1956, 1960), i. 212.
3. H.T. Dickinson, Bolingbroke (London, 1970), pp. 135-8.
4. i.e. in a letter to Lord Lansdowne:see ibid., p.136.
5. Grosvenor MSS.: J. Fowler to Grosvenor, 9 Apr. 1715.

unremitting gloom, for others it was a cause of genuine fear. In April, for instance, Shippen warned Peter Legh that 'all our Lett[e]rs are opened in defyance of an Act of Parliam[en]t';[1] which intelligence could only have increased in Legh an already well-developed tendency towards paranoia. Then again in May, Sir Henry Bunbury was dismissed from his place as Commissioner of the Revenue in Ireland, following a report from the Irish Lords Justices that they had discovered a letter from a Jacobite agent bearing his frank and superscription.[2] However, despite the threat of prosecution, Bunbury remained politically active throughout the summer, and took a leading part in the parliamentary opposition to the Secret Committee set up to investigate the activities of the late ministers.[3]

A number of Tory corporations at this time were concerned to demonstrate their fidelity to the new regime, and thus joined their Whig counterparts in presenting loyal addresses to the Crown. Yet, while they made fulsome reference to the felicity of King George's peaceful accession, their wording left little doubt as to the party allegiances of those who had drafted them. 'That your Majesty may allways have about your Sacred person, those of undoubted Loyalty and Steady principles to Support the Church and Government,' averred the High Churchmen of

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1. Legh of Lyme MSS.: Shippen to Legh, 13 Apr. 1715.

2. Hist. MSS. Comm., 8th Rep., pt. i (Marlborough MSS.), p.59: Irish Lords Justices to Stanhope, 10 May 1715; P.R.O., S.P. 44/117, pp.148-9: J. Stanhope to the Attorney and Solicitor Generals, 19 May 1715.

3. The Letters of Joseph Addison, ed. W. Graham (Oxford, 1941), no. 435, p.339: Addison to C. Delafaye, 8 June 1715.

Preston on the King's accession, 'is the hearty prayer of us your Maj[es]ties most Dutifull & Loyall Subjects.'[1] Likewise, in March 1715, the corporation of Wigan, noting with approval the King's pledges to Convocation, sent up an address which welcomed His Majesty's 'gracious assureance of protecting the episcopall churches of England'.[2] The Whig corporation of Liverpool, by contrast, added its voice to the chorus of those demanding 'exemplary justice' on the late ministers.[3]

The 'exemplary justice' demanded for those above was impeachment; for those below proscription. However, Lord Carnarvon's assertion in December 1714, that 'hardly one Tory is left in place, though never so mean a one',[4] is clearly inapplicable at that date beyond the confines of London and the Court. In the provinces, the really widespread purges of Justices of the Peace, Deputy Lieutenants and militia officers did not take place until the spring and summer of 1715, when Townshend, Stanhope and Cowper personally went through vetting the lists for each county.[5] Reviewing the Cheshire Commission of the Peace, Lord Cholmondeley made the modest request for three changes to be made, and was no doubt surprised when he heard from his brother of Lord Cowper's response:

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1. Manchester Central Library, Farrer Papers, L1/42/1, Miscellaneous Original MSS., no. 12: Address of the Mayor and Corporation of Preston to George I on his accession, n.d.

2. Hist. MSS. Comm., Kenyon MSS., no. 1168, pp.459-60: Humble Address of the Mayor, Bailiffs, and Corporation of Wigan, 27 Mar. 1715.

3. S. Hibbert-Ware, Lancashire Memorials of the Rebellion, 1715 (Chetham Soc., v, 1845: two parts, paginated separately), ii. 4.

4. Ld. Carnarvon to A. Hammond, 7 Dec. 1714, cited in Sedgwick, History of Parliament, i. 62.

5. Plumb, Walpole, i.213.

'My L.d Chancellor gives you his servise & says you shall not only have these three gentlemen in the commission but you may have the whole commission changed & none in but who you like or think proper if you desir'd it.'[1] There had in fact already been some alterations in the Commission of December 1714, but really significant decimation of Tory Justices in Cheshire did not take place until December of the following year. In Lancashire, the situation was somewhat different. In February 1715, Ralph Assheton told Lord Aylesford that there was only one active Justice in Amounderness hundred, 'tho' there are 12 or 13 Gent.s who live in this towne [i.e. Preston] & are in Commission, but do not act.'[2] A number of Justices were perhaps consequently omitted from the new Commission issued in August 1715, but not until November was there a wholesale removal of Tories from the bench. Even so, the proscription in both counties, when it did come, was selective in so far as Tory noblemen and baronets were left largely undisturbed.[3] The real victims were the backwoods squires, who for a time disappeared almost completely.[4]

Faced with electoral defeat, the impeachment of their leaders and the widening proscription of their party, the response of many Tories was

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1. Cholmondeley MSS., DCH/X/8: L.d Newburgh to L.d Cholmondeley, 4 July [1715?]

2. Finch-Halifax MSS., Box 3/91: Assheton to Aylesford, 25 Feb. 1714-15.

3. The practice generally adopted was to leave alone those already in the Commission, but not to appoint their successors when the existing holders of such titles died.

4. For an analysis of Tory removals from the Commissions of the Peace in both counties, see Appendix B.

one of resentment and bitterness, which increasingly manifested itself in displays of popular fervour for the exiled Stuarts. As Bolingbroke later wrote: 'If milder measures had been pursued, certain it is that the Tories had never universally embraced Jacobitism. The violence of the Whigs forced them into the arms of the Pretender.'[1] If Jacobite activity was not universal among the Tories, it was certainly widespread. On 10 June, the Pretender's birthday, bells were rung at Warrington to celebrate the occasion, and the common cry in the streets was reportedly: 'No King George but a Stuart.'[2] At Manchester, according to one account, a Tory mob assembled on the evening of the 9th, and the following day pulled down the dissenting chapel in Cross Street. After a week of unrest, in which the persons and property of those known to be well-affected to the new regime were continually threatened and harassed, the rioters at last left the town and proceeded to cross the Pennines into Yorkshire, wrecking all the nonconformist chapels they came to on the way.[3] In fact, from other sources, we know that the mob was already raised at least a fortnight before the 10 June demonstration. Seymour Cholmondeley[4] wrote to Grosvenor that on 29 May: 'a great parcel [of the rabble] got together at midnight & proclaim'd the pretender with a good deal of noise; but did little mischief.' This, he believed, was 'a foolish thing which I fear will hurt the town & the Gentlemen in that neighbourhood very much.'[5]

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1. Cited in Sedgwick, History of Parliament, i.62.

2. Hibbert-Ware, Lancashire Memorials, ii. 17.

3. A Letter from Manchester, 30 June 1715, cited ibid.

4. Seymour Cholmondeley (1690-1739), of Vale Royal, Ches. Younger bro. of Charles Cholmondeley; a moderate Tory, active in opposition to the Weaver Navigation, 1715 & 1719-20.

5. Grosvenor MSS.: S. Cholmondeley to Grosvenor, 6 June 1715; see also ibid.: same to same, 27 June 1715.

Once it appeared that the Justices of the Peace were either unable or unwilling to do anything effective, the Government had little choice but to order in the militia and two regiments of regular troops to restore the rule of law.[1] The troops ran their quarry to earth in the West Riding of Yorkshire, arrested the leaders and dispersed the rest. The most important of those taken up were Thomas Syddall, self-styled colonel of the mob and a blacksmith in Manchester, and an unnamed associate. These two men were subsequently brought to trial at Lancaster Assizes, where they came off, as one observer told Peter Legh, 'better than was Expected'.[2] The authorities could not refrain, however, from entertaining the suspicion that the prime movers in the recent disturbances might well have been gentlemen of more exalted station in life than those actually in custody. Yet the accused men steadfastly refused to implicate anyone else,[3] and upon conviction were sentenced to imprisonment and the pillory. They were subsequently released from Lancaster gaol by the rebel army in November 1715, retaken at Preston, and eventually executed for treason.[4]

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1. P.R.O., S.P. 35/3, f.204: Major Wyvill to Townshend, 25 June 1715 [translated into French]; P.R.O., S.P. 44/116 (unpaginated): Townshend to Sr. R. Assheton, 19 June 1715; ibid.: Townshend to R. Mawdesley, 25 June 1715.

2. Legh of Lyme MSS.: J. Goulbourne to Legh, n.d. [but must be autumn 1715].

3. The Private Journal and Literary Remains of John Byrom, ed. R. Robinson (Chetham Soc., 1st series, xxxii, 1854; xxxiv, 1855; xl, 1856; xliv, 1857), i. 29-30: W. Shrigley to E. Byrom, 10 Aug. 1715 (written in an assumed character).

4. Hibbert-Ware, Lancashire Memorials, ii. 19, 92.

Faced with similar demonstrations throughout the country,[1] the ministry acted swiftly. In July 1715, they issued a Proclamation declaring that henceforth rioting and the wanton destruction of property would constitute a felony punishable by death. Furthermore, the inhabitants of the county, hundred or town in which such damage was done were made collectively responsible for making good all losses sustained. By the end of the month all rioting had ceased.[2] This may simply mean that the threat of the scaffold was an effective deterrent to most would-be rioters; but with no effectual police-power, there can have been little chance of many such malefactors being successfully apprehended. It seems more likely, therefore, that hidden gentry organizers, who had summoned up the rioters in the first place, were now with equal speed and effectiveness able to have them stand down again, being unwilling to foot the bill for any further depredations. The gentlemen of Manchester, however, hotly refuted this explanation of affairs, and tried to pass the whole matter off as the excesses of a few trouble-makers.[3]

Perhaps this tends to underplay the real potential for spontaneous mob action, which was always a present factor in the eighteenth century. It is known, for instance, that organized rioters apart there were also free-booting mobs raised and travelling about the countryside at this

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1. For example, in Canterbury, Colchester, Taunton, Salisbury, Bristol, Tewkesbury, Oxford and Birmingham: see P.R.O., S.P. 44/116, passim.

2. Hibbert-Ware, Lancashire Memorials, ii. 18-19.

3. Kenyon MSS., DDKe/9/102/141: A Statement of the true nature of the disorders at Manchester, [in the handwriting of G. Kenyon,] n.d.

time, and that, far from controlling them, country gentlemen were left with little choice other than to buy them off. John Ward wrote in July to Peter Legh:

> I canot but think any Gentleman of figure must be under a great difficulty & dangerous Dilemma if ye Mob take it in their head to come to ones house & may expect encouragem.ts or to be treated w.th usuall hospitality. The complying w.th this may admit of a very dangerous construction & there may be some danger from not answering such Visitors as they expect.[1]

Thus, in consideration of this suggestion that gentlemen might be threatened into providing 'encouragements' for the mob, one should be careful not to assume, along with the Whigs, that all such popular demonstrations were sponsored or instigated by Tory squires for their own ends; such was clearly not the case.

The period between Queen Anne's death and the summer of 1715 had witnessed a definite increase in the proportion of Whig Justices serving in both the Lancashire and Cheshire Commissions of the Peace. Yet a number of Whigs remained acutely aware that in Lancashire especially there were important sections of local government still firmly under Tory control. Not surprisingly, therefore, they repeatedly pressed the ministry in London for a radical purge to expunge all Tories from positions of authority in that county. Letters reaching the capital, translated into French for the benefit of the King and his Hanoverian advisers, painted a dismal picture of the county's affairs: ' ...dans cette Comtè de landcastre nous somes les plus Malheureux de tous les Sujets du Roy,' declared one writer; 'il semble que nous soyons encore sous le Regne de la feue Reyne, aucun

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1. Legh of Lyme MSS.: Ward to Legh, 18 July 1715.

des Amis du Roy n'a la moindre protection.'[1] The Chancellor of the Duchy was himself accused of affording protection to Tories and Jacobites within the Duchy administration: 'Aucun Tory ne sera changè tant que M.d Aylesford sera chancellier.... Plust à Dieu qu'on voulust donner [le Sceau] à un nouveau chancellier qui fust homme actif et zelè.' The three Tory Chancery Clerks[2] were thought to be particularly dangerous: '[Ils] gouvernent toute le Comtè, et si on ne les casse pas, on gagnera peu de terrain en ostant les Juges à Paix.' Nevertheless, the writer was keen to name those Justices whom he thought should be removed, and to suggest some worthy gentlemen of his own party who might replace them.[3] More seriously, though, it was alleged that Privy Council decisions were being made available to the Lancashire Tories. Sir Christopher Musgrave, a clerk to the Council, was said to be leaking such information to Henry Fleetwood, and Edward Southwell to be doing likewise to Ralph Assheton.[4] Yet, in spite of all these allegations, little appears to have been done to remedy the situation.

As the summer of 1715 wore on, the portents of a Jacobite invasion and rising seemed to increase in number. In the Tory stronghold of Manchester, the townsfolk were growing restive beneath the financial burdens of supporting six troops of dragoons, though

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1. Brit. Mus., Stowe MSS. 228 (Hanover State Papers), f.61: Traductions d'une Lettre Ècrite à Mr. Molineux par un de ses Parents de Preston, 3/4 July 1715.

2. The three clerks in question were Assheton, Casson and Langton. See above, pp. 56-7.

3. Stowe MSS. 228, f.68: Letter dated at Preston, 22 July 1715 (N.S.).

4. Ibid., f.72: Letter dated at Preston, 26 July 1715 (N.S.); Ibid., f.75: Letter dated at Preston, 29 July 1715 (N.S.).

they were heartened somewhat to see the Whigs in such great fear of the Pretender.[1] The leading Tories of the surrounding area met one another frequently. Early in August, a group of these gentlemen, including Peter Legh, Alexander Radcliffe,[2] Holland Egerton[3] and William Shrigley spent three or four days together in a remote Derbyshire village, and by Shrigley's own account, 'something was there talked of prejudicial to the good old cause.'[4] The government, though, were not unnaturally anxious to maintain order in the area, after the violence of the summer, and when it became necessary to relieve the occupying regiment, the Secretary at War was given special instructions to ensure that 'in the removal the Towne of Manchester may not be left one Moment without Troops, that the Rebellious Spirit which still appears there may constantly be kept in awe.'[5]

The Whig ministry, however, pressed ahead with its impeachment of the former Tory ministers, until, on 8 August, the Duke of Ormonde, 'dignified and gracious to the end', sailed for the continent to join Bolingbroke and the Pretender. The Earl of Oxford stood his ground

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1. Byrom Journal and Remains, i. 29: Shrigley to E. Byrom, 25 July, 1715.

2. Alexander Radcliffe (1677-1735), of Fox Denton, Lancs. A High Tory and distant relative of the Earl of Derwentwater.

3. Holland Egerton (1686-1730), of Heaton, Lancs. Succeeded father as 4th Bart. in 1729. A High Tory.

4. Byrom Journal and Remains, i. 29-30: Shrigley to E. Byrom, 10 Aug. 1715. Since this letter takes the form of a satire, the words purporting to be those of a Manchester Whig, it is difficult to be sure when Shrigley is being serious. Towards the end, though, he appears to be speaking for himself: 'Perhaps ere this reach you some great news may be stirring; let's hear it.'

5. P.R.O., S.P. 44/118, pp.13-14: Townshend to W. Pulteney, 12 Aug. 1715.

and was sent to the Tower.[1] Bolingbroke and Ormonde in particular were now being regarded as martyrs by their Tory compatriots, including many not normally noted for their affection to the Stuart cause. For example, Sir Henry Bunbury, Charles and Seymour Cholmondeley, and Thomas Banks[2] were among the company present with Lord Barrymore at Rock Savage on 24 August, when 'a Health to our absent Friends and that they may return w.th Honor prosperity and Glory' concluded the entertainment.[3] Yet, apart from Bunbury's unfortunate peccadillo in Ireland, none of the others had been suspected of Jacobite leanings. Indeed, Barrymore, the host to these proceedings, was at this date still considered a staunch Hanoverian, and had been a member of the Commons Committee formed to prepare an address to King George to congratulate him on his happy accession.[4] As events were very soon to show, such social indiscretions were a naive reflection of Tory exasperations rather than a meaningful expression of a political commitment. Those in authority, however, were unwilling to take any chances. In August, the houses of prominent Lancashire Catholics were searched for horses, arms and ammunition,[5] and in the following month, steps were taken by Lord Derby as Lord Lieutenant to prepare the militia for the defence of the county.[6]

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1. D. Greenwood, William King: Tory & Jacobite (Oxford, 1969), p. 14; Plumb, Walpole, i. 217.

2. Thomas Banks (1695 - ?), of Winstanley, Lancs.; married Anne, half-sister to Charles & Seymour Cholmondeley.

3. The Cheshire Sheaf, 3rd series, xxxi (1936), note 6855, p.47: Extracts from the Diary of Henry Prescott, 1689-1719: 24 Aug. 1715.

4. Earl Egerton of Tatton, 'The Cheshire Gentry in 1715: drawn from the Ashley Hall Portraits at Tatton', 'Journal of the Chester Arch. Soc., new series, xv (1909), 11.

5. Great Diurnal of Nicholas Blundell, ii. 144: 18 Aug. 1715.

6. Lancashire R.O., De Hoghton MSS., DDHo/475/3: Derby to Lancashire Deputy-Lieutenants, 27 Sept. 1715.

For by that time, with the standard of Rebellion raised already in Scotland and Northumberland, the chances of a Jacobite army pushing down into the northwestern shires were reckoned to be high.

Against this background, a curious meeting took place in Cheshire. Ten members of the so-called Cheshire Club assembled at Ashley Hall, the seat of Thomas Assheton, and there, according to popular legend, decided by a casting vote against supporting the Pretender.[1] The identity of these men is known, though nothing of their deliberations. Lord Barrymore, Sir Richard Grosvenor, Peter Legh, Alexander Radcliffe, and the host were among those present; so too were Robert Cholmondeley of Holford,[2] Charles Hurleston of Newton,[3] Henry Legh of High Legh,[4] Amos Meredith of Henbury,[5] and John Warren of Poynton.[6] There are, however, no contemporary references in extant correspondence to this or any other meeting of the Cheshire Club. Indeed, the criteria for invitation to this meeting are far from clear. Those present do not correspond to any of the political groupings revealed during the preceding

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1. G. Ormerod, The History of the County Palatine and City of Chester (2nd edn., revised by T. Helsby, London, 1882), i. 557; Lord Tatton, 'Cheshire Gentry in 1715', loc. cit., pp. 5-21; Lady Newton, House of Lyme, pp. 367-8. Lady Newton ascribes the casting vote to Peter Legh, while Lord Tatton assigns it to Assheton.

2. Robert Cholmondeley (c.1652-1722), of Holford. Obscure but wealthy cadet branch of the family. High Sheriff of Cheshire, 1687. High Tory with Jacobite associations.

3. Charles Hurleston (d.1734), of Newton, Chesh. High Sheriff of Cheshire, 1727. Brother-in-law of Peter and George Shakerley. High Tory; involved in Jacobite demonstration in Chester in 1712.

4. See above, p. 53.

5. Amos Meredith (c.1688-1745), of Henbury, Chesh. High Tory; writer of Jacobite verse and friend of John Byrom.

6. John Warren (1679-1729), of Poynton, Chesh. His political affiliations are uncertain.

General Election, and in point of fact there is no evidence of any other association between them. Moreover, any assembly of Tory magnates, meeting for so portentous a purpose, ought surely to have included a good many more of the county's leading gentlemen, such as Sir Henry Bunbury, Sir George Warburton, Sir Thomas Brooke, John Ward, Charles Cholmondeley, Sir Francis Leicester, Peter Shakerley, and so on. The only thing these men seem to have had in common was their association, in one way or another, with Thomas Assheton, their host. Rather than sounding the Cheshire Tories' views on joining the Rebellion, it is at least as likely that Assheton, with some experience behind him, was attempting to proselytize his friends to the cause of passive obedience to the powers that be.

The Pretender's military and political advisers believed that, in the event of an invasion being launched, Lancashire was one of the areas most likely to favour the Stuart cause.[1] Relations between the High Church Tories and the old Catholic gentry was generally good, and Manchester had recently shown itself particularly zealous against the Hanoverian establishment.[2] It was thus with pre-conceived notions that Lord Widdrington[3] undertook a mission to Lancashire during the autumn of 1715, with the design of involving his Towneley kinsmen, and a number of other Catholic gentlemen with whom he was connected, in raising their High Church Tory friends for King James. Upon hearing

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1. Hist. MSS. Comm., Stuart MSS., i. 520-5: Memorial of Lord Mar, 5/16 July 1715.

2. Hibbert-Ware, Lancashire Memorials, ii. 26.

3. William, 4th Baron Widdrington (d.1743), of Blankney, Lincs. It is not clear whether he was a Protestant or a Catholic.

that the Rebellion had broken out in Scotland, they went at once to Manchester, where they received an enthusiastic reception. They were assured, moreover, that as soon as the Highland army entered the county, there would be 'a general insurrection of at least twenty thousand men'.[1] These assurances were communicated back to the rebel commanders, and were of crucial importance in determining the English gentlemen and a section of the Highlanders to turn south and try their fortunes in England.[2]

During September, the Government received information of a treasonable correspondence between Edward Harvey and the late French Ambassador to London, the Duc d'Aumont. Seized along with his papers and questioned by the Privy Council, Harvey made an unsuccessful attempt on his own life.[3] Shortly afterwards, a report was circulating in London that William Shippen had 'given Information at ye Secret Office ag.t several Persons, s.d to be concerned in a Plot & an intended Invasion from abroad,' which occasioned Shippen to post a personal denial at the Royal Exchange.[4] Some of Harvey's friends managed to remain cool. Lord Barrymore, who had lately repaired to his estates in Ireland, confided to Sir Roger Bradshaigh:

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1. Hibbert-Ware, Lancashire Memorials, ii. 26.

2. Farrer Papers, LI/59/4/41: J. F. Crosthwaite, The Hon. Charles Radcliffe, and his Connection with the Rebellions of 1715 and 1745. (reprinted from the Trans. of the Cumberland Assoc. for the Advancement of Lit. and Science, Part IV, 6-7).

3. For details of Harvey's treasonable activities, see Sedgwick, History of Parliament, ii. 115.

4. Bodl. MS.Rawlinson D.842, f. 382: Declaration of Will. Shippen, 28 Sept. 1715.

> I was never more Surprised then When I heard of Harvey's stabbing himselfe and being in a Plott, he is the last man I shoud have in ye least suspected. I always tooke him to be too wary to bee Drawn into any thing yt should prejudice his fortune or hinder his diversions.

In spite of his friendship with Harvey, Barrymore was clearly in no way sympathetic towards a Jacobite invasion. 'I pray god,' he continued, 'we may Enjoy peace and quietness and not be troubled w.th the Scotch Who Whenever they Enter England doe not goe back Empty.'[1] Nevertheless, others more favourable than Barrymore to the arrival of the Scots may have been considerably less sanguine about Harvey's arrest, which was perhaps instrumental in sobering the judgment of many of his fellow conspirators. Still, every effort was made to keep up their spirits. In October, Dr. Roger Kenyon returned to Lancashire from France to exert what influence he could on behalf of the Stuart cause.[2]

The attitude of the Catholic community was ambivalent. Some, like Nicholas Blundell,[3] preferred to avoid all political entanglements;[4] but, taken as a whole, they were more inclined to favour the rebels.[5]

On 29 October, the Deputy Lieutenants of Lancashire,[6] meeting at Preston, decided to secure immediately 'all Papists of Estate & Interest',

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1. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Barrymore to Bradshaigh, 18 Oct. 1715.
2. Hist. MSS. Comm., Stuart MSS., i. 434: Bolingbroke to James III, 18 Oct. 1715 (N.S.).
3. Nicholas Blundell (1669-1737), of Crosby Hall, nr. Liverpool, Lancs.
4. Great Diurnal of Nicholas Blundell, ii. 150: 31 Oct. 1715.
5. Hibbert-Ware, Lancashire Memorials, ii. 29-30.
6. Sir Henry Hoghton, Sir Edward Stanley, Thomas Ashurst, Francis Charteris, Edmund Hopwood, Samuel Hallows and Richard Norris: all Whigs.

but to leave all Protestants at large.[1] This resolve, however, came too late to be of any use. It was anyway impossible to implement without experienced officers for the militia,[2] and the support of regular troops. These were promised early in November. Major-General Wills was sent to Chester with orders to hold a watching brief over both counties, and there to assemble nine regiments of His Majesty's forces, which, it was felt, would 'undoubtedly be sufficient to keep any People in Awe who are disposed to Rebellion in those Parts.'[3] At the same time, Liverpool was to be fortified against the rebels;[4] but these hurried remedies could not disguise the lamentable state of military preparations in the northwest. On 7 November, hearing that plans to defend Lancaster had been abandoned, the rebel army made all speed into Lancashire, being in receipt of renewed assurances that the Tory gentry of the county would join them in arms with all their interest. King James, they were led to understand, had been proclaimed at Manchester, where the townsfolk had gathered together sufficient arms to furnish a troop of fifty men at their own expense.[5] Precisely who was making these

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1. De Hoghton MSS., DDHo/475/5: Resolutions of the Deputy Lieutenants, 29 Oct. 1715.

2. Lancashire R.O., Hulton MSS., DDHu/53/42: Statement by 15 Deputy Lieutenants of Lancashire to the Earl of Derby, n.d. [endorsed and forwarded to Ld. Townshend by Derby]. The 15 included all those who signed the resolutions of 29 Oct., with the exception of Charteris, and in addition: Sir Ralph Assheton, John Lever, Richard Entwisle, George Chetham, Robert Mawdesley, Samuel Crooke, Daniel Chaddock, Edward Norris and Sir Thomas Johnson.

3. De Hoghton MSS., DDHo/475/6: Ld Townshend to the High Sheriff, Deputy Lieutenants and Justices of the Peace of Lancashire, 1 Nov. 1715.

4. Great Diurnal of Nicholas Blundell, ii. 151: 5 Nov. 1715.

5. Hibbert-Ware, Lancashire Memorials, ii. 85.

reassuring promises remains a mystery, but it is perhaps significant that no prominent Tory names were given to the soldiers by way of encouragement, maybe because the men whom Lord Widdrington had found so convincing at Manchester were now having second thoughts.

Any doubts which High Churchmen may have had about giving aid to the rebels must have been increased by the Declaration which Archbishop Tenison and a large part of the Episcopal Bench drew up and promulgated on 3 November. 'We think it proper to observe to you,' the Declaration asserted, 'that all those must have a share in the guilt of the innocent blood that shall be spilled, not only who actually join in the Rebellion, but who do any way promote it.'[1] The Bishop of Chester,[2] however, when asked to add his name to this document, declined even to read it, saying that 'it was his fixed principle not to sign any public engagements but what the law required.'[3]

On 8 November, the rebels entered Lancaster, and were well received by the inhabitants. In the afternoon, according to one eye-witness, the gentlemen-soldiers in the army

> dressed and trimed themselves up in their best cloathes, for to drink a dish of tea with the Laydys of this towne. The Laydys also here apeared in their best riging, and had their tea table richly furnished for to entertain their new suitors. 4

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1. 'A Declaration of the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Bishops in and near London, Testifieing their Abhorrence of the Present Rebellion, with an Exhortation of the Clergy and People under their care, to be zealous in the Discharge of their Duties to His Majesty King George', printed in Hibbert-Ware, Lancashire Memorials, ii. 261-5.

2. Francis Gastrell (c.1662-1725). Canon of Christ Church, Oxford; Bishop of Chester, Apr. 1714-1725. Friend of Robert Harley, Earl of Oxford.

3. Hist. MSS. Comm., Portland MSS., vii. 213: W. Stratford to E. Harley, 8 Nov. 1715.

4. Peter Clarke's account of the rebels' march from Penrith to Preston, cited in Hibbert-Ware, Lancashire Memorials, ii. 97.

The insurgents had no thoughts, however, of staying in Lancaster, despite its natural advantages as a garrison, but intended pressing on to Manchester, in the belief that there they would be joined by the High Church Tories.[1] The next day they reached Preston. During the time they had been in Lancashire, a number of gentlemen, together with their tenants, servants and attendants, had joined the Jacobite army, and more were to do so at Preston; but almost all of them were Catholics.[2] This was particularly disturbing for those a-political Catholics, who had hoped to steer clear of trouble, and who now prepared for a hurried departure to the continent, if the need arose.[3]

Lord Molyneux's movements at this juncture are unclear. As leader and one of the more politically active of the Lancashire Catholics, he was naturally suspected of being involved in the Rebellion. Arms were found at his home, and an information was subsequently sworn by one of his gardeners that he had sent a party of his tenants to join the rebels at Preston, and that he would have joined them there in person, had not Wills' army cut off his approach. Molyneux strenuously

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1. Hibbert-Ware, Lancashire Memorials, ii. 98.

2. The following are known to have joined the rebels in Lancashire: Sir Francis Anderton of Lostock; Richard Chorley of Chorley; his son Charles; Gabriel Hesketh of Whitehall; his son Cuthbert; John Leyburne of Natsby; Ralph Standish of Standish; Charles Beswicke of Manchester; Mr. Carus of Halton; his sons Thomas and Christopher; Albert Hodgson of Leighton; John Dalton of Thurnham; Edward Tyldesley of Myerscough; Richard Butler of Radcliffe; Thomas Walton from Nr. Cartmel; Richard Towneley of Towneley; and Richard Shuttleworth of Preston. This list is by no means exhaustive.

3. Great Diurnal of Nicholas Blundell, ii. 151: 10 Nov. 1715.

denied these accusations, and no indictment was ever found against him.[1]

While the rebel army amused itself in Preston, the Government forces were taking steps to prevent their further advance. On the 8th Wills passed through Manchester, and left a further regiment in the town to prevent a rising at his rear. Several supposed Jacobite sympathizers were placed in close custody, and Lord Cholmondeley was recommended to have the Cheshire militia occupy Warrington and Manchester while Wills himself advanced towards Preston.[2] In Wigan on the 11th, Wills met up with Sir Henry Hoghton and the main body of the Lancashire militia, who, after some consultation with the general, set about raising a volunteer force of Presbyterians under their ministers, the Rev. James Woods of Chowbent and a Rev. Mr. Walker, for the purpose of securing the Ribble Bridge.[3]

There is no need here to recount in detail the course of Preston Fight.[4] The two armies clashed indecisively on 12 November, and the rebels surrendered on the 13th though not before a good many had made good their escape, which was rendered possible by Wills's failure adequately to seal off the town. The more important prisoners were quickly dispatched to London, while the private soldiers were dispersed

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1. De Hoghton MSS., DDHo/475/7: Information of Thomas Cowband of Elswick, sworn before Sir Henry Hoghton, 18 Jan. 1715-16; Brit. Mus., Stowe MSS. 750 (Parker Correspondence), ff. 157-8; T. Bootle to Ld Chief Justice Parker, 29 Jan 1715-16; Lancashire R.O., Molyneux MSS., DDM/11/69/13: Ld Molyneux's Case abt the Rebellion, 1716.

2. Hibbert-Ware, Lancashire Memorials, ii. 103-110.

3. Hibbert-Ware, Lancashire Memorials, ii. 116-118; see especially the letter from Hoghton to Woods, cited therein, p.117.

4. A full account can be found ibid., ii. 118-47.

to gaols in Chester, Lancaster and Liverpool.[1] The news of the rebels' surrender produced widely differing reactions. At Chester, on the triumphant return of Lord Cholmondeley and his fellow militia officers, an entertainment was arranged for them in the Pentice at the corporation's expense.[2] A local Whig squire noted in his diary: 'Blessed be God who has delivered us from these popish and Protestant Jacobites one time after another.'[3] Nicholas Blundell, on the other hand, found himself obliged to hide in the priest-hole at Crosby Hall for six days, 'a Streat place for a fat Man', and for part of that time shared his confinement with a soldier escaped from Preston.[4]

It was clear that, at the eleventh hour, the majority of Anglican Tories had drawn back from the brink of open rebellion, shrinking from the enormity of an act so essentially alien to their fundamental ideas about Church and State. Nevertheless, their Catholic neighbours and erstwhile co-conspirators were highly indignant, to say the least, that those who had been among the Rebellion's hottest promoters, had failed to make good their promises on the field of battle.[5] 'You see what we have brought ourselves to,' lamented the Earl of Derwentwater to Lord Widdrington, 'by giving credit to our neighbour Tories....

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1. A full account can be found in Hibbert-Ware, Lancashire Memorials, ii. 164-6.

2. Chester Corporation Assembly Book, cited in J.H.E. Bennett, 'Cheshire and the Fifteen', Journal of the Chester Arch. Soc., new series, xxi (1915), 33. The Pentice was Chester's assembly hall.

3. 'The Diary of George Booth of Chester and Katherine Howard, his Daughter, of Boughton, near Chester, 1707-1764', ed. G.P. Crawfurd, Journal of the Chester Arch. Soc., new series, xxviii (1928), 23: 14 Nov. 1715.

4. Great Diurnal of Nicholas Blundell, ii. 152: 16 & 20 Nov. 1715.

5. Hibbert-Ware, Lancashire Memorials, ii. 150.

If you outlive this misfortune, and return to live in the North, I desire you never to be seen to converse with such rogues in disguise, that promised to join us, and animated us to rise with them.'[1] One chronicler of the Rebellion, the Rev. Robert Patten, believed the Catholics and Scots to have been deceived by the 'wine-created valour' of inebriate Tory squires.

> That party [i.e. the Tories] who are never right hearty for the cause till they are mellow, as they call it over a bottle or two, began now to show us their blind side; and that is just their character, that they do not care for venturing their carcases any further than the tavern. There, indeed, with their High Church and Ormonde, they would make men believe ••• that they would encounter the greatest opposition in the world; but, after having consulted their pillows, and the fume a little evaporated, ••• they generally became mighty tame, and are apt to look before they leap, and with the snail, if you touch their houses, they hide their heads, shrink back, and pull in their horns. 2

Whilst this phenomenon must be credited with some share of responsibility, it cannot by itself explain so widespread a failure of Tory nerve. The fact is that the majority of Tories were never committed Jacobites. They hated the Whigs and the monopoly of power which they now enjoyed at the Hanoverian Court, but they feared that the coming in of the Pretender might mean a return to the dark days of 1687-8, to the elevation of Popery, and to the destruction of their beloved Church of England. The problems facing the Tories in 1715 were two-fold: how to regain the confidence and favour of the Court, and how to win back a disillusioned electorate. A rebellion aimed at restoring the Catholic Stuarts offered a solution to neither of them.

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1. Patten's account of a conversation at Wigan between Derwentwater, Widdrington and Brigadier Mackintosh, cited in Hibbert-Ware, Lancashire Memorials, ii. 169; see also pp.170-1.

2. Ibid., ii. 171-2.

3. The Whig Supremacy, 1716-1722.

For the Tory party as a whole, despite the ultimate reticence and inactivity of its Protestant adherents, the Rebellion of 1715 represented an unmitigated political disaster. Not only were their Whig opponents now confirmed as the only possible guarantors for the continuing security of the Hanoverian dynasty, but the Tories themselves were henceforth to be universally stigmatized as men of suspect principles and proven disaffection to His Majesty's person and government. Neither could Anglican Tories wholly escape from the direct consequences of their intrigues during the preceding summer. Sir John Bland was one of a number of Tory M.P.s arrested on suspicion of having actively promoted the Rebellion;[1] while Peter Legh, with two fugitive brothers on the run from Preston Fight, greatly feared the loss of his own liberty and the forfeiture of his estates.[2] On the other hand, the Hanoverian Lord Barrymore, enquiring after his own friends in Lancashire, was pleased to hear of none whom he knew being 'concern'd in any thing ag.t the Government'.[3] In this respect, given the broad circle of his acquaintance, he would seem to have been remarkably fortunate.

In the months after the Rebellion, all Tory communities, even conspicuously loyal ones, were regarded with the utmost contempt and suspicion by the Whig officers commanding what was a virtual army of occupation in the northwest. At Chester this resulted in a head-on

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1. Commons Journals, xxiii. 329.
2. Lady Newton, Lyme Letters, p. 265: Sir F. Leicester to P. Legh, n.d.
3. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Barrymore to Sir R. Bradshaigh, 13 Dec. 1715.

clash between the civil and military authorities, when the garrison-commander, Colonel Fane,[1] after a disagreement over the extent of his jurisdiction, imprisoned the recorder of the town and then attempted to lay the charge of transporting and maintaining five hundred rebel prisoners upon a local Whig magistrate. Sir Richard Grosvenor, who had been elected mayor the previous October, immediately petitioned the Crown for the recorder's release,[2] thereby stirring up a flurry of activity in Court circles which resulted in the colonel's recall to London under close arrest. In his reply to Grosvenor, Lord Townshend communicated the King's displeasure at hearing of Fane's activities;[3] and in his orders to the colonel, William Pulteney, the Secretary at War, made pointed reference to His Majesty's 'highest Resentment, and Indignation at a proceeding which tends so greatly to ye Prejudice of his service.'[4] A few days later, Townshend wrote to tell Lord Cholmondeley how much he had regretted hearing of 'the late bustle at Chester'; and he added somewhat caustically: 'I could wish your Lo[rdshi]p had gone thither to put an end to that matter before it had gone too far.'[5] As it was, the

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1. Hon. John Fane (1686-1732), of Mereworth, Kent; succeeded brother as 7th Earl of Westmorland in 1736. Though a staunch Whig in 1715, by the 1740's he was regarded as a Jacobite. See Sedgewick History of Parliament, ii. 25-6.

2. Chester R.O., Mayors' Letters, M/L/6/198: Petition to the King from the Mayor and Corporation of Chester, 22 Dec. 1715; see also Chester R.O., [1956] P/Cowper: W. Cowper, Collectanea Devana (2 MS. vols., compiled in or after 1763), i. 265-6; Grosvenor MSS.: R. Comberbach (the recorder) to Grosvenor, 10 Nov. & 19 Dec. 1715.

3. Chester R.O., Mayors' Letters, M/L/6/199: Townshend to Grosvenor, 24 Dec. 1715.

4. Ibid., M/L/6/200: Pulteney to Fane, 24 Dec. 1715.

5. P.R.O., S.P. 44/118 (unpaginated): Townshend to Cholmondeley, 27 Dec. 1715.

government was obliged to save face: despite subsequent attempts to justify his conduct,[1] Fane was only freed on condition that he made a full and abject apology to the civic dignitaries whom he had offended.[2]

Lancashire too was a prey to social tensions: 'As to Manchester,' a relative informed Mrs. Kenyon, 'they are ready to pull one another's eyes out, and the country is full of thieves and rogues.'[3] Taking such factors into account, therefore, the Whig stronghold of Liverpool was selected as the most suitable venue for bringing the rebel prisoners to trial,[4] and, in January 1716, a Commission of Oyer and Terminer was sent down to the county for that purpose.[5] At the opening of the proceedings, a special sermon[6] was preached by the Rev. Samuel Peploe of Preston, who, when the rebel army had entered that town two months previously, had continued with more than common zeal to pray for the members of the Brunswick family.[7] The trials went on throughout January and February. Scores of rebels were found guilty and more than forty were

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1. P.R.O., S.P. 35/10, ff.245-6: Representation of the Case of Colonel Fane to the King, n.d.

2. Chester R.O., [1956] P/Cowper: Collectanea Devana, i. 265-6.

3. Hist. MSS. Comm., Kenyon MSS., no. 1172, p.460: P.[?] Kenyon to Mrs. Kenyon, 10 Jan. 1715-16.

4. For the suggestion that the trials should be held at Preston rather than Liverpool, see P.R.O., S.P. 44/118: Extract from a letter to Townshend, 30 Dec. 1715.

5. Hibbert-Ware, Lancashire Memorials, ii. 190-1; P.R.O., D[uchy of] L[ancaster Papers] 20, bundle 9: Commission of Oyer and Terminer Gaol Delivery, 15 Dec. 1715. Though most of those chosen to serve on the commission were Whigs, the names of Lord Aylesford, Edward Vawdrey and John Thornton were also included.

6. Printed as: A Steadfast Affection to the Protestant Religion and the Happy Government of His Majesty King George in Opposition to the Wicked Designs of the Present Rebellion (London, 1716): see Bodl. MS. Rawlinson J. 4°. 2, f.165.

7. Hibbert-Ware, Lancashire Memorials, ii.100. For Peploe, see below, p. 103.

sent for execution at Manchester, Liverpool, Wigan, Preston, Garstang and Lancaster.[1] During February, however, a number of prisoners pleaded guilty before coming to trial and appealed to the King for clemency. As a result of their petition, capital sentences on more than a thousand were remitted, and they were turned over to a group of Liverpool merchants for transportation to the American colonies as indentured servants.[2]

The last remaining vestiges of Tory enthusiasm were greatly subdued by the executions in Lancashire and London, which, as one Lancaster Quaker observed, 'much silinced the clamors of the clergy'.[3] At Court and in the House of Lords, the Earl of Nottingham argued forcefully for a policy of leniency towards the Scottish and English peers who had led the Rebellion. Finding this advice ignored,[4] however, both he and his Finch relatives thereupon resigned all their offices held under the Crown, and retired once more into Opposition.[5]

With Lord Aylesford thus suddenly removed from the Duchy, it was once

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1. For a full account of the trial proceedings, sentences and executions, see Hibbert-Ware, Lancashire Memorials, ii. 191-5, 238-9. See also Grosvenor MSS.: J. Suer to Sr. Rd. Grosvenor, 18 Feb. 1715-16; Brit. Mus., Stowe MSS. 750, ff.157-8: T. Bootle to Ld. Chief Justice Parker, 29 Jan. 1715-16.

2. P.R.O., S.P. 35/2, f. 32: Petition of the Gentlemen at Chester [i.e. the rebel prisoners] to the King, 6 Feb. 1715-16; A.C. Wardle, 'Sir Thomas Johnson and the Jacobite Rebels', Trans. Hist. Soc. Lancs. & Chesh., xci (1939), 125-42.

3. The Autobiography of William Stout of Lancaster, ed. J.D. Marshall (Chetham Soc., 3rd series, xiv, 1967), p.173.

4. Of the seven noblemen sentenced to death for High Treason, Derwentwater, Kenmure and Wintoun were executed; Nithsdale escaped; and Cornwath, Widdrington and Nairne were reprieved.

5. For the arguments for and against leniency, see Plumb, Walpole, i. 218-22.

again rumoured that Lord Derby would succeed him.[1] However, Derby too had been working on behalf of the rebel lords, who included his cousin Lord Nairne,[2] and the prognostication proved false. The job was given instead to Lord Scarbrough.[3] Wholesale purges of Tory office-holders now followed, Edward Vawdrey and John Thornton being among the victims, and at the same time there took place a further sifting of the Lancashire Commission of the Peace.[4]

Even now the embarrassment of the Rebellion's aftermath was far from over. The military authorities faced considerable difficulties in coping with the rebel prisoners awaiting transportation in northern gaols. Some refused to sign the petition for clemency or the indentures for service; others refused to reveal their true identity, thereby giving rise to the suspicion that there might still be men of substance masquerading as common soldiers.[5] Furthermore, the conditions under which the prisoners were obliged to live were becoming a source of great concern to Whig and Tory sympathizers alike: food was scarce,

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1. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Ld. Barrymore to Sir R. Bradshaigh, 4 Mar. 1715-16.

2. Hist. MSS. Comm., Stuart MSS., ii. 84: J. Menzies to M. Michel Frilbourg (Lewis Inese), 2/13 Apr. 1716.

3. Richard Lumley, 1st Earl of Scarbrough (c.1650-1721). Educated as a Catholic, but became a Protestant in 1687. Favourite of Charles II; but signed invitation to William of Orange in 1688. Thereafter voted with the Whigs in the Lords, except on the question of Sacheverell's acquittal in 1710. Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Mar. 1716-May 1717. See D.N.B., xii.275-6.

4. Autobiography of William Stout, pp. 177, 208; Farrer Papers, L1/42/1, Misc. Original MSS., no. 13: Case of John Thornton, May 1716. For the changes in the Commission of the Peace, see Appendix B.

5. P.R.O., S.P. 35/5, ff.110A-112, 115-16, 129, 135-6, 140, 151, 185-6, 189-94: Col. J. Rapin to [P. Methuen], 8 Apr. - 13 June 1716; P.R.O., S.P. 44/117, p.432: J. Stanhope to Rapin, 19 Mar. 1715-16; ibid./120, pp. 8-9, 19, 24, 142: Methuen to Rapin, 19 July 1716 to 29 Mar. 1717.

sanitation non-existent, and disease rife.[1] Nevertheless, there were many local inhabitants who did not share these compassionate sentiments. In July 1716, a Chester woman who had been running errands for prisoners in the Castle had to seek the mayor's protection after being involved in scuffles with a number of other women who objected to her humanitarian activities.[2]

The English and Scottish lords were not the only prisoners to be tried in London, for in March 1716, the royal assent was given to a bill making possible the more speedy trial of the other rebel leaders in the city.[3] Richard Towneley and Edward Tyldesley, two Lancashire Catholics, were tried before the Marshalsea Court; both pleaded that they had acted under duress,[4] and, contrary to all expectations, both were acquitted. As far as can be ascertained, public opinion appears to have been against repeating in London the scenes of carnage already witnessed in Lancashire, and so graphically depicted in the Tory press. Yet in the north, it was widely believed that the acquittals had been secured by dint of outright bribery and corruption. True or not, the trial jury was severely reprimanded by the judge, and summarily dismissed.[5]

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1. Bennett, 'Cheshire and the Fifteen'. loc. cit., pp.34-5, 39-42; P.R.O., S.P. 35/6/17: W. Shawe to A. Cracherode, 5 Sept. 1716 [per cal.]; P.R.O., S.P. 44/120, passim. For a less critical account of prison conditions, see Autobiography of William Stout, pp. 176-7.

2. Grosvenor MSS.: A. Fogg to Sir Rd. Grosvenor, 18 July 1716.

3. Hibbert-Ware, Lancashire Memorials, ii. 214.

4. Cambridge Univ. Lib., Cholmondeley (Houghton) MSS., 80/432: The Case of Edward Tyldesley, n.d. The accused were Richard Towneley (1689-1735), of Towneley, Lancs. and Edward Tyldesley (d. before 1725), of Myerscough, Lancs.

5. Hibbert-Ware, Lancashire Memorials, ii. 220-1; P.R.O., S.P. 35/5, ff.155-6: Rapin to [Methuen], 21 May 1716; Records of the English Catholics of 1715, ed. J.O. Payne (London, 1889), pp.85-8: W. Moore to the Forfeited Estates Commissioners, n.d.

Other Lancashire Catholics were brought to trial and found guilty, but several were subsequently pardoned and released.[1] As late as October, however, five rebels were tried and executed at Lancaster, though how and why the charges came before the Assizes is unclear.[2]

By this time, however, the centre of political attention had largely shifted back to Westminster, where the Tories found themselves reunited, temporarily at least, in their opposition to the Septennial Bill. As early as April 1716, Lord Barrymore, for example, was fully occupied in trying to secure the appearance of Tory Members. 'I think this Contest y.t is like to be requires all our attendance,' he told Sir Richard Grosvenor, 'for my owne part I am convinced the matter of ye repeal or suspension will be pusht to the utmost and tho 'tis carr'd I thinke we ought not to bee forgiven If we are not there to give our negatives and best assistance ag.t it.'[3] In the division of 24 April for committing the Bill, the Tories were able to muster 162 votes, men of such widely divergent attitudes towards the Hanoverian Succession as Shippen and Hanmer joining their voices in the debate.[4] Yet as Barrymore had forecast, the ministry found no difficulty in carrying their point.

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1. Hibbert-Ware, Lancashire Memorials, ii. 224-8.

2. Ibid., ii. 239-40.

3. Grosvenor MSS.: Barrymore to Grosvenor, 2 Apr. 1716. See also Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Barrymore to Sr. R. Bradshaigh, 1 Apr. 1716.

4. Hist. MSS. Comm., Portland MSS., v. 522: J. Drummond to Ld. Harley, 28 Apr. 1716; Commons Journals, xviii. 429.

If, however, the main arena of political conflict was once again firmly established in the metropolis, provincial disquiet continued to afford a series of diverting sideshows. One important consequence of the Rebellion was the setting up of the Forfeited Estates Commission. This was a body primarily intended to manage the sale of property belonging to those attainted of treason; to meet outstanding claims against their estates; to compile a register of all landed property in the possession of Roman Catholics; and to seek those estates given over to 'superstitious uses' — that is the practice of the Catholic Religion.[1] The Commissioners employed their own agents to keep a close watch on Catholic activities in the northwest, and these were supplemented by others answerable directly to Walpole at the Treasury.[2] Several of the more prominent Catholics had absconded from their homes shortly after the failure of the Rebellion, and had sought refuge on the continent along with Protestant Jacobites like John Byrom[3] and Dr. Roger Kenyon;[4] which circumstances only added to the difficulties of those who remained.[5]

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1. Hibbert-Ware, Lancashire Memorials, ii. 243-5.

2. For the activities of these agents, see Brit. Mus., Stowe MSS. 750, ff. 210, 212-3: W. Moore to Ld. Chief Justice Parker, 5 Oct. & 19 Nov. 1716; Records of the English Catholics, pp. 85-8: W. Moore to the Commissioners, n.d.; Cholmondeley (Houghton) MSS., 78/1a: An Account of the Priests in Cheshire, Lancashire and Flintshire, 29 Dec. 1716.

3. John Byrom (1691-1763), of Manchester. Nonjuring poet and scholar. Enjoyed a wide circle of acquaintance in the northwest among Whigs as well as Tories. Close friend of Dr. Thomas Deacon.

4. Roger Kenyon (d.1724), M.D. Jacobite; Physician to Mary of Modena until her death in 1718. Brother-in-law and cousin of George Kenyon.

5. Many of the Catholic families who found it prudent to leave England for the Continent at this time are mentioned in Great Diurnal of Nicholas Blundell, ii. 170, 179, 202. For Byrom, see Byrom Journal and Remains, i. 34-5; for Kenyon, see Hist. MSS. Comm., Stuart MSS., ii. 92, 342: R. Kenyon to Mar, 17 Oct. & 23 Dec. 1716 (N.S.) [both letters dated from Rome].

There was a good deal of confusion among Catholics and Nonjurors alike about the legal consequences of not taking the oaths of allegiance and abjuration,[1] and many of the former contrived to transfer their property to Protestant trustees, thereby avoiding punitive seizures and taxation.[2] The Commissioners' attitude to their brief was rigid and without mercy. They saw their task as being to destroy completely the Catholic interest in the northern shires, and believed that the forfeiture of Catholic estates and their resale to Protestants was the only viable means of achieving this end; alternative suggestions were forcefully rejected.[3] To some Whigs, however, this pre-occupation with the Catholics seemed positively dangerous, since it left the Anglican Tories untrammelled and unchecked. Yet though agents in the field urged the Commissioners to ensure that the oaths were tendered again, 'to all persons without distinction, as well Protestants as Papists', it was in fact doubtful whether the Act of 1715 made this possible.[4] Nevertheless, at the end of 1716, rumours of a new plot fomenting among the Lancashire Jacobites were being relayed to London. William Moore,

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1. Hist. MSS. Comm., Kenyon MSS., no. 1175, p. 461: A. Barlow to G. Kenyon, 18 Nov. 1716.

2. Legh of Lyme MSS.: J. Ward to P. Legh, 10 Jan. 1716-17; Records of the English Catholics, p. 92: W. Moore to the Commissioners, 27 Dec. 1716.

3. Records of the English Catholics, p. 135: Forfeited Estates Commissioners to the Lords of the Treasury, 31 Jan. 1716-17.

4. Ibid., p. 92: C. Slaughter to G. Treby [one of the Commissioners], 5 Feb. 1716-17. The Act in question was 1 Geo. I, cap. 55: see Rupert C. Jarvis, Collected Papers on the Jacobite Risings (Manchester, 1971-2), ii. 303-7, 324 note 6.

Master of the References to the Commissioners, reported that before Christmas

> the Popish priests were everywhere spiriting up their people by assuring them that they would see an unexpected turn in their affairs! which probably proceeded either from what was then publicly discoursed that there would be an universal change in the ministry or from their having some private intelligence of the intended invasion from Sweden.[1]

In March 1717, three rebel prisoners were released from Preston gaol by the orders of a local Whig Justice, who justified his actions on the ground that the men were not only a charge on the government, but were in such a decrepit condition as to be a source of pity, which was greatly to the government's prejudice.[2] Indeed, Jacobite fervour was far from dead. There had been a new outbreak of sectarian violence at Stockport during February,[3] and in March, Thomas Assheton was reported to be in Holland to receive instructions from Jacobite agents.[4] Assheton, it will be recalled, was supposedly among those Cheshire gentlemen who voted not to join the Rebellion in 1715; thus his involvement in Jacobite intrigue only eighteen months later goes some way towards confirming Lord Nottingham's forecast that a policy of systematic repression would only prove counter-productive. Neither was Assheton the only northwestern Tory anxious to affirm his loyalty to

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1. Records of the English Catholics, pp. 85-8: Moore to the Commissioners, n.d. For details of the Gyllenborg Plot, see John J. Murray, George I, the Baltic and the Whig Split, (London, 1969), pp. 285-317.

2. P.R.O., S.P. 35/8/58: W. Shawe to J. Stanhope, 3 Mar. 1716-17 [per cal.]

3. 'Correspondence of the Rev. Peter Walkden: Letters from a Lancashire Student at Glasgow University During the Rebellion of 1715,' ed. J. Bromley, Trans. Hist. Soc. Lancs. & Chesh., xxxvi (1884), 31: J. Woodworth to P. Walkden, 22 Feb. 1716-17.

4. Hist. MSS. Comm., Stuart MSS., iv. 114: G. Jermingham to Mar, 10/21 March 1716-17.

the Stuart cause: Robert Cholmondeley of Holford made repeated visits to Jacobite agents, while diverting himself on the continent during the summer of 1717, in order to assure them of his sentiments towards King James.[1] The tide of events, however, was at last beginning to turn against those conspiring to bring in the Pretender. The release of the last rebel prisoners in July 1717[2] removed one of the main areas of discontent so effectively exploited by Jacobite Tories; at the same time, the Act of Grace of this year enabled many of those who had fled the country after the Rebellion to return to their homes.[3] Here were signs, at least, that social and political life were at last returning to normal.

One fact, however, was inescapable: the social and political world into which the exiles returned was one dominated by Whigs. In Cheshire, Lord Cholmondeley was the fountainhead of both local and ministerial patronage. He was Lord Lieutenant in both the county and the city, Governor of Chester Castle, and Chamberlain of the County Palatine. Whilst Hanoverian Tories like Randle Wilbraham might hope to receive some tokens of his favour, all the most attractive plums were reserved for the Whig supporters of his own family's interest.[4]

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1. Hist. MSS. Comm., Stuart MSS., iv. 422: Father Archangel Graeme to Mar, 3/14 July 1717.

2. P.R.O., S.P. 35/9/48: A. Cracherode to C. Delafaye, 24 July 1717.

3. Great Diurnal of Nicholas Blundell, ii. 207-8: 15-17 Aug. 1717; but see also Byrom Journal and Remains, i.35: E. Byrom to J. Byrom, 17 Aug. 1717.

4. Cholmondeley MSS., DCH/M/29: R. Wilbraham to Cholmondeley, 25 Jan. 1719-20; P.R.O., S.P. 35/11/28: Cholmondeley to Sunderland, 2 Mar. 1717-18 [per cal.].

His personal stock was high at Court. When ill-health kept him in the country, as it tended to do a good deal, the King was wont to ask after him and advise him to take regular exercise; that being, as the Duke of Manchester told him, 'the only way he thinks to keep People in good Health.'[1] During the split in the Whig party, between 1717 and 1720, he avoided obvious allegiances to either faction: an accomplishment rendered easier by his prolonged absences from Westminster.

In this respect at least, Lord Cholmondeley's conduct stood in stark contrast to that of the Earl of Warrington, his rival for the leadership of the Whig interest in the county. In 1716, Warrington had been given a pension of £1,500 per annum by George I,[2] and had been made welcome at Court.[3] His brother Langham Booth, however, as a Knight of the Shire for Cheshire, chose to follow an independent line in the Commons, and in 1717 joined Walpole and the Prince of Wales in Opposition, becoming the latter's Groom of the Bedchamber in the following year.[4] Such wayward behaviour inevitably reflected unfavourably on the earl, who was anxious to gain some employment at Court.[5] Thereafter, he declined even a regular attendance to his

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1. Cholmondeley MSS., DCH/M/29: Manchester to Cholmondeley, 5 Dec. 1719.

2. Calendar of Treasury Books, xxxi, pt. ii., pp301, 304; see also Cholmondeley (Houghton) MSS., corr. 770: Warrington to Walpole, 1 Apr. 1717, where the amount paid is stated as £1,000.

3. Hist. MSS. Comm., Cowper MSS., ii.117: List of Peers &c. summoned to his Majesty, 1716.

4. Sedgwick, History of Parliament, i. 472.

5. Cholmondeley (Houghton) MSS., corr. 768: Warrington to Walpole, 9 Feb. 1716-17.

duties in the Lords, coming up only at times of extreme crisis for the ministry.[1]

The apparent hardening of Lord Cholmondeley's attitude towards the Cheshire Tories was doubtless an important factor in his success at Court, and was given clear demonstration in 1720. At the end of February, upon the death of their recorder, Roger Comberbach, the corporation of Chester petitioned the Crown to approve as his successor Comberbach's son-in-law, Thomas Mather:[2] 'being a person esteemed to be well affected to your Majesty, and your Governm.t and to the Church of England as by Law established.'[3] Mather, though a Tory, was apparently well-known to the Lord Chancellor, who favoured granting the royal approbation immediately; 'for none but a Tory,' he told Cholmondeley's brother Lord Newburgh, 'would succeed at Chester & this was a moderate man & the best that could be had among the Torys ....' The Lord Chancellor was thereupon acquainted with Cholmondeley's belief that, if Mather and 'one or two more' were refused, a Whig might be chosen; 'but he seem'd,' so Lord Newburgh reported, 'not to think several refusals would be made, & I find takes this Mather for a harmless man ... & believes that only worse and more violent Torys will be chosen if this is not accepted.'[4] Thus it was with seeming reluctance that Lord

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1. P.R.O., S.P. 35/29, f.12: Warrington to ? , 6 Nov. 1721.

2. Thomas Mather (d.1745), of Chester. Elected alderman and recorder, 1719; received royal approval, 1720.

3. P.R.O., S.P. 35/20, f.194: Petition of the City of Chester to the King, 26 Feb. 1719-20.

4. Cholmondeley MSS., DCH/X/8: Newburgh to Cholmondeley, 8 Mar. [1719-20].

Cholmondeley was persuaded to acquiesce in the approval of Mather's election, and then only by the suggestion that, in pressing for a Whig recorder, he might end up with a Jacobite. However, this new posture as the scourge of the Cheshire Tories was far from being wholly consistent. He remained on good terms with his Tory friends and relatives, and continued to allow the more moderate among them to play an active role in county administration as Justices of the Peace, and perhaps as Deputy Lieutenants.[1]

Indeed, as Lord Lieutenant, he experienced considerable difficulty in getting enough Whig Gentlemen of figure and estate to serve at Quarter Sessions at all. When Robert Lowe was asked to serve as a Justice in May 1720, he sought to decline the honour on the ground that he lacked an adequate fortune. 'I have only sufficient barely to furnish me with the Necessaries & Conveniencies of Life,' he protested to Lord Cholmondeley; 'And I Apprehend the Acting as Justice of Peace will necessarily encrease any Expence, and lessen my Busines as a Lawyer ....' His chief objection, however, was more specific:

> ... Your Lordship knows That Justices of Peace have to do with the Poorest and Worst of Mankind that if they have Power will be very Eager for Revenge, And They will never want Power to revenge as long as there is Men of Riches and Malice to encourage and support them; so whilst there is such a Spirit of Malice in the County joyned to a great Estate, My slender Fortune will but Encourage such Malice & may soon Run me to much greater Expence than I can bear; ... It Therefore seems best only for those to Act who have a Purse as well as Courage to dispise it. 2

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1. Cholmondeley MSS., DCH/X/5: C. Cholmondeley to Ld. Cholmondeley, 9 July 1720. For Tory J.P.s, see Appendix B. No precisely datable list of Cheshire Deputy Lieutenants survives from this period. There are, however, two undated lists of both Deputy Lieutenants and militia officers (ibid., DCH/X/9), which from internal evidence can be placed at some date between 1714 and 1719. See also ibid.; DCH/L/43: Cheshire Deputy Lieutenants & Justices to Ld. Cholmondeley, 26 Mar. 1719, two signatories of which were Tories.

2. Ibid., DCH/L/49: Lowe to Cholmondeley, 30 May 1720. Despite these protests, Lowe's name does appear in the Commission of 27 Jan. 1720-1.

Increasingly, though, the business of the county was coming to repose firmly in the hands of a small group of Whig squires and clerics, many of whom were regarded as parvenus of the most recent vintage by the old established gentry families, while the vast majority of their Tory neighbours found themselves denied access to those positions of prestige and authority to which their estates and social pre-eminence had for centuries given them an all but proprietory claim.

The situation in Lancashire was hardly better, and did not improve when in June 1717 Nicholas Lechmere,[1] long time champion of the Junto Whigs in the House of Commons, was appointed Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster for life and proceeded to take a tight hold on the county administration. Lord Derby was continued as Lord Lieutenant, but appears to have exerted little influence in the north by this time, spending a good deal of his time on his Sussex properties.[2] When he did visit Lancashire, he was more often than not to be found enjoying the company of his Tory neighbours at Knowsley, including the Catholics Lord Molyneux[3] and Nicholas Blundell.[4] In general, it seemed,

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1. Nicholas Lechmere (1675-1727), of the Middle Temple, London. M.P. for Appleby, 1708-10; for Cockermouth, 1710-June 1717; for Tewkesbury, June 1717-Sept. 1721. Created Baron Lechmere, Sept. 1721. Q.C., 1708; Solicitor General, 1714-15; Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster for life, June 1717; Attorney General, 1718-20; Privy Councillor, July 1718-27.

2. Most of Lord Derby's surviving letters from this period are dated at Halnaker in Sussex.

3. Richard, 5th Viscount Molyneux [I] (d.1738). He had succeeded to his father's title and estates in 1717.

4. Great Diurnal of Nicholas Blundell, p.232: 16 June 1718; ibid., p.239: 1 Sept. 1718.

his interest in politics had abated considerably. He, like Lord Warrington, declined to attend regularly in the House of Lords, preferring, so he told the ministry, to remain in Sussex for the sake of his health.[1]

Yet if Lechmere's appointment brought little cheer to local Tories, there were other signs of the changing times. By the end of 1717, matters seemed sufficiently settled for even the Nonjuring John Byrom to consider returning to Manchester, where the feoffees of Chetham's Hospital had offered him the post of Librarian. He still scrupled, however, to take the abjuration oath which the appointment required, and so felt himself obliged to decline the invitation.[2] In fact, Nonjuring sympathies remained widespread and the county was rarely free from stories of cabal and conspiracy. Nevertheless, at the close of 1718, against the background of rumours that the Catholics were collecting funds for yet another Jacobite design, the Anglican Tories around Liverpool were occupying their time in more profitable and innocent pursuits: 'preparing to build a new chapel, to which they [might] present a man after their own heart.'[3] The differences between Jacobite and Hanoverian, however, were slow to diminish. '... [T]heir faces distinguish 'em,' Sir Roger Bradshaigh was told by a friend at

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1. P.R.O., S.P. 35/21/134: Derby to C. Delafaye, 29 June 1720 [per cal.].
2. Byrom Journal and Remains, i.39: J. Byrom to E. Byrom, 3 Jan. 1718 (N.S.)
3. Blenheim Palace, Blenheim MSS., D.I.33 (Sunderland Papers), bundle 1: C. Owen to Sunderland, 31 Dec. 1718.

Wigan, referring to the way in which news from abroad was received by the respective factions in the town; 'And ye Disaffected party who were lately in ye utmost despair, receive so much encouragement from ye present posture of affairs y.t they almost look us out of Countenance ....'[1] By 1722, at least one Lancashire squire seems to have been privy to the Jacobite conspiracy subsequently known as the Atterbury Plot;[2] for in February, Roger Nowell of Read confided to one of the lesser conspirators: 'I shall be glad to hear the fire grows hotter, and the flame ready to break out ....'[3] In the opinion of some local Whigs, the Bishop of Chester too was not without complicity in the plot,[4] but his involvement was incapable of proof, and he remained in his diocese until removed by death in 1725.

After the failures of 1722, the scale of Jacobite activity in both Lancashire and Cheshire, though not entirely eradicated, was none the less very much reduced. Many of the area's Tory squires accepted the status quo and resigned themselves to making the best of a life of bucolic obscurity, consoled only by the rustic excitements which fighting-cocks and hounds in full cry were able to afford. But others, whilst they eschewed all treasonable associations, remained determined

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1. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: A. Leigh to Bradshaigh, 15 Mar. 1718-19. For the hostilities with Spain and the projected Jacobite invasion, which form the background to these changes of mood, see Williams, Whig Supremacy, p.173.

2. See G. V. Bennett, The Tory Crisis in Church and State, 1688-1730: The Career of Francis Atterbury, Bishop of Rochester (Oxford, 1975), pp.223-41.

3. P.R.O., S.P. 35/30, f.66: R. Nowell to C. Halstead, 2 Feb. 1721-2. Roger Nowell (1675-1725), of Read, Lancs. High Tory.

4. Autobiography of William Stout, p.187

to harry their Whig opponents by every means they could invent or turn to their use. In this manner, they settled down to what promised to be an extremely lengthy campaign of political attrition.

Bishop Gastrell's refusal to admit the Rev. Samuel Peploe[1] to the Wardenship of Manchester Collegiate Church, without his first obtaining a University degree, served to illustrate the sort of opportunities which always existed for this kind of tactical harassment. Peploe had been recommended for preferment by William Moore, Master of the References to the Forfeited Estates Commissioners, who strongly urged that the Preston vicar should be rewarded for his services to the Hanoverian cause before and during the Rebellion. 'I must take the freedom to say,' observed Moore in 1716, 'that as this worthy divine's having yet met with no publick favour for his services and sufferings ••• must be a matter of great pleasure to the Papists and Jacobites, so it must be no less a cause of discouragement to the friends of the Government.'[2] Peploe's zealous behaviour was subsequently brought to the attention of Lord Townshend, who recommended him to the King's favour; and in 1717, Peploe was presented by the Crown to the vacant Wardenship of Manchester.[3] Bishop Gastrell, however, had already

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1. Samuel Peploe (?1667-1752). Rector of Kedleston, Derbys. & subsequently vicar of Preston; presented by the Crown to the Wardenship of Manchester Collegiate Church in 1717, but not installed until 1726; consecrated Bishop of Chester, 26 Apr. 1726. A staunch supporter of the Whig cause in Lancashire.

2. Records of the English Catholics, pp. 85-8: W. Moore to the Forfeited Estates Commissioners, n.d.

3. P.R.O., S.P. 35/31, f.152: Peploe to Townshend, 7 May 1722. Townshend was, in fact, already aware of Peploe's services to the House of Hanover (see above, p.88), and within a week of the rebels' surrender at Preston had promised to recommend him for preferment: see P.R.O., S.P. 44/118: Townshend to Peploe, 19 Nov. 1715. But nothing was done until Moore's letter re-awakened the Secretary of State's interest in his case.

proposed that the wardenship should be annexed to the bishopric, in order both to augment the meagre diocesan revenues and to provide a more convenient centre for purposes of administration.[1] He was therefore somewhat less than happy to learn of Peploe's preferment, and was even more disturbed to discover that the Crown's nominee was not qualified by the degree of Bachelor of Divinity which the College's statutes required. He therefore refused to install him; whereupon Peploe went to Archbishop Wake, who conferred the necessary degree upon him by faculty at Lambeth. Again the would-be warden applied to the bishop for admission; again the bishop demurred, this time on the ground that the Lambeth degree was invalid. Peploe thus found himself obliged to seek a writ of quare impedit against Gastrell, thereby beginning a legal battle between the bishop and the Crown which was to last for the next seven years.[2]

Bishop Gastrell responded to the situation in two ways: firstly, by attempting for as long as possible to prevent the Manchester Cause from coming to trial; secondly, by defending in print the Universities' sole right to confer degrees.[3] In the former endeavour he proved so

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1. Christ Church, Oxford, Wake MSS., Arch. W. Epist. 7, ff. 362-3: A Proposal for Annexing the Wardenship of Manchester to the Bishopric of Chester, n.d.

2. Hist. MSS. Comm., Portland MSS., v. 561-2: Gastrell to Oxford, 25 May 1718.

3. Francis Gastrell, The Bishop of Chester's Case, with relation to the Wardenship of Manchester, in which it is shewn that no other Degrees but such as are taken in the University, can be deemed Legal Qualifications for Ecclesiastical Preferments in England (Oxford, 1721).

remarkably successful that, by a series of legal quirks and accidents,[1] the merits of the case did not come to a determination until August 1722, when a Lancaster Assize jury at last found in favour of the Crown and Peploe, and against the bishop.[2] Even then the case was not over, for Gastrell's counsel offered a Bill of Exceptions to the general decision and carried their appeal to the Court of King's Bench, where the wrangling started all over again.[3]

For his part, Peploe became convinced that the bishop's obstinacy was political rather than legal in its motivation. 'The illegality of the Arch B[isho]ps degree for a qualification, is the objection Pretended,' he told Lord Townshend in May 1722: 'but (if there was a proper occasion for it,) I could make it pretty plain that the real objection is of another nature.'[4] A month earlier, however, while explaining a further delay in the trial proceedings to Archbishop Wake, he had been rather more expansive: 'No small rejoyceings have been made by some on y.[s] occasion;

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1. For details of the complex legal proceedings in this case, see Hist. MSS. Comm., Portland MSS., vii.272: Dr. W. Stratford to E. Harley, 23 Mar. 1719-20; Bodl. MS. Ballard 9, f.97: Gastrell to Dr. A. Charlett, 7 Sept. [1720]; Wake MSS., Arch. W. Epist. 8/259: Peploe to Wake, 3 June 1720; ibid., Arch. W. Epist. 9/97: R. Chicheley to Wake, 15 July 1721; ibid./100: same to same, 20 July 1721; ibid./105: same to same, 5 Aug. 1721; ibid./114: Peploe to Wake, 1 Sept. 1721; Brit. Mus., Addit. MSS. 4164 (Birch MSS.), f.84: A. Clayton to Dr. Cross, 28 Aug. 1721; ibid., ff.86-7: J. Audley to Cross, 29 Aug. 1721; Bodl. MS. Rawlinson Letters 23, f.98: T. Baker to T. Hearne, 5 Aug. 1722.

2. Bodl. MS. Rawlinson J. 4°. 2, f.165: Newspaper cutting, Aug. 1722; Wake MSS., Arch. W. Epist. 9/225: Copy of part of a letter from Mr. Paxton to Mr. Cracherode, 14 Aug. 1722; ibid./226: Peploe to Wake, 16 Aug. 1722.

3. See below, p.150 seq.

4. P.R.O., S.P. 35/31, f.152: Peploe to Townshend, 7 May 1722.

not to say scandalous reflections on their superiors. I believe I need not tell y^r^ Grace that this has been made a Party Cause on one side from the beginning.'[1] Although he clearly underestimated Gastrell's genuine concern for the privileges of the Universities, and the very real concern with which the case was followed in both Oxford and Cambridge,[2] Peploe was able to cite other evidence to support his contention that the bishop was not above intruding party bigotry into the exercise of his episcopal functions. In September 1720, for instance, Gastrell denied Letters Dimissory to a candidate for holy orders, for no other reason, according to Peploe, than that

> he had on some occasion asserted the Kings title against one who advancd certain propositions wch manifestly subverted it, wch was before hand represented to his l^d^p in such a manner as has made this poor man a sufferer. Nor is he the only Person who has met wth disappointments in seeking for orders, for the like reason. 3

At first sight, such obstructionist tactics as those employed in the Manchester Cause might seem petty, and their political value negligible, but they proved remarkably effective in the restoration of a battered morale. Whenever the bishop appeared in court at Lancaster Assizes, he was attended by substantial numbers of gentlemen and clergy, and by the local Tories every minor legal victory was regarded as a major triumph.[4] The Crown's case enjoyed not only the public support

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1. Wake MSS., Arch. W. Epist. 9/182: Peploe to Wake, 7 Apr. 1722.

2. For the Universities' attitude towards the case, see, for example, Bodl. MS. Ballard 20, Dr. B. Gardiner to Dr. A. Charlett, 27 Dec. 1720.

3. Wake MSS., Arch. W. Epist. 8/296: Peploe to Wake, 13 Sept. 1720.

4. Ibid. 9/114: same to same, 1 Sept. 1721; Addit. MSS. 4164, ff.86-7: J. Audley to Dr. Cross, 29 Aug. 1721.

of the Attorney and Solicitor Generals, but also, at one time or another, of Archbishop Wake, Lord Sunderland, Lord Townshend, the Lord Chancellor, and the Lord President of the Council.[1] Thus, by obstructing Peploe, Gastrell was not merely frustrating the aspirations of a rather minor Whig cleric; he was successfully thwarting the best efforts of the Whig ministry to get their champion installed. As for Peploe, his troubles at Manchester were only just beginning in 1722; in the event, the Collegiate Church and its Fellows were to remain a thorn in the side of the northwestern Whigs for the next thirty years.

One of the factors which adversely affected Peploe's cause was the absence from the ministry of his benefactor, Lord Townshend, during the period of the Whig Split between 1717 and 1720. Indeed, this opened up a whole series of new possibilities for the Tories, both in the provinces and at Westminster. As early as August 1716, their parliamentary forces were augmented by the defection of the Argyle-Shrewsbury group,[2] and were further swelled a few months later by the arrival in Opposition of Walpole, Townshend and their followers. Lord Barrymore, for one, believed that the rift in the Whig party might provide the opportunity which the Tories needed to revive their waning fortunes and reconcile themselves with the King. He therefore urged the need for a full

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1. Wake MSS., Arch W. Epist. 8/28: Peploe to Wake, 6 Feb. 1718-19; ibid., Arch W. Epist.9/97: R. Cricheley to Wake, 15 July, 1721.

2. Plumb, Walpole, i. 231.

attendance of Tory Members at Westminster. 'Noebody has a more thorough Contempt for ministers & what is Call'd men in greate offices then I have,' he told Sir Roger Bradshaigh in April 1717.

> I cannot remember they ever did the true service of their Country, they minded Indeed strengthening themselves to carry on private piques & getting as much money as they cou'd, but I have observ'd y^{t} when such people fall out, now & then some good comes out. So it may prove now for wch reason I wou'd not be absent at this juncture it may bee in a man's vote at this time to doe some good wch perhaps may never bee again in his power. 1

The Tories, however, were not necessarily obliged to link their future prospects of power with those of the Whig factions then in Opposition; for, in their efforts to bolster up a dwindling parliamentary majority against the onslaught of Walpole and Townshend, Sunderland and Stanhope were now seeking to neutralize the Hanoverian Tories at least. Thus, through the intermediacy of Governor Pitt and Lord Stair, they entered into clandestine negotiations with the exiled Lord Bolingbroke, whose attitude towards the Hanoverian dynasty had undergone a rapid transformation after the failure of the 'Fifteen.[2]

The possibility of a union between the Tories and a section of the Whig party was regarded with horror by the Jacobites, who consequently did their utmost to prevent any accommodation that might produce a new and stable administration which included Tories. In this endeavour, so the Pretender was informed, the services of William Shippen could

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1. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Barrymore to Bradshaigh, 27 Apr. 1717.

2. Plumb, Walpole, i. 251-2.

'never be sufficiently acknowledged.'[1] In the House of Commons, Shippen harried the King and his ministers with unrelenting ferocity, and on 4 December 1717 was sent to the Tower for a provocative speech in a committee on the Army Supply Bill,[2] the House resolving that he had used words which were 'highly dishonourable to, and unjustly reflecting on, his Majesty's Person & Government.' He was charged with having referred to the King's speech as 'rather ... calculated for the Meridian of Germany, then for Great Britain,' and to King George himself as 'a Stranger to our Language and Constitution.'[3] His Tory colleagues, however, anxious to avoid a confrontation with the Court at this time, complained that his words had been quoted out of context, and circulated a version of their own to prove the point.[4] Shippen was soon at large once more in unrepentant mood, and in March 1718 was assuring King James that all of his commands would be obeyed 'with the utmost pleasure as well as fidelity.'[5]

Walpole and Townshend, meanwhile, though prepared to cause the ministry the maximum amount of embarrassment, always stopped short of jeopardizing its security. After all, their aim was to rejoin the Government on favourable terms, not to destroy it altogether.[6] The

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1. Hist. MSS. Comm., Stuart MSS., v.558: Memorial of James Murray, written at Bishop Atterbury's direction, 3/14 July, 1717.

2. Plumb, Walpole, i.262-3.

3. Bodl. MS.Ballard 21, f.206: Mr. Shippen's Case, citing the printed Votes for 6 Dec. 1717.

4. Ibid., f. 207: Account of the Words actually spoken by Mr. Shippen; Wynnstay MSS., Box "C(Tin)"/69/27: W. Williams to Sr. W. Williams, 10 Dec. 1717.

5. Hist. MSS. Comm., Stuart MSS., vi.260: Shippen to James III, 25 Mar./5 Apr. 1718.

6. Plumb, Walpole, i.264.

Prince of Wales, however, having no such prospects, was less cautious in his conduct and more inclined to deal with the Tories. '... The King & Prince are out more y^{n}. ever,' reported Watkin Williams[1] to his father at the beginning of 1718, '& ye Prince is resolved to speech it in ye House of Lords. S^{r}. Thomas Hanmer is ye greatest man in England with ye Prince.'[2] Thus, if immediate rehabilitation was beyond the Tories' reach, some of them at least could perhaps look forward to a brighter future when the King died.

Yet one of the principal difficulties facing the Tory leaders was that of getting Members to attend Parliament at all. 'What occasion will there be,' asked a friend of Sir Richard Grosvenor, 'for the Torys to put themselves to the expence and trouble of long journeys thro' dirty ways, when old Lowndes and Honest Ferrars [i.e. the Opposition Whigs] can easily do the rest of the business?'[3] A few weeks later, however, the same correspondent was brimming with confidence that 'all the Western Members will be in town and stay the whole Parliament. I believe,' he assured Grosvenor, 'there will be as great an appearance as there used

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1. N.L.W. MSS. 10770 D (Wynnstay Correspondence): W. Williams to Sr. W. Williams, 16 Jan. 1717-18.

1. Watkin Williams [afterwards Williams Wynn] (?1693-1749), of Wynnstay, Denb. M.P. for Denbighshire, June 1716-1741; for Montgomeryshire, 1741-Feb. 1742; for Denbighshire, Feb.1742-Sept. 1749. Took additional name of Wynn, Jan. 1719. Succeeded father as 3rd Bart. in Oct. 1740. High Tory, and later Jacobite. Politically active in Wales and northwest England.

3. Grosvenor MSS.: [W. Morley] to Grosvenor, 9 Oct. 1718.

to be at the Choice of a Speaker.'[1] This session, though, was perhaps exceptional in that with the repeal of the Occasional Conformity and Schism Acts expected to come on in January 1719, and possibly even the repeal of the Test Act, Tory High Churchmen were more concerned than usual to make the effort. Shippen, for one, was busily engaged in writing whips to ensure that they did.[2] By the end of 1719, their numbers had begun to dwindle once more, and they seemed increasingly despondent. Even the Peerage Bill failed to arouse much excitement: 'the Torys says not a Word,' affirmed the Duke of Manchester to Lord Cholmondeley, 'but the Dispute is between unsatisfy'd Whigs; & Whigs for the Bill.'[3] Then, in April 1720, details were purposely leaked of what purported to be a scheme drawn up by Count Bernstorff for replacing Sunderland and Stanhope with Walpole, Townshend, and five or six of the leading Country Tories. Sunderland, convinced of the scheme's authenticity, was greatly disturbed, and after some deliberation decided to seek an accommodation with his Opposition rivals: a prospect which so alarmed the Prince that he too hastened to make up his differences with the Court.[4]

These events took place against a background of mounting financial hysteria, which culminated in August in the South Sea crash. Its effects in the northwest were not especially severe, though in Westmorland Lord Lonsdale was said to have lost most of his estate. William Stout, the Lancaster Quaker, also recorded the losses of his merchant friend, Robert

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1. Grosvenor MSS.: [W. Morley] to Grosvenor, 21 Oct. 1718.
2. Wynnstay MSS., Box "C(Tin)"/69/33: W. Williams to Sr. W. Williams, 22 Dec. 1718.
3. Cholmondeley MSS., DCH/M/29: Manchester to Cholmondeley, 5 Dec. 1719.
4. Plumb, Walpole, i. 283-8.

Lawson, who 'had some time since bought South Sea stock, about 500, when it was at the lowest, as a well wisher to the government when it was doubtfull.'[1] As for Cheshire, Lord Cholmondeley's brother seems to have been deeply involved in the South Sea at the height of the boom, and to have enjoyed quite a reputation for his financial acumen. ' ... I desire you woud recomend mee to L.d Newburgh,' Edward Southwell implored the Lord Lieutenant in June, 'to get mee into the Southsea: where he sails à pleine Voile: & I hover about the borders and cannot launch into the deep without so skillfull a pilott.'[2] Whether or not Lord Newburgh got his fingers burnt when the crash came is unknown.

Sir Richard Grosvenor was among those Tories who urged that an example should be made of the South Sea Directors,[3] but others like Shippen were more anxious to vent their spleen against Sunderland and Stanhope.[4] At the depth of the slump, it was even suggested that the Earl of Oxford might be called out of retirement to head a newly constructed coalition ministry:[5] a suggestion which, however unlikely, served to convince Walpole that the destruction of Sunderland and Stanhope would only force him into an alliance with the Tories.[6] Indeed, if Tories

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1. Autobiography of William Stout, pp. 180-1.
2. Cholmondeley MSS., DCH/L/44: Southwell to Cholmondeley, 15 June 1720.
3. N.L.W., Chirk Castle MSS. E.3949: Grosvenor to R. Myddleton, 11 Feb. 1720-1.
4. Plumb, Walpole, i. 338.
5. Ibid., p. 323.
6. Ibid., p. 334.

were to be allowed into a reconstructed ministry, Walpole was not necessarily going to be the Whig minister at its head. 'None but Moderate Toryes under God can save us our Excellent King and our incomparable constitution both in Church and State,' asserted Viscount Coningsby to Stanhope in November 1720,

> and if you putt y^r^ self at the head of them by dissolving ye parliam^t^ you'l make ye King happy the Kingdome safe and gett y^r^ selfe ye Greatest name y^t^ ever any English minister before attained to, where as if you are prevaild wth to continue this parliam.^t^ you'l be and so will all our libertyes drownd in the South Sea 1

Stanhope, however, died in February 1721, leaving Walpole alone to salvage what remained of Sunderland's credibility, and to build up his own position within the re-united Whig party. Sunderland, for his part, went on intriguing with the Tories into 1722, and at the time of his death was actually involved in a treasonable correspondence with the Stuart Court in Rome.[2] Even with the approach of a new General Election, it was patently clear that the conflict between the Walpole and Sunderland factions remained unresolved. 'It is said,' asserted Canon Stratford in December 1721, 'the opposition between the two ministers is greater than ever, and that the great struggle will be betwixt these two parties, and that each of them would choose rather to see a Tory in any place, than a Whig of the other party.'[3] The Tories,

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1. P.R.O., S.P. 35/23, ff.462-3: Coningsby to Stanhope, 30 Nov. 1720.

2. Plumb, Walpole, i. 364-5; Addit. MSS. 32686, ff.175-6: Newcastle to [Dr. G. Jordan?], 18 July 1721; G. V. Bennett, 'Jacobitism and the Rise of Walpole', in Neil McKendrick, ed., Historical Perspectives: Studies in English Thought and Society in Honour of J.H. Plumb (London, 1974), 70-92, passim.

3. Hist. MSS. Comm., Portland MSS., vii. 308: Dr. W. Stratford to E. Harley, 2 Dec. 1721.

on the other hand, were endeavouring to close ranks in order that they might go into the forthcoming electoral battle united as they had not been since 1710. Their efforts were not altogether successful.[1] Nevertheless, so long as the Whigs remained divided, the Tories had a very real chance of returning to power.

The way in which the rival Whig factions courted the Tories was clearly seen in Cheshire, where, in the early months of 1720, a scheme to make the River Weaver navigable from Frodsham Bridge to Winsford became a subject of heated controversy. The issue had long been a divisive one in the northwest. In 1711, the Tories had been united in opposing a similar scheme as being 'designed onely for ye Interest of ab.^{t} half a dozen Leverpoole merch[an]ts, & not for ye publick good of ye County it's in.' The measure was defeated.[2] The plan was resurrected in 1715, but this time the Tories were divided among themselves. John Egerton of Oulton, one of the Tory sponsors of the Northwich Compromise, was named as one of the subscribers in the bill which Langham Booth was endeavouring to steer through Parliament,[3] and Sir George Warburton's position was, to say the least, equivocal. Thus the Chester Members, Sir Richard Grosvenor and Sir Henry Bunbury, were asked to present the county petition against the Bill, both the Cheshire

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1. Hist. MSS. Comm., Portland MSS., vii. 309: Dr. W. Stratford to E. Harley, 6 Dec. 1721.

2. Legh of Lyme MSS.: T. Patten to P. Legh, 10 Mar. 1710-11. For a full discussion of the political and economic aspects of this issue, see T. S. Willan, The Navigation of the River Weaver in the Eighteenth Century (Chetham Soc., 3rd series, iii, 1951).

3. Cholmondeley MSS., DCH/L/49: T. Assheton to Ld. Barrymore, n.d. [c.Dec.1714].

Members happening 'a little untowardly to bee (att present) ag.t the intereste of their County,' as one interested observer put it.[1] After a hard battle, this bill too was defeated.

By the end of 1719, a petition in favour of bringing a new Weaver Bill before Parliament that session, sponsored by Langham Booth, was circulating in both Lancashire and Cheshire. On being asked to sign this petition, Randle Wilbraham discovered that it already contained upwards of a hundred and fifty signatures. ' ... I find while some are deliberating,' he told Lord Cholmondeley, 'others are executing & The matter w.ch is of publick concerne is made a p[a]rty driving engine.'[2] The Whig and Tory branches of the Cholmondeley family were joined in their opposition to the scheme: Charles Cholmondeley, though himself out of Parliament, used what influence he possessed with his brother-in-law, Lord Stanhope, to gain the ministry's aid against the bill, while Lord Cholmondeley himself enlisted the support of the Duke of Manchester in the same cause.[3] But though Stanhope and the Duke of Argyle did indeed undertake to organize opposition to the measure in Parliament,[4] the general attitude in both Houses was clearly sympathetic to the idea of river navigation,[5] and, despite

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1. Grosvenor MSS.: W. Watts to Grosvenor, 15 June 1715. See also Brit. Mus., Addit MSS. 36914 (Aston Papers), f.54: Watts to Sir T. Aston, 17 June 1715.

2. Cholmondeley MSS., DCH/M/29: Wilbraham to Cholmondeley, n.d.; see also Great Diurnal of Nicholas Blundell, ii. 277: 15 Dec. 1719.

3. Addit. MSS. 36914, ff.72-3: C. Cholmondeley to Sr. T. Aston, 5 Feb. 1719-20; Cholmondeley MSS., DCH/M/29: Manchester to Ld. Cholmondeley, 17 Mar. 1719-20.

4. Cholmondeley MSS., DCH/X/8: L.d Newburgh to L.d Cholmondeley, 8 Mar. [1719-20].

5. Addit. MSS. 36914, ff.83-4: S. Cholmondeley to Aston, 26 Apr. 1720.

allegations of corruption levelled against the projectors,[1] the bill passed the Commons at the end of March 1720.[2]

The main body of those objecting to the bill in Cheshire were Tories; but while there were some who were 'entirely against the thing, & would be (perhaps) dissatisfied with any manner of doeing it,'[3] there were many others whose hostility was directed against the cliquish fashion in which the scheme had been undertaken and promoted, rather than against the basic design intended.[4] 'The Undertakers they have nominated are Mr. Egerton of Oulton, Mr. Oldfeld of Leftwich,[5] & Mr. Amson of Eardshaw,'[6] commented one disgruntled Tory squire to Sir Thomas Aston. 'I havn't a list of theire Comisoner's else wold have sent itt, but they are such a gang as you never saw, There is L.d Barrymore, you, & I thinke 6 or 7 Barr[one]ts left out y.t & abundance of the Gente.'[7] Conscious of this fact, the House of Commons subsequently added 'a great many of the gentlemen of estate & interest in the county,' so as to take it out of 'private hands'. Still, opposition to the Bill continued in the Lords,

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1. Legh of Lyme MSS.: S. Cholmondeley to J. Amson, 1 Apr. 1720.

2. Cholmondeley MSS., DCH/X/8: L.d Newburgh to L.d Cholmondeley, 31 Mar. [1720].

3. Legh of Lyme MSS.: S. Cholmondeley to P. Legh, 17 May 1720. Those Tories who objected on principle seem to have regarded canals and river navigation schemes as a device to enhance the power of the 'moneyed interest'.

4. Staffordshire R.O., Gower MSS., D.593/P/16/1/16: J. Egerton to Ld. Gower, 19 Mar. 1719-20.

5. Leftwich Oldfield (n.d.), of Leftwich, Chesh. Tory; supported the Compromise in 1715.

6. John Amson (c.1685-1735), of Lees, Chesh. Tory; voted for Cholmondeley in 1715, but thereafter associated closely with the Compromise group.

7. Addit. MSS. 36914, ff. 81-2: W. Watts to Aston, 12 Mar. 1719-20.

but it soon became evident that the measure would pass into law if some alternative scheme could not be devised. The Duke of Argyle was of the opinion that a county meeting should be summoned in Cheshire, and that the gentlemen should undertake to bring in a Bill of their own 'with a more general & publick good & benefit to the county'.[1] This idea was accepted and, in May 1720, after hearing a commitment on behalf of the Cheshire gentlemen to bring in another Bill during the next session, the Lords rejected Langham Booth's Bill by a margin of four votes.[2]

Despite the apparently economic and social nature of the factors involved in the Weaver navigation scheme, in the Commons at least, as Seymour Cholmondeley later noted:

> ... it was thrown wholely upon party, the Princes friends made it their own cause & the tories chose rather to vote for a bill which Mr. Booth declared was to secure his election, than serve a brother of my Ld. Stanhope's [i.e. Charles Cholmondeley], though he is (I hope) no more a Whig than they. The three undertakers being tories helped this a good deal without doubt, & thus it went through the Commons. When it came to the Lords, the reconciliation happen'd & those things in Courts are always sincere: however Ld. Townshend & that set had a mind to try how far they could drive a point against our two friends, & they prevailed so far that Sunderland was worse than neuter: so that Ld. Stanhope was forced to work as hard as he could, he made the case his own, & threw it out by his own single power with the help of the Scotch, who follow'd the Duke.[3]

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1. Cholmondeley MSS., DCH/X/8: Ld. Newburgh to Ld. Cholmondeley, 5 Apr. [1720].

2. Ibid.: same to same, 10 May [1720]; Addit. MSS. 36914, ff. 92-3: S. Cholmondeley to Aston, 10 May 1720.

3. Legh of Lyme MSS.: S. Cholmondeley to P. Legh, 17 May, 1720.

This account demonstrates the complexity of the ramifications facing any Whig group wishing to court the Tories at this time. The Weaver Bill was a scheme drawn up by a combination of Hanoverian Tories like John Egerton, and the Warrington faction of the Cheshire Whigs. These groups had co-operated together in 1715 to procure the Northwich Compromise, and were anxious to repeat their success in 1722. The fact that three of the undertakers were Tories was enough to win the support of the Tory party in the Commons, especially since the Whigs involved in the project were also in Opposition at that date. On the other hand, Charles Cholmondeley's reputation still suffered in Tory circles at Westminster by virtue of his relationship to Lord Stanhope, even though in Cheshire he was now infinitely more representative of rank-and-file Tory opinion than Egerton. Thus the rival Whig factions each paid court to the Tories in their own way: Walpole and Townshend appealing to the common spirit of parliamentary opposition; Stanhope and Sunderland paying heed to the opinions of Tories at the grass roots. Even after the reconciliation of April 1720, these fundamental differences of approach remained, and were to be of crucial significance in determining the complexion of allegiances in the coming General Election.

4. The Growth of Opposition, 1721-31.

As the first Parliament of King George's reign drew to a close, the Tories at Westminster found themselves once more the only substantial group in opposition to the Court; but if since the Rebellion they had been stigmatized as the party of disaffection, and that not without some justification, the troubles that beset their opponents now enabled them to face the electorate with some degree of equanimity. The Whigs' repeal of the Occasional Conformity and Schism Acts was known to have alienated many churchmen, while the Septennial Act, the Peerage Bills and the Southsea Bubble were expected to influence the votes of many uncommitted country gentlemen in the Tories' favour. Thus they went into the General Election of 1722 not as the demoralized remnant of a once-great national party, but with some confidence in their ability to reverse the humiliating defeat inflicted upon them seven years earlier.

In the northwest, the process of constructing new electoral interests was begun at the end of 1720, on strong expectations of a premature dissolution. While Sir Henry Hoghton busied himself in Lancashire writing circular letters to declare his candidacy for the county,[1] Sir Richard Grosvenor was labouring in Denbighshire to heal the longstanding rift between the rival Tory factions there,[2] and a few months later, in March 1721, Lord Barrymore could be found negotiating for permission to canvass Sir Roger Bradshaigh's tenants on behalf of Lancashire's sitting Tory Members, Sir John Bland and Richard

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1. Farrer Papers, L1/48/10, Sir Thomas Phillipp's MSS., miscellaneous documents, no. 20: Hoghton to E. Parker, 3 Dec. 1720; Hulton MSS., DDHu/48/67: Hoghton to H. Hulton, 8 Dec. 1720.

2. Chirk Castle MSS. E.4524: R. Myddelton to Grosvenor, 26 Dec. [1720]. For a full discussion of the political rivalries in Denbighshire, see P.D.G. Thomas, 'Wynnstay versus Chirk Castle: Parliamentary Elections in Denbighshire, 1716-41', National Library of Wales Journal, vol. 11, no. 2 (1959), 105-23.

Shuttleworth.[1] The first signs of serious activity in Cheshire did not appear until the autumn of the same year, when a former Grosvenor protégé, Thomas Brereton,[2] declared his intention of contesting the Chester mayoralty against his benefactor's candidate. Since the mayor possessed the unlimited power of creating honorary freemen, the outcome of the contest was of the utmost interest to local Tories. Thomas Assheton offered to use his influence among the country squires on Grosvenor's behalf, and in October wrote: 'I'm heartily concern'd ... for ye opposition you meet w.th in Chester, I wish it does not end in a breatch amongst ye Torys, not to be made up, & a dissolution of ye best establish'd interrest in England.'[3] Brereton's campaign grew more determined. In a short pamphlet, circulated freely round the town, he attacked both Grosvenor and Robert Pigot,[4] his steward and election agent, for their interference in the affairs of the corporation, and further implied that both had profited from the South Sea fiasco. 'And why? What is all this for?' the pamphlet asked rhetorically, referring to the intended contest. 'Is it any Party-Cause? Is the Difference between Whigg and Tory? Or is the Church concern'd in this Dispute? No such Thing. The Question is whether this City ... ought to Idolize and exalt one only Neighbouring Family, in contempt of all

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1. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: A. Leigh to Bradshaigh, 27 Mar. 1721.

2. Thomas Brereton (d.1756), of Shotwick Park, nr. Chester. M.P. for Liverpool, 1724-9, 1734-56. He later became Walpole's principal agent for elections in the northwest.

3. Grosvenor MSS.: Assheton to Grosvenor, 9 Oct. 1721.

4. Robert Pigot (n.d.), of Eaton Hall, Chesh. Mayor of Chester 1723-4. For his relations with Sir Richard Grosvenor between 1711 and 1732, see Grosvenor MSS., Estate Papers, Box 42/1: Memorandum, n.d.

the rest?'[1] These assertions inspired a swift and mordant refutation from the pen of an anonymous Tory campaigner, who in an open letter to Brereton demolished his case in terms redolent of a former age:

> The purport of your Libell, contains malicious insinuations, injurious sarcasms, and base reflections upon a deserving Patriot, and worthy Magistrates, and to add life to your senceless Jargon, you call liberty property and slavery w.th ye same canting Air as ye Puritans fulminated their K[in]g killing principles, who were a Virmin yt called upon ye Lord whilst they destroy'd his Anointed.

Moreover, if more concrete objections were required, the writer went on to turn the tables on Brereton by suggesting that he, rather than Grosvenor and Pigot, had been the real culprit in the South Sea fraud.[2] Whether Chester voters weighed such claims and counter-claims in the balance cannot now be ascertained, but it was the Grosvenor candidate who was duly elected as mayor.

Northing daunted, however, Brereton now turned his attention to the coming parliamentary contest, and began creating freemen at considerable expense to himself. Sir Henry Bunbury, wintering in Bath for the good of his health, was much disturbed in early November at a suggestion that he might be willing to join with Brereton against his colleague, and hastily wrote to both Grosvenor and the corporation reaffirming his satisfaction with their present arrangements.[3] His overtures to Bunbury having fallen on deaf or timid ears, Brereton abruptly changed his tactics,

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1. Considerations, Offer'd to the Citizens of Chester (1721), pp.2-3. Anon., but almost certainly by Brereton. Copy among papers of Sir Richard Grosvenor.

2. A Letter to Mr. T[homa]s B[re]r[eto]n upon his printed Advice to the People of Chester (13 Oct. 1721). MSS copy among papers of Sir Richard Grosvenor.

3. Grosvenor MSS.: Bunbury to Grosvenor, 9 Nov. 1721; Chester R.O., Mayors' Files, MF/138: Bunbury to the Mayor & Corporation of Chester, 10 Nov. 1721.

and declared himself openly for the Good Old Cause. He began to treat lavishly, canvassing votes on whatever basis seemed most likely to succeed, and thereby obliging Grosvenor to issue a public renunciation of any association between them. By the end of November, Sir Richard could inform Bunbury that 'the Whigs espouse his Interest as one man'.[1] As the campaign progressed it became clear that Bunbury's interest was all the more vulnerable to Brereton's encroachments on account of his enforced absence in the West Country; all the efforts of his wife and steward, and of Grosvenor himself, were no substitute in the voters' eyes for his personal presence.[2] Yet all this activity and expense was a trifle premature, since the old Parliament had not been dissolved, and Brereton could not seriously expect to be a match for Grosvenor in the length of his purse. In fact, he seems to have been deceived by popular rumour into believing that the dissolution would come before the end of 1721, whereas, in the event, it did not occur until the following March. It was perhaps the effects of this miscalculation which tipped the balance finally against him.[3]

From Grosvenor's point of view, however, the most disturbing factor in the situation was the support which Brereton seemed to enjoy among his Tory neighbours. Peter Shakerley, a principal architect of the Cheshire Compromise in 1715, wrote a fulsome circular letter on his behalf,[4] and Watkin Williams Wynn, a rising star among the Tories of

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1. Grosvenor MSS.: Grosvenor to Bunbury, 28 Nov. 1721.

2. Ibid.: Bunbury to Grosvenor, 2 Dec. 1721; ibid.: Grosvenor to Bunbury, 12 Dec. 1721.

3. Bunbury was also aware of the rumours to this effect, but discounted them: see ibid.: Bunbury to Grosvenor, 9 Nov. 1721.

4. Univ. Coll. of North Wales, Baron Hill MSS. 6802: Shakerley to the Mayor & Corporation of Chester, n.d. [per calendar in N.L.W.]

North Wales, was also rumoured to be in his interest. It was with no little relief, therefore, that Grosvenor received word from Wynn that Brereton had no authority for canvassing his tenants, and that he was himself in favour of maintaining the status quo at Chester.[1] Ultimately far more damaging to Brereton, though, were the measures being set afoot by the Lord Lieutenant. In spite of the fact that he now enjoyed a spotless Whig reputation at Court, Lord Cholmondeley was once again employed in the task of making interest for his Tory cousin Charles, this time partnered in the Opposition camp by John Offley Crewe. On 12 December, his lordship wrote to Grosvenor with an offer to support him for the city if he in turn would declare his interest for Cholmondeley and Crewe in the county:[2] a line of action which Sir Richard was only too willing to follow. Thus Brereton's main hope of success, which lay in the organized and wholehearted support of the Cheshire Whigs, was jeopardised by clandestine negotiations conducted behind his back.

By the end of December the prospects for Grosvenor and his friends were looking somewhat brighter. The Tories had also begun to treat the freemen, and Brereton was said to be 'not soe chearfull as usuall'. His supporters were of the view that he could not now secure a majority at the poll; yet, they declared, he would certainly petition against the return, and they still hoped 'to have him their Member by that means'. Speculation about likely voting patterns still exercised the minds of the

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1. Grosvenor MSS.: Wynn to Grosvenor, 9 Dec. 1721.

2. Ibid.: Ld. Cholmondeley to Grosvenor, 12 Dec. 1721. This corroborates the reports made subsequently to Sunderland by the Earl of Warrington: see Blenheim MSS., D.I. 33: 9 Mar. 1721-2, 7 Apr. 1722.

interested parties, encouraged by the disquieting intelligence that the Presbyterians, having formerly assured Grosvenor of one vote at least, were now resolved to plump for Brereton. However, taking this into account, Grosvenor remained confident that even Bunbury, the weaker member of the team, would beat their opponent by two hundred votes.[1]

Brereton was not alone in anticipating an early dissolution; the same expectation was shared by Dr. Roger Kenyon, who at the beginning of November was distracted by the news that Sir Roger Bradshaigh intended setting up with his son at Wigan.[2] For more than a year Bradshaigh had prevaricated about renewing his agreement with Lord Barrymore, at the same time denying both the means and the inclination to throw him over. Nevertheless, he feared that to join his interest with Barrymore's again would involve him in the expense of defending his Tory colleague against the animosity of his own Whig supporters; and this he wished to avoid at all costs.[3] It was therefore somewhat ironical that, in January 1722, he should find himself facing a makeshift opposition of disgruntled Whigs, determined to thwart not only Barrymore's re-election, but his own too, if he should attempt to prefer his son. The chief labourers in this ambitious confederacy were Bradshaigh's former client, John Sumner,[4] and a prominent Wigan dissenter, John Walmisley.[5] Their primary objective was to eject

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1. Grosvenor MSS.: Grosvenor to Bunbury, 28 Dec. 1721.

2. Hist. MSS. Comm., Kenyon MSS., no. 1186, p.464: Dr. R. Kenyon to (his sister) Mrs. Kenyon, 2 Nov. 1721.

3. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Bradshaigh to Barrymore, 17 Nov. 1720.

4. Rev. John Sumner (d.1725), of Wigan, Lancs. Sometime Master of Wigan Grammar School.

5. John Walmisley (n.d.), of Wigan, Lancs.

Barrymore, and set up in his place Thomas Crisp of Parbold,[1] who had been High Sheriff of Lancashire during the Jacobite trials of 1716, and with whom they found themselves 'so nearly allied in Opinion, as to Religious affairs; as well as politicks'.[2] Ever a good churchman if not often a convincing Tory,[3] Bradshaigh reluctantly threw in his lot with Barrymore; whereupon, his bluff called, Crisp judiciously extricated himself from the fray, leaving his sponsors to find a new candidate. Barrymore now exerted himself to neutralize such factious members of his own party as might have been prevailed upon to join with Sumner and Walmisley simply in order to break through his alliance with Bradshaigh. With Bishop Gastrell, Peter Shakerley and Sir Edward Chisenhall all declaring themselves heartily in favour of that alliance continuing, Barrymore could look forward with some confidence to the outcome of his forthcoming meeting with such Tory loyalists as George Kenyon, Alexander Radcliffe, Holland Egerton and John Warren.[4] But Sumner too was confident of his own success, declaring to Alexander Leigh, Bradshaigh's chief agent in Wigan,[5] that 'if the Devil stood Candidate ... the greatest part of ye

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1. Thomas Crisp (c.1690-1758), of Parbold, Lancs. M.P. for Ilchester, 1727-34. Sheriff of Lancs., 1715-16. Returned as a Government supporter in 1727, he went over to the Opposition in 1733, and was defeated at the ensuing General Election.

2. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: A. Leigh to Bradshaigh, n.d.

3. See above p. 8.

4. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Barrymore to Bradshaigh, 26 Jan. & 6 Feb. 1721-2.

5. Alexander Leigh (n. d.), of Hindley, Lancs. Attorney. Mayor of Wigan, 1727 and 1737; Town Clerk, 1732-5. Supporter of the Finch interest down to 1715; thereafter he served both Barrymore and Bradshaigh until the breakdown of their agreement in 1744, when he reverted to his original Tory allegiances.

Town wou'd be for him Rather than my L.d Barrymore'.[1] This notwithstanding, by the end of February his lordship could report with satisfaction an overwhelmingly favourable response to most of his circular letters declaring the joint interest, and though he was disturbed to find Sir Roger still asking for single votes, remained certain of victory.[2] Sumner, meanwhile, had found not one, but two substitute candidates for Crisp: Henry Furnese,[3] a prosperous London merchant who reinforced his claims by purchasing Lathom Hall near Wigan, and the Hon. Charles Mordaunt,[4] a cousin of the Earl of Peterborough, who already possessed estates in both Lancashire and Cheshire. 'How Mr. Sumner will Divide himself between these two potent Gentlemen I don't understand,' observed Leigh, 'Unless he thinks his Interest can bring 'em both in. -- One of 'em might p[er]haps, by ye power of Money, have made a tollerable push; But I hope the plurality will disappoint 'em both.'[5]

The Wigan Compromise, then, was still holding good after a fashion, but that in Cheshire appeared damaged beyond repair. The candidacy of Cholmondeley and Crewe, after being tentatively canvassed for several

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1. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Leigh to Bradshaigh, 6 Feb. 1721-2.

2. Ibid.: Barrymore to Bradshaigh, 19, 20 & 28 Feb. 1721-2.

3. Henry Furnese (after 1688-1756), of Gunnersbury House, Midx. M.P. for Dover, Dec. 1720-1734; for Morpeth, May 1738-1741; for New Romney, 1741-1756. Secretary to the Treasury, July-Nov. 1742; Lord of Treasury, 1755-6. Whig; went into Opposition, 1734-42, re-joining the administration with Pulteney in 1742. For details of his later career, see Sedgwick, History of Parliament, ii. 56.

4. Hon. Charles Mordaunt (n.d.), of Gawsworth, Chesh. Whig. Stood on Duchy interest at Preston in 1727. See below, pp.160-1.

5. Crawford MSS.: 47/2/-: Leigh to Bradshaigh, 25 Feb. 1721-2.

months, was officially declared on 3 February 1722. In their circular letters they emphasised their reluctance to trouble the county with a contested election. They felt compelled to do so, however, by 'the extraordinary methods & very forw[ar]d applicacon made use of to have ye pr[e]sent members continu'd ... for ye ensuing parliam[en]t,' as well as by the 'advice & encouragem[en]t of a gr[ea]t Number of Gentlemen & Freeholders'. As to their principles, they adopted a traditional Country platform, promising if elected to 'make it our whole business (w.th out any view to places or pensions) to serve the county to the utmost of our power'.[1] Few electors could fail to recollect that Crewe had sat in Parliament as the Whig member for Newcastle-under-Lyme in the late Queen's reign; had stood unsuccessfully in Cheshire on the same interest; and, like Cholmondeley, had been thrown over by his party in the Compromise of 1715. Yet, however self-interested his motives, it was equally clear that he now stood unreservedly 'on the Tory Intrest backt by the Nonjurors' of the county.'[2]

Before these circular letters could be sent out, the news broke that Sir George Warburton had decided not to stand again, thereby, as Cholmondeley and Crewe added in a postscript, putting the election 'upon a new foot, y.t every one may be freed fro[m] any pre-engagem.t they might think y.m selves under.'[3] By the end of the month, Lord Barrymore was

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1. Grosvenor MSS.: Cholmondeley and Crewe to the Cheshire Freeholders, 3 Feb. 1721-2.

2. Blenheim MSS., D.I.33: Warrington to Sunderland, 9 Mar. 1721-2.

3. Grosvenor MSS.: Letter to the Cheshire Freeholders.

ready to vouchsafe his belief that 'S.r George's Desisting has put Mr. Booth to greate Straits. I think the Game is up w.th him, but some say he will stand it out.'[1] When in March the Earl of Warrington wrote to Sunderland acquainting him with the situation in Cheshire, it was clear that he regarded Warburton's withdrawal as something less than spontaneous: ' ... tho' but newly declared, [it] has been a long concerted matter ... intended to give the Tories the whole sway in this County.' He went on to assure Sunderland that, notwithstanding this disadvantage, his brother would continue 'to press his Election Single, as the only means to support the Whigg Interest from being wholy brought under, and which, I presume the Government is desirous to have supported every where.' Making pointed reference to Lord Cholmondeley's 'Great Favour at Court', he urged Sunderland 'to give such Intimation' to the Lord Lieutenant as he saw fit that he was 'not to countenance the Tories in the Election, but such as are and have ever been firm to this Government.'[2]

The old Parliament was finally dissolved on 10 March, and, in anticipation of the imminent arrival of the new writs, Lord Barrymore began to give some consideration to the best polling arrangements in Lancashire, where contests threatened in no fewer than five out of the seven constituencies. At Wigan, though Furnese and Mordaunt too had now apparently retired from the field, Sumner had managed to find yet another candidate. With the poll only a matter of days

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1. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Barrymore to Bradshaigh, 28 Feb. 1721-2.
2. Blenheim MSS., D.I.33: Warrington to Sunderland, 9 Mar. 1721-2.

away, Captain Legh of Castle Hill,[1] whose name had first been mentioned at the beginning of February,[2] was heard to be canvassing the support of Lord Derby, which obliged Barrymore to go in person to Knowsley in order to preserve the old earl's neutrality. Indeed, to make quite certain of the outcome, he was even prepared to promise his interest in the county for Sir Henry Hoghton, and against his old friend Richard Shuttleworth.[3]

At Clitheroe, a young diplomat, James Haldane,[4] succeeded in gaining the favour of the Duchess of Kendal, one of the King's German mistresses. Less than a week before the poll there, she wrote on his behalf to Sunderland:

> Comme il est à Clitherow travailler pour s'y faire élire Membre de Parlement il a besoin de l'assistance de Mr. Mountain,[5] qui sur le moindre mot de vous My Lord, est prêt à joindre à luy préférablement aux deux autres qui sont des Torys. Ainsi il depend de vous de le déterminer en sa faveur, j'espère qui vous ne le refusez pas, et je vous prie seulement de le faire sans perte de tems. 6

The two Tories were Thomas Lister and Natheniel Curzon,[7] brothers-in-law,

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1. Probably Richard Legh (1679-1742), of Woolton, Lancs. Younger brother of Peter Legh of Lyme. Captain of Horse Guards. The Hey estate, Newton-in-Makerfield, near Castle Hill, belonged to the Brotherton family, but may have been on lease to the Leghs: see V.C.H. Lancs., iv. 135, note 30.

2. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Barrymore to Bradshaigh, 6 Feb. 1721-2; ibid.: A. Leigh to Bradshaigh, 6 Feb. 1721-2.

3. Ibid.: Barrymore to Bradshaigh, [2 letters] n.d.

4. James Haldane (n.d.). Whig. Acquaintance of Sir Henry Hoghton.

5. John Monckton (1695-1751), of Serlby, Notts. Created Viscount Galway [I] 1727. M.P. for Clitheroe, 1727-34; for Pontefract, 1734-47, 1749-51. Staunch Whig.

6. Blenheim MSS., D.II.2: 21 Mar. [1721-2].

7. Nathaniel Curzon (1676-1758), of Kedleston, Derbys. Succeeded as 4th Bart., 1727. M.P. for Derby, 1713-15; for Clitheroe, 1722-7; and for Derbyshire, 1727-54.

and co-heirs through their wives of the Assheton estates in the town. Both men spent freely, their election agents strengthening the appeal of their political principles with an apparently limitless supply of liquor and entertainment for the voters and their wives. During the last week of their campaign, the Tory candidates dined every night in a different hostelry, running up a bill of thirty pounds in one house alone.[1] Even with the Duchess's support, Haldane and Monckton were unable to match such blandishments, and the outcome of the contest was never in any serious doubt.

At Lancaster and Newton the sitting members were returned unopposed; at Liverpool Sir Thomas Johnson and William Cleiveland[2] were returned after a poll, well ahead of a young local lawyer, Thomas Bootle;[3] and at Wigan Barrymore and Bradshaigh too were, in the event, returned without a contest. Henry Fleetwood declined to stand again at Preston, but gave his interest to Thomas Hesketh of Rufford,[4] 'a gentleman very much a Tory'. Writing to Sunderland before the elections, the Dowager Duchess of Hamilton[5] had little doubt that the Chancellor of the Duchy, Lord Lechmere, might combine his interest with Sir Henry Hoghton's and carry the town

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1. Farrer Papers, L1/13/2, MSS. of the Curzon Family of Whalley: Deposition of Margaret Sharp, n.d.

2. William Cleiveland (1695-1724), of Liverpool. M.P. for Liverpool, 1722-4. Despite his identification in Sedgwick, History of Parliament, i. 559 as a government Whig, it seems more likely that he was in fact a Tory, and that Bootle had stood unsuccessfully on the government interest. See Brit. Mus., Loan 29/109: [J. Wainwright] to Ld. Harley, 25 Apr. 1724.

3. Thomas Bootle, see below pp. 162, note 1.

4. Thomas Hesketh (?1699-1735), of Rufford, Lancs. M.P. for Preston, 1722-7. A staunch Tory and reputed a Jacobite.

5. Elizabeth, Duchess of Hamilton (c.1680-1744). Widow of the Jacobite Lord Lieutenant of Lancashire, James, 4th Duke of Hamilton and Brandon (d.1712). She seems not to have shared her husbands politics, being from 1722 at least a staunch Whig.

for two Whigs. For his own part, Hoghton was fiercely contesting the county against Shuttleworth and Bland, and gave his interest at Preston to Daniel Pulteney,[1] at this date still a sound supporter of the Government. Upon sounding out Lord Derby, however, Hoghton was informed that his lordship 'would not meddle, but if a right person was chose to set up and those would exert themselves that ought to do it, both the old Members might be turned out.'[2] The results of both these elections, therefore, were a hefty blow to Whig morale: at Preston, though Pulteney was successful, Hesketh soundly defeated the second Whig candidate, Thomas Molyneux; and, even worse, after a poll lasting ten days, Hoghton and Sir Edward Stanley[3] were both trounced by their Tory opponents.[4]

During the inevitable post mortem into the underlying causes of so crushing a defeat, Whig analysts were in agreement that the major share of the blame had to be laid at the Lord Lieutenant's door. 'The Earl of Derby pretended to be neuter upon the Papists promising they would be soe too,' noted William Stout, 'but [they] privetly engaged their intrest for [Bland and Shuttleworth], soe that they made use of the Earl of Derby's impart[iality] to engage his intrest against his inclinations to promot Houghton and his kinsman Stanley, who otherways had been elected. The disafected made great rejoysing and revaling for

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1. Daniel Pulteney (?1674-1731), of Harefield, Mdx. M.P. for Tregony, Mar-Oct. 1721; for Hedon, Nov. 1721-2; for Preston, 1722-31. Went into Opposition in 1725.

2. Blenheim MSS.: Duchess of Hamilton to Sunderland, n.d., cited in Sedgwick, History of Parliament, i. 269, 272. The original at Blenheim is missing.

3. Sir Edward Stanley, 5th Bart. (1689-1776), of Bickerstaffe, Lancs. Succeeded distant cousin as 11th Earl of Derby in 1736. M.P. for Lancashire, 1727-36. Opposition Whig.

4. Blenheim MSS., D.I.34: Hoghton to Sunderland, 6 Apr. 1722; P.R.O. S.P.35/31, f.272: Anti-Rumpolian to Mr. Sharpe, 26 Apr. 1722.

their success.'[1] The Duchess of Hamilton writing to Sunderland was even more forthright in her criticism: 'I'm sorry I can't tell y^{r} Lo^{p} our Ld Lieu[tenan]t is not a little indolent else a pert person wou'd not have carried of some hundreds of his Lo^{ps} owne tennents.' Moreover, she added, Lord Lechmere had been 'very ill us'd by his people of ye Duchy wch I wish his Lo^{p} knew for most if not all went against Sir Harry.'[2] True or not, such rationalizations as these were of little consolation to Hoghton, who, having been prompted to stand by his 'Zeal for the King's Service' and his 'Desire to breake the Jacobite Interest in this dissaffected County,' was now obliged to throw himself upon the favour of the ministry, and in February 1724 was brought into Parliament on the Government interest at East Looe.[3]

In the Cheshire elections, which came on in April, the Whigs fared little better. For the city, Grosvenor and Bunbury succeeded in routing Brereton, in spite of the late intervention of a second Whig, Hugh Williams,[4] intended to mop up Brereton's second votes; whilst in the county Cholmondeley and Crewe came home comfortably ahead of their opponent Langham Booth. After the poll, the Earl of Warrington writing to Sunderland left the minister in no doubt as to where he thought the blame for his brother's defeat lay:

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1. Autobiography of William Stout, p.186.

2. Blenheim MSS., D.II.2: 6 Apr. 1722.

3. Ibid., D.I.34: Hoghton to Sunderland, 6 Apr. 1722; Sedgwick, History of Parliament, ii.143-4.

4. Hugh Williams (?1694-1742), of Chester. M.P. for Anglesey, 1725-34. Returned as a Whig by the Tory Bulkeleys on the recommendation of his first cousin Watkin Williams Wynn.

> Altho' the Endeavours of the Nonjurors, and others noe better affected to the Government have succeeded to carry the Election in Cheshire for Mr. Cholmondeley and Mr. Crewe, yet my Brother has had the Honour of making an Effort for support of the Whigg Intrest, for that was the whole of the Contest; as we can without Vanity (because Truth) say its our Family has been its Stay from being long agoe quite run down in this County. I hope to have the Honour of waiting on your Lordship very soon, and acquainting you with the particulars of the Scheme to throw my Brother out, and rivet the Tory Power here, laid with soe much more Artifice than Honour, that some even of the Nonjurors would not come in to the Whole of the Project: In the mean while I shall only add, that our Lord Lieutenant's Intrest has gone (as usual) the same way as that of the Nonjurors, however, he may colour it over to your Lordship. 1

Clearly, the Compromise had broken down; for although some gentlemen, like John Egerton of Oulton, had continued to stand by the terms of the 1715 agreement,[2] stipulating a truce to last for two elections, the majority of those who had forsaken the Tory interest at that time had on this occasion rallied to its standard.[3]

Viewed as a whole, then, the election represented a considerable success for the Tories of both counties. Deeply divided for almost a decade, Jacobites and Hanoverians had at last been prepared to sink their differences of principle, and join together in a single interest. Moreover, this reunification had been accompanied by an increasing willingness to revive the broader patterns of mutual electoral support which in Queen Anne's reign had cemented their existence as a great national party. Now as then, Tory politicians were seen to give aid to one another, not only across constituency, but across county boundaries, and

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1. Blenheim MSS., D.I.33: 7 Apr. 1722.
2. Kenyon MSS., DDKe/9/103: R. Vernon to G. Kenyon, 31 Dec. 1724.
3. See Appendix A.

this co-operation was to continue and flourish in the years ahead. Yet this being said, it could be a mistake to overestimate the degree to which the Tories had been responsible for their own successes, and to ignore the invaluable contribution afforded by Whig allies. In Cheshire, for example, Lord Cholmondeley's decision to appear once more in the Tory interest was of crucial significance in determining the outcome of the elections in that county; so too was that of Sir Roger Bradshaigh to join with Barrymore, albeit reluctantly, at Wigan. The divisions in Whig ranks at this date, however, were as yet an ephemeral circumstance, with only the roughest correlation to the more permanent fissures that were to develop during the next decade or so. The Tories could not necessarily expect such a favourable state of affairs to recur, and indeed must have been only too well aware that, even as they celebrated, fellow labourers elsewhere had failed comprehensively in their efforts to secure a more Tory Parliament than the last. Nevertheless, if the enemy's forces had not noticeably diminished, the Tories could perhaps derive some consolation from the fact that they had at least stopped the rot. Their task for the future must be not only to widen the basis of their own support in the country, but to secure the long-term assistance of more reliable allies. On this the efficacy, if not now the survival, of opposition depended.

The spectre of Jacobitism, however, continued to haunt the Tory conscience, and the gradual revelation of the Atterbury Plot during the spring and summer of 1722, carefully stage-managed by Walpole,[1] produced a general hardening of public attitudes towards

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1. Bennett, 'Jacobitism and the Rise of Walpole'. loc. cit., pp. 70-92, passim.

Catholics and Nonjurors, in the northwest as elsewhere. In June, for example, the Tory magistrates of Chester reported to Lord Townshend the names of six suspected papists, who, having refused to take the oaths and subscribe the declaration required by a recent order of the Privy Council, were to be proceeded against at Quarter Sessions.[1] Furthermore, one of those arrested in August was Captain Halstead, a Lancashire gentleman enjoying a wide circle of acquaintance that included Lord Barrymore, Thomas Assheton and Edward Harvey, the last of whom put up £2,000 to help bail him out of prison.[2] Early in September, the Government was advised of rumours circulating in Lancashire that the Jacobites of Preston were 'agreed to make a Generall Massacre in the night time':[3] some measure perhaps of the heights to which Whig feelings of insecurity had been raised by the recent scares. A few days later, the disaffected of the town were found to have opted for a more tangible, if less sanguinary, form of demonstration: more precisely, the inscription of the monogram J.R. upon the corporation regalia.[4] Not all of those in authority were so inclined to over-react, however. Colonel William Ker, for instance, whose troops were still garrisoned in Lancashire, reported from Manchester that 'wee are all in peace and quietness in this part of the World,' and that in Preston 'they live all in perfect friendship together ... so that there

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1. P.R.O., S.P. 35/31, f.347: Mayor and Magistrates of Chester to Townshend, 16 June, 1722.

2. Ibid./32, f.63: Assheton to [Halstead], 23 July 1722; ibid., f.291: Memorandum concerning Halstead's bail, 14 Aug. 1722.

3. Ibid./33, ff.3-4: Duke of Roxburgh to Mr. Scot, 2 Sept. 1722.

4. P.R.O., S.P. 44/123, pp. 51, 163: Carteret to T. Molyneux, 13 & 27 Sept. 1722.

is no room to suspect any disturbance from thence.' He was wary of rumour and speculation: 'except by this universal Modesty,' he told Lord Townshend, 'and the good behaviour they show, one may imagine there is something more than ordinary in it, but it is hard to judge and draw such ane inference, from a right proceeding.'[1] Notwithstanding such uncommon moderation, in October a nonjuring priest was taken up by the Whig magistrates at Manchester;[2] and amid reports that the correspondence of most Tories was now being opened at the Post Office,[3] and that further arrests were imminent, Peter Legh, a veteran paranoid, felt obliged to seek the protection of Lord Harcourt, only desiring, as he told his lordship, 'to be quiet and not to give the least Umbrage for any one to disturb me'.[4]

If the mood of the times gave fresh heart to the Whig Loyalists of 1715, who, like the Rev. James Woods, were now encouraged to press their claims to compensation and reward for their services in the Rebellion,[5] the new year of 1723 brought little consolation to the Tories. In February, Sir Richard Grosvenor and Charles Cholmondeley

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1. P.R.O., S.P. 35/33, ff.104-5: Ker to Townshend, 16 Sept. 1722.

2. Byrom Journal and Remains, i.47: Journal, 16 Oct. 1722.

3. Wynnstay MSS., Box "C(Tin)"/69/51: Wynn to Sir W. Williams, 3 Nov.1722.

4. P.R.O., S.P.35/33, ff.347-8: Legh to Harcourt, 19 Oct.1722.

5. Hist. MSS. Comm., Kenyon MSS., no. 1188, pp. 464-5: Dr. B. Grosvenor to Woods, 18 Feb. 1722-3. Woods's petition was successful, and he used the £100 awarded him to erect a new dissenting meeting-house at Chowbent.

were put out of the Cheshire Commission of the Peace,[1] presumably by way of retribution for their electoral successes the previous spring; and if this were not enough, the Government was now presented with fresh evidence to indicate that a Papist insurrection in Lancashire had indeed been in preparation the preceding summer.[2]

The ministers responded to the Atterbury Plot, and to the reports of large remittances being sent to the Pretender by the Catholics, with harsh measures. Preferring a policy of repression to one of mollification, Walpole imposed an annual levy of £100,000 on the incomes of both Catholics and Nonjurors,[3] and this in addition to the double land tax for which they were already liable. 'The yearly value of the Papists' estates in Lancashir,' the Quaker William Stout noted, 'is valued at about twenty thousand pounds a year, and their tax to contribut to the whole will be about 8s. 9d in the pound according to the said value; which is hard on such of them as have not been concerned in ye plot.'[4] For many less well-off Catholics these new burdens on their estates were insupportable, and some had no choice but to sell up.[5] To the Nonjurors there remained the alternative of taking the oaths, and Dr. Roger Kenyon, as one of their number, sympathised with their dilemma. 'The new Acts of Parliament,' he wrote, 'will possibly revive old doubts and disputes, and bring some gentlemen in the neighbourhood to a resolution, who have wavered,

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1. P.R.O., C.234/5: Fiat for a new Commission of the Peace for Cheshire, 6 Feb. 1722-3.

2. P.R.O., S.P.35/42, ff.160-1, 217-8: J. E. to Townshend, 21 Mar. 1722-3 & 25 Mar. 1723.

3. 9 Geo: I. cap. xviii.

4. Autobiography of William Stout, p.188; see also Great Diurnal of Nicholas Blundell, iii. 118, note.

5. Legh of Lyme MSS.: B. Trott to P. Legh, 13 Oct. 1723.

as I hear of late; in truth, I am sorry for them either way.'[1] Confusion persisted, however, as to the precise scope of the legislation compelling Nonjurors to register their estates, with the result that the full rigour of the law was not brought to bear in every case.[2]

Although the 'Grand Tax', as Nicholas Blundell dubbed it, dealt a decisive blow to Jacobite morale, and proved to be the last straw for those Catholic gentry already in straitened circumstances, it did little to inhibit the expanded social life of their more illustrious co-religionists. By 1727, Lord Molyneux, for example, was in debt to the tune of £16,000, and was increasing the deficit by more than £1,000 annually: a victim not so much of punitive taxation as of personal extravagance.[3] Likewise Blundell himself, though somewhat more concerned to maintain his solvency, continued to cut an impressive figure in the fashionable society of the northwest. He kept in particularly close touch with the Stanleys, and in 1726 successfully sought the Earl of Derby's assistance in gaining relief from one of the pecuniary disadvantages of his faith: the excessive contribution normally exacted from recusant gentry towards the cost of maintaining the militia horse.[4] Neither was the acquaintance of even the most scrupulous Nonjurors particularly restricted by the official political climate. John Byrom,

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1. Hist. MSS. Comm., Kenyon MSS., no.1190, p.466: Dr. R. Kenyon to Mrs. Kenyon, 25 July 1723.

2. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: A. Leigh to Bradshaigh, 13 & 22 Mar. 1723-4.

3. Molyneux MSS., DDM/11/6916: 'Some Observations humbly offered to the consideration of my Lord Molyneux, by [his lawyer] I[saac] Greene', 10 Mar. 1726-7.

4. Great Diurnal of Nicholas Blundell, iii. 193, 202.

for instance, enjoyed a circle of friendships in the north that included not only such uncompromising Tories as Dr. Thomas Deacon[1] and the fellows of Manchester College, but also such resolute Whigs as Ralph Leycester of Toft[2] and Darcy Lever of Alkrington.[3] Indeed, during prolonged sojourns in London he appeared intent upon ingratiating himself with the Whig establishment, trying to win sponsors and subscribers to a new system of shorthand which he had lately devised. Lords Lonsdale and Stanhope were among his patrons, and by 1727 he was even considered persona grata at the table of the fire-eating Bishop of Salisbury, Benjamin Hoadly. Evidently, though it could still be asked by those into whose company he was being introduced whether he was not a Tory, the inevitable answer did little or nothing to prejudice his advancement.[4]

In 1725 occurred the death of Lord Cholmondeley. He was succeeded by his brother, Lord Newburgh, who shortly afterwards was appointed Custos Rotulorum in Cheshire, and Lord Lieutenant both there and in North Wales.[5] The change was of little political moment, in the short term at any rate, since like his predecessor the new earl was inclined to favour the Tories: a propensity clearly underlined by his choice of

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1. Thomas Deacon (d.1753), of Manchester. Physician and celebrated Nonjuror. See below p. 308.

2. Ralph Leycester (1699-1777) of Toft, Chesh. One of the Whig gentlemen who opposed the Grosvenors at Chester in 1732-4. See below p.183 seq.

3. Darcy Lever (d.1743), of Alkrington, Lancs. Sheriff of Lancashire 1736; knighted 1737.

4. Byrom Journal and Remains, i. passim, but see esp. pp. 50, 52, 102, 111, 263.

5. P.R.O., C.231/10, Crown Office Docquet Book, 1721-46, pp.77-8.

Sir Richard Grosvenor as one of his Deputy Lieutenants.[1] In the longer term, however, it was of much greater significance, since it coincided with the entry into northwestern politics of the new earl's son, Lord Malpas,[2] who had recently been brought into Parliament as member for East Looe by the interest of his father-in-law, Sir Robert Walpole, and now became Governor of Chester Castle. An ambitious young man, Malpas was intent upon extending his family's influence in the northwest, and finding a seat for himself in the area, with or without the help of his ineffectual father. With this view in mind, he turned his attention towards Wigan, where the fragile peace of the borough appeared to be in imminent danger of collapse, and there set about exploiting the situation to his advantage.

The twin pillars of electoral success at Wigan were a majority on the jury of the Court Leet and the favour of the mayor, since between them they controlled the nomination of both resident and non-resident burgesses.[3] So long as the agreement between Lord Barrymore and Sir Roger Bradshaigh remained in force, the dominant interest in the corporation was an uneasy coalition of their respective supporters: Tories and Whigs, torn between loyalty to their party and their contractual obligations to one another. There were dissidents of both

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1. Grosvenor MSS.: Warrant appointing Grosvenor as Deputy Lieutenant in Cheshire. 1725.

2. Hon. George Cholmondeley (1703-70), of Cholmondeley, Chesh. Styled Visc. Malpas, 1725-33; succeeded father as 3rd earl in 1733. M.P. for East Looe, Jan. 1724-1727; for New Windsor, 1727-May 1733. Became a staunch Whig. For details of offices held, see Sedgwick, History of Parliament, i. 151.

3. Cox, 'Sir Roger Bradshaigh and the Electoral Management of Wigan', loc. cit., pp. 130-3.

parties who resented this alliance, both as an affront to their principles and as an obstacle to the monopolization of patronage that would follow from an outright party victory. In 1722 it had been a Whig group led by Sumner and Walmisley that had endeavoured to break through the agreement; but only two years later the delicate balance of compromise was primarily threatened from a very different quarter.

The chief architect and driving force behind the new opposition was Thomas Willis.[1] During the summer of 1724, a resolution was taken among the Tories to dispute the next mayoral election, at which, by the terms of the agreement, one of Sir Roger's supporters was due to be chosen. This proposal evidently received the factious approval of Sumner and Walmisley, for in June Barrymore was assuring Alexander Leigh that 'ye design of those y.t joyne w.th Mr. Willis is Intirely to overturn my Interest in y.t Corporation w.ch I must Endeavour to prevent'. They were, he added, such as 'have always been my opposers there & who's opposition to S.r Roger is that he joyn'd heartily w.th mee Last Election ... and has alwayes perform'd ye part wee agreed on .... '[2] It was Willis's Tory supporters, however, who constituted the most serious threat, including as they did George Kenyon, the recorder, and Richard Atherton,[3] a prominent figure among the county Tories. It was, therefore,

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1. Thomas Willis (n.d.). Descended from a family of Liverpool merchants active in the Tory interest during Queen Anne's reign. Chosen alderman in 1723.

2. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Barrymore to Leigh, 22 June 1724.

3. Richard Atherton (1700-26), of Atherton, Lancs. Formerly Whigs, the family changed sides abruptly in 1722: see E. Baines, The History of the County Palatine and Duchy of Lancaster, ed. J. Croston (1888-93), iv. 337, 346.

a major victory for the joint interest, when Barrymore managed to secure the authoritative backing of Bishop Gastrell, thereby effectively neutralizing the powerful influence of the Rector, Samuel Aldersey,[1] and the High Church rank and file.[2] At the Michaelmas Leet, Bradshaigh was himself chosen mayor, and proceeded to reinforce his interest by the creation of thirty-eight new burgesses. Thereupon, the opposition challenged the qualifications of some of his followers to sit on the jury, asserting that jurors should be not only resident burgesses holding no civic office, but also payers of scot and lot.[3] Sir Henry Hoghton was much concerned to learn that some of his own Whig friends still appeared in Willis's interest,[4] but could do little to prevent it.

Nevertheless, Lord Barrymore remained aware that the continuing existence of a group of dissident Tories must constitute a serious menace to his own electoral security, and so worked assiduously throughout the summer to engage the interest of leading Tories in both counties against Willis and his friends. His efforts could only be counted a partial success; for while he was able to enlist a considerable body of supporters, including Gastrell and Richard Shuttleworth amongst others, he also managed to arouse the mistrust of his colleague, who evidently suspected

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1. Rev. Samuel Aldersey (d.1741). Rector of Wigan, 1713-41. High Church Tory.

2. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Barrymore to Bradshaigh, 3 Aug. 1724.

3. Cox, 'Sir Roger Bradshaigh and the Electoral Management of Wigan', loc. cit., pp.147, 151.

4. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Barrymore to Bradshaigh, 1 Dec. 1724.

the nature of his motives. Barrymore did his best to dispel these fears, claiming to have only Sir Roger's interests at heart;[1] but such altruistic protestations failed to impress Bradshaigh, and by the end of June the breach between the two men was public knowledge.[2] The only course left open was to bring Bradshaigh more closely into the negotiations, and when in July the Bishop came to Wigan to arbitrate in the matter of jurors' qualifications, it was he not Barrymore who superintended the visit.[3]

The Bishop's expedition should have been followed by a parley at Ashley Hall,[4] where Lord Barrymore was to have met with 'ye whole posse of the other Side', but in the event he cried off, claiming a sore throat by way of excuse.[5] Negotiations now broke down completely, and Willis was left to take the opposition's case before the Autumn Assizes at Lancaster for a determination. Despite Barrymore's continuing optimism,[6] the jury found against the defendants, who, in order to preserve the status quo, were obliged to fall back on a counter-challenge of some of their opponents' jurors. By the end of Bradshaigh's mayoralty a stalemate had been reached, the only point of agreement

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1. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Barrymore to Bradshaigh, 15 June, 1725.
2. Kenyon MSS., DDKe/9/103/39: J. Walmisley to Kenyon, 28 June 1725.
3. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Barrymore to Bradshaigh, 13 & 18 July, 1725.
4. Thomas Assheton's house, used for the Cheshire Club meeting in 1715.
5. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Barrymore to Bradshaigh, 18 & 24 July 1725.
6. Ibid.: same to same, 14 Aug. 1725.

between the two sides being a moratorium for the present on further legal action.[1] Those in the corporation committed to the joint interest now closed ranks, and invited Barrymore to succeed Sir Roger as mayor. His lordship, after an appropriate display of modesty, accepted,[2] and immediately took ship for Dublin, leaving the entire management of his election to his suspicious colleague. He did agree to write personally to Lord Derby in an effort to neutralize the dissident Whig vote,[3] the chances of which were enhanced still further by the death of Sumner at the end of September.[4] The opposition, however, continued to stand their ground, and, with Willis as their candidate, forced a poll.[5] Barrymore being duly chosen, albeit in his absence,[6] Willis at once swore out a writ against him, and the legal wrangling began afresh.[7]

This was the complex situation into which Lord Malpas chose to interpose himself. The precise circumstances of his initial intervention are less than clear: his name was not so much as mentioned prior to the election of Barrymore as mayor, yet by the end of November negotiations for an end to the corporation disputes were said to be going ahead with

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1. Cox, 'Sir Roger Bradshaigh and the Electoral Management of Wigan', loc. cit., p.151.

2. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Barrymore to the Aldermen and Burgesses of Wigan, 1 Sept. 1725.

3. Ibid.: Barrymore to Bradshaigh, [dated in Dublin] 16 Sept. 1725.

4. Ibid.: same to same, 1 Oct. 1725.

5. The poll is preserved in Wigan Court Leet Roll, no.133 (Wigan R.O.). For an analysis of the gentry and clerical vote, see Appendix A.

6. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Barrymore to A. Leigh, 16 Oct. 1725.

7. Cox, 'Sir Roger Bradshaigh and the Electoral Management of Wigan', loc. cit., p.151.

his 'consent'.[1] Like Sumner and Walmisley before him, Malpas was evidently prepared to enter into a factious co-operation with Willis and the dissident Tories in an effort to break through the Barrymore-Bradshaigh alliance: to form a joint interest, as it were, against the joint interest of their opponents. Indeed, given his family's record of political compromise, and his own curious circle of acquaintance,[2] he must have seemed an ideal leader for such a confederacy. The complicated issue of burgess rights and juror qualifications, however, was of little interest to him and he soon showed himself only too anxious to see the matter settled. Lord Barrymore was positively jubilant, therefore, to learn that Willis had been 'instructed' to treat with Bradshaigh and himself on their own terms. This information, he told Sir Roger, would be 'of greate use & cause much heat amongst [Willis's] former Supporters.' Barrymore was not slow to press home his advantage, and immediately began to put into operation a project which, he believed, 'w.^{d} raise y.^{t} desention amongst them as w.^{d} confound Willis & Kenyon's designs'.[3] With Bradshaigh fully privy to the deception,[4] he informed Willis that he knew Sir Roger 'to be soe much Sr Robert [Walpole]'s Humble Servt', that, if the minister desired, he would willingly resign his seat to Malpas at the next election. This, of course, was precisely

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1. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Willis to Barrymore, 30 Nov. 1725.

2. Though he was Walpole's son-in-law, Malpas was just as much at home in the highest of Tory circles: see, for example, Wynnstay MSS., Box "C(Tin)"/163/14: Robt. Williams to Sir W. Williams, 29 Nov. 1726.

3. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Barrymore to Bradshaigh, 6 Dec. 1725.

4. See Sedgwick, History of Parliament, i.481. In her article on Bradshaigh, Miss Cruickshank seems to have missed the point of the stratagem.

what Willis did not want to see. Lord Malpas dependent on the Tories for his election was one thing; Lord Malpas as the personal nominee of the Prime Minister was quite another. Yet if this intimation was expected to dampen still further the ardour of the dissident Tories, it was more particularly calculated to dull the campaigning zeal of Malpas himself, who, for the time being at least, would be permitted to believe that he had scored a bloodless victory. For Willis and his friends, however, matters were to get still worse. Unbeknown to them, the lawyer chosen to represent their interests in the legal settlement of the corporation disputes was a personal friend of Barrymore's. Moreover, Thomas Assheton and Holland Egerton, two of the Tories who had originally backed the opposition against Barrymore, were now drawn into the peace negotiations, to the great embarrassment of Willis and Kenyon: for, Bradshaigh was assured, 'it shews to their old friends what distrates [sic] them and makes them angry wch Will doe us good.'[1]

Sir Roger stood in need of reassurance, since by this time Lord Barrymore's intrigues were becoming so complicated that once again he began to fear that it was he, and not Willis, that was intended as the dupe. Alexander Leigh, too, was beginning to share his doubts, the more so when it appeared that his lordship was ready to reveal his entire legal case to their opponents before any settlement was reached.[2] Barrymore was in fact involved in a very dangerous game

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1. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Barrymore to Bradshaigh, 12 Dec. 1725.

2. Ibid.: A. Leigh to Bradshaigh, 14 & 21 Dec. 1725; ibid.: Barrymore to Leigh, n.d.

which might have backfired on him at any stage. Whilst he felt increasingly confident about his own position, being informed that Richard Atherton no longer intended to oppose him outright on the Tory interest, he was less definite about the prospects of driving a wedge between Malpas and his sponsors in the town. At his most optimistic, he hoped to persuade Malpas to desist altogether, reasoning that, without Willis's aid, he would be uncertain of meeting with a return, even if Bradshaigh stood down. This, however, assumed that Willis would now drop him, which was by no means settled. More realistically perhaps, he could hope that Malpas would at least disassociate himself from the legal battle over the burgesses,[1] as he had clearly intimated his wish to do. Barrymore's main plan, however, was to procrastinate long enough for Bradshaigh to come to terms with Walpole for some employment, as the price of letting Malpas in upon his interest. This would leave Sir Roger with up to four years income at the government's expense, after which he could resign or renegue on the deal as he saw fit.[2] During December and January, both sides moved slowly towards a settlement of their outstanding differences, in spite of constant suspicions on the part of Leigh and Bradshaigh that their interest were being sacrificed.[3]

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1. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Barrymore to Bradshaigh, 22 Dec. 1725.

2. Ibid.: Leigh to Bradshaigh, 21 Dec. 1725.

3. Kenyon MSS., DDKe/9/103/42: Willis to Kenyon, 3 Jan. 1725-6; Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Leigh to Bradshaigh, 5 & 16 Jan. 1725-6; ibid.: Barrymore to Bradshaigh, 11 Jan. 1725-6.

Agreement was finally reached at the end of January: rules were drawn up to regulate the future conduct of burgesses on juries, and it was decided to put a stop to all further legal proceedings for the time being.[1] In February, the remaining matter of those burgesses elected the previous Michaelmas was finally settled, with an agreement that those objected to by either side should disclaim. Barrymore, well satisfied with this outcome, and anxious to avoid further expense and trouble, pressed Bradshaigh to accept:

> You may remember If my advice and opinion had been taken & follow'd Michaelmas was a twelve month all had been safe and wee had some hundreds off pounds more now in our pocketts. I gave up my owne judgm[en]t purely to gratifie your desires and hope you'l acquiesce a little now to myne, & have noe jealousies, trust your friends and lett them have a Confidence in one another, the Consequence must bee prosperous. 2

Leigh, too, urged Bradshaigh to accept 'without any Expressions of Concern or Uneasyness on your part; and without ye Least show of your having any Future Expectations from ye Consequence of it.' If they were to succeed, it was necessary to conceal their real design; and how better to achieve that than by giving the ministers some 'hopes of receiving your Complim[en]t of acquiescence when ye time of Election comes? The Less Danger they see, the less care they'll take to provide ag.^{t} it: and If it be once given out by ye other side, that you are out of ye Question, the Generality of our adversaries will rest satisfied with their Imaginary Conquest, & Cease to tempt away our Friends from us.'[3]

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1. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Barrymore to Bradshaigh, 21 Jan. 1725-6.
2. Ibid.: same to same, 1 Feb. 1725-6.
3. Ibid.: Leigh to Bradshaigh, 4 Feb. 1725-6.

Bradshaigh accepted the agreement.[1] Increasingly estranged from Lord Malpas, the dissident Tories entered upon the relative security of a truce with their opponents that lasted throughout the summer of 1726, in spite of rumours reaching Barrymore that his colleague was now planning to join with Malpas against him.[2] No jury was sworn at the Easter Leet, thereby averting opposition threats to re-open legal proceedings. Both sides, however, were busily preparing for the next mayoral election due in October. When it came, Barrymore and Bradshaigh appear to have done some sort of deal to secure the county Tories by setting up Peter Legh's nephew, Legh Master,[3] recently settled at New Hall in the neighbouring parish of Winwick.[4] During his own mayoralty, Barrymore had greatly increased the number of Tory squires from both Lancashire and Cheshire enjoying the freedom of the borough, and, though this diminished the danger from the Whigs, it made Barrymore more dependant than ever on a straight party vote.[5] Not all the Tories, however, welcomed the arrangement. Richard Atherton, being informed of the unsuccessful endeavours of Willis and Kenyon to prevent Master's

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1. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: 'Proposalls for settling the matters now in Dispute & for preventing any future ones in ye Corporation off Wigan', n.d. This is obviously an early version, probably representing the full demands of the opposition when the negotiations started. If so, it shows how much ground Barrymore had won.

2. Kenyon MSS., DDKe/9/103/43: Willis to Kenyon, 13 May 1726; Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Leigh to Bradshaigh, 7 June 1726.

3. Legh Master (c.1694-1750), of New Hall, Ashton-in-Makerfield, Lancs., and Codnor Castle, Derbys. M.P. for Newton, 1727-47. Tory.

4. Cox 'Sir Roger Bradshaigh and the Electoral Management of Wigan', loc. cit., p.153. The poll is preserved in Wigan Court Leet Roll, no. 135; for analysis, see Appendix A.

5. Ibid.: pp. 147, 154.

election, expressed his gladness to find 'so much courage and resolution left amongst the honest Gentlemen of the Country and hope they will unanimously join in opposing such arbitrary and tyrannicall proceedings as ... were practized att Wigan Election.'[1] As events were soon to show, there was perhaps more courage and resolution about than even he imagined.

The altercation at Wigan was not the only political dispute in the northwest at this time; for at the Collegiate Church of Manchester, more than six years after his initial presentation, Samuel Peploe was still not in possession of his wardenship. In April 1724, the case was taken up by the Attorney General, Sir Philip Yorke, who promised his assistance to have the matter brought on in King's Bench.[2] It came on at last in November, but even then procedural wrangles necessitated a further post-ponement until the following term.[3] Disillusioned by what he regarded as the facile promises of the Crown's legal officers, Peploe again appealed to Archbishop Wake. 'I know not how to scramble for the things of this world,' he owned ruefully.

> When I had no Prospects of better Preferment than Preston, I was well content, & if I never have more, I trust in God, I shall be so. However as there is nothing but Personal Picque ... & self interest; to say no more; & as I am two hundred pounds worse now for the favor intended me, I would not willingly be defeated in my expectations. 4

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1. Lancashire R.O., Farington MSS., DDF/2439/10: Atherton to G. Farington, 20 Oct. 1726.

2. Brit. Mus., Addit. MSS. 35584 (Hardwicke Papers), f.326: Peploe to Yorke, 24 Apr. 1724.

3. Hist. MSS. Comm., Portland MSS., vii. 390-2: Canon Stratford to Oxford, 28 Nov. & 6 Dec. 1724.

4. Wake MSS., Arch. W. Epist. 10/141: Peploe to Wake, 7 Feb. 1724-5.

On 4 May 1725, the case was finally determined in Peploe's favour,[1] and, despite some suggestion that the Bishop might appeal to the House of Lords, the decision of King's Bench was allowed to settle the question once and for all.[2]

In the lengthy period during which the wardenship had been in dispute, however, the affairs of the College had fallen into confusion. As far back as 1721, upon the death of a fellow, Lord Townshend had sought a legal opinion about the Crown's right of nomination to this and such other vacancies as might occur during the hiatus;[3] and having received a favourable report, he may even have held up proceedings on Peploe's case, in order to exploit the opportunities more fully.[4] Evidently the Manchester fellowships were considered juicy plums in a far from barren orchard of ecclesiastical patronage, and when a second vacancy was augured in 1724, the Secretary of State found himself besieged by a veritable army of hopeful clerics and their worthy patrons.[5] Yet once the case was settled, the right of election reverted to the warden and fellows; which unfortunate circumstance first brought the College's internal politics to the attention of the Duke of Newcastle. Before departing for Hanover, Townshend had informed his grace of the delicate balance of parties within the College chapter:

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1. Hist. MSS. Comm., Portland MSS., vi. 3: J. Wainwright to Oxford, 4 May 1725.

2. Byrom Journal and Remains, i.134: Journal, 14 May 1725; ibid., p.143: J. Byrom to Mrs. Byrom, 25 May 1725.

3. P.R.O., S.P. 44/122, p.85: Townshend to the Attorney & Solicitor Generals, 24 Oct. 1721.

4. Ibid./123, p.51: Carteret to the Attorney General, 3 Mar. 1721-2.

5. P.R.O., S.P. 35/48, ff.6-8: Rutland to ? , 6 Jan. 1723-4; ibid./51, f.40: Sr. T. Lowther to ? , 12 Aug. 1724. Peploe too was being approached: see Wake MSS., Arch. W. Epist. 10/151: Peploe to Wake, 20 Nov. 1725.

> that there was at present an equality between the Whiggs & Tories, that Mr. Whitworth, who was a Whigg, was in a very declining Condition, and if he died, the College would be in Tory Hands, but that Mr. Whitworth would resign to a friend of his own who was a Whigg, and then there would be a better chance for preserving the Whigg Interest. 1

Matters were again thrown into confusion, however, by the death in November 1725 of Bishop Gastrell. A few days only after his demise, Peploe informed Wake that he no longer apprehended any design on the part of the Universities to challenge the Manchester ruling by the institution of quo warranto proceedings. The bishop had apparently spent a considerable amount of time on his last visitation alluding to the possible results of such proceedings, and had contributed significantly to Tory morale. 'Your Grace can scarce imagine the boastings of a sort of men in this country on y.^{t} acc[oun]t', the Archbishop was told. But if, therefore, Gastrell's death had proved timely in one respect, it had been rather less so in another; for the Manchester College statutes directed that only the Bishop of Chester could legally institute a new warden, and Peploe now faced a further delay whilst a new prelate was chosen. 'I pray God,' he told Wake earnestly, 'we may have a B[isho]p of a true Primitive Spirit, who will seek the peace & Prosperity of o.^{r} Church, & State by such measures as we have not of late been blessed with.'[2]

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1. Addit. MSS. 32687, ff.97-8: Newcastle to Rutland, 26 June 1725. The fellow in question was Charles Whitworth (n.d.). He had been elected in 1720, but was never properly installed; he was inducted to a living in Kent in 1724, and left Manchester in the following year.

2. Wake MSS., Arch. W. Epist. 10/151: Peploe to Wake, 20 Nov. 1725.

The question of Gastrell's successor was hotly disputed, and produced an unseemly public squabble between Lancelot Blackburne, Archbishop of Yorke, and Edmund Gibson, Bishop of London, as each sought to press his own candidate upon the ministry. At first Blackburne seemed assured of success; but by January it was rumoured that Gibson, having failed to secure ministerial backing for his first nominee, had thrown the weight of his influence behind a compromise candidate: none other than Samuel Peploe himself.[1] On the 15th of that month, Peploe was informed that the bishopric had been conferred upon him, and that he would be permitted to keep the wardenship of Manchester in commendam. 'It is a great satisfaction to me,' the Duke of Newcastle assured him, 'to have this opportunity of congratulating w.th you upon this signal Mark of H[is] M[ajesty']s favour to you, w.ch as it is a just Reward for y.r Zeal & affection to ye true Interest of our King & Countrey so must be exceedingly acceptable to all those who wish well to our present happy establishment.'[2]

A Whig acquaintance of John Byrom's was inclined to see the workings of Providence in such an extraordinary choice; but as the Nonjuror later told his wife: '[to be] for construing providence in the accidents of mortal life too rigorously, or to make a whig or tory providence on't, might lead one too far.' Yet even he reckoned that Peploe's advancement had 'something very uncommon in't after all'.[3]

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1. A full account of this dispute is given in N. Sykes, Edmund Gibson, Bishop of London, 1669-1748 (Oxford, 1926), pp. 123-7.

2. P.R.O., S.P. 35/61, f.15: [Newcastle] to Peploe, 15 Jan. 1725-6.

3. Byrom Journal and Remains, i. 195: Byrom to Mrs. Byrom, 26 Jan. 1725-6.

Canon Stratford favoured a more secular explanation. According to him, Gibson had set about procuring 'letters from some of the rankest men in those parts[1] to recommend Peploe as the person that would be most acceptable and popular in that diocese'. Stratford could scarcely agree: 'I do not believe he could have pitched on a man that would have been so disagreeable to all sorts of men in that diocese, or that would have made such a figure on the Bench, as this is like to do.'[2] Observers were not slow to contrast the characters and accomplishments of Peploe and his predecessor, though the estimates varied along with the politics of the critic concerned. Yet all agreed that it was a political appointment, and one calculated to strengthen the Whig interest in the northwest.[3] Travelling down to his diocese in June 1726, the new bishop received an ecstatic reception from the Whig gentry assembled at Warrington, and his arrival at Manchester was eagerly awaited by his supporters there.[4] His difficulties in the Collegiate Church were far from over, and by October he was locked in a legal battle

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1. One of these was almost certainly Sir Thomas Lowther: see Lancashire R.O., Cavendish MSS., DDCa/22/2: Letterbook, p.3: Lowther to J. Fletcher, 1 Mar. 1725-6.

2. Hist. MSS. Comm., Portland MSS., vii. 417: Stratford to Oxford, 29 Jan. 1725-6.

3. For two such opposing views, see Bodl. MS. Hearne's Diaries 110, pp. 56-7, 152-3: 15 Nov. 1725 & 20 Jan. 1725-6; and Hist. MSS. Comm., Portland MSS., vii. 418-9: Canon Stratford to Oxford, 29 Jan. 1725-6, citing Richard Bentley.

4. Bodl. MS. Hearne's Diaries 112, pp. 93-4: 22 June 1726 -- Extract from The Reading Post or Weekly Mercury for Monday, June 20, 1726.

with the fellows over the appointment of a new chaplain:[1] a telling harbinger of the antagonism which was to subsist between himself and the chapter for the next twenty-five years. Nevertheless, it was clear that Peploe's appointment represented a significant, if perhaps inevitable, set-back for the Tories, and one which underlined more than anything else could their need for a new identity and new friends. Their consciously projected image as the Church party was an anachronism, the electoral value of which decreased steadily with time. Their future, if one existed, was as a Country party, appealing to the prejudices and self-interest of the hard-pressed squireens and petty merchants, for whom Walpole's Whigs personified all the intangible social and economic forces that were altering their way of life.[2] Here at least they might find new recruits and new allies. Whether they themselves could adapt sufficiently to take advantage of the situation, however, was a question only time could answer.

The unexpected death of George I in June 1727 brought momentary hope to the Tories, who confidently expected the immediate removal of Walpole and his closest associates. At Cartmell in Lancashire the new

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1. Rev. Richard Assheton (1694-1764), M.A. was elected chaplain by the fellows in 1720, but Peploe refused to ratify the election. A petition in Assheton's favour, containing the signatures of 39 clergymen and 285 laymen (including several of the most prominent Tory gentry) was presented to the Archbishop of York in Nov. 1726. See F. R. Raines, The Fellows of the Collegiate Church of Manchester, ed. Frank Renaud (Chetham Soc., new series, xxi, xxiii, 1891), ii. 216-25; Byrom Journal and Remains, i. 231-4, 236, 248-51, 261-2, 265-6, 272. His confirmation as chaplain was ordered by a mandamus from King's Bench in 1728, and he became a fellow in 1731.

2. For a comprehensive discussion of this Country ideology, see Isaac Krammick, Bolingbroke and His Circle: The Politics of Nostalgia in The Age of Walpole (Cambridge, Mass, 1968), especially chapters 2, 3 & 8.

King was proclaimed on Sunday, 18 June; though, as Sir Thomas Lowther[1] was later informed, 'not with much rejoicing, because of the sudden & surprising news of his late Ma[jes]ties Death'.[2] It soon became clear, however, that George II intended retaining his father's ministers, which, as William Stout noted, 'the disafected are not yet pleased at.'[3] Still, those Tories with any political ambition whatsoever did what they could to ingratiate themselves with their new sovereign. 'You'l wonder perhaps to hear Lord Gower is a topping Courtier,' Lady Wortley Montagu told her sister, 'and that there is not one Tory left in England.'[4] Nevertheless, beneath the surface appearance of reconciliation and harmony, little of substance had changed: no Tories had been taken into place; proscription continued and was even intensified at the level of county administration; and Walpole remained as firmly in charge of the ministry as ever. Not all his opponents were as good-humoured as the staunchly Jacobite William Shippen; who, upon taking the oath of allegiance to the new King, kissed Walpole's thumb instead of the Bible,

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1. Sir Thomas Lowther, 2nd Bart. (c.1699-1745), of Holker Hall, nr. Lancaster, and Marske, Yorks. Son-in-law of 2nd Duke of Devonshire. M.P. for Lancaster, 1722-45. Entered politics as a Whig, but became increasingly independant.

2. Cavendish MSS., DDCa/22/2, Letterbook, p.38: J. Fletcher to Lowther, 3 July 1727.

3. Autobiography of William Stout, p.198.

4. The Complete Letters of Lady Wortley Montagu, ed. R. Halsband (Oxford, 1965-7), ii. 81: to Lady Mar, [July 1727].

and being asked to repeat the ceremony correctly replied only: 'Ah Robin, that's not fair'.[1]

The old King's demise of course necessitated the summoning of a new Parliament, and a feverish bout of electioneering began almost at once. In Cheshire, Lord Cholmondeley began by sounding out the possibility of running Lord Malpas as a candidate, though on precisely what interest is far from clear. Tories like Peter Legh and John Egerton were approached for their support, and a county meeting was called for the end of July; but in the end the plan came to nothing.[2] Much more significant was the candidacy of Sir Robert Salusbury Cotton,[3] a Whig baronet almost certainly put up by the Earl of Warrington to oppose both the Cholmondeley interest and the sitting Tory members. To the north of the Mersey, things began more quietly. At Lancaster, Sir Thomas Lowther was so confident of being returned unopposed, along with fellow Whig Christopher Tower,[4] that he gave instructions to his electoral agents in the town to refrain from spending any money at all until his

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1. Letters to and from Henrietta, Countess of Suffolk, and her Husband, the Hon-George Berkeley, 1712-67, ed. [John Wilson Croker] (London, 1824), i.341: Editor's note.

2. Legh of Lyme MSS.: Malpas to Legh, 29 June 1727; ibid.: Ld. Cholmondeley to Legh, 29 June 1727. For the general unpopularity of aristocratic intervention of this sort in county elections, see Sir Lewis Namier, The Structure of Politics at the Accession of George III (2nd. ed., London, 1957), p.71.

3. Sir Robert Salusbury Cotton, 3rd Bart. (1695-1748), of Combermere, Chesh., and Llewenny, Denb. M.P. for Cheshire, 1727-34; for Lostwithiel, 1741-7. Lord Lieutenant of Denbighshire, 1733-48.

4. Christopher Tower (?1694-1771), of Huntsmoor Park, Bucks. M.P. for Lancaster, 1 May 1727-1734; for Aylesbury, 1734-41; for Bossiney, Dec. 1741-Mar. 1742. Paternal grandparents came from Nr. Lancaster. A Director of the Bank of England, 1734-40, he was a consistent supporter of Walpole.

arrival.[1] This injunction was subsequently amended to permit some limited treating, but by the standards of the day, Lowther's campaign was hardly open-handed.[2]

As for Wigan, Lord Barrymore was expressing his hope in July that the events of 1725-6 had not prejudiced his and Bradshaigh's interest in the town; he had written to a number of his Tory friends, among them Thomas Hesketh, Richard Shuttleworth, Sir John Bland and Thomas Assheton, and seemed confident that all was quiet.[3] He was mistaken. Sir Roger was once again writing circular letters on his own account,[4] and, as rumoured the previous summer, may have contemplated dropping Barrymore and joining his interest with that of the dissident Tories, now under the banner of Peter Bold.[5] The mayor, Legh Master, was himself plotting with Bold and his friends,[6] and it was even suggested that the two of them might stand jointly, against both Barrymore and Bradshaigh, with the full backing of the

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1. Cavendish MSS., DDCa/22/2, Letterbook, pp. 38-9: Lowther to J. Fletcher, 8 July 1727.

2. See ibid., pp.40-2: correspondence between Lowther and Fletcher, 13 July to 1 Aug. 1727. Dr. John Beckett of Newcastle University has suggested to me that Lowther's finances were in a parlous condition, which may account for his parsimony.

3. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Barrymore to Bradshaigh, 7 July, 1727.

4. Hist. MSS. Comm., Kenyon MSS., no. 1196, p.467: Bradshaigh to Kenyon, 10 July, 1727.

5. Peter Bold (?1705-62), of Bold Hall, Prescot, Lancs. M.P. for Wigan, 1727-34; for Lancashire, May, 1736-1741, Jan. 1750-61. Father and Grandfather both represented the county as Tories. Personal friend of Sir Edward Stanley, 11th Earl of Derby.

6. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: A. Leigh to Bradshaigh, 10 July, 1727; Legh of Lyme MSS.: L. Master to E. Beresford, 23 July 1727.

country Tories.[1] Some Tories, however, were greatly alarmed by the prospect. William Shrigley, for one, feared that such internal bickering might enable Bradshaigh to break through his engagements and bring in 'a forreign Whigg'; and he was probably not alone in such views.[2] Meanwhile, still in Ireland Barrymore was deeply concerned to hear of the independent line adopted by his erstwhile partner, and even more disturbed to learn of the treacherous conduct of the mayor. 'I cannot believe,' he told Bradshaigh, 'a Gentleman off his figure can act a part soe Contradictary to his Engagem[en]ts'. He reaffirmed his own commitment to maintaining their joint interest, and did everything in his power to revive Sir Roger's own zeal for the same cause.[3]

Affairs at Wigan, however, were not the only situation worrying Shrigley. He was particularly exercised by another suggestion that Peter Legh might be preparing to throw his influence in Cheshire behind a new joint interest of Cotton and Charles Cholmondeley: the result apparently of a reconciliation between the Whig magnates of Cholmondeley and Dunham.[4] While he questioned the accuracy of such gossip, Shrigley left Legh in no doubt about his own views, and heartily expressed his wish 'y.[t] honour & honesty may be more practis'd, & every man may have his own'.[5] Lords Cholmondeley and Warrington may indeed have been prepared to support such

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1. Legh of Lyme MSS.: E. Allanson to Legh, 24 July 1727. Those known to have fostered the idea include Master, Bold, Willis, Legh and Richard Clayton of Adlington.

2. Ibid.: Shrigley to Legh, 25 July 1727.

3. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Barrymore to Bradshaigh, 28 July 1727.

4. Dunham was the Cheshire seat of the Earls of Warrington.

5. Legh of Lyme MSS.: Shrigley to Legh, 25 July 1727.

an interest, but there is no evidence to suggest that either of the sitting members were consulted, or that any prominent Tories were prepared to entertain the idea of such a Compromise. By mid-August, apparently with the full backing of Lord Malpas, Cotton was campaigning for single votes on the Whig interest.[1]

August also witnessed the appearance in Preston of Charles Mordaunt, one of the Whigs who had unsuccessfully canvassed Wigan in 1722. Put up by the new Chancellor of the Duchy, the Duke of Rutland,[2] Mordaunt entered the lists at Preston with the King's own approval, for the express purpose of defeating Daniel Pulteney, who had gone into open opposition more than two years before.[3] He arrived to find the town already split between the Whig and Tory candidates, and the Duchy interest reduced almost to nothing. He reported gloomily to Rutland: 'tis pitty this election was not thought off before; for there is not the least room, either to hope success, or give vexation.' Both sides had spent so lavishly that 'no sum of money can compass this affair,' and even the Duchy officers could scarcely be relied upon. 'In my poor opinion,' he told the Chancellor,

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1. Cholmondeley MSS., DCH/L/34: J. Tomlinson to Malpas, 12 Aug. 1727. However, during August Sir Francis Leicester was threatening to order his tenants to refrain from voting at all: see Leicester-Warren MSS., DLT/LL.7: P. Legh to Leicester, 17 & 23 Aug., 11 Sept. 1727.

2. John Manners, 3rd Duke of Rutland (1696-1779), of Belvoir Castle, Leics. M.P. for Rutland, Jan. 1719-Feb. 1721. Ld. Lieutenant of Leicestershire, 1721-79; Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, 1727-36. For other offices held, see Sedgwick, History of Parliament, ii. 240.

3. Sedgwick, History of Parliament, ii.373. Also see below pp. 180-1.

'your Grace should imediately resent this usage & remove the Courts, for itt is a generall agreement of the whole Town, to turn their backs on the Government.'[1] A memorandum sent to Newcastle made the same point: the return of the seals to Lancaster 'would intirely render the law men insignificant, who are the only band that leads the others on to the opposition now made to the chancellors recommendation.'[2] Whatever the relationship elsewhere between Tories and Opposition Whigs, at Preston they acted in total harmony, Pulteney standing unequivocally on the Tory interest with the personal backing of Lord Gower.[3] Henry Pelham, however, recalling the manner of the Opposition leader's introduction into the borough in 1722, was convinced of collusion on the part of the local Whigs. 'I think it pretty plain,' he confided to Walpole, 'that Sr. Harry Houghton is rather inclinable to Poulteney.'[4] Yet even if this was so -- and it seems highly unlikely -- Pulteney's election was clearly not dependent on the fact.

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1. Cholmondeley (Houghton) MSS., corr. 1467: Mordaunt to Rutland, 5 Aug. 1727.

2. Addit. MSS. 33061, f.425: Memorandum, n.d. Not all the Duchy officials were as inactive or hostile as Mordaunt suggests, however: see Cholmondeley (Houghton) MSS., corr. 1468: Vice Chancellor and Chancery Clerks to Rutland, 5 Aug. 1727.

3. Cholmondeley (Houghton) MSS., corr. 1467: Mordaunt to Rutland, 5 Aug. 1727. Pulteney also received a gift of venison from the Earl of Oxford to help him treat the voters: Brit. Mus., Loan 29/104: Pulteney to Oxford, 11 Aug. 1727.

4. Ibid., corr. 1476: Pelham to Walpole, 10 Aug. 1727.

In Liverpool, meanwhile, a new opposition group under the leadership of Thomas Bootle[1] and George Tyrer[2] was putting up a spirited challenge to the dominant Whig caucus in the corporation now led by Thomas Brereton, who had shifted his attention from Chester to what he hoped would prove a more responsive field of operations. Bootle had contested two elections at Liverpool as a government Whig in 1722 and 1723, before being successful at a by-election in 1724. Even then, according to one Tory observer, he came in 'meerly by a lucky hit & for want of a Tory to oppose'.[3] Thereafter, though always remaining a nominal Whig in national politics, he decided to change his tack, and went into an alliance with his former opponents, the local Tories. In Parliament too he voted with the Opposition. In 1726, his election as Mayor of Liverpool marked the start of a long and bitter campaign against the ruling Whigs. He ceased to call regular meetings of the Town Council, and instead carried on municipal business through the Common Hall: an older body, composed of all the freemen, which had increasingly fallen into disuse during previous centuries. Having thus temporarily assumed control of the borough, the opposition proceeded to reinforce their position by extensive creations of freemen, and went into the election campaign of 1727 with renewed confidence of victory.[4] Since

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1. Thomas Bootle (1685-1753), of Lathom Hall, nr. Liverpool, Lancs. M.P. for Liverpool, Apr. 1724-1734; for Midhurst, 1734-53. Serjeant-at-Law in the Duchy of Lancaster, also Attorney and Serjeant in the Co. Pal. of Lancs., 1717-27. Knighted Nov. 1745. Became attached to the Prince of Wales' Court in the 1730s, and was Chancellor to the Prince, 1740-51. Opposition Whig. Lawyer.

2. George Tyrer (n.d.). Tory merchant. Had been mayor in 1710-11.

3. Brit. Mus., Loan 29/109: [J. Wainwright] to Ld. Harley, 25 Apr. 1724.

4. Touzeau, Rise and Progress of Liverpool, i.420-3.

the mayor was also returning officer, however, Bootle was obliged to resign the office before being eligible to stand for re-election to his parliamentary seat,[1] and on 1 August summoned a Common Hall for the purpose. His opponents not unnaturally resisted the move, and called for a poll to decide the issue. They were defeated by 545 votes to 441, and, at a further meeting held a few days later, Tyrer was chosen to complete the mayoral term.[2]

Elsewhere in Lancashire, however, the situation was becoming fraught with problems for the Tories. Early in August, Lord Barrymore returned to Rock Savage[3] to face what was tantamount to an ultimatum from Legh Master. The mayor proposed a compromise, whereby Barrymore should stand down in favour of Bold; in return his lordship would receive assurances that no further changes would be made in the corporation, and would be allowed back in unopposed at the ensuing election. If he were to refuse, the Tory dissidents would force a poll and create such new burgesses as were necessary to ensure victory. Bold, in the mean time, was putting pressure of his own on the Tory establishment in the country to abandon Barrymore, complaining bitterly of Shuttleworth's efforts to make interest for the sitting members around Preston, and threatening to stand himself for the county if he did not desist.[4] Since Sir Edward

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1. Sedgwick, History of Parliament, i.271.

2. Touzeau, Rise and Progress of Liverpool, i.419-20.

3. His principal seat in Cheshire.

4. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Barrymore to Bradshaigh, n.d. [but early Aug. 1727].

Stanley was already canvassing strongly for the other seat,[1] it was not a threat that could be lightly ignored. Although Barrymore insisted on consulting Bradshaigh before committing himself, he was not overly confident about his chances in the event of a contest. 'The Mayor has acted a part y.t I want a name to give it,' he told Bradshaigh, 'but as matters stand Wee must be silent and take our hands out off the Lyon's mouth as softly as Wee can.' Nevertheless, he hoped to make some electoral capital by making the terms of the offer public, and was now at least sure of his colleague's assistance.[2] As late as the 15th he was still calculating his potential support among the country Tories: Holland Egerton had agreed to stand neutral; Sir Ralph Assheton[3] and his brother[4] would vote for both the sitting members; and Alexander Radcliffe could be relied upon to give the earl a single vote. Bradshaigh's Whig allies, however, were less accommodating: Mr. Duckinfield[5] and Mr. Blackburne,[6] among many others, threatened to give only single votes to Sir Roger, unless Barrymore's interest in Cheshire went for Sir Robert Cotton, this despite Bradshaigh's assurances that they would be for both.[7] Barrymore began at last to despair, and agreed to come to terms.

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1. Great Diurnal of Nicholas Blundell, iii. 219: 29 July 1727.

2. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Barrymore to Bradshaigh, 8 Aug. 1727. But see also Cox, 'Sir Roger Bradshaigh and the Electoral Management of Wigan', loc. cit., pp.154-5. Miss Cox suggests that Master's proposal was made after 17 Aug., whereas the wording of this letter strongly implies that Barrymore knew of the mayor's terms already.

3. Sir Ralph Assheton, 3rd Bart. (c.1692-1765), of Middleton, Lancs. A Tory. Sheriff of Lancs., 1739.

4. John Assheton (d.1758). Tory.

5. Robert Duckinfield (1687-1748), of Manchester. Sheriff of Lancs., 1741. Staunch Whig.

6. William Blackburn (n.d.), of Latchford, Chesh. Whig.

7. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Barrymore to Bradshaigh, 15 Aug. 1727.

His opponents, for their part, were pleased enough with their success. Master reported to his uncle that Thomas Willis now accepted that Bradshaigh had the strongest single interest in the town, and was happy that Sir Roger and Bold should be chosen. Provided Sir Roger acquiesced with good grace, Master would be party to no further moves against him; but if he did not, then steps would be taken to throw him out, and remodel the corporation in a manner more favourable to the Tories.[1] Presented with such a choice, Bradshaigh, like his colleague, could do little but accept the terms offered, and on 23 August the two sides concluded their agreement. No fewer than ten of the signatories were to be found among the forty-six burgesses made by Barrymore during his own mayoralty as a bulwark against Lord Malpas and the Whigs. The list included some of the most prominent Tories in the northwest: Shuttleworth, Hesketh, Thomas Assheton, Thomas Towneley,[2] Sir Thomas Standish, Silvester Richmond,[3] Thomas Kenyon[4] and William Clayton of Adlington, many of whom could be counted among Barrymore's personal friends.[5]

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1. Legh of Lyme MSS.: Master to Legh, n.d. [but Aug. 1727]; Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Barrymore to A. Leigh, 17 Aug. 1727. Whether Peter Legh actively supported Bold's candidacy is unclear: see ibid.: Memorandum of his conversation with John Yates, n.d.

2. Thomas Towneley (d.1737), of Royle, Lancs. Tory.

3. Silvester Richmond (n.d.), of Liverpool, Lancs. He had been recommended by Barrymore to Ld. Oxford in 1720 as Steward of the Rivers Estates: Brit. Mus., Loan 29/126: Barrymore to Oxford, 29 July 1720.

4. Thomas Kenyon (1678-1731), of Peel, Lancs. Younger brother of George Kenyon, the recorder. Tory.

5. Crawford MSS., 47/3/191: Proposals of Peter Bold, 23 Aug. 1727. The signatories are identified in Appendix A. See also Cox, 'Sir Roger Bradshaigh and the Electoral Management of Wigan', loc. cit., pp.147, 155-6.

The election results themselves held few surprises. Despite their early confidence, Lowther and Tower found themselves opposed at Lancaster by the notorious libertine, Colonel Francis Charteris,[1] standing on a personal interest of local property and hard cash. Both sitting members were returned, but only after considerable expenditure, which Lowther at least could ill afford.[2] Stanley and Shuttleworth were returned unopposed for the county of Lancashire, and Bootle shared the representation of Liverpool with Brereton after a poll. As expected Hoghton and Pulteney were brought in at Preston; Legh Master joined Shippen at Newton; and Thomas Lister, as part of an agreement relating to the purchase of burgages,[3] came in with the Whig Viscount Galway at Clitheroe. In Cheshire, Cotton succeeded in beating Crewe, the second Tory candidate, after an expensive contest,[4] and was returned along with Charles Cholmondeley. Lastly, at Chester, Sir Richard Grosvenor achieved a successful, if somewhat spiteful, coup by securing the election of his younger brother Thomas, rather than that of his old colleague Sir Henry Bunbury, who, after more than a quarter of a century as champion of the Tory and High Church interest, found himself obliged to Whigs and Presbyterians for more than half the 424 votes that he did receive.[5]

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1. Francis Charteris (1675-1732), of Hornby Castle, Lancs. Whig. For details of his life, see D.N.B., iv. 135-6.

2. Autobiography of William Stout, p.198

3. Sedgwick, History of Parliament, i. 269.

4. Ibid.; i. 203.

5. A copy of the poll-book is preserved among the Grosvenor MSS. and the gentry and clerical votes are analysed in Appendix A. Of the 424 freemen giving Bunbury a vote in 1727, 174 can be identified as voting in 1747; of these 70 voted Tory, 81 voted Whig, and 23 split their votes. For Thomas Grosvenor, see below p.188.

That the Tories had lost ground in both counties was obvious; and although this was partly due to circumstances beyond their control, such as the new Whig stance adopted by the Cholmondeley interest, the greater share of the responsibility lay in their own hands. It had proved impossible to limit the turmoils at Wigan to that town alone, and the divisions manifested there spread out and remultiplied across both counties, resulting not only in the loss of two county seats,[1] but in a great deal of unnecessary bitterness and animosity as well. Yet there were also hopeful signs. The co-operation between Tories and Opposition Whigs at Liverpool and Preston clearly marked the way forward, presaging what was to prove the first significant re-alignment in politics since the 1690s.

Speaking generally, the 1720s were not a decade especially marked by social enmity and division; partisan allegiances, and even dynastic ones, rarely interfered with personal friendships, and the gentlemen of the northwest tended to share a common social circle, whether in London or in the country.[2] With the Succession settled for the present, and the Triennial Act repealed, the political climate had cooled considerably from the turbulence and zealous fervour that had typified the reign of Queen Anne, and it is impossible to depict England as a divided society at this date without serious qualifications. This being said, however, party allegiances remained largely intact and the balance of party forces was still more closely maintained than their relative strengths in the unreformed Parliament might at first suggest. There is some evidence,

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1. The damage in Lancashire was to some extent mitigated by the fact that Sir Edward Stanley quickly joined with Pulteney in Opposition.

2. Particularly illustrative of this point are Byrom Journal and Remains, i. passim; and Great Diurnal of Nicholas Blundell, ii & iii. passim.

too, that in the northwest at least, and almost certainly elsewhere, circumstances were again contriving by the end of the decade to polarize the county communities once more.

Foremost among the factors operative in Lancashire and Cheshire was the continuing campaign waged by the Bishop of Chester against the Fellows of Manchester College. Whereas electoral disputes generally concerned a limited number of interested parties, ecclesiastical controversies of this kind were at once longer lasting and more widely resented. The idea of 'the Church in Danger' had lost some of its emotive appeal, but could still be relied upon to arouse the passions and prejudices of ordinary people, even if it was no longer a passport to electoral success. In December 1727, Bishop Peploe demanded the notes of an anti-Hanoverian sermon preached at Manchester by the Rev. John Copley.[1] No persecution appears to have followed, but this high-handed action was seen by many as a significant portent of what could be expected in the future.[2] Then in January 1728 came the news that one John Heber[3] had obtained a mandamus for his appointment to a fellowship at Manchester, made vacant by the death of the Rev. Radley Aynscough.[4] The bishop

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1. Rev. John Copley (c.1664-1732), M.A., of Batley, Yorks. Pre-elected Fellow of Manchester Collegiate Church, 1703; Fellow, 1706. Tory and Nonjuror.

2. Byrom Journal and Remains, i. 281: Journal, 15 Dec. 1727.

3. Rev. John Heber (1703-75). Became Rector of Marton, 1728; and Vicar of Ribchester, 1738. Was never installed as Fellow of Manchester.

4. Byrom Journal and Remains, i. 290: J. Byrom to Mrs. Byrom, 23 Jan. 1727-8. Rev. Radley Aynscough (c.1681-1728), M.A. had been elected Chaplain of Manchester Collegiate Church in 1709; and Fellow in 1727, but was not installed. He was a Nonjuror.

apparently believed the right of presentation was still vested in the Crown, and recommended Heber's preferment as 'a happy means to begin a Reformation of that Church, y.t town, & country, which need it as much as any part of the Kingdom.'[1] The move was opposed by the fellows, who took the matter to law insisting that Aynscough had been a fellow, and that they consequently had a right to elect his successor. Against this, however, it was argued that neither Aynscough nor his predecessor had been fellows, having failed to take the oaths, and that the Crown was exercising its right to fill up the place left vacant by the death of Thomas Hall[2] in 1720. No determination was reached, and in the following June the fellows proceeded to elect the Rev. Henry Brooke[3] to the vacancy.[4] In the interim, College administration was brought to a standstill, the fellows refusing to transact any official business until Peploe ceded them the right to move to an election.[5] Even then, tempers had little time to cool before the area of disagreement shifted to the question of whether or not to create a new parish in Manchester: a complex and rather diffuse issue, which brought the bishop into direct conflict with the entire Tory

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1. P.R.O., S.P. 36/5, ff.70-1: Peploe to ?, 31 Jan. 1727-8. Either Byrom had prior knowledge of the bishop's intentions, or one of these last two letters is misdated.

2. Rev. Thomas Hall (d.1720), M.A. Pre-elected Fellow of Manchester by royal mandate, 1684; elected Fellow, 1688. In 1714 he was Senior Fellow and Vice-Warden.

3. Rev. Henry Brooke (c.1694-1757), D.C.L. Mandamus, 1727; elected Fellow, 1728. Whig.

4. Byrom Journal and Remains, i.293-5: J. Byrom to Mrs. Byrom, 13 Feb. 1727-8; ibid., p.294, note 2.

5. Ibid., pp. 302-7: Journal, 1 June, 1728.

establishment of the town.[1] Neither was Peploe's charge to the diocesan clergy during his Primary Visitation calculated to ease the tension; for it spoke, as Thomas Hearne later noted, 'with a great deal of malice' against Roman Catholics, Nonjurors and 'other honest men':[2] a characterization with which the Manchester Tories were all too readily identifiable.

In March 1729, a new row flared up over the right of visitation at the College: whether the bishop or the Crown should properly exercise the functions of that office. Informed opinion held that the College statutes had reserved a general right of visitation to the Crown; but the picture had become obscured by the protracted legal arguments put forward during Peploe's struggle to gain possession.[3] Clearly, if the bishop was rightfully the only legal visitor, a change would have to be made, since Peploe as bishop could hardly visit an institution of which he was also warden. The upshot of this uncertainty was the decision to seek a Private Bill for investing the Crown with visitorial authority whenever

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1. Byrom Journal and Remains, i. pp. 307-13: Journal, 4 June 1728. Byrom's rather garbled account is unfortunately the only primary source for this dispute. It does, however, include a full list of the Tory notables in Manchester: Thomas Kenyon, Edward Beresford, Thomas Deacon, John Copley, Peter Mainwaring, Mr. Hall, Mr. Lever, and, of course, Byrom himself.

2. Bodl. MS. Hearne's Diaries 120, p.155: 15 Mar. 1728-9. The visitation had begun at Chester on 19 June 1728: see ibid., MS. Rawlinson J. 4°.2, f.165.

3. Hist. MSS. Comm., Portland MSS., vii. 474-5: Canon Stratford to Oxford, ? & 22 Mar. 1728-9.

the warden should also be bishop. The Tories at Westminster were indignant against a procedure which at best was otiose, and which at worst, they feared, might be the prelude to a general attack upon the rights of corporations in general, and upon those of the Universities in particular. Lords Oxford, Foley and Anglesey were called upon to organize opposition to the bill in the Upper House, and were suitably primed with the information that Peploe had celebrated the previous 5 November at Manchester in the company of two dissenting ministers, and had pledged King William's health as the 'founder' of the protestant religion in England. Yet, in spite of such irrelevant bigotry, they failed to prevent the bill's passage into law; and for the bishop the way was left open to urge ministerial intervention in the College's affairs.[1]

Another sign of hardening political divisions was the renewed purging of the Commissions of the Peace in both counties. Especially noticeable in Lancashire was the expulsion of those Tories and Opposition Whigs who had supported Bootle at Liverpool in the recent election: Bryan Blundell, George Tyrer and Josiah Poole.[2] Tyrer and John Hughes, who followed Bootle in the mayoralty, continued the practice of transacting corporation business in Common Hall; or, as their opponents charged, of not transacting it at all. The Whigs, who retained a majority on the

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1. Hist. MSS. Comm., Portland MSS., vii. pp.475-7: Stratford to Oxford, Good Friday, Easter Day, 3 & 7 Apr. 1729.

2. Lancashire R.O., Quarter Sessions Records, QSC/225: Draft letter to the Justices taken off the Commission of the Peace for Lancashire, 8 Feb. 1727-8. For a full list of exclusions see Appendix B. Blundell, Poole and Hughes were all Liverpool merchants, but little more is known about them.

now moribund Council, reacted by setting up a committee of seven aldermen to carry on the government of the town through more normal channels.[1] In May 1729, Brereton, having been appointed to office as a Commissioner for Victualling the Navy, and being obliged to stand for re-election to his seat in the Commons, found himself opposed by Sir Thomas Aston,[2] a Cheshire Whig, who had for some years collaborated closely with his Tory neighbours. Lord Barrymore, for one, now exerted himself strongly on Aston's behalf, and predicted that Brereton would be 'hard sett' to hold his seat.[3] Aston's supporters were subjected to a barrage of threats and blandishments, delivered more often than not through the agency of a small army of excise and customs officers, supplied by Walpole for the purpose.[4] These pressures notwithstanding, Aston carried the election by a narrow margin. Brereton petitioned the Commons, alleging irregularities in the conduct of the poll; but though the Prime Minister laboured in person for his client, the decision of the House was to uphold the return, and Aston was declared duly elected.[5]

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1. Picton, Liverpool Municipal Records, ii. 86-8.

2. Sir Thomas Aston, 4th Bart. (?1704-44). M.P. for Liverpool, May 1729-1734; for St. Albans, 1734-41. Opposition Whig. Later enjoyed the patronage of the Duchess of Marlborough.

3. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Barrymore to Bradshaigh, 18 & 30 May 1729. Brereton had been made a burgess at Wigan in 1725, and in 1727 had used his influence among the out-burgesses at Liverpool against Barrymore. The earl was now repaying the compliment: see Cox, 'Sir Roger Bradshaigh and the Electoral Management of Wigan', loc. cit., p.156.

4. Gentleman's Magazine (1733), iii.620: Aston's speech against the tobacco excise, 16 Mar. 1732-3. For Brereton's relations with Walpole, see Hist. MSS. Comm., Egmont Diary, i.85-7: 25 Mar. 1730.

5. Liverpool R.O. Foster Cunliffe MSS., ND 72/101: Aston to Cunliffe 15 Jan. 1729-30; The Case of Sir Thomas Aston, Bart., n.d. [a printed pamphlet among the papers of Richard, 1st Earl Grosvenor in the Grosvenor MSS]; Hist. MSS. Comm., Egmont Diary, i. 77, 83, 85-7:5, 19 & 25 Mar. 1729-30.

The petition was not heard, however, until March 1730, and pending its outcome the Liverpool Whigs determined both to bolster up their own position, and to take action against their opponents. In July 1729, in the absence of a Council being called, twenty-seven aldermen and councilmen met together and admitted one Thomas Vernon to the freedom of the borough. In August, they exhibited articles against John Hughes, charging neglect of his duties as mayor by virtue of his refusal to summon the Council, but the meeting was apparently adjourned without any decision being reached. Then, in September, a committee was set up to consider the many applications for freedom still outstanding. Mayor Blundell, Hughes, Tyrer and Foster Cunliffe[1] all attended this meeting, but attempting to leave before a vote could be taken were forcibly restrained by their opponents. By November, the Whigs had ready a list of their own supporters to be made freemen; but when Alderman Gildart[2] moved that 105 of these, including Lord Malpas, should be made free gratis, Cunliffe, the new mayor, together with Tyrer, Poole, Hughes and Bailiff Whitfield, withdrew without adjourning.[3] During Cunliffe's mayoralty, a temporary truce was arranged so that the merchants of the town might give their undivided attention to ensuring the rejection of two measures then before Parliament: a new Weaver Navigation scheme, which it was felt would damage their commerce, and the Royal Africa

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1. Foster Cunliffe (d.1758), of Liverpool, Lancs., and Saighton Grange, nr. Chester. Merchant and shipowner. Mayor of Liverpool, 1729-30 and 1735-6. Supported the Tories until 1736, when he went over to the Whigs.

2. Richard Gildart (1671-1770), of Bevington Hill, Liverpool. M.P. for Liverpool, 1734-54. Whig. Commercial partner of Sir Thomas Johnson, his father-in-law. Mayor 1714, 1731 & 1736.

3. Touzeau, Rise and Progress of Liverpool, i.424-6; Picton, Liverpool Municipal Records, ii.89.

Company's petition for a grant of £15,000 per annum to support their forts and settlements along the African coast.[1] These distractions passed, however, the struggle was renewed afresh, and continued through Tyrer's third mayoralty. In February 1731, the Whigs employed legal counsel on the corporation's behalf, and as a temporary expedient considered locking the doors of their chamber to prevent further secessions.[2] At last, in the autumn of 1731, Gildart was himself elected mayor. Charges were brought in Council against Bootle, Poole, and Charles Pole for neglect of their civic duties, and upon their failing to appear as summoned, they were discharged from their offices as common councilmen.[3] This was the first victory for the Walpolian party in Liverpool since 1726, and a further five years would have to elapse before the opposition was finally routed.

Between 1727 and 1731, there were corporation squabbles at Lancaster too, resulting from the efforts of the recorder, Robert Gibson, to build up the strength of Tory representation in the Common Council there.[4] 'The Papists and the disafected to the Government had a great dependence on him,' remarked William Stout on Gibson's death in 1731, 'and he too much inclined that way, and in his last years intruded such men into the councill of the town as were not agreeable to the friends of the Government.'[5] Yet if he

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1. Foster Cunliffe MSS., MD 72/100: Brereton to Cunliffe, 5 Jan. 1729-30.

2. Touzeau, Rise and Progress of Liverpool, i.426-7.

3. Ibid., pp.427-8. According to Picton, however, only Poole was expelled from the Council: see Liverpool Municipal Records, ii.92.

4. Cavendish MSS., DDCa/22/2, Letterbook, pp.49, 57: J. Fletcher to Sir T. Lowther, 17 Mar. 1727-8 & 22 June 1728; ibid., p.51: Lowther to Fletcher, 28 Mar. 1728.

5. Autobiography of William Stout, p.208.

failed at last to overthrow it, Gibson did succeed in seriously weakening the Whig interest in Lancaster, with consequences that the next election would reveal soon enough.

Wigan, by way of contrast, enjoyed a rare period of political calm. While Sir Roger Bradshaigh continued to solicit in vain for some suitable place under the Government,[1] Lord Barrymore retired to a life of rural simplicity in Ireland, finding sufficient political diversion in the pages of The Craftsman, which he had sent over especially from England.[2] The death of George Kenyon in 1728 did cause some slight friction, since Sir Roger chose to recommend the Vice Chancellor of the County Palatine of Lancaster, Thomas Ashurst,[3] to succeed Kenyon as recorder, in preference to the earl's nominee, the Tory Thomas Pigott.[4] Yet on his brief visits to England, Barrymore made a point of demonstrating his own continuing attachment to the joint interest by entertaining leading burgesses at Rock Savage,[5] and no great upset in his relations with Bradshaigh seems to have followed from this rebuff. The earl's interest in politics was subdued, but not extinguished: during Carteret's Lord Lieutenancy he was an active member of the Irish Privy Council,[6]

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1. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Barrymore to Bradshaigh, 5 May 1728.

2. Ibid.: same to same, 7 Apr. & 12 Dec. 1728.

3. Thomas Ashurst (1672-1744), of Ashurst, Lancs. Contested Liverpool unsuccessfully as a Whig in 1727. Recorder of Liverpool from 1724, and Wigan from 1729. Vice-Chancellor of County Palatine, 1726-42.

4. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Barrymore to Bradshaigh, 8 Dec. 1728 & 19 Jan. 1728-9; P.R.O., S.P. 36/10, ff.72-3. Petitions of Sir Roger Bradshaigh and the Corporation of Wigan to the King, Jan. 1728-9. Pigott was a lawyer and Barrymore's agent in Manchester.

5. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Barrymore to Bradshaigh, 24 Dec. 1729.

6. Addit. MSS. 36138, ff.206-7: Bill for the Relief of Irish Debtors, signed by Barrymore, 24 Jan. 1729-30.

and throughout his absence from the English House of Commons his relationship with Watkin Williams Wynn grew increasingly intimate. Above all, he had plenty of time to re-think his own political aspirations, and those of the Tory party to which he belonged; and in so doing began to question the fundamental principles on which his conduct had been based for upwards of twenty-five years. His loyalty to the House of Hanover had won him nothing; perhaps under the Stuarts things might be better.

Important changes were also in agitation in Cheshire. In May 1729, the Lords of the Treasury, for reasons best known to themselves, decided to terminate the Earl of Warrington's pension of £1500 a year.[1] For more than a year he pressed Walpole to reverse the decision, and hinted darkly at the consequences of not doing so: 'I am very unwilling to make the Conjectures which would naturally occurr, if you conclude your Transaction with me in the manner you seem at present to have closed it; having more Inclination to be, what you have yet in your power to make me, Sir your most humble servant.'[2] Satisfaction being denied him, Warrington went sulkily into Opposition, both in the Lords,[3] and in Cheshire, where it seemed more than likely that at the next election he would break through the compact between himself and the Cholmondeley interest, which in 1727 had helped secure Sir Robert Cotton's election.

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1. Bodl. MS. Add.D.4, f.114: Warrant to Walter Chetwynd, 15 May 1729.

2. Cholmondeley (Houghton) MSS., corr. 1721: Warrington to Walpole, 3 June 1730.

3. P.R.O., S.P.36/22, ff.143, 150: List of Peers expected to vote for and against the Pension Bill, 2 Mar. 1730-1.

In any case, he was hardly likely to have viewed with equanimity Lord Malpas's increasing ascendancy in the county, evidenced between 1731-1732 by his role in securing the Deanery of Chester for the Rev. Thomas Brooke.[1] It was rapidly becoming clear that the Whig gentry of Cheshire now regarded Malpas as their undisputed leader, their principal spokesman, and guardian of their interest, and against such a background, self-interest alone dictated that Warrington should seek new political allies. Walpole and his son-in-law had miscalculated and would soon have to pay the price of error.

Thus, by 1730, the supremacy of Walpole's Whigs in Parliament, and of their supporters in the country, was clearly coming under increasing pressure from the motley forces of the Opposition. It was no longer merely the Jacobite-riddled Tory Opposition, which had soldiered on doggedly since 1714; it now contained a small but permanent corps of disgruntled Whigs, some personally, others ideologically at odds with both the style and content of Walpole's Government, and determined with Tory assistance to bring it to an end.[2] Jacobitism was not extinguished,

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1. P.R.O., S.P. 36/23, f.5: E. Warren et al. to [Malpas], 6 Apr. 1731; ibid./25, f.151: Sir Charles Duckinfield et al. to Malpas, 18 Dec. 1731; ibid./27, ff.7-8: Memorandum, 1 June 1732. A former Tory, the Rev. Thomas Brooke (d.1757) became a zealous Whig during the 1720s, and thereafter was of great assistance to Peploe at Chester.

2. There are several good recent studies dealing with the Opposition to Walpole; see in particular: Plumb, Walpole, ii; Archibald S. Foord, His Majesty's Opposition, 1714-1830 (Oxford, 1964); Kramnick, Bolingbroke and His Circle; Dickinson, Bolingbroke. Among older works the following are still useful: C. B. Realey, The Early Opposition to Sir Robert Walpole, 1720-1727 (Philadelphia, 1931); Sir Keith Feiling, The Second Tory Party (London 1938).

but it was generally disorganised and demoralised, and its adherents were comforted by the strong wine of nostalgia, rather than fired by the courage born of true conviction. In 1728, the Scottish Jacobite, George Lockhart, lamented the decline in support for the Stuarts as a new generation came to the fore in public life:

> whilst no party is acting for his interest, no projects formed, nothing done to keep up the spirits of the people, the old race drops off by degrees and a new one sprouts up, who having no particular byass to the King [ie.] James III , as knowing litle more of him than what the public news papers bear, enter on the stage with a perfect indifference, at least coolness, towards him and his cause, which consequently must daylie languish and in process of time be tottaly forgot. 1

Others of similar persuasion were equally worried about prevalent Tory attitudes, and especially about what they saw to be the increasing co-operation between their own party and the Opposition Whigs of Daniel and William Pulteney. They rightly perceived that if such a coalition were ultimately to defeat Walpole, it would bring into place not only the Pulteneys and Wilmington, but also Bolingbroke, Wyndham, Bathurst and a considerable body of their Tory supporters, which would effectively split the party, and render even more distant the prospect of King James's Restoration.[2]

The Opposition's campaign was conducted with great energy, both in Parliament and in the press. Corruption in government, the standing army,

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1. The Lockhart Papers, ed. Anthony Aufrere (London, 1817), ii.405. Lockhart was probably thinking specifically about Scotland, but his point is of general application.

2. The Royal Archives, Windsor Castle, Stuart Papers, 122/109: J. Hamilton to J. Edgar, 18 Dec. 1728. [Consulted on microfilm at the Senate House Library, University of London.]

and the conduct of foreign policy were all grist to their mill; and although a good deal of suspicion necessarily remained between the Whig and Tory wings, in general they co-operated well enough, and the electoral arrangements that had proved so effective in Liverpool and Preston were regularly mirrored during debates in St. Stephen's Chapel. Bootle, Aston and Shippen were frequent speakers against the Court, and if they lacked the voting strength to defeat the ministry on any major issue, they could at least delay and complicate the conduct of its business.[1]

The Jacobites' response was to proselytize their Tory colleagues, especially the younger ones, and to begin building up a new body of active supporters committed to the Stuart cause. In this connection the north and west were areas of critical importance. In January 1730, one Jacobite agent, being informed by a friend in England of the favourable disposition then prevailing across the country, was urging upon the Pretender the need to write to 'as many ... that is noted to incline to his interest'. He went on to propose in particular 'an union with the northwest',by which he meant engaging the interests of Lord Gower, Lord Barrymore, Sir Charles Kemmys[2] and Watkin Williams Wynn. It was

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1. Hist. MSS. Comm., Carlisle MSS., p.64: Hon. C. Howard to Lord Carlisle, 15 Jan. 1729-30; ibid., pp.71-2: same to same, 21 Apr. 1730; Hist. MSS. Comm., Egmont Diary, i.126: 3 Feb. 1730-1. One successful campaign was that against the African Company Petition, Feb.-Mar. 1730, the details of which can be followed in the letters addressed to Cunliffe by Bootle, Aston, Pole and others: Foster Cunliffe MSS., MD72/100-115.

2. Sir Charles Kemys, 4th Bart. (1688-1735), of Cefn Mably, Glam. M.P. for Monmouthshire, 1713-15; for Glamorgan, Feb. 1716-1734. Tory, despite being nephew to the Whig Lord Wharton, and a personal friend of George I before his accession.

suggested that Shippen was the most suitable person to treat with these gentlemen, and that the whole negotiation, if successful, would be 'of Great Service' to King James.[1] A year later James wrote to the Duchess of Buckingham to suggest what rewards might be offered to the Opposition leaders at his Restoration; these overtures included a barony for Daniel Pulteney and some 'suteable employment' for both him and Shippen.[2] He also began writing personal letters to a number of influential Tories that included Sir Richard Grosvenor, in the hope, it seems, of flattering them into a more decisive frame of mind.[3] Yet, for the time being at any rate, there was little sign of any enthusiastic response to these approaches. Plenty of free advice, but little in the way of objective planning passed between the Stuart Court and its agents across Europe. Even more serious was the inability or unwillingness, on the part of King James's advisers to distinguish between reasonable optimism and downright wishful thinking. What was needed was a long-term strategic plan based on accurate information about the political situation in England, so that the opportunities which undoubtedly existed might be exploited to the full. This was precisely what the Jacobites did not have.

In the mean time, the Opposition pressed ahead with its own plans, largely unconcerned by the aspirations entertained in Rome, and before the

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1. Stuart Papers, 133/151: C. Shepheard to D. O'Brien, 25 Jan. 1730 (N.S.)

2. Ibid., 142/99: James to Duchess of Buckingham, 31 Jan. 1731 (N.S.)

3. Ibid./146: R. Smith to J. Edgar, 9 Feb. 1730-1. It appears Grosvenor never received his letter, which had been sent by way of Lady Ann Oglethorpe. Perhaps the Lady was a better judge of Grosvenor's principles than the Pretender.

parliamentary session of 1731, Walpole felt himself under sufficient pressure to warrant canvassing his own supporters for their attendance in the House.[1] The Lancashire lawyer, Nicholas Fazakerley,[2] whose services were increasingly in demand by the Opposition, confessed himself in April 1731 to be 'so hurried with business he could not stir out of his chamber.'[3] But it was Daniel Pulteney who, more than anyone, represented the main link between the two halves of the Opposition. He was, as Speaker Onslow put it, 'a sort of magazine for all the materials necessary to [its] work,'[4] and his death in September 1731 came as a dreadful blow. A contemporary epitaph summed up his principles: ' ... Publick Men and publick Things/He judg'd by one constant Standard,/The true Interest of Britain./ He made no other Distinction of Party;/ He abhorred all other ....'[5]

Despite the loss of one of its principal leaders, the Opposition was well established by 1731, and a renewed spirit of confidence was everywhere evident among the Tories and their new allies. A positive start had been made towards the creation of a new County Coalition that in the course of the next decade would change the face of British Politics. Moreover, the political arrangements made in the northwest in 1727, and greatly extended thereafter, were at the very core of this revival, and vital to its continuing success.

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1. Cavendish MSS., DDCa/22/1/3: Walpole to Sir T. Lowther, 2 Jan. 1730-1. Lowther's prodivity for independence was perhaps thought to make him a likely recruit to the Opposition.

2. Nicholas Fazakerley (?1685-1767), of Prescot, Lancs. M.P. for Preston, Jan.1732-1767. Recorder of Preston from 1742. A Tory. Acted as counsel for Bishop Gastrell in the Manchester Cause and first came to national prominence in 1731 when, with Bootle, he acted as counsel for the defence in the trial of the printer and publisher of The Craftsman.

3. Hist. MSS. Comm., Egmont Diary, i.172.

4. Cited in Sedgwick, History of Parliament, ii.374.

5. Bodl. MS.Ballard 50, f.201.

5. The Country Coalition, 1731-41.

Notwithstanding the suspicions and hostilities which persisted between the Whig and Tory sections of the Opposition, the ten years down to 1741 saw them collaborating more and more with one another. This increasing cohesion was more pronounced in the country at large than at Westminster, where, especially after 1735, internal wrangling over goals and tactics became endemic; yet even here the embryonic coalition could on occasion prove remarkably resilient in the face of all the obstacles militating against its survival. However, it was in the marginal parliamentary constituencies that the power-struggle between pro- and anti-Walpole forces was fought most bitterly, and here also that the opposition parties most clearly displayed their unity of purpose. Indeed, by the late 1730s, it was this apparent consensus which threatened to bring about the coalition's ultimate destruction, as by way of conscious reaction a number of Tories were led to venture once more into the wastelands of Jacobite intrigue.

In 1731, however, all this lay in the future. Towards the end of September, thinking themselves 'und.^{r} Engagem[en]ts by what they sign'd formerly at Wigan,' the Tory squires who had combined against Lord Barrymore in 1727 now offered to assist him, should he choose to contest the seat made vacant at Preston by the death of Daniel Pulteney. Barrymore declined graciously, expressing the hope that the gentlemen would write to Lord Derby 'and by y.^{t} meanes have a good Representative'. Nicholas Fazakerley, he suggested, would be an ideal choice.[1] So it was

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1. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Barrymore to Bradshaigh, 27 Sept. 1731. The 1727 agreement (ibid., 47/3/191 -- see above p.) had specifically stated: 'That if a Vacancy happens for or within ye County of Lanc[aste]r before ye end or Dissolution of ye next Parliam[en]t the Assenters to these proposalls will give their Intrest to [Ld. Barrymore]; And endeavour to Introduce him to supply such Vacancy Wherever ye same shall Happen.'

that in due course, backed by the mayor, Sir Edward Stanley, as well as by the local Tories,[1] Fazakerley was elected after a brief poll, in preference to the Whig candidate, James Haldane, who had contested Clitheroe unsuccessfully in 1722. Before returning to Ireland, Barrymore did concern himself in the corporation elections at Liverpool, but he was unable to prevent Brereton from securing Richard Gildart's election as mayor.[2]

At Chester, meanwhile, there was already in agitation a project soon to dwarf all other political considerations in the area: a scheme for making the River Dee navigable to the sea by means of a new channel.[3] At first the matter seemed straight forward enough. In March 1732, a private bill, supported by members of both parties,[4] was laid before the House of Commons, read twice, and referred to the further consideration of a committee chaired by Sir Richard Grosvenor. Even before the bill was presented, however, there was a good deal of unrest in Chester on account of a rumour that Sir Richard was opposed to the scheme in principle. The navigation was evidently popular with most of the city's inhabitants, and the Whigs on the corporation did their utmost to exploit

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1. Lancashire R.O., Stanley (Knowsley) MSS., DDK/820/1: Representation of the mayor, sheriff and burgesses of Preston in support of Fazakerley's candidacy, 4 Jan. 1731-2. Signed by Stanley, Thomas Hesketh, et. al.

2. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Barrymore to Bradshaigh, 11 Oct. & 20 Nov. 1731.

3. For the best discussion of this and earlier schemes, see T.S. Willan, 'Chester and the Navigation of the Dee, 1600-1750,' Journal of the Chester Arch. Soc., new series, xxxii (1937-8), 64-7. Many of the contemporary pamphlets putting the cases for and against the 1732/3 scheme can be found in the Grosvenor MSS.

4. The bill's sponsors in the Commons were Sir Richard Grosvenor, Thomas Grosvenor and Charles Cholmondeley (Tories); Sir Robert Cotton and Hugh Williams (Whigs).

such sentiments and to identify themselves as the bill's chief promoters.[1] Almost immediately after the bill's committal, a number of petitions were presented objecting to some of its technical provisions, and by April, despite the addition of new members, the committee was hopelessly deadlocked.[2]

In Chester, the mood of the populace now began to grow ugly. While prominent Whigs like John Williams[3] were feted by the townsfolk, a number of Tory aldermen found themselves threatened with violence, and at the races one of Grosvenor's servants was 'mob'd off ye ground on ye account of ye navigation'.[4] A few days later, the mob was raised again on well-attested reports that Grosvenor's steward, Robert Pigot, was in Hawarden to whip up a further petition against the bill, and that Grosvenor himself had prevailed with Sir John Glynne[5] to oppose the measure. Faced with such charges, Sir Richard's friends in the city found themselves powerless to defend his interest. As one of them

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1. Grosvenor MSS.: T. Bolland to Sir R. Grosvenor, 4 Mar. 1731-2.

2. For full details of this first bill, the petitions for and against, and the Commons proceedings, see Commons Journals, xxi.790, 812-3, 849, 853-4, 857-8, 860, 863, 865, 867, 887. For Grosvenor's own account of the bill's prepration, and his confidence that it would be passed, see Grosvenor MSS.: Grosvenor to [T. Bolland] , 7 Mar. 1731-2.

3. John Williams (d.1737), of Bridge House, Chester. Attorney General for Chester, Denbigh, Montgomery and Flint. Whig alderman. Uncle of Watkin Williams Wynn and father of Hugh Williams.

4. Grosvenor MSS.: J. Brown to Grosvenor, 1 Apr. 1732; ibid: Rev. T. Aubrey to Grosvenor, 4 Apr. 1732.

5. Sir John Glynne, 6th Bart. (1713-1777), of Hawarden, Flints. M.P. for Flintshire, 1741-7; for Flint Boroughs, Nov. 1753-1777. Tory.

informed him:

> soe confident are y^r^ Enemys that it is already ruined, that [I] my self saw [it wagered] ... that neither yor self nor any supported by yor Interest are Returned members for this city for the two next coming parliam[en]ts .... I shall only add that ye very best of yor friends are Dumb on these Occations, And hang down their heads Like Bullrushes.

The constables were refusing point blank to arrest the rioters, and preparations were being made for a thousand people to greet Hugh Williams when he came down from London.[1] Grosvenor's position was, indeed, an extremely difficult one. He had no strong views about the navigation either way, but probably sympathized with those opposing the bill as it was then framed. These could be divided into four main categories. Firstly there were a number of experts who questioned the technical competence of the engineer, Nathaniel Kinderley, claiming that he had been responsible for a similar scheme at Rye, where widespread flood-damage had resulted.[2] Allied to this was a second complaint that the primary objective of improving the navigation was being sacrificed to the desire for land reclamation, at the expense of those Welsh squires, mainly Tories, who farmed the mud flats through which the channel was to be dug. Thirdly, the cheesemongers of London and Westminster, their monopoly of cheese buying from Cheshire farmers seemingly threatened, objected on the twin grounds of too high a tonnage duty, and too shallow a depth of water in the proposed cut. Lastly, Liverpool corporation

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1. Grosvenor MSS.: T. Bingley to Grosvenor, 8 Apr. 1732.

2. Chirk Castle MSS. E.1136: W. Travers to R.Myddelton, 20 Apr. 1732.

opposed the bill in conjunction with Sir Roger Mostyn,[1] who owned the wharves at Parkgate then used for loading and off-loading goods destined for Chester. They maintained that silt from the new channel would obstruct the entrance into Liverpool and its out-ports, especially Hoylake.[2] Some of these objections were doubtless rooted in self-interest, but that fact alone did not render them any the less legitimate. What was particularly serious from Grosvenor's point of view was the number of his Tory friends and neighbours who stood to lose by the scheme,[3] and it is hardly surprising that supporters of the project blamed him with impeding its progress in committee.

The Whigs had found an ideal stick with which to beat their opponents, and Lord Barrymore for one believed it no coincidence, as he told Francis Price:[4] 'y^{r} Chester men are mad. I alwayes thought y^{t} navigation was sett on Foot to Destroy Sr Rich[ar]ds Interest and Will in Time turn out the old Inhabitants & people the place wth a new Colony. They are very fond off what must ruine them but y^{t} you nor I can help.'[5] By May, Lord

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1. Sir Roger Mostyn, 3rd Bart. (1673-1739), of Mostyn, Flints. & Beeston, Chesh. M.P. for Flintshire, 1701-2; for Cheshire, 1702-5; for Flint Boroughs, 1705-8; for Flintshire, 1708-13; for Flint Boroughs, 1713-15; for Flintshire, 1715-34. Hanoverian Tory; son-in-law of the E. of Nottingham. Teller of the Exchequer, Dec. 1714-June 1716. Ld. Lieut. of Flintshire, 1727-39.

2. For a discussion of these points, and of the pamphlet literature relating to them, see Willan, 'Chester and the Navigation of the Dee', loc. cit., p.66. There are further pamphlets relating to the cheesemongers in the Grosvenor MSS.

3. Glynne, Mostyn and Wynn all opposed the bill in Parliament.

4. Francis Price, M.D. (d.1749?), of Overton, Flints. Tory. Ld. Barrymore, one of his closest friends, was godfather to his children.

5. N.L.W. MSS. 3582E (Puleston Letters)/3: Barrymore to Price, 16 Apr. 1732.

Malpas, Brereton, Hugh Williams and Richard Manley[1] were being widely identified in Tory circles as the principal architects, both of the navigation scheme itself and of the recent violent outbreaks in the city. 'The Revolution at Chester is beyond thought,' wrote Barrymore from Castle Lyons[2] on the 9th. 'Who has instilled these true revolution principles in them. I fancy Brereton has a finger in the pie. This will occasion the spending of [£]10,000. If Sir Richard thinks it worth while to keep Chester all his antagonists cannot spare so much, add my Lord Malpas to them!'[3] Nevertheless, Grosvenor must have been disturbed to hear of the machinations going on inside the corporation. Alderman Bennett[4] and Roger Comberbach,[5] both of them associated with Lord Malpas, had attempted subborning the mayor to create Colonel James Cholmondeley[6] a freeman of the city and sponsor his candidacy at the next General Election, and only the prompt intervention of Robert Pigot had prevented a very dangerous situation from developing. There was

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1. Richard Manley (n.d.), of Chester. One of the principal undertakers of the navigation, he was three times unsuccessful Whig candidate for Chester (Jan. & Mar. 1732-3, and 1734): and once for Reading (1739).

2. His seat in County Cork.

3. Hist. MSS. Comm., 15th Rep. VII (Puleston MSS), p.313: Barrymore to Price, 9 May 1732. See also Brit. Mus., Addit. MSS. 46,400 (Puleston Correspondence), ff.3-3b.: G.R[oss] to Price, 13 May 1732--Barrymore's postscript.

4. Henry Bennett (d.1741), of Chester. Alderman; mayor 1698/9 & 1716/17. Originally a supporter of Grosvenor but went over to the Whigs in the early 1730s.

5. Roger Comberbach, jun. (d.1757), of Chester. Whig. Prothonotary of Co. Pal. of Chester, 1734-57.

6. Hon. James Cholmondeley (1708-75). M.P. for Bossiney, Mar.1731-1734; for Camelford 1734-41; for Montgomery 1741-7. Brother of Lord Malpas and son-in-law of Lord Barrymore, whose daughter Penelope deserted him in 1736. Whig and professional soldier. Lt.Governor of Chester Castle 1731-70; Governor 1770-5.

some consolation, however, in the news that Hugh Williams's entry into Chester had turned out to be a less impressive demonstration than his friends had expected, thereby leading to the speculation that popular passions might be cooling.[1] With the end of the parliamentary session on 1 June 1732, the navigation bill lapsed without the committee making any report. Yet from a political standpoint, this event was completely overshadowed by the news that Sir Richard Grosvenor was on his deathbed, and that Thomas Grosvenor, his brother and heir, was dangerously ill.[2]

Sir Richard's demise on 12 July could not have come at a worse time for the Tories, for it made necessary a by-election in Chester at the very moment when popular resentment against the loss of the navigation bill was at its height. Moreover, the vacancy having occurred during the parliamentary recess, they would have to wait several months for the start of the next session before the writ for a new election could be issued. In this situation a contested mayoral election in October was unavoidable. Well aware that his own health would not enable him to winter in England, Sir Thomas Grosvenor was concerned to see his interest in Chester secured before his departure for warmer climes. He therefore did his best to reconcile the differences between his Tory friends in Cheshire and North Wales, paying particular attention to confirmation of the agreement between the Wynn and Myddelton factions in Denbighshire which his brother had managed to bring about before his death.[3] This achieved, he retired to the

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1. Grosvenor MSS., Box 42/1 (Estate Papers): Pigot to Grosvenor, 14 May 1732.

2. N.L.W. MSS. 358 2E/5 Barrymore to Price, 11 June 1732. There were also apparently some disheartening rumours circulating about Robert Grosvenor, but the details are obscure.

3. Chirk Castle MSS. E.37: Sr. T. Grosvenor to R. Myddelton, 2 Aug. 1732; ibid. C.17: Agreement between Wynn and Myddelton, n.d. [but before July 1732]; Wynnstay MSS. L.917: Renewal of this agreement, Aug. 1732.

Continent, leaving the management of his affairs to his agents and friends.

From the start, Robert Grosvenor was looked upon as the most likely Tory Candidate for the parliamentary vacancy, though Lord Barrymore expressed some regret that Sir Henry Bunbury was not considered, and there was some suggestion that Major Peter Warburton[1] might contest the seat with Whig support.[2] The main burden of Tory electoral organization, however, fell on the shoulders of Robert Pigot, who according to Lord Barrymore's estimate, knew 'better how to manage the Citty then any man alive'.[3] By the end of August the political hubbub in Chester was attracting national attention; it was fast becoming clear that control of the city was a party totem, for which the Whig and Tory legions of all the surrounding counties were prepared to do battle to the death. The expense was reckoned to be prodigious,[4] and Pigot later produced accounts to show that he alone had spent more than £6,000 on Sir Thomas's behalf, and all of it able to stand scrutiny in the Court of Chancery;[5] how much was paid out in direct bribes one can only surmise, but the Gentleman's Magazine spoke of votes being bought for £20 or £30 each.[6] The navigation remained the most

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1. Peter Warburton (n.d.), of Arley, Chesh. Moderate Tory. Youngest brother of Sir George Warburton, 3rd Bart. His niece was Sir Richard Grosvenor's wife.

2. Grosvenor MSS.: Robert Grosvenor to ?, 21 July 1732; N.L.W. MSS. 3582E/6: Barrymore to Price, 3 July 1732.

3. N.L.W. MSS. 3582 E/6: Barrymore to Price, 3 July 1732.

4. Hist. MSS. Comm., 15th Rep. VII, pp.313-4: Barrymore to Price, 27 Aug. 173

5. Grosvenor MSS., Box 58/2 (Estate Papers): Robert Pigot's Account Book for the Mayoral Election of 1732; ibid., Box 42/1: Memorial of Robert Pigot, 12 Sept. 1745. Pigot accounted for a total expenditure of £6,476.12s. 9½d.

6. Gentleman's Magazine (1732), ii.1029; ibid.(1733), iii.87.

divisive factor, particularly inside the Tory-dominated corporation, where throughout September a revised version of Kinderley's proposals, intended as the basis for a new bill when Parliament re-assembled, was the subject of heated argument;[1] but although the aldermen and council members were split on the matter of the new channel, the majority continued to support the Grosvenor interest.

The poll to elect a mayor for the year 1732/3, due to begin on 13 October, was preceded by a week of riots and street-fighting between the Whig and Tory mobs, sparked off by an attempt on the part of Grosvenor's supporters to bolster up their electoral position by creating several hundred honorary freemen during the night of 10 October. As the violence grew in ferocity, each side brought in reinforcements from outside: a large contingent of Welshmen raised by Watkin Williams Wynn and Sir John Glynne for the Tories; 'soldiers disguised, sailors fetch'd from Liverpool, and other desperate rabble' for the Whigs.[2] After a bloody confrontation in the centre of the city, it was decided at length to put an end to further hostilities. Six gentlemen from each party were appoint-

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1. Grosvenor MSS., Box 42/1: Pigot to Robert Grosvenor, 7 Sept. 1732.

2. Chester R.O., 1956 P/Cowper, Collectanea Devana, i. 270-3. For details of the violent events leading up to the election, see: London Evening-Post, 14-17 Oct. 1732; Daily Courant, 25 Oct. 1732; Craftsman, 24 Feb. 1732-3; A Letter from a Freeman of the City of Chester to his Friend in London (1733); Free Briton Extraordinary, cited in Gentleman's Magazine (1733), iii. 126; Grosvenor MSS.: G. Shakerley to Sr. T. Grosvenor, 19 Oct. 1732. The newspaper accounts are extremely partisan, whereas Cowper and Shakerley, though both Tories, are a good deal more candid about the failings of their own side.

to meet at John William's house to conclude a truce, the strangers were all sent out of town, and on the eve of the poll the leaders of the Whig interest dined with their opponents at the Feathers Tavern, with a promise that this gesture would be reciprocated on the following day. The agreement was printed and posted up around the town.[1] After three days of polling, the two Grosvenor candidates carried their election by majorities of 239 and 237 respectively over their Whig rivals, and the more senior, Alderman Johnson, was chosen as mayor.[2]

Although the day-to-day management of the Tory campaign had been the work of Robert Pigot and his agents, the strategic planning, so to speak, had been left to the care of Watkin Williams Wynn and William Leveson Gower,[3] Robert Grosvenor being permitted only a very subordinate role in his brother's absence. A good deal of friction developed between him and Gower; so much so that Wynn was hard pressed to avoid an open breach between them.[4] Nevertheless, the painstaking efforts of all those involved, to marshal support among the Tory gentry of Cheshire and North Wales, and to bring to the polls every single out-voter they could contact, were wholly successful. ' ... I never saw nicer or more clever

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1. Grosvenor MSS.: Shakerley to Sr. T. Grosvenor, 19 Oct. 1732.

2. The figures were: George Johnson (Tory) 1097; Peter Ellames (Tory) 1095; Henry Bennett (Whig) 858; James Mainwaring (Whig) 858. The reason for each side fielding two candidates is unclear, as the precise method of polling is not specified in the city charter.

3. Hon. William Leveson Gower (c.1696-1756). M.P. for Staffordshire, Dec. 1720-1756. Tory. Brother-in-law to the Grosvenors, having married their sister Anne in 1730. Went over to the Government with his brother, Lord Gower, in 1744, but reverted to Opposition in 1751.

4. Grosvenor MSS.: Robert to Sr. T. Grosvenor, 30 Nov. & 6 Dec. 1732. ibid.: J. Sparrow to R. Grosvenor, 28 Jan. 1733 (N.S.); ibid., Box 43/1 (Estate Papers): R. Andrews to [R. Grosvenor], 23 Jan. 1732-3.

management then those you entrusted have shewn in this Criticall Juncture,' George Shakerley told Sir Thomas Grosvenor afterwards.[1] Once the result of the election became known, adherents of the victorious interest over a wide area were ecstatic: drink flowed, bonfires were lit, and windows were illuminated in scores of towns and villages from Carnarvon to Shrewsbury, and from Wrexham to Manchester.[2]

Yet in spite of such celebrations the battle was far from over. At the end of January 1733, the by-election came on at last, and after a contest with Richard Manley, the principal promoter of the Dee project, Robert Grosvenor was returned at the head of the poll.[3] But already moves to procure a second navigation bill were being set afoot in the Commons. This time it was to be a distinctively Whig measure from the start, the strong support it received from the ministry being due doubtless to the influence of Lord Malpas in such quarters. Robert Grosvenor was the only Tory among the four members charged on 16 February with bringing in the bill; but he took no subsequent part in its preparation, and the final version was the work of his Whig colleagues: Hugh Williams, Lord Malpas and James Cholmondeley.[4] During the committee stage, the proceedings

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1. Grosvenor MSS.: Shakerley to Sr. T. Grosvenor, 19 Oct. 1732

2. Ibid.: R. Grosvenor to Sr. T. Grosvenor, 20 Oct. 1732.

3. For a partisan Whig account of the proceedings at this by-election, see 'An Unpublished Diary of the Rev. Peter Walkden in 1733/4', ed. H. Taylor, Journal of the Chester Arch. Soc., new series, iii (1888-90), 153, 159-60.

4. Commons Journals, xxii. 6, 44-5, 69-70; Grosvenor MSS.: Sr. R. Grosvenor to H. Williams, 22 Feb. 1732-3.

became even more partisan, as attention turned to investigating alleged financial malpractices on the part of several Tory aldermen in Chester, said to have been perpetrated under a former Dee Navigation Act of 1700.[1] In March and April, a large number of Petitions, both for and against the Kinderley scheme, were referred to the committee for consideration, and its membership was augmented so as to greatly increase the size of the Whig majority, thereby ensuring a favourable report to the House.[2] This report, when delivered at the end of April, was debated for two days, and a week later, on 2 May, the bill passed the Commons after a division (68 votes against 20) and was taken up to the Lords.[3]

In the mean time, two further blows had shaken the Tory managers in Chester: about the middle of February, the first news was received of Sir Thomas Grosvenor's death from consumption in Naples, and almost simultaneously it was learnt that the Chester Whigs intended lodging a petition against the validity of Robert Grosvenor's election. Sir Thomas's family and friends were most concerned to keep secret the news of his death for as long as possible, so that plans might be laid for a further by-election. The first consideration was to find a suitable candidate

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1. 'Unpublished Diary of the Rev. Peter Walkden', loc. cit., p.154: 20 Feb. 1732-3. See also the entries for 6 & 13 Mar. 1732-3 in the original MSS., preserved in the Chester Archeological Society collection (92 WAL) at the Chester R.O.; Grosvenor MSS.: A paper headed 'Answer to objections about the Navigation Accounts layd before the Committee of the House of Commons', n.d., among the papers of Sr. Robert Grosvenor. For details of the 1700 scheme, see Willan, 'Chester and the Navigation of the Dee', loc. cit., pp. 65-6; Grosvenor MSS.: T. Tyndale to Sr. R. Grosvenor, 26 May 1733.

2. Commons Journals, xxii. 74, 80, 88, 92, 94-5, 96-7, 100-1.

3. Ibid., pp. 125-6, 132, 136.

for while the Tory aldermen were ready to accept Sir Robert's recommendation they nevertheless insisted on being consulted before any public declaration was made. Randle Wilbraham,[1] a rising Tory lawyer from Rode Hall, near Congleton, was mentioned as a possible choice, but after some deliberation it was decided to set up Sir Charles Bunbury,[2] provided only that he could secure the approval of his uncle, Sir Thomas Hanmer.[3] Both Grosvenor and Wynn used their good offices to obtain Hanmer's compliance, and assured Bunbury that he would not be put to any expense.[4] 'In my opinion,' Wynn commented, '& I find it meets with ye concurrance of our Freinds in ye country; no man is so likely to succeed at y.s time ....'[5] By 24 February, however, the general report of Sir Thomas Grosvenor's death had reached the city, and Brereton, together with Alderman Bannett and two Whig squires, Ralph Leycester and Francis Jodrell,[6] was busily canvassing votes for Manley against a new election.[7] On the same day, Hanmer's agreement having been

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1. Randle Wilbraham (?1695-1770), of Rode Hall, Cheshire. M.P. for Newcastle-under-Lyme, Nov. 1740-1747; for Appleby, 1747-54; for Newton, 1754-68. Vice Chamberlain of Chester; DepY Steward of Oxford Univ. Moderate Tory; enjoyed patronage of 1st E. of Cholmondeley and later Lord Gower.

2. Sir Charles Bunbury, 4th Bart. (1708-42), of Bunbury and Stanney, nr. Chester. M.P. for Chester, Mar. 1733-1742. Tory. Son of Sir Henry Bunbury and nephew of Sir Thomas Hanmer.

3. Grosvenor MSS.: E. Partington to Sir R. Grosvenor, 19 Feb. 1732-3.

4. Ibid.: Bunbury to Grosvenor, 22 Feb. 1732-3; ibid.: Bunbury to Wynn, 22 [misdated 26] Feb. 1732-3.

5. Ibid.: Wynn to Grosvenor, 23 Feb. 1732-3.

6. Francis Jodrell (1690-1757), of Twemlow, Cheshire. Whig. Sheriff of Cheshire, 1716.

7. Grosvenor MSS.: Partington to Grosvenor, 24 Feb. 1732-3.

obtained, Grosvenor wrote warmly to Bunbury, expressing his own approbation, and assuring Sir Charles that his agents in Chester would 'make it their care to serve you on this occasion as my self & make not the least doubt of baffling our adversarys'.[1]

The petition against Sir Robert Grosvenor's own return in the January by-election was laid before the House of Commons on 21 February. It claimed that the right of election at Chester lay exclusively in the resident freemen, and that Richard Manley would have had a clear majority of these, had his supporters not been subjected to gross intimidation by a number of special constables, needlessly created by Grosvenor's friends in the corporation. The names of James Mainwaring,[2] Henry Bennett and Roger Comberbach headed a list of more than 200 freemen who had set their signatures to the allegations contained in the petition; that of the defeated candidate was not among them. The petition was read out and ordered to be heard at the Bar of the House on 5 April.[3]

As far as Bunbury's election was concerned, the main bone of contention during the short campaign leading up to the poll was inevitably the navigation. Although both Grosvenor and Bunbury joined the corporation in still publicly supporting the navigation in principle, albeit with serious reservations about the scheme as it was then framed,[4] most of their Tory

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1. Grosvenor MSS.: Grosvenor to Bunbury, 24 Feb. 1732-3.

2. James Mainwaring, Sen. (1673-1749), of Bromborough, Chesh. Whig merchant. Alderman of Chester; mayor, 1708-9.

3. Commons Journals, xxii. 53-4. Copies of the petition, with lists of signatures appended are in the Grosvenor MSS., among the papers of Sir Robert Grosvenor; and in the Wynnstay MSS., L.1214.

4. Letter from a sincere Friend to the Gentlemen and Freemen of the City of Chester, dated 24 Feb. 1732-3. Printed handbill among the papers of Sir Robert Grosvenor.

friends, in North Wales particularly, objected to it on any terms. Moreover, the publication in Chester of how various Tory members had voted in committee did nothing to dispel the impression that the bill's passage depended on the Whigs alone. 'It is true,' an anonymous well-wisher wrote to Grosvenor, 'that insinuations can take no place with men of Honour; But that Rascal Brereton has sunk all sense of that in this place, when in pursuit of Whig Work; & his Understrappers are inflameing the Citizens with hourly prejudices against Your Interest.'[1] Thus, less than five months after their triumph at the mayoral election, the Chester Tories found themselves beset on all sides: by the malicious propaganda of their opponents; by the petition lodged against Grosvenor in the Commons; and by the inquiry into their alleged malversation of the navigation accounts. Against this, their discovery of an informant at Nantwich , prepared to testify that an excise officer there had incited the townspeople to join the Whig mob at Chester the previous October, could scarcely begin to redress the balance.[2] On 27 February, however, with Bunbury's parliamentary aspirations officially declared, Grosvenor's friends and agents began to canvass in earnest, and were encouraged to find a considerable measure of support for their candidate. The only complaint was against his youth, 'and that ... out of the mouths of some bawling people'.[3] Little more than a week later, George Shakerley could report 'y^{t} The Opposition Party looses ground so fast y^{t} I can hardly think they will stand a Poll this time.'[4] Nevertheless, when on 13 March

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1. Grosvenor MSS.: 'An Old Englishman' to Grosvenor, 25 Feb. 1732-3.
2. Ibid.: E. Partington to Grosvenor, 26 Feb. 1732-3.
3. Ibid.: same to same, 27 Feb. 1732-3.
4. Ibid.: G. Shakerley to Grosvenor, 6 Mar. 1732-3.

Richard Manley made his public entry into the city, accompanied by an impressive muster of Whig gentlemen and a large number of his followers in the town,[1] he seemed determined to press ahead. He defended his reasons for undertaking the navigation, and endeavoured to play down the suggestion that his opponents were ready to bring in a bill of their own, less prejudicial to the interests of the Tory gentry.[2] On 23 March, after three days of polling, Bunbury was declared duly elected, and apart from some minor scuffles around the hustings there was no trouble from the mob. He and Manley 'parted very good friends', however, and no danger was apprehended of a further petition.[3]

Sir Robert Grosvenor, meanwhile, was preparing to fight the petition against his own election, assiduously searching out precedents for the swearing of special constables during elections in other boroughs.[4] But in the event his labours proved unnecessary; for after being postponed on several occasions, on 18 April the hearing at the Bar of the House was finally put off to a date in June, making it virtually certain that the petition would lapse when Parliament was prorogued for the summer.[5] The Dee Bill, however, despite further petitions against it, went through all

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1. Grosvenor MSS.: Partington to Grosvenor, 14 Mar. 1732-3; 'Unpublished Diary of the Rev. Peter Walkden,' loc. cit., p.156.

2. To the Citizens of Chester, dated 19 Mar. 1732-3. Printed handbill among the papers of Sir Robert Grosvenor, bearing the name of Richard Manley.

3. Grosvenor MSS.: Bunbury to Grosvenor, 24 Mar. 1732-3; cf. ibid.: Partington to Grosvenor, 24 Mar. 1732-3.

4. Ibid.: T. Stringer to Grosvenor, 21 Mar. 1732-3.

5. Commons Journals, xxii. 56, 114, 120, 204.

its readings in the Lords and received the Royal Assent on the last day of the parliamentary session.[1] It being perceived in April, therefore, that the petition against Grosvenor was effectively dead, the Cheshire Whigs reacted to the news with ill grace. Some believed that Manley had been bought off, while others blamed Walpole for not prosecuting the case with more vigour. In a letter to Ralph Leycester, widely circulated in Cheshire, Hugh Williams ascribed the petition's failure to more parochial causes: the death of Lord Cholmondeley, the indisposition of James Cholmondeley, and the death of Alderman Bennett's son; though precisely why these should have affected the issue was not made clear. Whatever the reason, Grosvenor's supporters were well satisfied with their reprieve. 'Be pleas'd to accept this Testimony of my Joy for your Victory over the Whiggish faction,' wrote the Rev. Thomas Willcocke at the end of April. 'I hope the Defeat is such as will lay a lasting Foundation of our Tranquility in this Citty.'[2]

A total victory it was not. The Dee Navigation project had received parliamentary approval, and by challenging the right of non-resident freemen to vote in parliamentary elections Grosvenor's opponents had clearly touched a sensitive nerve; nobody doubted that it was a point which could, if raised again at some future date, menace the very basis of the Tories' electoral supremacy in Chester. Yet, notwithstanding

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1. Lords Journals, xxiv. 254, 256, 265, 273-4, 277, 281, 288, 296-7, 303-4, 310. Local Whigs apart, the undertakers included a number of prominent London merchants and financiers, five of whom sat in Parliament as Whigs: Sir John Eyles, Bt., Sir Joseph Eyles, Kt., Henry Lascelles, John Phillipson, and Thomas Revell. For details of the Dee Navigation Act (6 Geo. II, cap. 30), the names of the undertakers, and the work carried out, see Willan, 'Chester and the Navigation of the Dee', loc. cit., p.66; Brit. Mus., Addit. MSS. 11394 (Miscellaneous Papers), ff.28-30.

2. Grosvenor MSS.: Rev. T. Willcocke to Grosvenor, 25 Apr. 1733.

these set-backs, the Cheshire Tories had succeeded in weathering a very dangerous crisis. Their organisation had been tested and strengthened, and the experience gained was to prove invaluable as the General Election approached.

The heats and animosities evidenced at Chester were in part fuelled by the much larger crisis developing at Westminster and in the country at large during the early months of 1733. The Opposition opened the parliamentary session with a concerted thrust against the ministry, commencing with an attack on the Address in which William Shippen and Sir Thomas Aston both played prominent roles. In particular, Shippen's speech of 16 January made ominous reference to 'Jealousies and Suspicions without Doors'. There was, he told the House, 'a most remarkable Spirit among the People for defending their Liberties and their Trade, in Opposition to Attempts they expect to be made against both': an obvious allusion to the intended Tobacco Excise Bill. And, he continued,

> ... this Spirit is so general, that it cannot be ascribed to any one Set of Men: They cannot be branded with the Name of Jacobites or of Republicans. No; the whole People of England seem to be united in this Spirit of Jealousy and Opposition; and it ought not to be entirely neglected. 1

A fortnight later, Sir Edward Stanley, prospective heir to the Derby interest in Lancashire, seconded Sandy's motion for a Pension Bill, and was one of those charged with its preparation.[2] During February, Aston, Shippen,

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1. Gentleman's Magazine (1733), iii.393.

2. Ibid., pp. 394-7.

Wynn, and Charles Cholmondeley were among those who demanded a reduction in the armed forces and objected to Walpole raiding the Sinking Fund. They were found in favour of action to prevent further Spanish depredations, and in opposition to the re-imposition of salt duties.[1] Only Aston's ill-conceived motion for balloting the House on every question, and his subsequent stand against the Opposition's Qualification Bill [2] momentarily exposed the weaknesses in an otherwise strong and united front.

The major issue of the session, however, was the Excise Bill itself. The Opposition's press campaign, which portrayed the bill as merely the first step towards a general excise, was well under way before the parliamentary session began, and soon proved itself a devastating success. 'The City of London, & all ye other trading Cities in ye Kingdom run mad about it,' Watkin Williams Wynn told his father in January. 'If S.r Rob[er]t attempts it, it must certainly end in his destruction.[3] The evidence from the northwest corroborates his assertions of popular unrest. At Liverpool, only Thomas Brereton's refusal to supply them with the Common Seal[4] prevented the Whig-dominated Council from officially instructing the borough's parliamentary representatives to oppose 'any new Excise or any Extension of the Excise Laws': an action which produced 'great uneasiness

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1. Gentleman's Magazine (1733), iii.pp. 353, 399-400, 453-5; Hist. MSS. Comm., Carlisle MSS., p.89: Howard to Carlisle, 12 Feb. 1732-3.

2. Hist. MSS. Comm., Egmont Diary, i.326, 332-346: 13 & 20 Feb. 1732-3, 3 Apr. 1733.

3. Wynnstay MSS. C. 95: Wynn to Sir W. Williams, 16Jan. 1732-3.

4. Brereton had been elected mayor in succession to Gildart the previous October.

among his own & best freinds' in the town.[1] Even so, he was unable to prevent a deputation of the town's merchants being sent up to London to lobby their M.P.s.[2] At Wigan, the objections raised against the bill were so strong, that Sir Roger Bradshaigh was obliged to write to his friends in the corporation to explain his attitude towards it; but even this did little to check the genuine misgivings which undoubtedly filled the minds of many of his constituents.[3] When the matter finally came up for debate in the Commons during March and April, the Liverpool members, Aston and Bootle, were prominent among those speaking against it; and when Walpole's majority had dropped to a mere 17 votes on 10 April and he prepared to abandon the bill, Aston was to be found among the hard core of those supporting Wyndham's call for its outright defeat.[4] Likewise it was a northern member, Sir Edward Stanley, who a week later moved for a Select Committee to inquire into frauds in the Customs. Having reached thus far, however, the Opposition declined to press home their advantage. 'Since their conquest and our defeat,' wrote one Government supporter towards the

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1. Touzeau, Rise and Progress of Liverpool, i. 431; Grosvenor MSS.: E. Partington to Sr. R. Grosvenor, 19 Feb. 1732-3. Instructions were apparently sent up from Liverpool in any case, as indeed they were from Lancaster, Wigan and Chester as well: see Paul Langford The Excise Crisis: Society and Politics in the Age of Walpole (Oxford, 1975), Appendix A, p.172.

2. MS. Diary of the Rev. Peter Walkden, p.63: 10 Apr. 1733.

3. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: R. Holt & A. Leigh to Bradshaigh, 26 Feb. 1732-3.

4. Hist. MSS. Comm., Egmont Diary, i.350-1, 358, 361: 4, 10 & 11 Apr. 1733.

end of April, 'we have laid upon our arms like two armies looking at one another, without either side caring for a Division'.[1]

Belief in the reality of the Opposition's achievement was attested by scenes of public rejoicing up and down the country. At Liverpool, for example, jubilant merchants sported 'Gilt Cockades on Leaf Tobacco' bearing the legend 'No Excise'; the Town Hall and merchants' coffee-house were illuminated; bells were rung; and two excisemen were burnt in effigy.[2] Yet, as the Opposition leaders knew well enough their success was only a grand illusion: a triumph of propaganda rather than a victory of substance. It was not votes but abstentions from voting that had forced Walpole to withdraw the Excise Bill: the defection of placemen, convinced by rumour that his administration had lost the confidence, not of the people, but of the King.[3] The great significance of the entire exercise lay not so much in what it had already achieved, as in what it might yet achieve in the future. Like the Tory managers in Chester, the Opposition leaders had gained invaluable experience in techniques of organisation, in the uses of propaganda, and above all in the efficacy of co-operative effort; the lessons would not be wasted in either case.

Preparations for the forthcoming General Election were already well in hand before the Excise Crisis broke. In November 1732, the Jacobite historian, Thomas Carte, wrote to a friend:

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1. Hist. MSS. Comm., Carlisle MSS., p. 111: Howard to Carlisle, 21 Apr.1733.

2. MS. Diary of the Rev. Peter Walkden, p.74: 1 May 1733; Touzeau, Rise and Progress of Liverpool, i.432; Autobiography of William Stout, p.212.

3. See Langford, The Excise Crisis, especially pp. 62-100. Sir Robert Salusbury Cotton, Sir Henry Hoghton, Sir Thomas Lowther and Sir Roger Bradshaigh were among those who abstained in the division of 10 April 1733: see ibid., Appendix C, pp. 175-6.

> As to the affairs of the Kingdom, they seem preparing every where for a new election; and interest is making in all places. Disputes never ran so high as they are likely to do when that time comes .... People (for what reason I can't conceive) imagine that this parliament will be dissolved after the next session; I do not see what foundation they have for it 1

Carte was not mistaken in this observation. As early as October 1732, for instance, Lord Barrymore and Sir Roger Bradshaigh were in the process of renewing their joint interest at Wigan, and shortly thereafter began a diligent canvass of local Tory leaders, Shuttleworth, Hesketh, Bold and Lister, in order to avoid any repetition of the events of 1727.[2] During March and April, with the excise agitation at its height, further electoral preparations were understandably adjourned, but from May onwards they began again with renewed and unaccustomed vigour. Also in May, there occurred a significant event for the future of the northwestern Whigs, as Walpole's son-in-law, Lord Malpas, succeeded to the title, estates and offices of his late father, the 2nd Earl of Cholmondeley, the only exception being the Lord Lieutenancy of Denbighshire, which was given to Sir Robert Salusbury Cotton.[3] It was on these two men, Cotton and the new earl, that the main burden of defending the Whig interest in Cheshire at the next election would fall.

In Parliament, the Opposition continued to harry the ministry for the remainder of the session, but there were increasing signs of division between the Whig and Tory sections of the minority. During the debate on

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1. J. Nichols, Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century (London, 1812-15) ii. 515-7: T. Carte to Mr. Williams, 21 Nov. 1732.

2. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Barrymore to Bradshaigh, ? Oct. 1732; ibid.: same to same, 2 Mar. 1732-3.

3. P.R.O., C.231/10, pp.202-3: Patents and Commissions of Appointment, 27 May, 14 & 21 June 1733.

the Princess Royal's marriage portion, a number of Opposition Whigs, including Sir Thomas Aston, made a particular point of expressing their zeal both for the Royal Family, and for its proposed alliance with the House of Orange. 'I was pleased to see on this occasion the discontented Whigs separate from the Tories and Jacobites,' noted the future Lord Egmont in his diary, 'because 'tis an evidence that they are not absolutely linked together, though they join on all occasions to distress the Ministry, having personal spleen against Sir Robert Walpole because he does not admit them to employments.'[1] The Opposition's parliamentary squabbles, however, were cut short by the end of the session; moreover, as the summer wore on, their capacity for sustained and united effort in the country at large became increasingly evident, as they proceeded to launch a massive electoral assault against their opponents. Among the 127 constituenices where matters were eventually pushed to a poll, were such forlorn hopes as the Duke of Newcastle's own county of Sussex. Here the revival of 'the old cause, Whig & Tory,' greatly alarmed both the Duke and his Whig neighbours, one of whom believed it to 'proceed from an agreement among the Tories to oppose every where'.[2] Faced with such a prospect the Court began to make its own preparations, the king personally overseeing the large amounts of Civil List money earmarked by the ministry for electoral purposes.[3]

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1. Hist. MSS. Comm., Egmont Diary, i.372: 9 May 1733.

2. Addit. MSS. 32688, ff.88-9: Richmond to Newcastle, 14 Aug. 1733; ibid., f.155: Scarbrough to Newcastle, 21 Aug. 1733; ibid., f.421: H. Pelham to Newcastle, 29 Sept. 1733.

3. J.B. Owen, 'George II Reconsidered', in A. Whiteman, J.S. Bromley and P.G.M. Dickson, eds., Statesmen, Scholars and Merchants: Essays in Eighteenth-Century History presented to Dame Lucy Sutherland (Oxford, 1973), p.122.

Even before the end of the parliamentary session, still firmly ensconced in Ireland Lord Barrymore was making inquiries of Bradshaigh as to the most likely date for the dissolution, and planning with his former colleague the most appropriate steps to be taken to re-inforce their interest at Wigan.[1] At the same time he was privately urging Watkin Williams Wynn and his Tory friends not to obstruct Sir Roger's election, least the burden of opposition should inadvertently harm his own interest. '[W]e cannot bee thrown out now,' Barrymore told Francis Price, 'for he has at all Events an undoubted majority and If he Wanted many more might Easiely have [them] for the magistrates are in his power ....' He went on to press for his 'friend Watkin' to attend the race-meetings at Wigan and Preston that summer, in order to 'qualifie the hott men in relation to Sr. Roger', and thereby save his lordship from 'greate Expence and Infinite trouble'. In return, Barrymore would endeavour to strengthen his own interest in the borough by having Wynn and Price made burgesses.[2] He also wrote to Bold, Master and Hesketh, to ask them for their interest in accordance with the 1727 agreement. Even so, he did not now expect the election to take place before the New Year. 'Theres noe dispute,' he told Bradshaigh, 'but the Excise has made the greatest noise any thing off the kind has done for this 100 years and I find resentments run high in Court & Contrey [yet] a cold Winter may temperate matters.' Surprisingly perhaps, he kept Sir Roger fully informed of his overtures to Wynn and the other Tories, and went so far

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1. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Barrymore to Bradshaigh, 8 May 1733.

2. N.L.W. MSS. 3582E/11: Barrymore to Price, 17 May 1733.

as to outline his reasoning as he had done with Price.[1] Bradshaigh, however, rejected out of hand the idea of Wynn's being made a burgess.[2] Thus, with Tory tempers continuing to run high against Sir Roger, Barrymore determined to remain in Cork, from where he could continue to urge upon his 'old friends' the impossibility of securing Bradshaigh's defeat, and assure them of his own resolution to defend himself should any attempt be made to replace him.[3] 'I w.d give as little offence as possible, either to y.r friends or to the others,' he told Sir Roger in August. 'I fear the Latter [i.e. the Tories] will require some appearances that I think much better lett alone and alsoe Engagements that I w.d be free from.' Nevertheless, he still believed an opposition could be avoided by skillful management. 'I have my agents w.th the hott men,' he continued, 'and keep a constant correspondence w.th them on our owne affairs. I have alsoe my advocates y.t ply them all to prevent the folly and Expence off a Contest at Wigan & I hope it Will have the desir'd Effects.' He was also anxious to remain on good terms with the Whigs, and in particular with Sir Henry Hoghton. 'I owe him soe many obligations for his favours at the Last Election ... y.t If it Lyes in my power to serve him, I Will,

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1. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Barrymore to Bradshaigh, 17 May 1733.
2. Ibid.: same to same, 8 June 1733.
3. N.L.W. MSS. 3582E/12: Barrymore to Price, 10 June 1733.

at all risques lett who's [sic] Will bee angry or pleas'd.'[1]

If the situation at Wigan could be described as delicate, that prevailing at Chester was equally so. There was no diminution in the strength of party feeling, and further opposition to the Grosvenor interest was almost assured. Whereas Sir Richard and Sir Thomas had normally resided at Eaton Hall, just outside the city, Sir Robert Grosvenor lived principally in London or at Swell Court in Somerset, and this meant that the independent role of the city's Tory aldermen in managing their party's electoral interest in the borough was greatly expanded. Exhortations to Sir Robert for his return to Chester became the rule in times of crisis, and corporative grumbling became endemic; but more and more the city fathers were obliged to act upon their own initiative.[2] An equally important concomitant to this situation, however, was Grosvenor's increasing involvement in the electoral politics of London and the Home Counties. At a county meeting held in Middlesex, for instance, it was he who now stood up among his Tory neighbours to recommend William Pulteney as their candidate for the next election.[3] For the time being, though, his presence in Chester was not crucial, and in his absence his friends in the corporation pressed ahead with measures to further strengthen the Tory interest there, the most significant of which was the wholesale creation of new freemen, including many of the

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1. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Barrymore to Bradshaigh, 7 Aug. 1733.

2. For the first sign of these developments, see Grosvenor MSS.: E. Partington to Grosvenor, 20 June, 1733.

3. Ibid.: Draft of Grosvenor's nomination speech, n.d. [but c.1733-4].

leading Tory squires of Cheshire, Lancashire, Shropshire, Staffordshire and the several counties of North Wales.[1]

July and August witnessed the public entries into Chester of both Grosvenor and Lord Cholmondeley, and a county meeting at which the gentlemen and freeholders present agreed unanimously to vote at the forthcoming election for Knights of the Shire for Charles Cholmondeley and John Crewe, junior,[2] and against Sir Robert Salusbury Cotton 'who was for the Tobacco Bill'.[3] Coupled with the re-imposition of salt duties[4] during the late session of Parliament, the Excise Bill had fairly crippled the Whig interest in Cheshire, and Lord Derby's open support for their Tory opponents can scarcely have improved the Whigs' chances of success. Even more decisive was the ambivalent attitude of the Dunham interest. At first, while Lord Warrington's friends and relations warmly espoused Cotton, the earl himself appeared to stand neuter; but by mid-September, though his wife continued to campaign for the Whig candidate, Warrington was beginning to incline, albeit coolly, in favour of Cholmondeley and Crewe.[5]

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1. Grosvenor MSS.: Lists of those voted free gratis upon the recommendation of the mayor, 22 June, 10 July, and 16 Aug. Not all took up their freedom straight away, however: cf. the dates of their enrolment in J.H.E. Bennett, ed., Rolls of the Freemen of the City of Chester, 1392-1805, (Lancs. & Chesh. Record Soc., li, 1906; lv, 1908), ii. passim.

2. John Crewe, jun. (1709-52), of Madely, Staffs. & Crewe Hall, Chesh. M.P. for Cheshire, 1734-52. Son of John Offley Crewe, the sitting Tory member for Cheshire at the dissolution in 1734. In 1738 he married a daughter of Richard Shuttleworth.

3. Gentleman's Magazine (1733), iii. 379.

4. The mining and processing of salt was the principal industry of central Cheshire.

5. Addit. MSS. 32688, ff.187, 332: W. Jessop to Newcastle, 26 Aug. & 15 Sept. 1733.

From the relative isolation of his Irish seat, Lord Barrymore surveyed these developments in Cheshire with some relish. 'If our former friends stand firm,' he told Francis Price, 'I cannot think they can Loose it, and as to Chester I think the Late Candidate [i.e. Manley] and his associates Except Bennett are speciall poor. I cannot think he Will Launch out much and unlesse they can make a very greate Expence there can been noe fight in y^{t} Election.' He was less happy, though, about the situation at Liverpool, and feared that Sir Thomas Aston's lack of diligence might enable Brereton to succeed there.[1] In fact, Aston was already assured of the Duchess of Marlborough's recommendation at St. Albans and was consequently disinclined to involve himself in another expensive contest in Lancashire. After years of neglect by successive Whig ministries, though, Lord Derby on the contrary was spoiling for a fight. Despite his age and declining health, he now began asserting himself more vigorously than at any time since the General Election of 1715; only on this occasion it was on behalf of Country party candidates, not only in Lancashire but in Cheshire and Flintshire as well.[3] His defection was a dreadful blow to the northwestern Whigs, and as welcome to the Tories as it was surprising. To Lord Barrymore, however, the most encouraging news of all was from Wigan; for by the end of September he had received concrete assurances from his friends in Lancashire that

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1. N.L.W. MSS. 3582E/13: Barrymore to Price, 9 Sept. 1733.

2. Hist. MSS. Comm., Verulam MSS., p.122: Duchess of Marlborough to Visc. Grimston, Mar. 1733.

3. For his involvement in Flintshire, see N.L.W., Glynn MSS. 5145: Derby to Sir R. Mostyn & Sir J. Glynne, 10 Sept. [1733].

they were ready to stand by their engagements of 1727, and to offer no opposition either to himself or Bradshaigh. 'I have often stil'd y.t dayes work the Funerall off our oppossers,' he asserted triumphantly to Sir Roger; and so it now appeared to have been.[1]

Speculation about the warmth and sincerity of Lord Warrington's commitment to the Opposition was answered in October by an election address to his tenants and other Cheshire freeholders in favour of the Tory candidates. 'When I my self came first into Parliament,' he declared, 'my Resolution was to have a view to the good of the nation in my Votes, and it is still my Intention so to do, without regard to self Interest, or who I may please, or offend thereby: And if I did not believe these two Gentlemen would act on the same Principle, they should not have [my] assistance.'[2] From the Tory point of view, the only discordant note to sound in Cheshire was the threat of a legal challenge to the Chester corporation's right of co-opting new members rather than filling vacancies by popular election. Encouraged by Wynn, Grosvenor instructed Randle Wilbraham to prepare a defence case; and though the issue was hotly debated in the local press, the cause was not ready for trial until after the election was over.[3]

In spite of Lord Warrington's defection, however, the Whigs remained surprisingly optimistic about their electoral prospects in

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1. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Barrymore to Bradshaigh, 23 Sept. 1733.

2. Hist. MSS. Comm., Kenyon MSS.,no. 1201, p.469: 12 Oct. 1733. I am most grateful to the Rt. Hon. Lord Kenyon for providing me with a copy of this Address.

3. Grosvenor MSS.: Wynn to Grosvenor, 11 Nov. 1733; Adams's Weekly Courant, 16-23 Jan. 1733-4. See below pp.222-4.

Cheshire.[1] Sir Robert Salusbury Cotton spent much of the winter in London, his mobility severely hampered by a prolonged attack of gout, and the task of organizing his election campaign devolved in the main upon his brother. The six months after October 1733 was marked by recurrent outbreaks of mob violence, not only in Chester but in many of the smaller market towns as well, encouraged by the liberal distribution of free ale; and in one such disturbance the Tory candidates appeared in person to enhearten their supporters and spur them on.[2] Cotton's friends canvassed assiduously, and as late as 30 March 1734 Sir Robert was being assured that 'in spite of the Divel and Mad[a]m Crewe' his election was certain.[3]

In Lancashire, meanwhile, two of the last remaining citadels of Whig power were under close siege. In October 1733, the election for mayor and bailiffs at Liverpool was won by Brereton's Whig nominees, William Pole being chosen mayor by a majority of only 74 in a poll of almost 1800.[4] Owing to certain manifest irregularities in the conduct of that poll, however, Thomas Bootle took the matter to Lancaster Assizes for a determination. Yet, as James Mainwaring wrote afterwards,

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1. A superbly detailed picture of the Whig election campaign can be pieced together from Cotton's papers in the Chester R.O. None of his correspondents seem at any time to have seriously contemplated the possibility of his defeat.

2. Cotton of Combermere MSS., CR.72/6, bundle marked 'from Box 37': J. Finney to L.S. Cotton, 23 Oct. 1733; ibid.: W. Maisterson to [Ld. Cholmondeley?], 14 Jan. 1733-4.

3. Ibid.: P. Davenport to Sir R. S. Cotton, 30 Mar. 1734.

4. Ibid.: J. Mainwaring to Cotton, 10 Apr. 1734.

> tho' ye Judge declared on ye point of Law that the Mayor was duely Elected, [neverthless] ye Jury were determin'd, ye Corporation had made so many Lancashire Gent[leme]n free that there were scarce any but Torys to serve -- however ye Jury Will Certify for a new Trial & ye present officers Will Continue to make the Next return for Parliam[en]t. 1

The mayoral contest was not the only subject of contention, though. In December 1733, the Tories had challenged the validity of all the freemen made by the Council since the start of Gildart's mayoralty in October 1731;[2] and in the following February, the Whigs retaliated with the expulsion of Robert Whitfield from his position as common-councilman.[3] Even with his court action pending, Bootle realised that his re-election at Liverpool was doubtful: a state of affairs for which he held Sir Robert Walpole, as Brereton's patron, directly responsible. Thus, with Sir Thomas Aston out of the running and Lord Derby intent upon setting up one Colonel Murray, a Scottish army officer, Bootle decided to hedge his bets, and applied to his own patron, the Duke of Somerset, to be brought in for his pocket borough of Midhurst.[4] The hollow victory gained at Lancaster only served to confirm his pessimism; for he correctly anticipated that the Parliament would be dissolved and the writs issued for a new

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1. Cotton of Combermere MSS., CR 72/6, bundle marked 'from Box 37': J. Mainwaring to Cotton, 30 Mar. 1734; Touzeau, Rise and Progress of Liverpool, i. 433-4; Picton, Liverpool Municipal Records, ii. 93-4.

2. Picton, Liverpool Municipal Records, ii. 94. See Wynnstay MSS. L.1225 for a full list of those objected to.

3. Touzeau, Rise and Progress of Liverpool, i.434-5; Picton, Liverpool Municipal Records, ii. 95.

4. Hist. MSS. Comm., 15th Rep. VII (Somerset MSS.) pp.121-2: Bootle to Somerset, 26 Feb. 1733-4. I am unable to identify Colonel Murray.

election before he could obtain a favourable judgement on the verdicts in Westminster Hall. Upon returning to Liverpool at the end of March, he found his friends, 'the principal merchants and ancient freemen', exceedingly hearty; but, as he told Somerset, 'the prodigious numbers of freemen lately made, above 500, having no right of freedom, consisting of custom house, excise, and salt officers, justices of the peace, and such like dependents, are a very heavy weight upon us'.[1] Notwithstanding the verdicts against them, the mayor and bailiffs continued to make wholesale creations of freemen, and now seemed certain to be the returning officers for the parliamentary election.[2] The eleventh-hour decision of Lord Derby to enter heartily into Bootle's interest came too late to be of much service.[3]

At Preston, in spite of further offers of assistance from Lord Barrymore,[4] Sir Henry Hoghton found himself hard-pressed by the combined forces of Lord Derby and the Tory Richard Shuttleworth. At first, Shuttleworth's son was to have been set up jointly with Nicholas Fazakerley, but with his unexpected death at the height of the campaign, everything was thrown into confusion. '[M]y adversarys have offer'd their Interest to severall to oppose me,' Hoghton told Walpole at the beginning of April, 'but I have the town in such an high spiritt,

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1. Hist. MSS. Comm., 15th Rep. VII, p.122: Bootle to Somerset, 30 Mar.1734. Bootle's statement is clearly substantiated by the analysis of Whig votes contained in the pollbook for the ensuing election: An Exact List of the Persons who Polled at ... Liverpool in 1734. (Copy in Liverpool R.O.)

2. Hist. MSS. Comm., 15th Rep. VII, pp.122-3: Bootle to Somerset, 15 Apr. 17

3. Ibid., p.123: same to same, 9 May 1734; Legh of Lyme MSS.: Derby to the aldermen, freemen and friends of Liverpool, 24 Apr. 1734.

4. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Barrymore to Bradshaigh, 20 Mar. 1733-4.

that nobody is yet named. Lord Derby on account of the Excise, and other unpopular votes this Session (w.ch now I feele the weight of) is my declar.d Enemy, and offers to be at the Expense of keeping me out, if any one will undertake it.'[1] The election was too close at hand, however, for any new candidate to contemplate challenging Hoghton's long-established interest in the town, and in the event Lord Derby's offer was not taken up.

The General Election campaign was carried on against a background of renewed parliamentary pressure on the ministry, maintained throughout the short session ending with the dissolution on 17 April. The Opposition opened the attack in January with a threat to bring up the question of the Prince of Wales's allowance in the House of Commons, which so embarrassed Lord Cholmondeley, as the Prince's Master of the Horse, that he refused to move for an address of thanks to the King's Speech, least his motives should later be called into doubt.[2] Among the northwestern Tories, Shippen distinguished himself particularly, speaking forcefully in debates on the Address, the Seville Treaty, and the army.[3] The most serious challenge came in March, however, with a combined Tory and Opposition Whig assault on the Septennial Act, Shippen, Wynn, Charles Cholmondeley and Sir Edward Stanley all speaking to Bromley's motion in favour of its repeal.[4]

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1. Cholmondeley (Houghton) MSS., corr. 2146: Hoghton to Walpole, 2 Apr. 1734.

2. Hist. MSS. Comm., Egmont Diary, ii.7: 15 Jan. 1733-4.

3. Gentleman's Magazine (1734), iv. 284-5, 292, 347.

4. Hist. MSS. Comm., Egmont Diary, ii.55: 13 Mar. 1733-4.

The elections themselves began at the end of April and continued into May. In Lancashire, the early returns were all unopposed: Barrymore and Bradshaigh came in again at Wigan; Shippen and Master at Newton; Hoghton and Fazakerley at Preston; Lister and William Curzon[1] at Clitheroe. The major contest was at Liverpool, where Whig and Tory out-burgesses from throughout the northwest converged in support of their respective interests. Lord Barrymore, Richard Shuttleworth, Sir Robert Grosvenor, Sir Charles Bunbury and Sir Edward Stanley all appeared in person on behalf of Bootle and Foster Cunliffe, the Opposition candidates; but, though they claimed to have a legal majority at the close of the poll, the mayor and bailiffs made their return in favour of the Whigs, Brereton and Gildart.[2] By separating the votes of the old freemen 'by Right of Birth or Service' from those made free 'without Right' since 1731, the pollbook printed by the Tories after the election plainly demonstrated the importance of honorary freemen in a marginal borough. Of the 385 new freemen voting in 1734, 339 cast their votes for both Whig candidates; a further 13 recorded a single Whig vote; and only 33 voted for one or both of the Tories.[3] Such a high degree of accuracy in predicting their likely voting behaviour would seem to indicate a remarkable level of party identification. Quite clearly, almost two decades after the death of Queen Anne, Whigs and Tories were still 'as discernable as day or night'.[4]

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1. William Curzon (?1681-1749) of the Inner Temple. M.P. for Clitheroe, 1734-47. Returned as a Tory on the interest of his brother Sir Nathaniel Curzon, 4th Bart.

2. Chirk Castle MSS. C.21: R. Pigot to J. Myddelton, 1 May 1734; Hist.MSS. Comm., 15th Rep. VII, p.123: Bootle to Somerset, 9 May 1734.

3. An Exact List of the Persons who Polled at Liverpool, pp.11-14.

4. The phrase is from Plumb, Growth of Political Stability, p.135.

There was a contest too, though a more parochial one, at Lancaster, where Sir Thomas Lowther, having apparently come to terms with the Tory opposition in the town, stood on a joint interest with Robert Fenwick,[1] an independent Whig, who since 1727 had served as Serjeant-at-Law in the Duchy of Lancaster. They were opposed by the recorder, Allen Harrison, and his second, Thomas Hamilton; but after a campaign reckoned to have cost the participants more than £5,000, Lowther and Fenwick were declared duly elected, having had in their interest 'most of the gentry and substantiall freemen, being they were neighbours borne, and of good estates'.[2]

In Cheshire, Cholmondeley and Crewe were successful after a bitterly fought contest, Cotton only giving up the poll when Lord Barrymore and Mr. Warburton[3] arrived at the hustings on the last day with a body of more than 500 Tory voters.[4] Though Lord Cholmondeley complained afterwards of the large-scale creation of nominal freeholds for the purpose of qualifying voters, there was precious little he could do about the result. The cost of the election had been enormous: John Crewe, for instance, made no secret of the fact that he alone had spent upwards of £13,000,[5] and

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1. Robert Fenwick (1688-1750), of Burrow Hall, Lancs. M.P. for Lancaster, 1734-47. Serjeant-at-Law in the Duchy of Lancaster, and Attorney and Serjeant in the Co. Pal. of Lancs ., 1727-49; Vice Chancellor of the Co. Pal. of Lancs., July 1742-Jan. 1743.

2. Autobiography of William Stout, pp.216-7. Little is known of Harrison and Hamilton; it would seem, however, that they were ministerial Whigs, who objected strongly to Lowther's compromise with Fenwick and his Country party associates.

3. Probably Peter Warburton of Arley, youngest brother of Sir George Warburton; although it could conceivably be his nephew Peter (d.1776), who succeeded Sir George as 4th Bart. in 1743.

4. London Evening-Post, 18-21 May 1734.

5. P.R.O., S.P. 36/32, ff.4-6: Ld. Cholmondeley to [Walpole?], 20 May 1734.

Cotton had been obliged to borrow money in an effort to keep pace.[1] At Chester, where Richard Manley and Hugh Williams had stood against them on the Whig interest, Grosvenor and Bunbury were easily returned, though their opponents claimed to possess a majority of resident freemen, and subsequently petitioned the Commons on that account.[2]

To contemporaries then, it was 'the old cause, Whig & Tory', which characterized the General Election of 1734, and few could doubt that the latter had got the best of the battle. True enough, the ministry's overall majority had only been cut by 24 (from 126 to 102), but given the resources at their disposal it should not have been cut at all. According to Lord Hervey's exposition, the King was furious, and blamed the Whigs for their negligence; all too publicly he expressed his view

> that if the Tories had had a quarter of the support from the Government that the Whigs had received from it for twenty years together, they would never have suffered the Crown to be pushed and the Court to be distressed in the manner it now was; and generally added to these declarations that he could not help saying, for the honour of the Tories, that they were always much firmer united, and more industrious and circumspect, than the Whigs. 3

In Cheshire the Tories' victory had been total, and in Lancashire only the efforts of Brereton at Liverpool and the misfortune of young Shuttleworth's death at Preston had prevented them from realising their most optimistic ambitions. In St. Stephen's Chapel, the Opposition would soon resolve itself once more into its component parts of Jacobite, Tory

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1. Cotton of Combesmere MSS., CR 72/6: G. Legh to Cotton, 2 Apr. 1734.

2. Hemingway, History of Chester, ii.398; Commons Journals, xxii. 335, 509, 730.

3. Cited in Sedgwick, History of Parliament, i.42-3. Cf. Langford, The Excise Crisis, pp. 149-50.

and Patriot Whig, but for the duration of the election, in the northwest at any rate, such distinctions had held no meaning. All those opposed to Walpole and his administration had come together to form a single, united interest: a new County Coalition.

With the General Election over, there was no noticeable reduction in the level of political tension. In Lancashire and Cheshire three issues in particular served to perpetuate the quarrel: a projected visitation of Manchester Collegiate Church, the continuing struggle for control of Liverpool corporation, and the attack on the Tories' interpretation of the Chester city charter.

In June 1734, Bishop Peploe began to urge afresh the idea of a visitorial commission for Manchester College, maintaining it to be the only means of solving the problems of disaffection in the town. 'The Interest of the Government is much concerned in the regulation of y.t Church,' he told Walpole, '& all the Kings friends earnestly wish to see it.'[1] The Bishop of Hereford and the Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry were willing to lend their assistance if desired, and Peploe had in mind 'a few honest Gentlemen in the neighbourhood ... proper to be in the Commission w.th them,' as he informed the Duke of Newcastle.[2] The matter being referred to Peploe's former patron and benefactor, Edmund Gibson, Bishop of London, he likewise endeavoured to impress upon the ministry the need for decisive action. 'The Town of Manchester,' he wrote to Newcastle, 'is said to be remarkably Disaffected, and that Disaffection to be greatly supported by the members of ye College, and to spread from

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1. Cholmondeley (Houghton) MSS., corr. 2211: Peploe to Walpole, 12 June 1734.

2. P.R.O., S.P. 36/32, ff.93-4: Peploe to Newcastle, 24 June 1734.

thence into the neighbouring parts. On the other hand, the Bishop ... has always supported the Government both here and throughout his Diocese, and is certainly entitled to all the protection and assistance that the Court can give.'[1] In August, therefore, as the result of further solicitations from both Peploe and Gibson,[2] orders were given for a suitable commission to be prepared; yet more than two months went by without any steps being taken towards its implementation.[3] In December, the fellows at last got wind of what was intended against them, and immediately sent a deputation to London to prevent it.[4] When by January still nothing had happened, Peploe, joined now by Brereton, Cotton, Lowther, Bradshaigh and Hugh Williams, decided to petition the Crown directly, and at the same time took the opportunity of submitting his own list of commissioners.[5] Now at last, the Government was stirred to action, and on 21 January 1735 a warrant was drawn up for a full-scale visitorial commission to be held at Manchester. But before any wheels could be set in motion, the warrant was cancelled, and another was not issued until 15 April. In its final form, however, the commission must have come as a bitter blow to the Whigs and especially to Peploe; for whilst it empowered the visitors to look into all matters relating to finance and discipline, it specifically prohibited them from investigating the legality of the fellows' tenures:

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1. P.R.O., S.P. 36/32, f.105: Gibson to Newcastle, 29 June 1734.

2. Ibid., f.119: Peploe to Newcastle, 6 July 1734; ibid., f.126: Gibson to Newcastle, 11 July 1734.

3. P.R.O., S.P.44/128, p.310: Newcastle to the Attorney & Solicitor Generals, 26 Aug. 1734; ibid., pp.311-2: Petition of Dr. Peploe to the King, n.d.; P.R.O., S.P. 36/33, ff.52-3: Peploe to Newcastle, 5 Nov. 1734.

4. P.R.O., S.P. 36/33, ff.168-9: Peploe to Newcastle, 27 Dec. 1734.

5. Cholmondeley (Houghton) MSS., 78/26: Petitions and Draft Petitions to the King, n.d. Those suggested as commissioners were: the Duke of Rutland, the Earl of Derby, the Earl of Warrington, the Bishop of St. Asaph, the Bishop of Lichfield & Coventry, Ralph Leycester, Francis Reynolds, James Chetham, Thomas Brereton and Hugh Williams.

the very purpose for which the whole exercise had been designed.[1] The reasons for this change of heart on the part of the ministry remain a total mystery, but it would seem that the Tory fellows had more powerful advocates at Court than their opponents knew.

During this same period the Government was also being kept fully informed about the plight of the Whig interest in Liverpool. The entire cost of defeating Bootle and his allies in the town at both the mayoral and parliamentary elections had been borne personally by Thomas Brereton, who afterwards sought to have himself reimbursed by the Court. He had resolved, so he told Walpole in July, to spend as much as was necessary 'rather than Lord Derby, assisted by Lord Molyneux, Lord Warrington & Lord Barrymore should bring in a Tory: not doubting but His Majesty wou'd assist me under such an exigency & to effect so expensive an undertaking.' He was now in debt to the tune of £1000, and claimed to have spent more than thirty times that amount over the years in the service of the king and his late father. He went on to outline the circumstances in which he found himself:

> ... I am as much the mark of the Jacobites in these parts , as you (to your great honour are) in you high Station; & I have the vanity to say, no Man in England but myself, cou'd have prevented this Borough falling into their hands, & it is the only one in the County they have not in the whole, or in half: yet notwithstanding their united force, the large subscriptions, and the malice w.th which they persecute me, I will allways keep it from them. 2

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1. P.R.O., S.P. 44/153, ff.444-50, 455-64: Warrants for a commission to visit Manchester College, 21 Jan. 1734-5 & 15 Apr. 1735. Those named as commissioners in both documents were: the Duke of Rutland, the Earl of Warrington, the Bishop of Hereford, the Bishop of St. Asaph, the Bishop of Lichfield & Coventry, Ralph Leycester, Francis Reynolds, James Chetham, Francis Jodrell, Henry Wright, William Wright, Samuel Dunstar, D.D., Richard Goodwin, D.D. and George Legh, L.D.

2. Cholmondeley (Houghton) MSS., corr. 2288: Brereton to Walpole, 26 July 1734.

His petition apparently met with little success, for more than three years later his friend, Richard Gildart, was reproaching the ministry with having 'soe greatly neglected ... him that deserves soe Well'.[1] Thus, in October 1734, with their leader pursued by his creditors and effectively hors de combat, the Liverpool Whigs suffered their most serious reverse since 1726; for at the corporation elections Lord Derby was himself chosen to serve as mayor. However, due to the earl's failing health, the executive functions of the office devolved upon his deputy, the Tory Bryan Blundell, who, with his old associates, George Tyrer and John Hughes, as bailiffs, set about dismantling the edifice of Whig supremacy that Brereton and his friends had so laboriously built up in the borough since 1731. During his term of office Blundell summoned few Council meetings, preferring as before to divert as much business as possible through Common Hall.[2] One such meeting, however, was held on 4 February 1735 for the purpose of replying to a mandamus from King's Bench calling for the restoration of Robert Whitfield to the corporate body. Yet though Whitfield had the backing of Blundell, Tyrer and Foster Cunliffe, the Council's Whig majority were nonetheless able to force through their own answer to the writ, and the exp. sion's validity was upheld.[3] Such tactical victories by their opponents, however, only served to reinforce the Tories' determination to rule without the Council; and with the power of creating freeman restored once more to Common Hall, the Whigs had little immediate prospect of regaining control.

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1. Cholmondeley (Houghton) MSS., corr. 2737: Gildart to Walpole, 27 Dec. 1737.

2. Touzeau, Rise and Progress of Liverpool, i.438-9; Grosvenor MSS.: E. Partington to Grosvenor, 24 July 1735. Unlike Touzeau, I see no reason to doubt Lord Derby's support for the proceedings carried out in his name.

3. Ibid., i.435-6; Picton, Liverpool Municipal Records, ii. 96-7.

The third scene of continuing friction was Chester. On 29 July 1734, Watkin Williams Wynn wrote to inform Grosvenor, who was then in London, that the lawsuit challenging the corporation's right to co-opt members was down to be heard at the next Assizes, having been put off the previous spring.[1] William Shippen had already been induced to approach Nicholas Fazakerley about the matter, and Wynn urged Grosvenor to do likewise, 'for on Him ye Fate of Chester depends, in my humble opinion'.[2] A week later he wrote again and this time pressed Grosvenor to return immediately to Cheshire. 'You cannot possibly come down before you are wanted,' he assured Sir Robert, 'for ye Cestrensians begin to murmur damnably, & to think y.^{m}selves almost deserted .... The Assizes in all probability will be definitive & y.^{r} Freinds will be better able to judge of their doom. I w.^{d} therefore upon no account y.^{t} you be absent at y.^{s} critical juncture.' Fazakerley had promised Shippen to attend the trial but was pessimistic about the outcome. Wynn, though, was less despondent. 'I am satisfyed for my own part our Predecessors had their reasons,' he asserted, '& it is very hard we can not find y.^{m} out.'[3] In the event, his confidence proved well-placed; for when the case came on in the autumn, it was discovered that vital evidence had been falsified, whereupon Fazakerley and Bootle, appearing for the corporation, had little difficulty in getting it put off yet again.[4]

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1. In April 1734, the Chester Whigs had been confident that the case would be brought to a final determination before the election; they were, however, disappointed. See Cotton of Combermere MSS., CR 72/6 J. Mainwaring to Cotton, 10 Apr. 1734.

2. Grosvenor MSS.: Wynn to Grosvenor, 29 July 1734.

3. Ibid.: same to same, 6 Aug. 1734. Also in the Grosvenor MSS. are several papers concerning the legal issues raised by this case.

4. John Rylands Univ. Lib., Egerton of Tatton MSS., 1/1/54: J. Egerton to S. Hill, 4 Sept. 1734. I am assuming that the circumstances rather obscurely detailed in this letter do in fact refer to the Chester corporation suit.

Early in 1735, however, the cause was revived once more. The Crown as plaintiff charged that Mayor Johnson and eighteen members of the city corporation had usurped to themselves the privilege of electing aldermen and members of common council, which by the charter of Henry VII and its subsequent confirmations was expressly vested in the citizens at large; that indeed there were those still alive who could remember the franchise being so exercised during the Whig supremacy of the 1690s. At first, counsel for the defence argued in King's Bench before Lord Chief Justice Hardwicke that the right of co-option had been sactioned by the charter granted in 1685 by Charles II; but, meeting with little encouragement for this time of reasoning, they were obliged to change their tack, and had the case transferred back to Chester for determination at the next Assizes. On 1 April 1735, the matter came to trial before Chief Justice Verney. The defendants now conceded that they were incorporated under the charter of Henry VII; but, following the authority of Lord Coke, went on to plead a bye-law of the following reign as justification for their customary method of co-option, even though this was contrary to the specific terms of the charter. The Crown maintained that such a bye-law would have been nullified by the acceptance of another charter of Charles II, dated 1664. They were, however, unable to prove that this charter had been accepted, and after a trial lasting fourteen hours a special jury of Cheshire gentlemen brought in a verdict for the corporation. Though the cause was afterwards reckoned to have cost both parties a total of £10,000,[1] nevertheless, from the Tory point of view it was money well spent; for had the case succeeded, the Tory interest in the city must

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1. Hemingway, History of Chester, ii.398; Gentleman's Magazine (1735), v. 217. A detailed account of the legal arguments put forward in court can be found in N.L.W. MSS. 4876D (Bodelwyddan Papers).

inevitably have gone under. Receiving an account of the decision from a friend in Cheshire, and being fully aware of its importance, Lord Barrymore for one was delighted: it was, he told Price, 'the most agreeable news I have heard for some time'.[1]

In May 1735, with Frederick, Prince of Wales, continuing to dally with the Opposition, Lord Cholmondeley at length felt himself obliged to resign his post as Master of the Prince's Horse; he was appointed to the Treasury Board, and his former place in the Prince's household was put into commission under three equerries.[2] His reputation thus refurbished, he was able to turn his attention back to Cheshire, where in spite of their recent defeat the Chester Whigs were contemplating one final effort against their opponents. In September it became known that they had it in mind to contest the forthcoming mayoral election; whereupon Wynn wrote again to implore Grosvenor's return to the city. 'We hope there will be no dispute,' he told Sir Robert, 'but there is no certainty of preventing it but by y.r coming down & tarrying some little time at least amongst your friends.' The corporate body he believed was secure; 'but two thousand voters may be easily lead & may as easily by any ill conduct of y.r self or Friends be misled.'[3] However, Grosvenor had no intention of visiting Cheshire,[4] and in spite of Wynn's entreaties left his friends to manage as best they could. In the event, the election passed off without trouble, and the Whig interest in Chester lay dormant

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1. N.L.W. MSS. 3582E/25: Barrymore to Price, 5 Apr. 1735.

2. Cholmondeley (Houghton) MSS., corr. 2557: Cholmondeley to Walpole, n.d. [but endorsed 1735] ; Hist. MSS. Comm., Egmont Diary, ii.178.

3. Grosvenor MSS.: Wynn to Grosvenor, 16 Sept. 1735.

4. Ibid.: Grosvenor to Ld. Warrington, 11 Aug. 1735.

for more than a decade. The charter decision had sapped their strength and exhausted their finances, and the deaths of John Williams in 1737 and Henry Bennett in 1741 must have lowered their morale even further. At the same time, Grosvenor's reluctance to appear in Cheshire at all greatly increased Wynn's influence in the city. In October 1736, he was elected mayor, and like Sir Richard Grosvenor in 1715 served the office in person.[1] Another result of Sir Robert Grosvenor's indifference was a growing estrangement between the Grosvenor family and their supporters in the city corporation: a split in the Tories' power-base in Chester, which in 1747[2] came close to overturning what Thomas Assheton had once described (with little exaggeration) as 'the best established interrest in England'.

Even more important in the short term was the death in February 1736 of the Earl of Derby. His office as Chamberlain of the County Palatine of Chester was given to Lord Cholmondeley, thereby completing his monopoly of patronage in Cheshire.[3] However, no attempt was made to replace Derby in the Lord Lieutenancy of Lancashire, and the office remained vacant till after Walpole's fall from power in 1742.[4] The earl was succeeded in title and estates by his distant cousin, Sir Edward Stanley, whose elevation to the peerage made necessary a new election for the county of

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1. Gentleman's Magazine (1736), vi.619; P.R.O., S.P. 36/42, ff.185-6: Wynn to Newcastle, 3 Sept. 1737.

2. See below, pp.

3. P.R.O., S.P. 36/38, f.121: R. Comberbach to Cholmondeley, 4 Feb.1735-6.

4. See P.R.O., C.231/10, Crown Office Docquet Book, passim & especially p.335. There is no record of any commission under the Great Seal for creating a Ld. Lieutenant to replace Derby; likewise no commission was revoked when the 11th Earl of Derby was made Lord Lieutenant on 15 Mar. 1741-2.

Lancashire. Peter Bold immediately declared his intention of standing for the vacancy.[1] The new earl's son being still a minor, no opposition was expected,[2] and on 4 May Bold was returned without a contest.

Lord Derby's passing also tolled the death-knell for the Tories' Common Hall opposition in Liverpool. In October 1735, the earl had been followed in the mayoralty by Foster Cunliffe, one of the defeated parliamentary candidates in 1734, who for most of his term continued to rule without recourse to the Council; but in September 1736, Cunliffe went over to the Whigs and at a Council meeting summoned by him on the 23rd the Common Hall proceedings of his predecessor were declared void, and his erstwhile Tory associates, Tyrer and Hughes, were expelled from the corporation.[3] With Cunliffe as the returning officer at the mayoral election in October, the Whigs were assured of victory, and Richard Gildart was duly chosen. Lord Barrymore's reaction was probably typical of his Tory neighbours': ' ... it realy Damp't mee beyond Expression,' he told Price in November. '[T]hat Curs'd False hearted Rascall Cunliffe deserves the Gallows more than Jonathan Wild ever did by his numberlesse rogueries & now Indeed that good Towne are in the most Cruell-Bondage and I Cannot perceive any releife for them.'[4] In the same month, the Whig majority passed a resolution in Council condemning the admissions of freemen

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1. Lancashire R.O., Scarisbrick MSS., DDSc/9: Bold to R. Scarisbrick, 7 Feb. 1735-6.

2. Ibid.: J. Brownsword to Scarisbrick, 8 Feb. 1735-6.

3. Touzeau, Rise and Progress of Liverpool, i.439-42; Picton, Liverpool Municipal Records, ii. 96-7, 99-100. Picton gives 5 Nov. 1736 as the date of the expulsions. Hughes later recanted and after an interval of four years was restored.

4. N.L.W. MSS. 3582E/32: Barrymore to Price, 9 Nov. 1736.

under Lord Derby's regime, but shrank from declaring them void;[1] and in December, the ministerial press in London was openly rejoicing in the knowledge that the Tory interest at Liverpool had been routed.[2] Had the old Earl of Derby lived, some chance might yet have remained for the Tories to launch a counter-offensive, but with his successor increasingly disinterested in politics of whatever stamp, the Tory leaders in the town were robbed of their most powerful ally, and their resistance collapsed.

In 1733 and 1734, during the Excise Crisis and the campaign leading up to the General Election it had begun to look as though the united opposition party, advocated by Bolingbroke and Daniel Pulteney, was at last becoming a reality. Just as in the 1690s and 1700s the old High-Church Tories of Charles II's reign had coalesced with the New Country group centred around Robert Harley;[3] so now it seemed that Wyndham's Tories and Pulteney's Whigs might forge a new Country Coalition, strong enough to defeat Walpole and form an alternative administration. Electoral co-operation, however, was not to prove the harbinger of parliamentary amity, and the Opposition was soon split once more by internal disputes and grievances. While the disgruntled Whigs continued to suspect their Tory allies of harbouring Jacobite sympathies, the Tories for their part distrusted the personal motivation of Pulteney, Carteret and the other Opposition Whig leaders. Only twice down to 1740 were the two wings of the Opposition sufficiently united to threaten Walpole's ministry: in 1737

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1. Touzeau, Rise and Progress of Liverpool, i.445; Picton, Liverpool Municipal Records, ii. 99-100.

2. N.L.W. MSS. 3582E/33: Barrymore to Price, 17 Dec. 1736.

3. Feiling, The Tory Party, 1640-1714, pp. 275-423.

on Pulteney's motion for an increase in the Prince of Wales' allowance, and in 1739 in their dislike of the Spanish Convention; and in both these instances pointless bickering robbed them of victory. Therefore, though their numbers steadily increased, augmented amongst others by the forces of the Prince and the Duke of Argyle, the Opposition showed little sign prior to 1740 of being able to defeat the ministry in Parliament, much less of being able to form an administration capable of taking over the nation's affairs.[1]

The importance of Jacobitism to the Opposition's predicament after 1734 can hardly be overstressed; it was both the actuality and fear of Jacobite intrigue which, more than any other single factor, prevented the formation of a Patriot ministry in the 1730's. True enough, the great majority of those opposed to Walpole's government at this time had little or no sympathy for the pretensions of 'the King over the water'. The Earl of Derby's son, Lord Strange,[2] touring France in 1737, apparently eschewed the haunts of well-known Jacobite agents like Lord Sempil, and visited instead the oracular Lord Bolingbroke.[3] Likewise, the Tory Sir Charles Bunbury, visiting Leyden on his way to the South of France in 1738, left the city without paying his respects to Ezeckiel Hamilton, the Pretender's representative there.[4] Some of the old Catholic gentry in

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1. There is no good detailed account of George II's second Parliament. The basic outline of events can be followed in Sedgwick, History of Parliament, i. 43-6. The best recent discussion of the Opposition's lost opportunities is to be found in Dickinson, Bolingbroke, pp.247-76.

2. James Stanley (afterwards Smith Stanley), styled Lord Strange (1717-71), of Knowsley Hall, Lancs. M.P. for Lancashire, 1741-71. Ld. Lieut. of Lancs., 1757-71; Privy Councillor from Dec. 1762; Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, 1762-71. A fiercely independent Opposition Whig in the 1740s & 50s, often associated with the Tories.

3. Hist. MSS. Comm., Denbigh MSS., v.226: J. Stanhope to Lady Denbigh, 16 Dec. 1737 (N.S.).

4. Hist. MSS. COmm., 10th Rep. I (Underwood/Weston MSS), p.513: Hamilton to Ormonde, 27 Jan. 1738 (N.S.).

Lancashire and elsewhere, stripped of political power and reduced to penury by repressive taxation, might still cabal and plot for their King's Restoration;[1] but even here, many retained bitter memories of the price paid by their families for upholding the Stuart cause in times past, and were determined not to repeat the folly.

This having been said, however, it remains the case that during the late 1730s the Pretender and his followers deliberately stepped up their efforts to revitalize the Jacobite interest in England. Regular channels of communication were opened to Wynn and a number of others potentially useful to the cause,[2] and by 1740 this small coterie of English Jacobites was embarked upon the most serious negotiations to have taken place with the Stuart Court since 1722. Their aim was to engineer a rising of King James's supporters in Britain, timed so as to coincide with an invasion by French troops. Their primary objective, therefore, was to gain the confidence of the French minister, Cardinal Fleury, and to convince him of their capacity to fulfil their side of the bargain. The man chosen to represent the views of the English Jacobites in Paris was perfect for the job of persuading Fleury that the Tories as a whole were at last prepared for 'real business'; for it was none other than Wynn's enigmatic friend Lord Barrymore, for thirty years the epitome of Tory moderation and the symbol of political compromise.[3] In the absence of any hard evidence, the reasons behind

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1. P.R.O., S.P. 36/45, ff.204-5: R. Duckinfield to Sir H. Hoghton, 16 Apr. [1738], inclosing a deposition of Elizabeth Robinson, dated 11 Apr. 1738.

2. Stuart Papers, 174/134: James to Wynn, 28 Oct. 1734 (N.S.); ibid., 194/10: D. O'Brien to James, 4 Feb. 1737 (N.S.); ibid., 209/6: James to the Duchess of Buckingham, 28 Aug. 1738 (N.S.), enclosing letters to Wynn, Shippen and Ld. Orrery.

3. Ibid., 221/107: A. Brett to James, 28 Mar. 1740 (N.S.). The phrase 'real business' is Ld. Sempil's: see ibid., 223/124: Sempil to James, 13 June 1740 (N.S.).

his spectacular conversion to the Pretender's cause must remain a matter for speculation. He was now seventy-three years old, and his surviving letters from the preceding decade show him to have been a man increasingly possessed by cynicism, particularly with regard to the political world in which he lived. He was also bitter about his treatment by the Whigs in 1715; for having attained the rank of lieutenant-general by the age of forty-three, he had been stripped of his regiment on the eve of the Rebellion, and despite his loyalty to the Hanoverian establishment had been left to make the best of a premature retirement. Now, in 1740, it was as a military adviser as well as go-between that he was enticed into King James's service: a puff to his vanity that he found impossible to ignore. If his schemes were awry, he could at least face death with equanimity as 'the Pretender's General'.

His brief in France, though, was a difficult one. A Jacobite emissary, visiting England earlier in the year to assess the prospects for a rising, had found King James's friends 'more timorous and backward than heretofore, and yet as full of good inclinations as ever'. It was, he reported, 'impossible to form any plan of business with [them]; [they] shudder at the thought of a[n attempt]when [they] find it can be compass'd, and yet wish it, and even seem to long for it.' While Wynn and Sir John Hynde Cotton remained hearty enough, Shippen, it was said 'trembles, and infuses his fears into the gentlemen to whom [the King] wrote ....'[1] Barrymore's task, therefore, was to assure Fleury and the Pretender that the time was indeed propitious for an attempt to restore the Stuarts to

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1. Stuart Papers, 221/109: Sempil to James, 28 Mar. 1740 (N.S.). The words in square brackets have been deciphered.

the English throne. 'Your faithful servants,' he informed James from Paris, 'think by many incidents lately happend that the present juncture is much the most favourable that has been for many years ....' For the English Jacobites to make an attempt without French help, however, was an enterprise certain to end in their ruin; and after his meetings with the cardinal, Barrymore had little hope that any such assistance would be forthcoming.[1] Nevertheless, Fleury did agree to send an agent of his own to assess the situation; but early in 1741, much to Barrymore's disgust, an unfavourable report was received in Paris, and the whole scheme was shelved indefinitely.[2]

The Stuart Court, however, did not restrict its contingency planning solely to negotiations with the Jacobite Tories; with hopes still being entertained of an eventual parliamentary Restoration, advances were made also to key figures in the Whig Opposition. Yet by 1741, while Lord Chesterfield and James Erskine, for example, were giving every encouragement to the Pretender's efforts at bringing the Whig and Tory sections of the Opposition closer together, Pulteney nervously shied away from any suggestion of treasonable association.[3] The Tories, too, remained deeply divided, both in their attitudes towards the Pretender, and in their feelings about the desirability of more concerted action with the Patriot Whigs. To Lord Barrymore, however, such a 'grand Combination', as he styled it, was to be greatly feared. In February 1741, he confided his apprehensions to Lord Sempil:

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1. Stuart Papers, 222/128: Barrymore to James, 23 May 1740 (N.S.).

2. Ibid., 223/124: Sempil to James, 13 June 1740 (N.S.); ibid., 231/110: [Barrymore] to [Sempil], 15 Feb. 1740-1.

3. Dickinson, Bolingbroke, p.271; Sedgwick, History of Parliament, ii.16.

> ... I am well assured it is now forming. It is not for us to direct who implore relief; but if that is not to be had soon, matters will cool, and the great zeal now shewn will dwindle into views only to make themselves easy by joyning with the Party they really hate, wch nothing but being abandon'd would oblige them to. Self preservation will drive them to it, and things here will have another aspect: all will go on wth unanimity. 1

Outside of Parliament, though, unanimity seemed to be precisely what the Opposition's supporters, or at least the most vocal among them, wanted to see; and they were clear enough too about the measures they wished their representatives at Westminster to take on their behalf. Thus in February 1739, following the example set by the City of London's Common Hall, a large number of Liverpool merchants, ignoring the advice of their Whig M.P.s, sent up a petition declaring their dissatisfaction with the terms of the Spanish Convention. However, as one Liverpool Tory told a friend: '[the] Council who are all Walpolians wou'd not sign It. The Minister, forsooth! must not be made uneasy, whatever becomes of ye Nation.'[2] During the summer recess of 1739, the Tory corporation of Chester, likewise following the example of London, voted an address of thanks to Grosvenor and Bunbury for their conduct in the previous session, and took the opportunity of pressing them to promote the bringing in of a Place Bill as soon as Parliament re-assembled. '[T]he excellency of our Constitution,' the address asserted, 'consists in an equal poise between the Prerogatives of the Crown and the Rights and Liberties of the People and ... that ballance can never be better preserved than by an Independency in Parliament and the honest decision

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1. Stuart Papers, 231/110: [Barrymore] to [Sempil], 15 Feb. 1740-1.

2. Brit. Mus. Addit. MSS. 28229 (Caryll Correspondence), f.317: G. Dickens to R. Caryll, 21 Feb. 1738-9.

of the uninfluenced part of the House of Commons.'[1] In the event, the Place Bill introduced at the end of January 1740 was defeated by only 16 votes. 'Had that Bill pass'd at this Time,' commented the Duke of Newcastle sombrely, 'It would have carried such a Reflection upon the Members of this House of Commons, that It would have been difficult to have got a Whig Parliament afterwards.'[2] Many of the ministry's opponents found the Opposition's now endemic disunity profoundly disturbing; and early in the New Year Lady Bland 'served up a grand assembly in London, supposedly to clear her husband Sir John 'of being [in] any way concerned in the sins of the nation'.[3] Yet even when they had managed to push the ministry so close to defeat, the Opposition leaders were unable to agree for long, and on the motion to address the King for Walpole's removal in February 1741, their facade of unity disintegrated completely. Some Jacobites and a few malcontent Whigs voted for the motion; a much larger group of differing persuasions withdrew before the division; and a small number, including some Tories, actually voted with the Court. In the end the minority could scrape together a mere 106 votes. The reasons for such chaotic behaviour were varied: some Tory purists, like Barrymore, were endeavouring to prevent 'the grand Combination', or the setting up of Pulteney at the head of a re-formed Whig ministry; others, both Tories and Patriots, were seeking to demonstrate their continuing loyalty to the Hanoverian regime and their respect for the royal prerogative.[4] But whatever the reasons for

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1. Grosvenor MSS.: Address of the mayor, aldermen and commons of Chester to their representatives in Parliament, n.d.

2. Addit. MSS. 32693, ff.51-2: Newcastle to Sir W. Ashburnham, 1 Feb. 1739-40.

3. Hist. MSS. Comm., Hastings MSS., iii.28: Lady Fairfax to Lady Huntingdon, 10 Jan. 1739-40.

4. Dickinson, Bolingbroke, pp.269-70; Sedgwick, History of Parliament, i.45; National Library of Scotland MSS.7044 (Yester Papers), ff. 158-9: Pulteney to Tweeddale, 1 Mar. 174[0-]1.

it, this unedifying spectacle was viewed with dismay by the Opposition's supporters in the country, as their Whig opponents mocked and chided them for their ineptitude. From Liverpool, a local Tory reported to Francis Price how 'the Walpolians ... give themselves great Airs & triumph exeedingly,' and went on to quote the contents of a letter to the Council from Richard Gildart, in which he expressed his hope that after so crushing a defeat 'no more lyes wou'd be sent into ye Country weekly as usual; now y.t the world sees there's nothing in all [the Opposition's] pretended Grievances.'[1]

Thus, almost a year to the week before Walpole's actual fall from power, his parliamentary opponents had once more demonstrated their total incapacity for united action. While Jacobites like Barrymore, Wynn and Sir John Hynde Cotton, still placed their trust in achieving a Stuart Restoration by force of arms, a section of the disgruntled Whigs under Pulteney and Carteret were increasingly anxious to come to terms with the ministry for their own security. Yet by far the greatest part of the Opposition, as future events were clearly to show, continued to support in principle the idea of a broadly-based Country Coalition. As conceived in the 1720s by Bolingbroke and Daniel Pulteney, and as advocated now by such men as Chesterfield, Argyle, Bathurst and Gower, the primary goal was to be the eradication of the old distinctions between Tory and Whig, and the establishment in their place of a new political consensus, the proponents of which would be motivated by the spirit of patriotic fervour rather than the spur of factious self-interest.

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1. N.L.W. MSS. 3581E/10: G. Dickens to Price, 17 Feb. 1740-1.

Only a fundamental shift of political attitudes, it was felt, could preserve the traditional balance of the English constitution and the liberties of the English people. It matters little whether Walpole's administration really did threaten either constitutional balance or national liberty; what remains of overriding importance is the fact that many contemporaries believed it did. As well as those who opposed Walpole wholly or partly for reasons of frustrated ambition or hopes of personal gain, there were undoubtedly many others who sincerely imagined that the Whig triumph of 1714 had menaced the old social order, by undermining the authority of the ancient gentry families, and preaching a gospel of money and jobbery as the new foundations of political power. It was of course an exaggerated picture, and a jaundiced one; yet it contained a sufficiently large element of truth to provide an adequate basis of political motivation throughout the 1740's and beyond: so long, indeed, as half the political nation continued to lie under the stigma of proscription. Those Whigs who sought only to force an entry into the ministry for themselves had naturally little wish to abolish political proscription, or the party distinctions on which it depended; while, at the opposite extreme, most Jacobites merely wanted to transfer its application onto their opponents. Nevertheless, for those would-be Patriots, Whig and Tory alike, who did seek the abolition of the existing political configurations, the removal of Walpole remained a vital first step; and with the approach of another General Election, it was to this single end that they now determined to direct their attention.

6. The Parting of the Ways, 1741-7

As a decade which saw the jostling of Walpole from power, the creation of a 'Broadbottom' Administration, the suppression of a Jacobite Rebellion, and the widespread disintegration of Tory electoral interests the 1740s must by any criteria represent a significant juncture in the development of British political life. For the Tories it was a decisive one, marking their final breach with Jacobitism and foreshadowing their long-awaited quietus as a great national party. But though the Tory mood by the end of this period was characterized by disorientation and decay, ten years earlier amid preparations for the forthcoming General Election it had been distinguished by an appearance of resolution and vitality.

Nevertheless, with so much depending upon the fragile relations built up between the Tories and their Opposition Whig allies, there was a good measure of dissension too. In Lancashire, it became known as early as May 1739 that Lord Derby was planning to set up his son, Lord Strange, as Knight of the Shire, though he intended asking no-one for their vote or interest, and since neither Shuttleworth nor Bold seemed anxious to step down, a contest seemed inevitable.[1] This situation provided the occasion for a bitter row among the leaders of the Country interest; for Derby suspected Lord Barrymore of encouraging the sitting Tory Members to stand firm, despite the latter's protestations that he regarded Strange's election as a forgone conclusion. Yet, as Barrymore

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1. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Barrymore to Bradshaigh, 18 May 1739.

hinted darkly to Bradshaigh, if Lord Derby continued to labour the point, he was as well able to spend £1000 as his lordship.[1] In Cheshire, all remained quiet save for Bishop Peploe, who was concerned by the steadily increasing influence of Watkin Williams Wynn at Chester and now began urging the Government to mount a determined campaign against Wynn's power-base in Denbighshire.[2] In fact, arrangements to that end were already well in hand: Sir Robert Salusbury Cotton, Lord Lieutenant of Denbighshire, had been chosen to stand for the county, while Wynn's Tory rival, John Myddelton,[3] had received guarantees of Whig support if he would stand for the Denbigh Boroughs. Early in November, however, Cotton suddenly withdrew his support from Myddelton and pulled out of the county contest, to the great embarrassment of Whig associates like Thomas Brereton.[4] By January 1740, the Whigs had persuaded Myddelton himself to stand against Wynn for the county seat, and shortly afterwards the whole ludicrous web of faction was rendered complete by the announcement that Cotton now intended standing for the Boroughs with Wynn's blessing. His former friends had few delusions about the reasons for such a complete <u>volte-face</u>. 'S.r Rob.t is irredeemably lost,' remarked one observer, 'for he is not to spend one farthing, S.r W[illia]m W[illia]ms's[5] agent having p[ai]d all the bills ...; so y.t you may depend upon it that the old Miser made a

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1. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Barrymore to Bradshaigh, 7 Sept. 1739.

2. Addit. MSS. 32692, ff.448-9: Peploe to Newcastle, 7 Nov. 1739.

3. John Myddelton (1685-1747), of Chirk Castle, Denb. M.P. for Denbigh Boroughs, Apr. 1733-1741; for Denbighshire, 1741-Feb. 1742. Hanoverian Tory. Entered into an electoral compact with the government in 1739, and voted with the Walpole ministry, 1741-2.

4. Chirk Castle MSS. E.903: Brereton to Myddelton, 5 Nov. 1939.

5. Wynn's father.

safe bargaine before he opened his purse.'[1]

Meanwhile, in Lancashire, Lord Strange pressed ahead with his own campaign, and by March was sending out circular letters to the gentlemen of the county.[2] Feeling obliged to protect his interests, Richard Shuttleworth entered into an agreement with his old opponent, Sir Henry Hoghton, whereby he undertook not to oppose Hoghton's candidate at Preston in return for his support in the county. This was an eventuality which Lord Derby had clearly not foreseen; thus, as Lord Barrymore noted cynically, 'the noble Earl, by his refined policy, has brought the dispute to lie between his son and his friend Bold.'[3] A week later, realising the futility of his situation, Bold stood down, but not before his candidacy had created a good deal of bitterness in Tory ranks, and not least because it had forced Shuttleworth to commit himself in honour against meddling at Preston.[4]

All remained calm at Wigan until the spring of 1740.[5] Then in March rumours began to circulate that Francis Reynolds,[6] a Manchester Whig, intended intervening in the borough. The story caused some

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1. Chirk Castle MSS. E.5330: J. Griffith to D. Williams, 29 Jan. 1739-40. See also N.L.W. MSS. 3582E/45: Barrymore to Price, 9 Feb. 1739-40. The whole affair is discussed in detail in Thomas,'Wynnstay v. Chirk Castle: Parliamentary Elections in Denbighshire, 1716-41', loc. cit.

2. Lancashire R.O., Pedder MSS., DDPd/26/251: Strange to R. Robinson, 11 Mar. 1739-40.

3. Hist. MSS. Comm., 15th Rep. VII, p.321: Barrymore to Price, 15 Mar. 1739-40.

4. Legh of Lyme MSS.: Shuttleworth to P. Legh, 23 Mar. 1739-40.

5. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: T. Banks to Bradshaigh, 13 Nov. 1739.

6. Francis Reynolds (d.1773), of Strangeways, Lancs. M.P. for Lancaster, Apr. 1745-1773. Whig. Surveyor of Woods in the N. of the Duchy of Lancaster, 1740-61; Provost Marshal of Barbados, 1741-61; Clerk of the Crown to the D. of L.,1741-61.

considerable stir among Bradshaigh's friends there, but by May a semblance of tranquility had been restored and no further overtures were talked of.[1] Two months later, Reynolds was reported to be fully engaged at Preston; 'to what purpose time Will shew,' commented Barrymore, 'but a very greate Expence is certain.'[2] Indeed it was; for Shuttleworth, having apparently decided that his agreement with Hoghton had been nullified by Bold's withdrawal, now resolved to press ahead with his original plans, which involved setting up his son James on a joint interest with the sitting Tory member, Nicholas Fazakerley.[3]

These squabbles in Lancashire, however, were of parochial interest when set beside the major confrontation fomenting in North Wales. Almost nobody was happy about the contorted pattern of party allegiancies which had been constructed in Denbighshire. Lord Barrymore, himself a practised connoisseur of factious unions, disapproved strongly. 'I am sorry there was occasion to sett up S^{r}. Robt. [Cotton] at Denbigh,' he told Francis Price. 'Middleton is bad but I much feare he is Worse and the most unsettled man alive. I think he Will Change his mind before the Elections.'[4] Myddelton, for his own part, was as suspicious of his new friends as he was of his old enemies, and in the autumn of 1740 began furtively monitoring the intrigues of his neighbours by means of an agent in the

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1. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: T. Banks to Bradshaigh, 25 Mar. & 6 May 1740; ibid.: A. Leigh to Bradshaigh, 28 Mar. 1740.

2. Ibid.: Barrymore to Bradshaigh, 11 July 1740.

3. N.L.W. MSS. 3582E/54: Barrymore to Price, 20 Aug. 1740.

4. Ibid./45: same to same, 9 Feb. 1739-40.

Post Office.[1] Lord Cholmondeley, he soon discovered, was endeavouring to prize Cotton free from Wynn's influence by offering his interest in Cheshire if Sir Robert would agree to stand again in that county;[2] given his experience in 1734, this was hardly an appealing proposition. His brother, Lynch Salusbury Cotton,[3] was meanwhile attempting to persuade him to stand on his own interest for Denbigh Boroughs, where without Wynn he could expect to enjoy the backing of Lord Cholmondeley, Lord Dysart[4] and Lady Delves.[5] '[N]o doubt but an Old Whigg will have the preference of those people that are his Antagonists,' he was asserting confidently in October.[6] But it was Sir Robert's own doubts which were most significant: though not easily convinced by his brother or Lord Cholmondeley, he was nevertheless becoming increasingly disturbed by the implications of his devil's compact with Wynn. During November 1740, being invited to dine at Wynnstay, he wrote telling his brother about his misgivings: 'there will be people of such principles there, that I Can't at all be fond of, & sho.[d] much Rather avoid them.'[7] It was not altogether surprising, therefore, when in March 1741 Cotton at last abandoned his campaign in

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1. A letterbook of the correspondence between the agent [Mr. Barber] and Myddelton, containing transcripts of several intercepted letters, is in Chirk MSS. C.31.

2. Chirk Castle MSS. C.31/5: Barber to Myddelton, 30 Sept. 1740.

3. Lynch Salusbury Cotton (c.1705-75), of Combermere, Chesh. and Llewenny, Denb. Succeeded bro. as 4th Bart., 1748. M.P. for Denbighshire, Dec. 1749-1774. Whig. Receiver of land tax in N. Wales and Chesh., 1742-75.

4. Lionel Tollemache, 4th Earl of Dysart [S](1708-70). The Tollemaches did not begin to utilize the political potential of their Cheshire estates until the 1750s.

5. Elizabeth Broughton [Delves](n.d.), heiress of Sir Thomas Delves, 4th Bart. of Doddington, Chesh. Her husband and son both sat as Whigs for Staffordshire constituencies.

6. Chirk Castle MSS. C31/12: L.S. Cotton to Sir R.S. Cotton, 15 Oct. 1740.

7. Ibid./26: Sir R.S. Cotton to L.S. Cotton, 25 Nov. 1740.

Denbigh Boroughs, and accepted the offer made through Lord Cholmondeley to be brought in elsewhere at the Government's expense.[1]

Denbighshire was not, however, the only scene of party conflict in the area; for in neighbouring Flintshire, by way of retaliation, a subscription was organised with a view to setting up a suitable candidate to contest Flint Boroughs in the Country interest.[2] Sir John Glynne, the defeated Tory candidate in 1734, was chosen to stand for the county, and Richard Williams,[3] Wynn's younger brother, was persuaded somewhat reluctantly to stand for the Boroughs.[4] One minor setback encountered during the campaign was the refusal of Lord Derby to place his small interest in the county at the disposal of the Tory candidates: a refusal which stemmed, so it was thought, from a longstanding dispute between the Glynne and Stanley families.[5] By working through Richard Shuttleworth '& some others who are intimate with His L[ordshi]p', Sir Thomas Mostyn[6] at length managed to secure Derby's backing for Williams at least, but against Sir John the earl remained adamant.[7]

By the end of 1740, Sir Robert Grosvenor was certain that, with the Duke of Argyle's support in Scotland added to that of Dodington and

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1. He was in fact returned for Ld.Edgcumbe's borough of Lostwithiel.

2. Sedgwick, History of Parliament, i.376-7; Grosvenor MSS.: Subscription List, n.d. (among the papers of Sir Robert Grosvenor). Grosvenor contributed £200, the largest individual sum in a total of £1591-12s.-0d. promised.

3. Richard Williams (?1699-1759), of Penbedw, Denb. M.P. for Flint Boroughs, Mar.1742-1747. Tory.

4. Glynne MSS. 5143: R. Williams to Glynne, 25 Oct. 1740.

5. The manor of Hawarden had been sequestered from the Royalist Stanleys during the Civil War, and had subsequently passed to the then Presbyterian Glynnes, where it remained. See Feiling, Tory Party, 1640-1714, p.101.

6. Sir Thomas Mostyn, 4th Bart. (1704-58), of Mostyn, Flints. M.P. for Flintshire, 1734-41, 1747-Mar.1758. Hanoverian Tory.

7. Glynne MSS.5140: Derby to Mostyn, 20 Nov. 1740; ibid. 5141: Mostyn to Glynne, 26 Nov. 1740; ibid. 4065: same to same, 7 Mar. 1740-1.

the Prince of Wales in the West Country, the Tories and their allies would find themselves in a clear majority after the elections were over: a view with which his friend George Shakerley[1] readily concurred.[2] When Parliament was dissolved, however, on 27 April 1741, the northwest seemed determined to take little or no part in the electoral revolution being so confidently augured by the Opposition. The bustles in Denbighshire and Flintshire apart, the only contested election threatened in the area was at Preston, where the interloper Reynolds was finding himself hard pressed by the Tories. A few days before the poll was due to begin, Hoghton and a friend wrote by express to the Duke of Newcastle explaining their plight: 'Mr. Fazackerley and Mr Shuttleworth father and son are here, who not content with the mobbs in town (which we should not reguard) have called in Crowds of papists and others in that Interest.' Hoghton and the other Whig Justices of the Peace had been obliged to send to Bolton for reinforcements to support the company of soldiers normally garrisoned in Preston. Orders had now been received, however, from the Secretary at War requiring all troops to retire from the town for the duration of the election, according to the law, and the Justices feared the worst if these orders were not rescinded: 'my Lord we are as near a rebellion as possible, [and] have neither military force nor Lord Lieutenant ....'[3] The Government, though sympathetic, was unprepared to countenance such

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1. George Shakerley (1682-1756), of Gwersyllt, Denb. and Hulme Hall, Chesh. half-brother of Peter Shakerley (d.1726). High Tory. His dau. Frances became the 2nd wife of Sir Watkin Williams Wynn in 1748.

2. Chirk Castle MSS. C.31/27: Grosvenor to Shakerley, 18 Nov. 1740; ibid./28: Shakerley to Grosvenor, n.d.

3. P.R.O., S.P. 36/55, ff.332-3: Hoghton & R. Molyneux to Newcastle, 30 Apr. 1741. For details of the riots, see the affidavits of W. Shawe & W. Nolan, ibid./56, ff.7-8: 1 May 1741.

blatant contempt of electoral propriety, and the poll was allowed to go ahead without any interference from the army.[1] Fazakerley and James Shuttleworth[2] were returned with a comfortable majority; afterwards one observer estimated the cost to have been in excess of £4,000.[3] Elsewhere, in both Lancashire and Cheshire, Peter Bold excepted, the sitting Members were returned without opposition.

After a fierce struggle, Wynn came top of the poll in Denbighshire, but the sheriff, a kinsman of Myddelton's, rejected almost 600 of his votes, and declared his opponent duly elected. Having taken the precaution, though, of standing also in Montgomeryshire, Wynn was returned there without a contest, but in both the Flint and Denbigh Boroughs his nominees were beaten by Whig candidates, and only Sir John Glynne as Tory choice for the county of Flintshire was returned unopposed.[4] Like the election campaign which preceded it, the outcry provoked by Wynn's defeat in Denbighshire spread not only through North Wales but into Cheshire and Lancashire as well. In Liverpool, for example, George Dickens[5] professed himself 'put out of all patience to see so much iniquity ride Triumphant, & the Villain so insolent upon the occasion. ... Great joy it was to

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1. P.R.O., S.P. 36/56, f.9: J. Couraud to Hoghton & Molyneux, 3 May 1741.

2. James Shuttleworth (1714-73), of Gawthorpe Hall, Lancs. & Forcett Park, Yorks. M.P. for Preston, 1741-54; for Lancashire, 1761-8. Sheriff of Yorks., 1760-1. Tory.

3. Autobiography of William Stout, p.230. A printed poll list can be found among the Kenyon MSS. (DDKe). Strangely enough, Hoghton did not himself cast a vote.

4. Sedgwick, History of Parliament, i.375-8.

5. George Dickens (n.d.), M.D. of Liverpool. Jacobite. Correspondent of Francis Price.

all the Bob-Torys[1] when the news came that Sir W[atkin] was postpon'd.' The most particular object of Tory indignation, however, remained the indefatigable Thomas Brereton, who, having resumed his position as the Government's 'Agent-General for Elections in these parts', had been extremely active on Myddelton's behalf during the campaign, and now taunted Wynn to petition against the return.[2]

Looking at the General Election as a whole, the lack of activity in Lancashire and Cheshire was hardly the fault of the Tories. At the dissolution, ministerial supporters had held only five seats in the former county and none at all in the latter, so that any initiative aimed at altering the political status quo in either shire ought properly to have originated with the Whigs. As it was, they seem to have given up all hope of restoring any semblance of political balance in the area; and indeed by prefering to concentrate all their energies in Wales they were unable to preserve even the beggarly remnant of parliamentary representation with which they had started. With Reynolds's defeat at Preston, only Brereton Gildart, Bradshaigh and Lowther remained, and of these the last two were soon to prove unreliable assets when it came to a show-down. Not since the Tory landslide of 1713 had the Whigs fared so badly. Much of the responsibility for failure must necessarily rest with Lord Cholmondeley; for, as Lord Lieutenant in Cheshire and, since 1736, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster as well, he alone controlled the fountainhead of local patronage and dictated the broad outlines of Whig electoral strategy. Walpole had invested his son-in-law with supreme power in the northwest,

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1. This is an interesting expression. Dickens usually refers to the local Whigs as 'Walpolians'; by 'Bob-Tories,' therefore, he seems to be making a precise reference to those Hanoverian Tories like Myddelton who were prepared to throw in their lot with 'Bob' Walpole. This interpretation is adopted too by Sir Keith Feiling: see The Second Tory Party, p.38.

2. N.L.W. MSS. 3581E/15 & 16: Dickens to F. Price, 3 & 19 July 1741.

but Cholmondeley was totally inadequate and unfitted for the task of utilizing it to best advantage. Through years of neglect the Whig interest in the area had been allowed to wither, and almost to die, its opponents periodically chastened, but its friends ill-rewarded and ignored. The result was a growing sense of alienation: a rejection of Walpole and his system. Thus, when Tories looked forward with vindictive eagerness to a fast-approaching day of condign retribution, they were by no means alone.

Despite some premature fears expressed by Lord Barrymore that the Prime Minister might find himself stronger in the new Parliament than in the old,[1] it soon became evident that Walpole's majority in the Lower House had dropped from 42 votes to 17 as a result of the election.[2] Already in August, Opposition leaders were confident of gaining a majority for themselves by dint of careful management, and Lord Chesterfield, though deeply suspicious of Pulteney and Carteret, was pressing on his colleagues the value of contesting the election for chairman of the Commons Committee on Privileges and Elections, as a standard around which to rally their followers.[3] In October, Pulteney visited Thomas Bootle in Lancashire, and there assured a gathering of local gentry supporters that the motion for Walpole's removal would be re-introduced during the next session.[4]

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1. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Barrymore to Bradshaigh, 16 June 1741.

2. Sedgwick, History of Parliament, i.46-7. For a full account of the disintegration of Walpole's majority, see J.B. Owen, The Rise of the Pelhams (London, 1957), pp.1-40.

3. The Letters of Philip Dormer Stanhope, Fourth Earl of Chesterfield, ed. B. Dobrée (London, 1932), ii.467-70: Chesterfield to Dodington, 8 Aug. [misdated Sept.] 1741.

4. N.L.W. MSS. 3581E/12: G. Dickens to F. Price, 16 Oct. 1741.

The new Parliament in fact opened in December with the Opposition appearing to be as deeply divided as ever,[1] but as the Commons settled down to the business of determining the results of disputed elections the minority began to take on a greater degree of coherence and unanimity. After a pyrrhic victory in two divisions on the Bossiney return, the ministry was unable to prevent a date being fixed for hearing Wynn's Denbighshire petition at the Bar of the House, and on 16 December the Opposition succeeded in electing their own nominee to the chairmanship of the Elections Committee, Sir Thomas Lowther being among those who voted against the Government.[2] The following day a friend wrote to Peter Legh in Cheshire, acquainting him with the result: 'This place has not been before carried by the Country party of 33 Years. This happy omen wee hope presages greater Success.'[3] As the determination of vital election petitions went ahead during December and January, Lowther continued to vacillate between absenteeism and downright opposition, and Sir Roger Bradshaigh, who had deserted Walpole in the first shirmishes on the Bossiney petition, may have done likewise.[4] Opposition leaders, however, remained deeply concerned about absentees from their own ranks, particularly from among the Tories. Thus at the end of December, Wynn wrote to supporters of the Country interest in Liverpool, urging them to ensure the

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1. The Yale Edition of Horace Walpole's Correspondence, ed. W.S. Lewis, et. al. (London, 1937-?), xvii.230-5: H. Walpole to Sir H. Mann, 10 Dec. 1741.

2. Sedgwick, History of Parliament, i. 48, 97. The House voted to seat Wynn for Denbighshire in place of Myddelton on 23 Feb.: see ibid., i.375-6; ii. 287-8.

3. Legh of Lyme MSS.: ? to Legh, 17 Dec. 1741. The letter is franked by William Shippen, but is not in his handwriting.

4. Sedgwick, History of Parliament, ii.227-8; Owen, Rise of the Pelhams, p.20.

presence of all local Tory members at Westminster:

> We are now a Majority & it is in the Power of our Friends to remain so if they will but attend; it is that & that only that Clogs the Wheels at present .... I hope the Town of Liverpool where Interests are so much at Stake will remonstrate to every deliquent in it's Neighbourhood the absolute necessity of Attendance. ... A small fit of illness & slight fit of the Gout cannot be a Plea where there is an Honest Heart at this time when the Fate of the Country may well possibly turn upon a single Vote. 1

Emphasized in this way, the seriousness of the situation seems to have had its effect; for by the middle of January the Cheshire Tory, Randle Wilbraham, was boasting of the Country party's ability to bring between 255 and 260 supporters into the House, if such would be enough to carry the day.[2] Some Whig observers remained sceptical, however: 'This same Opposition, with many heads, seems to be neither so Powerful nor so Unanimous as it would fain appear,' commented one such stalwart to the Duke of Devonshire.[3] There must have been others who shared his doubts.

Such opinions notwithstanding, Walpole was now coming under an increasing amount of pressure from his ministerial colleagues. By the beginning of February he had determined to resign, leaving Newcastle and Hardwicke to come to terms with Pulteney and Carteret. Though justifiably bitter about the manner of his removal, Walpole nevertheless remained dead set against the idea of a broadly-based coalition of the sort being

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1. N.L.W. MSS. 3581E/19: Wynn to [J. Hardman], 29 Dec. 1741. The extract printed in Hist. MSS. Comm., 15th Rep. VII, p.324 incorrectly gives Francis Price as the recipient. Legh Master, the absentee whom Wynn had principally in mind, had in fact set out for London despite his gout a month before: see Legh of Lyme MSS.: Piers Legh to P. Legh, 29 Nov. 1741.

2. N.L.W. MSS. 3581E/13: G. Dickens to F. Price, 15 Jan. 1741-2.

3. Chatsworth House, Devonshire MSS.: Sir R. Wilmot to Devonshire, 12 Jan. 1741-2.

advocated by Argyle and Wilmington. ' ... I am of opinion,' he told Devonshire, 'that the Whig Party must be kept together, w.ch may be done w.th this Parliament, if a Whig Administration be form'd.'[1] A Whig administration was formed, at least tentatively:[2] Wilmington had the Treasury; Pulteney and Carteret were suitably accommodated, and a number of their closest supporters were taken into place. Rumour and confusion persisted, however, and news of the ministerial changes occurring in the wake of Walpole's resignation was received with mixed feelings in the country at large. Of primary concern to supporters of the Opposition was the matter of how the Tories ought to react to the changing situation. At Liverpool, for example, George Dickens was flatly opposed to any compromise with the old regime. 'I would not have errant Knaves blended with honest men,' he told Francis Price; 'that woud not be ye way to obtain a Change of Measures [and] without a Change of Persons signifies nothing at all.'[3]

On 12 February, the bulk of the Opposition assembled at the Fountain Tavern in the Strand in order to consider their position.[4] Apart from a general condemnation of all those who had entered the new ministry without prior consultation, and demands for an enquiry into the conduct of the

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1. Sedgwick, History of Parliament, i.49-51; Devonshire MSS.: Walpole to Devonshire, 2 Feb. 1741-2.

2. The best account of the complex negotiations which preceded the formation of the new ministry is given in Owen, Rise of the Pelhams, pp.87-125.

3. N.L.W. MSS. 3581E/23: Dickens to Price, 7 Feb. 1741-2. I strongly disagree with Dr. Owen's assertion (Rise of the Pelhams, p.98) that the Tories had no interest in joining the Government: they were not prepared to join it on simply any terms.

4. For accounts of the Fountain Tavern meeting, see: Horace Walpole's Correspondence, xvii.335-40: H. Walpole to Mann, 18 Feb. 1741-2; John, Viscount Perceval, Faction Detected (7 edns. 1743-4); London Evening-Post, 16 Feb. 1741-2.

late administration, the principal call, as Sir Dudley Ryder noted in his diary, was for 'The establishment of a ministry on a broad bottom, as the term was, by which they meant to take the Tories into the administration. They talked of extinguishing parties with their names, and having but one party.'[1] The Duke of Argyle, in particular, was strongly in favour of a settlement that would bring the Tories into Government. The meeting's deliberations ended with three toasts, each indicative of the preoccupations of those assembled: firstly 'No Screen'; secondly 'Perseverence, Unanimity & Attendance'; and lastly 'the Cleansing of the Augean Stable'.[2]

Extra-parliamentary pressure was also building up. The Common Council of the City of London met to draw up instructions to its Members of Parliament, and sent into Scotland and the provinces for other corporations to do likewise.[3] The Common Council of Chester were quick to respond, and after thanking Grosvenor and Bunbury for their 'vigilant and faithful Conduct in Parliament', went on to demand that they

> Concurr in such Salutary Laws as shall be thought necessary for Disabling Pensioners from sitting in Parliament as Representatives of a free People, for reducing and limiting the number of Placemen in the House of Comons, and the Repeal of the Septenial Act that thereby his Majesty may be rightly Informed of the true Sense of his People.

They also called for an inquiry into the behaviour of 'those who have been the Causes of all past mismanagements', that they might be brought

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1. Cited in Sedgwick, History of Parliament, i. 51-2.

2. N.L.W. MSS. 3581E/24: Dickens to Price, 19 Feb. 1741-2.

3. Horace Walpole's Correspondence, xvii. 328-35: H. Walpole to Mann, 9 Feb. 1741-2.

to trial and punished, and concluded with an oblique endorsement of Argyle's demand for the abolition of Government by Party:

> ... we have now reason to hope that every odious name of Distinction will soon be forgot and lost among us and that no Difference will remain but of those that are Friends or Enemies to the Constitution, of those who would maintain the Freedom and Independency of Parliament and of those who would Subject it to Corrupt and Ministerial Influence. 1

On 16 February, Wynn and a number of other Opposition leaders approached the Duke of Argyle and urged him to accept the King's offer of chief command of the army, which he had hitherto refused unless several Tories were brought into the administration. On the following evening, at a 'general Meeting of the Heads of the Denominations in the Opposition' held at Dodington's house, Argyle sought the approval of those present to enter the ministry on the strict understanding that, 'assoon [sic] as he found that he could not only govern That [i.e. the army] according to the Nation, but also reduce every Thing else in the Administration of Affairs to the public Content of the People,' he would resign again. The Jacobite Duke of Beaufort, who privately admitted to looking upon 'the Perseverance of this Man in the Cause of our Country to be our Last Stake', though 'oblig'd to differ in much too public a Manner' from some of his 'most esteemed Freinds', at length persuaded the Tories to demonstrate their support for Argyle by accompanying him to the King's Court at St. James's. There the next morning, attended by many members of the Tory party including Beaufort and Wynn, Argyle waited upon the King and

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1. Grosvenor MSS.: Address of the mayor and commonalty of Chester to their representatives in Parliament, n.d. [but Feb. or Mar. 1741-2].

kissed hands.[1]

The breakthrough into Government for which the Tories had waited so long seemed at last to have arrived. 'I have just time to tell you what Revolutions here are,' Legh Master wrote breathlessly to his uncle, Peter Legh. 'The Late Treasury Board to a man turn'd out, & new ones all fixt as you'll see by ye news papers to night: The K[ing] & Pri[nce] reconcil'd, a Coalition of Partys in full view .... People here are all in high Spirits, the Late Placemen excepted who cant with patience think any but themselves are intitled to places.'[2] The Opposition were pressing ahead also with their plans for prosecuting the former ministers: a conscious revenge for the impeachments of Oxford, Bolingbroke and Ormonde twenty-five years before.[3] Nicholas Fazakerley was charged with the job of preparing the case against Walpole,[4] amid strong rumours in Liverpool that he was on the point of succeeding Lord Cholmondeley as Chancellor of the Duchy.[5]

This general mood of optimism and exuberance lasted into March. It was widely believed that Argyle had carried his point and that the new Admiralty Board would include a number of Tories: 'as I suppose you will hear by rejoicings from Rome!' commented Horace Walpole acidly to a friend.[6] However, in pressing for still further concessions the

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1. Bodl. MS. Ballard 29, f.75: Beaufort to Mr. Paston, 18 Feb. 1741-2; Hist. MSS. Comm., Egmont Diary, iii. 254-5.

2. Legh of Lyme MSS.: Master to P. Legh, 18 Feb. 1741-2.

3. N.L.W. MSS. 3581E/25: G. Dickens to F. Price, 12 Mar. 1741-2.

4. Horace Walpole's Correspondence, xvii. 335-40: H. Walpole to Mann, 18 Feb. 1741-2; Hist. MSS. Comm., Egmont Diary, iii. 260.

5. Addit. MSS. 46400, f.173: T. Moss to F. Price, ? Feb. 1741-2.

6. Horace Walpole's Correspondence, xvii. 355-6: H. Walpole to Mann, 3 Mar. 1741-2.

Opposition now overplayed its hand, and on 8 March, reacting strongly against renewed pressure from the duke's associates, the King struck Sir John Hynde Cotton's name out of the Admiralty List. The following day a retaliatory resolution calling for a secret committee of inquiry into the conduct of the administration during the previous twenty years was defeated in the Commons by two votes, and on 10 March Argyle resigned from the Government.[1] 'The World is here again chang'd,' Legh Master pronounced gloomily, 'the Broad Bottom, ye Coalition of Parties is all at an End here.'[2] In Liverpool, the news of the Opposition's defeat was received with elation by the Whigs and with anger by the Tories. 'There was a fault somewhere to be sure,' George Dickens wrote testily to Francis Price, 'to let the Motion [for a secret committee] be lost by two when it ought to have been prevented. Legh Master and Bootle were not in the House & Sr Tho: [Lowther?] went out of it a Neuter. The way to be sure is never to be secure.'[3]

Having thus examined in some detail the role played by the Tories in the climactic events surrounding the collapse of Walpole's administration, it is not necessary to dwell further on the protracted search for ministerial stability, which was to preoccupy contemporaries for the next four years, and which has been dealt with more than adquately elsewhere.[4] For the purposes of the present study it is more important to consider the effects

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1. Owen, Rise of the Pelhams, pp. 100-2; Sedgwick, History of Parliament, i.53.

2. Legh of Lyme MSS.: Master to P. Legh, 13 Mar. 1741-2.

3. N.L.W. MSS. 3581E/25: Dickens to Price, 12 Mar. 1741-2.

4. The best account is in Owen, Rise of the Pelhams, pp.101-320. Dr. Owen is, however, rather weak on the question of Tory involvement in the complex negotiations of these years, and should be supplemented by reference to Private Correspondence of Chesterfield and Newcastle, 1744-6, ed. Sir Richard Lodge (Camden Soc., 3rd series, xliv. 1930), passim; and to Chesterfield's letters to Gower in P.R.O., 30/29/1/11 (Granville Papers).

which changes at the centre had in the provinces, especially as regards the political influence enjoyed by local Whig magnates. Lord Derby, for example, was appointed to the Lord Lieutenancy of Lancashire, left vacant since the old earl's death in 1736.[1] Lord Cholmondeley, on the other hand, not on the best of terms with the new regime, lost a good deal of the prestige and power which had accrued to him over the years as Walpole's son-in-law. He retained his official posts in Cheshire and North Wales, but in December 1743 was obliged to give up the seals of the Duchy of Lancaster to Lord Edgcumbe.[2] The Post of Lord Privy Seal which he got in exchange, apparently as a mark of ministerial favour, was in reality a golden handshake, secured only with the greatest difficulty and lost within a year. During that time his relations with the Pelhams deteriorated badly, and by November 1744 he was said to belong to Lord Granville's party in the House of Lords.[3] For New Whigs like Thomas Bootle, the fruits of victory proved even more illusive. During the early part of 1742 he was being suggested as a likely Chief Baron of the Exchequer, and his patron, the proud Duke of Somerset, personally recommended his qualifications for the job to Lord Chancellor Hardwicke: but all to no avail.[4]

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1. P.R.O., C.231/10, p.335: Commission of Appointment, 15 Mar. 1741-2.

2. Richard, 1st Baron Edgcumbe (1680-1758), of Mount Edgcumbe, nr. Plymouth, Devon. Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, 1743-58. For constituencies represented and other offices held, see Sedgwick, History of Parliament, ii. 3-4.

3. Cholmondeley MSS., DCH/X/10: Orford [i.e. Walpole] to Cholmondeley, 6 May 1743; An Eighteenth-Century Correspondence, ed. L. Dickins and M. Stanton (London 1910), pp.107-8: T. Lennard-Barrett to Rev. S. Miller, ? Nov. 1744.

4. Devonshire MSS.: Sir R. Wilmot to Devonshire, 4 Feb. 1741-2; Addit. MSS. 35587, f.37: Somerset to Hardwicke, 14 June 1742; ibid., f.39: Hardwicke to Somerset, n.d.

Of more general political concern in Tory dominated counties, however, was the vexed question of Whig predominance in Commissions of the Peace. In February 1742, the Tories had been in some hopes of seeing some significant alterations, particularly in North Wales where proscription was rigorously enforced against Wynn and his associates.[1] Yet by the end of the year the prospect of obtaining new Commissions appeared to be receding rapidly into the realms of wishful thinking, much to the frustration and annoyance of those most involved. More encouraging, though, was the continued association between the Tories of Cheshire and North Wales and that most recent neophytes, Sir Robert Salusbury Cotton, still Lord Lieutenant of Denbighshire. Many had believed Cotton's 'conversion' a purely temporary phenomenon, but in November 1742 he was reported to be still working closely with Wynn and George Shakerley, who 'frequently press'd him to vote with the Patriots or stay at Home'.[2] Late in 1743 or early in 1744, a new Commission was issued in Flintshire, which prompted Sir John Glynne to write personally to Lord Chancellor Hardwicke expressing his 'most Grateful acknowledgements' for this great service done the county, and assuring Hardwicke of his readiness 'to render to his Majesty & to his Government all the services in my little power.'[3] It was by no means a general victory, however, for elsewhere the Commissions remained largely unchanged.[4]

The formation of the so-called Broadbottom Administration at the end of 1744,[5] went some way toward reviving Tory hopes of a fuller

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1. Addit. MSS. 46400, f.178: Sir J. Glynne to F. Price, 27 Feb. 1741-2.
2. Chirk Castle MSS. E.4898: D. Williams to J. Myddelton, 23 Nov. 1742.
3. Addit. MSS. 35587, f.237: Glynne to Hardwicke, 10 Mar. 1743-4.
4. For the situation in Lancashire and Cheshire, see Appendix B.
5. See Owen, Rise of the Pelhams, pp.239-51.

participation in Government. Horace Walpole regarded the Opposition's efforts with cynicism. 'One has heard of the corruption of courtiers,' he wrote at the end of December; 'but ... the impudent prostitution of patriots, going to market with their honesty, beats it to nothing.'[1] Yet is is clear that not all those who entered the ministry were motivated by wholly mercenary considerations. Writing to Gower, Lord Chetwynd expressed his hope that 'what is now farther to be hoped for, is a more extensive Coalition, & y.^{t} the Publick may reap some benefit by a change of measures ....'[2] Lord Barrymore, too, seemed optimistic about the outcome of further negotiations. 'I wish our friends success in every thing that may tend to the Liberties off the nation,' he told Francis Price, 'w.th Cart Loads off honours and all the Employm[en]ts &c.'[3] Once again, however, Tory hopes were dashed. There was no general coalition. Only a handful of Tories were taken into the ministry, and these on a personal footing; some others were offered places and Wynn a peerage, but all refused, balking at the idea of being bought off piecemeal, and probably fearing the electoral consequences of appearing to support an arrangement designed with the sole intention of leaving the Opposition bereft of leaders.[4] Therefore, though some Tories did offer their limited backing to such governmental action as they could approve of,

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1. Horace Walpole's Correspondence, xviii. 549-52: H. Walpole to Mann, 24 Dec. 1744.

2. P.R.O. 30/29/1/11, f.287: Chetwynd to Gower, 26 Dec. 1744.

3. N.L.W. MSS. 3582E/86: Barrymore to Price, 12 Jan. 1744-5.

4. Sedgwick, History of Parliament, i.74; Owen, Rise of the Pelhams, pp.250, 257-60. I can find no evidence to support Dr. Owen's endorsement of the contemporary Whig claim that it was the Tories themselves who wrecked the idea of a full 'coalition of parties': this was never on offer.

the majority remained in Opposition. Thus on 21 March 1745, while nearly forty Tories divided with the administration on the question of a vote of credit for the war in Europe, one hundred and nine voted against them.[1]

Lord Chesterfield, himself one of the 'New Allies' taken into place by the Pelhams, repeatedly expressed the view that a large body of moderate Tories could easily be attached to Government by the adoption of appropriate measures, such as the redrafting of Commissions of the Peace.[2] 'If our friends in the Administration are wise,' he told Gower in April 1745, 'they will continue to strengthen your hands, by such concessions as will satisfy the reasonable, and greater part of the torys in the nation, and so brand the others with Jacobitism and Faction.'[3] At the same time he acquainted Newcastle with the difficulties facing Gower:

> I would by no means have him intimidated by an unreasonable party clamour, and if he can make a decent schism in the Tory party I would have him stand it; but if he cannot do that I cannot advise him to stand single, a supposed apostate from a party of which he was once the head, and which will remain too numerous and possessed of too many national pretences at least to be called Jacobite or factious. [4]

If a 'coalition of parties' were not achieved in Government, he argued, it would develop in Opposition. By September he was warning Newcastle of the need to 'show a very great Majority in Parliament, and hinder the forming of a Party of various denominations, which will then be call'd a

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1. Owen, Rise of the Pelhams, p.256; Private Correspondence of Chesterfield and Newcastle, pp.37-42: Newcastle to Chesterfield, 26 Mar. 1745.

2. For the Justice of the Peace Bill and the partial success of negotiations aimed at increasing Tory representation on Commissions of the Peace, see Owen, Rise of the Pelhams, pp.260-4.

3. P.R.O. 30/29/1/11, ff.290-2: Chesterfield to Gower, 13 Apr. 1745 (N.S.).

4. Private Correspondence of Chesterfield and Newcastle, p.44: Chesterfield to Newcastle, 13 Apr. 1745 (N.S.). For Newcastle's reply, see ibid., pp.47-8: 16 Apr. 1745.

National Party ....'[1] It was sound advice, but Newcastle and his brother, obsessed by the susceptibilities of their Old Corps of Whigs, were not about to make any further concessions.

To the most partisan of Whigs the agitation for a truly broad-bottomed administration was a game played for the Pretender;[2] and indeed there may still have been some who harboured a naive belief in the possibility of a parliamentary restoration of the Stuarts. Lord Chesterfield may well have been negotiating to that end whilst at Avignon in 1741, and Argyle's conduct in the following spring was thought by some to admit of a similar construction.[3] Yet for a majority of Tories the idea of coalition offered a more immediate and positive reward: a high road back to political respectability. There were undoubtedly a number of Tory gentlemen whose Country principles made them suspicious of all administrations and who would accept employments in none; but there were also others, such as Legh Master, for whom the charms of office held an almost irresistable appeal.[4] To committed Jacobites, therefore, the prospect of Tories being taken into Government and of proscription in the shires being brought to an end constituted more of a threat than a promise of hope, for it seemed likely to augur the final extinction of their cause.[5] Yet once the chances of a full coalition of parties had receded, they were quick to

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1. Private Correspondence of Chesterfield and Newcastle, pp.66-9: Chesterfield to Newcastle, 12 Sept. 1745.

2. See, for example, Horace Walpole's Correspondence, xvii. 355-6: H. Walpole to Mann, 3 Mar. 1741-2.

3. Sedgwick, History of Parliament, i. 71-2; cf. Bolingbroke's flirtation with the same idea in 1732: Dickinson, Bolingbroke, p.232. For Argyle's conduct, see below p. 258.

4. For the evidence relating to Master, and a full discussion of this question, see below pp. 315-6.

5. See Stuart Papers, 231/110: [Barrymore] to [Sempil], 15 Feb. 1740-1, cited above p. 232.

seize upon every opportunity for exploiting the feelings of disappointment and frustration which Whig intransigence had engendered. Thus, in June 1742, Lord Barrymore was deputed to convey a letter from the Pretender to the Duke of Argyle, in the hope of drawing him more closely into future intrigues.[1] When Argyle disclosed the entire transaction to the ministry, Barrymore endeavoured to extricate himself from a difficult position by denying any knowledge of the letter's contents, and proclaiming himself, somewhat disingenuously, 'a faithfull serv[an]t to to [sic] his majestie and my Countrey'.[2]

Notwithstanding this close scrape, the old earl continued to cabal with Wynn and other Jacobite leaders. After Cardinal Fleury's death in 1743, the plan for an Anglo-Scottish rising backed by French troops was revived, and as a result of detailed negotiations it was decided to put the scheme into operation early in 1744. On 14 February, however, details of the plan were leaked to the ministry in London, and the following day an explanatory message from the King was laid before Parliament. Nevertheless, no fewer than 123 Tories in the Commons divided against a loyal address: 'to show the French,' so Government supporters alleged, 'what numbers in the House they might depend on.'[3] A week or so later, the Pretender's

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1. Horace Walpole's Correspondence, xvii. 475-80: H. Walpole to Mann, 30 June 1742; Sedgwick, History of Parliament, i.72, 114; Brit. Mus., Addit. MSS.9129 (Coxe Transcripts), ff.123-4: Copy of the Paper delivered to Argyle, dated 25 Apr. 1742 [sic]. It seems clear that the communication delivered to Argyle was not a personal one, but a circular letter, and cannot therefore be construed as evidence of prior Jacobite involvement. See Archdeacon Coxe's memorandum: Addit. MSS. 9129, f.131.

2. P.R.O., S.P. 36/59, f.12: Barrymore to Argyle, 7 July 1742. Noticeably his choice of words does not specify to which King's majesty he was referring.

3. Cited in Sedgwick, History of Parliament, i.73.

principal agent in England, Colonel William Cecil, was taken into custody. A search of his papers revealed evidence implicating Lord Barrymore in the invasion conspiracy, and on 26 February a warrant was issued for his arrest on suspicion of High Treason.[1] Barrymore was taken in his bed at 5 o'clock the next morning, but because of his age (he was now seventy-seven years old) he was permitted to remain in his home under house arrest. The following day he was examined before the Lords of the Cabinet Council.[2] His response to their questioning was typically enigmatic: 'I have, my Lords,' he told them, 'a very good estate in Ireland, and on that, I believe, fifteen hundred acres of very bad land; now by G[o]d, I would not risk the loss of the poorest acre of them to defend the title of any King in Europe, provided -- it was not in my interest.'[3] Tory well-wishers believed that the charges against Barrymore rested on nothing more substantial than his having carried the Pretender's letter to Argyle. 'I hope there is nothing more in it,' wrote one such observer to Francis Price, 'and that this is rather to prevent any mischief than to punish him for anything that has yet happened.'[4] Likewise, an Irish associate believed his lordship 'too wise a man to forfett his life and fortune for any foreigne power'.[5] Even after the discovery of a cache of

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1. Addit. MSS. 33004, ff.68-71: Cabinet Council minutes, 23-26 Feb.1743-4; P.R.O., S.P. 36/59, ff.225-8: List of and observations on the paper taken at Cecil's house, n.d; ibid./63, ff.146-53: Examination of Col. Cecil, 26 Feb. 1743-4.

2. Hist. MSS. Comm., Egmont Diary, iii.288-9; Addit. MSS.33004, f.72.: Cabinet Council minutes, 27-28 Feb. 1743-4. Several contemporary references state that Barrymore was examined by the Privy Council but there is no entry in the Privy Council Register: P.R.O., PC.2/98.

3. Cited in J.R. Robinson, The Last Earl's of Barrymore, 1769-1824 (London, 1894), pp.3-4. No contemporary copy of the examination survives, however, and Robinson is not a wholly reliable source.

4. Hist. MSS. Comm., 15th Rep. VII, p.328: T. Hayman to Price, 28 Feb.1743-4.

5. N.L.W.MSS. 3579E/69: W. Pearde to Price, 9 Mar. 1743-4.

arms in County Cork, Lord Egmont remained convinced of the earl's innocence: 'I believe my Lord has no guilt on him,' he noted in his diary, 'being a wary old man ..., and having too great an estate, which he is very fond of, to hazard upon an uncertainty of an insurrection succeeding in Ireland.'[1] On 6 March Barrymore applied for bail, once more protesting his loyalty to the Hanoverian dynasty: 'I have as much Duty to his majestie as any subject he has tho I may differ w.th many of his faithfull serv[an]ts, in many measures yett I am as firmly attatcht to his service and defence as any of them.'[2] The application was denied, pending examination of his papers in Cheshire and subsequently in Ireland.[3] Nothing material was discovered, however, and after a further examination at the end of March he was at last admitted to bail in the sum of £5,000: Richard Shuttleworth and John Crewe were among four sureties putting up £2,500 each.[4] Early in May, with the threat of French invasion passed, both the earl and his friends were discharged from their recognizances.[5]

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1. Hist. MSS. Comm., Egmont Diary, iii.293. Egmont actually went to see Barrymore after his release: see ibid., p.295.

2. P.R.O., S.P.36/63, ff.280-1: Barrymore to Newcastle, 6 Mar. 1743-4.

3. Addit. MSS. 33004, f.77: Cabinet Council minute, 8 Mar. 1743-4; Gentleman's Magazine (1744), xiv.165; P.R.O., 63/406, f.115: Lady Buttevant to Lord Buttevant, 3 Mar. 1743-4; ibid., ff.133, 139: Devonshire to Newcastle, 13 & 17 Mar. 1743-4; ibid., ff.151-2: Newcastle to Devonshire, 24 Mar. 1743-4.

4. Addit. MSS. 33004, f.82: Cabinet Council minute, 30 Mar. 1744. For a copy of this second examination, see P.R.O., S.P. 63/406, ff.169/70.

5. P.R.O., S.P. 44/132, p.311: Newcastle to the Attorney General, 5 May 1744; Gentleman's Magazine (1744), xiv.277.

Nevertheless, both Barrymore and his friend Wynn continued to press their contacts in France for a new invasion plan, and during October 1744 Sir Watkin travelled in person to Paris, in order to explain the state of public opinion in England and to give some account of the measures being taken there to promote the Pretender's restoration.[1] Jacobite estimates of their own potential strength, however, were as always greatly exaggerated.[2] Possibly they were seeking to impress their French allies, or else they mistook Tory anger and disappointment after 1742 for genuine Jacobite zeal; perhaps they were simply naive. Yet whatever their shortcomings, they succeeded in convincing not only the French but also the Stuart Court that the time was now ripe for an attempt. And so the train of events leading to the 'Forty-Five was set in motion.[3]

Meanwhile, in Britain, the invasion scare at the beginning of 1744 had put both the Government and its supporters on their guard, and led amongst other things to the penal laws against Papists and Nonjurors being put into execution. As a result almost 3,000 convictions were recorded at Lancaster Quarter Sessions during April of that year, and would have been recorded in Chancery as a prelude to further persecutions had not the Duke of Newcastle intervened to prevent it.[4] In September 1745,

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1. Sedgwick, History of Parliament, i.73-4, 441; ii.544.

2. See, for example, Stuart Papers, 253/51: Ld. Balhaldy's memorandum on the state of parties in England, 25 Oct. 1743 (N.S.).

3. There is a vast bibliography concerning the '45 Rebellion and the career of 'Bonnie Prince Charlie': much of it more romantic than historical. The most useful account is in R.C. Jarvis, The Jacobite Risings of 1715 and 1745 (Carlisle, 1954). See also, by the same author, Collected Papers on the Jacobite Risings.

4. De Hoghton MSS., DDHo/389: Sir H. Hoghton to Derby, 6 Apr. 1744; Hist. MSS. Comm., Kenyon MSS., no.1210, p.471: R. Molyneux to G. Kenyon, 1 May 1744. For a full account, see Jarvis, Collected Papers, ii.303-25, especially 317ff. The recording of these convictions was still a contentious issue as late as 1750.

however, upon learning that Charles Edward Stuart had landed in Scotland, and that the standard of rebellion had been raised in the Highlands, the Government issued a new proclamation, calling for immediate steps to be taken against all those suspected of disaffection to His Majesty King George: the oaths of allegiance were to be tendered, and the arms and horses of those refusing to take them were to be confiscated.[1]

From the very beginning, though, there was a measure of common conviction that any official moves to resist the threat of invasion should seek to involve, as Lord Chancellor Hardwicke put it, 'Men of all Parties & denominations, who are not Jacobites ....' To Archbishop Herring he expounded his belief that it was essential 'to convince foreign Powers ... that the appearances in England are very different from those in Scotland, and that they will be mistaken if they take their measures from the latter.'[2] In Lancashire, where similar reasoning seemed to prevail, a general meeting of the nobility, gentry and clergy was summoned to forgather at Preston on 26 September, when, after being addressed by Lord Derby and Thomas Bootle, the assembled company agreed to enter into an association for raising 5,000 troops by subscription for the defence of the county and the service of the King.[3] There

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1. P.R.O., P.C.2/99, pp.182-96: Proclamation and circular letters for its implementation addressed to Lord Lieutenants, Custodes Rotulorum, Justices of the Peace, and other responsible officers in peculiar jurisdictions, 5 Sept. 1745.

2. Addit. MSS. 35598, ff.62-4: Hardwicke to Herring, 21 Sept. 1745.

3. Gentleman's Magazine (1745), xv.554; Stanley (Knowsley) MSS., DDK/1741/7/6: Derby et al. to Newcastle, 27 Sept. 1745; De Hoghton MSS. DDHo/475/18: Sr. H. Hoghton to H. Pelham, 29 Sept. 1745.

were problems, however. Though more than £11,000 had been raised by 22 October, Lord Derby found it all but impossible to find suitable officers for the proposed regiment. 'This your Grace may Probably wonder at,' he told Newcastle,

> but such is the unhappy Condition of this County, that many of our best Estates are are [sic] in Popish hands, and at this time we have very few young Gentlemen in the Protestant Familys; for my own part I am so unfortunately situated that I know but one within Eight miles of me that wou'd take Command of a Company. 1

At another county meeting held at Chester on 2 October, however, where a subscription was begun to raise and maintain 2,500 men for the King's service, the response was more encouraging. According to one account, Sir Robert Grosvenor gave £2,000 and promised as much again were it required; many gentlemen, including several other prominent Tories, subscribed a year's income of their estates; even 'catholics of the best distinction shew'd their zeal for the government.'[2] Throughout the northwest, Tory and Opposition-Whig leaders seemed particularly anxious to display their affection for the Hanoverian establishment. Thus, in addition to the massive financial contribution already mentioned, Grosvenor was at pains to secure a loyal address from the Tory corporation of Chester;[3] Lord Gower personally assured the King that he was no Jacobite and was ready to serve His Majesty with his life and fortune;[4]

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1. De Hoghton MSS., DDHo/475/43: Derby to Newcastle, 22 Oct. 1745. For a full discussion of the military situation in the northwest, and other difficulties regarding the subscription, see Jarvis, Collected Papers, i.120-38.

2. Gentleman's Magazine (1745), xv.553. An incomplete list of subscribers in Cheshire, dated 2 Oct. 1745, can be found in Cholmondeley MSS., DCH/X/9. Grosvenor's name is not on the list; he was probably in London at the time.

3. Addit. MSS. 32705, f.221: Grosvenor to Newcastle, 28 Sept. 1745.

4. Horace Walpole's Correspondence, xix. 125-9: H. Walpole to Mann, 4 Oct. 1745.

and Sir Nathaniel Curzon took command of a county regiment in his native Derbyshire.[1] Nicholas Fazakerley and Robert Fenwick subscribed to the association in Lancashire;[2] Randle Wilbraham and John Ward of Capesthorne did the same in Cheshire.[3] Everywhere, moderate Tory squires laboured to expunge the stigma of disaffection which had crippled their party for thirty years past.

Yet, paradoxically, it was to this very area that the rebels looked most especially for support. In a paper seized from a Jacobite agent in Newcastle, the Young Pretender appealed to his friends in England, 'and particularly those to the North & North West', to lend their fullest assistance when his army entered the kingdom; and with almost prescient aptness he concluded: 'there is no more time for Deliberation, Now or never is the Word.'[4] Moreover, there were many Hanoverian loyalists in this region who heartily concurred in Prince Charles' opinion of their neighbours' sentiments. In Lancashire, where Whig suspicions bordered at times on paranoia, the biggest fear was of a Catholic insurrection. Sir Henry Hoghton, himself a staunch and unashamed Presbyterian, was particularly morbid on this theme. Writing to Henry Pelham on 11 September he took issue with the Prime Minister's assertion 'that the dispositions of the people and the strength of the Enemy is farr different from what it was in the year 1715. As to our Country,' he observed referring to Lancashire, 'our Enemys are as strong

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1. Devonshire MSS.: Newcastle to Devonshire, 11 Oct. 1745.
2. Stanley (Knowsley) MSS., DDK/1741/7 (loose papers): T. Starkie to Derby, 21 Oct. 1745; ibid.: R. Fenwick to Derby, 26 Oct. 1745.
3. Cholmondeley MSS., DCH/X/9: Subscription List, 2 Oct. 1745.
4. Addit. MSS. 35588, f.102: 'Copy of the Paper found in Hickson's Glove at Newcastle, 1745.'

as then, and I know no converts to be depended on.'[1] Lord Derby, writing to Newcastle a fortnight later, was equally pessimistic:

> Your Grace knows well we have many papists in these parts, whose Religion makes them (secretly at least) as much Enemies to the Government in the State as in the Church. At present for ought I can observe or learn they are perfectly quiet, but how far things may alter, when they see their friends among them, your Grace will best judge. For the rest of the County, there never was less appearance of an intention or desire to disturb the Government 2

With the news of the rebel successes in Scotland, many of Hanoverian sympathies in Lancashire prepared to leave the county, and by 7 October it was reported that all business in and around Preston was at a standstill.[3] Hoghton and his cronies responded to this crisis by reviving the matter of the 3,000 Catholics convicted in 1744, and pressing the Clerk of the Peace, George Kenyon,[4] to record the convictions in Chancery or King's Bench, so that further action could be taken upon them.[5] Thomas Bootle, the experienced Chancery lawyer to whom Kenyon appealed for help, was of the opinion that persecution of the Catholic community was more likely to provoke them into open rebellion than cow them into submission, but he found Hoghton totally intransigent on the subject.[6] As Sir Henry told another Whig Justice in November:

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1. De Hoghton MSS., DDHo/475/11: Hoghton to Pelham, 11 Sept. 1745.
2. Stanley (Knowsley) MSS., DDK/1741/7/4: Derby to Newcastle, 22 Sept. 1745.
3. Brit. Mus., Addit. MSS. 39923 (Jacobite and other letters), f.57: R. Shepherd to Mr. Nourse, 7 Oct. 1745.
4. George Kenyon, Jun.r (d. 1780), of Peel, n.r Manchester, Lancs. Tory. Clerk of the Peace in Lancs., by virtue of a patent for three lives granted to his father in 1710.
5. De Hoghton MSS., DDHo/475/13: Hoghton to Pelham, 18 Sept. 1745; Hist. MSS. Comm., Kenyon MSS., no. /1213, p.473: Hoghton to Kenyon, 18 Oct.1745.
6. Hist. MSS. Comm., Kenyon MSS., no.1214, pp.473-4: Bootle to Hoghton, 2 Nov. 1745.

'I think gentle methods at this time a day, used to those who are ready to rise and cut our throats, can have no good Effect, & a severity, tho' a liberty otherwise, very justifiable.'[1] Thus, amid reports that loyalist gentry in Lancashire were being threatened with violence if they attempted to aid the Government,[2] the Deputy Lieutenants took what steps they could to disarm those they suspected of disaffection; but though horses were seized and a few fowling-pieces taken in, no stronger evidence of any impending massacre was forthcoming.[3]

There were fears too of disaffection in Cheshire,[4] and even greater apprehensions of a rising in North Wales.[5] The Hanoverian Tory Sir Thomas Mostyn, however, strongly repudiated the imputation of a general spirit of rebellion to his own county of Flintshire. 'As to our present Scituation,' he told one of his brothers, 'I am persuaded that there is no One in this Neighbourhood who has either the Will or the ability to join the Rebels w.th 20 Men, ... but I am not singular in my opinion, 'tis the general one & all the People of Chester who have any Friends in this County are flying to them for Refuge.'[6] Much of the Government's intelligence on the subject of Jacobite activity in the area was supplied to it by Mrs. Hatrell, a redoubtable Flintshire

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1. De Hoghton MSS., DDHo/475/65: Hoghton to W. Shawe, 9 Nov. 1745.

2. Horace Walpole's Correspondence, xix. 169-72: Mann to H. Walpole, 5 Dec. 1745 (N.S.).

3. P.R.O., S.P. 36/73, f.225: C. Stanley & W. Hill to Newcastle, 10 Nov. 1745.

4. Ibid./70, ff.124-5: J. Cholmondeley to Ld. Cholmondeley, 2nd Oct. 1745.

5. Addit. MSS. 35598, ff.126-7: Archbishop Herring to Hardwicke, 20 Nov. 1745; Horace Walpole's Correspondence, xix.165-9: H. Walpole to Mann, 22 Nov. 1745.

6. P.R.O., S.P. 36/74, ff.179-80: Mostyn to [his brother], 22 Nov. 1745. See also ibid., f.184: Mostyn to Newcastle, 23 Nov. 1745.

lady of sturdy Whig principles and an ingemuous disposition. During November 1745, she plied the ministry with detailed accounts of Jacobite meetings that were supposed to have taken place in Cheshire and North Wales during the preceding summer. Those principally concerned in such intrigues were mainly, though not all of them, members of the Cycle of the White Rose.[1] Primarily a Welsh society, the Cycle was originally founded in 1710, during the wave of High Tory idealism which followed the trial of Dr. Sacheverell. The date chosen for the inaugural meeting was 10 June, the Old Pretender's birthday, and thereafter, for the next 150 years or so, the Cycle retained all the formal trappings of Jacobite allegiance. No regular meetings are recorded prior to 1722, but from then on the members are known to have assembled monthly in each other's houses, not merely to drink loyal healths to 'the King over the water', but also to co-ordinate Tory activities throughout Wales and the Marches.[2] The meetings of 1745, however, which so disturbed Mrs. Hatrell, were not ordinary Cycle sessions. In the light of subsequent events, it would seem that Barrymore and Wynn (the former, incidentally, not a Cycle member) had spent the summer systematically testing out the degree of support they might expect to find among their Tory neighbours in the event of

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1. The best modern account of the Cycle's activities is in P.D.G. Thomas, 'Jacobitism in Wales', Welsh Hist. Rev., 1 no. 3 (1962) pp.279-300, and especially p.287 seq.

2. For the membership of the Cycle, see Appendix C.

a rising. Indeed, their ultimate failure to join the Young Pretender becomes more readily understandable if, as appears probable, these soundings met with a less than enthusiastic response.[1] Although it was popularly rumoured in Ireland that Wynn and Sir Robert Grosvenor intended joining the rebels if they entered Wales,[2] in Grosvenor's case at least the story seems to have been wholly without foundation. At the beginning of December, having hitherto remained in Chester at the request of the Prince of Wales to assist preparations for the defence of the city, he at length journeyed to London and was presented at Court, 'having never been there before, and always counted very high.'[3] Philip Henry Warburton,[4] M.P. for Chester since 1742 and like Grosvenor a Cycle member, likewise distinguished himself in the apprehension and examination of two Jacobite messengers sent to Lord Barrymore's house at Marbury.[5] And at Lyme, in a bizarre re-enactment of the Cheshire Club meeting of 1715, Peter Legh the younger, supposedly used his casting vote to scotch plans for a rising among the local Tory squires.[6]

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1. P.R.O., S.P. 36/73, ff.316-7; ibid./74, ff.122-3; ibid./75, ff.89-90: Mrs. M. Patrell to Ld. Chief Baron Parker, 12, 25 & 27 Nov. 1745.

2. Hist. MSS. Comm., 15th Rep. VII, p.333: R. Jones to F. Price, ? Dec. [1745].

3. Grosvenor MSS.: T. Bootle to Grosvenor, 13 & 28 Nov. 1745 (Bootle was knighted on 23 Nov. 1745); Northumberland MSS.: A. Mordaunt to Lady Hertford, 3 Dec. 1745, cited in Sedgwick, History of Parliament, ii.88.

4. Philip Henry Warburton (1700-60), of Hefferstone Grange, Chesh. M.P. for Chester, May 1742-1754. Tory, but with Whig background: his father was Rev. Matthew Henry, dissenting minister in Chester during Queen Anne's reign.

5. Sedgwick, History of Parliament, i.441-2; ii.128. For a full account of this incident, see Jarvis, Collected Papers, ii.85-93.

6. Lady Newton, House of Lyme, pp.388-9. There is no contemporary evidence to support this account, and its authenticity must therefore be open to some doubt.

The rebel army entered England on 9 November, but was then detained for almost a fortnight at Carlisle. On 22 November, however, the Deputy Lieutenants and officers of the Lancashire militia assembled at Liverpool, finding themselves unable to prevent the insurgents from advancing further, decided to secure their arms and have their men stand down. '...[W]e are not able to conceive what service we can do to the Publick,' they wrote despairingly to Newcastle, 'even now when we see all that is dear to Englishmen our Religion & Liberties are at stake.'[1] With 'a Body jaded almost to Death and an aching Heart', Lord Derby concurred in their appraisal of the situation, and begged permission to leave the county and 'seek the Common Asylum of the Nation'.[2] On the following day, a Tory gentleman described the situation in Chester: 'Since my Last, in this City we have had nothing but Hurry & Confusion, Family's leaving the Town and ye Inhabitants in the sub[ur]bs carrying their Bedding & Effects &c. into the Town. Trade Intirely stop'd most of the shopkeepers I believe will shut up after today, For the Gateways are Bricking up.'[3]

Marching down through Lancashire, the rebel soldiers were generally pleased with their reception; yet though the country people there blessed the Stuart Prince as he passed by, the army gained but few recruits from among the English gentry. However, they continued

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1. P.R.O., S.P. 36/74, f.186: Deputy Lieutenants and officers to Newcastle, 22 Nov. 1745. Signed: Sir H. Hoghton, Sir R. Bradshaigh, W. Farington, W. Shawe, J. Blackburne, F. Cunliffe, C. Stanley, R. Hesketh, A. Harrison, E. Trafford, H. Legh, W. Hill.

2. Ibid., f.187: Derby to Newcastle, 22 Nov. 1745.

3. Ibid., f.242: R. Lloyd to ? , 23 Nov. 1745.

to receive great assurances of future aid. 'Had they but Resolution equal to their Inclination,' one Highlander wrote home from Preston, 'some of the first men [would join us] but Courage often is where people want the other.' Still they hoped for better fortune in Manchester, 'certainly the most loyal Town [i.e. to the Stuarts] in the West & the most considerable.'[1] On the night of 25 November, a body of Roman Catholics proclaimed the Pretender at Ormskirk and beat the town for volunteers, but they were soon dispersed by local townsfolk, and a dozen or so were taken prisoner.[2] As things turned out, Manchester proved a great disappointment to the rebels: according to John Ward's chaplain only twenty-nine men joined the 'regiment' raised there by Francis Towneley, and all of these were said to be 'men of desperate Fortunes'.[3] Even as they pressed on to Derby, some of the rebel soldiers remained confident that Wynn was on the point of joining them with a force of 10,000 men. But in fact Sir Watkin's Welsh army never existed, and on 6 December, stripped at last of their illusions, the Highlanders began their long and bitter retreat.[4] Two days after their departure, Richard Barry[5] arrived in Derby with a message from Wynn and his father for the Young

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1. P.R.O., S.P. 36/75, ff.85-6: W. H. to Mary Hamilton, 27 Nov. 1745.

2. Ibid., ff.114-15: T. Furnivall to R. Rider, 27 Nov. 1745.

3. 'Manchester in the 'Forty-Five: A Letter from an Eye-Witness,' ed. Rupert C. Jarvis, Manchester Review (Summer 1958), pp.181-6. The Chevalier de Johnstone later claimed to have gained 180 recruits in Manchester and to have handed them over to Towneley, whose regiment 'never exceeded three hundred men'. See A Memoir of the 'Forty-Five, ed. B. Rawson (Folio Soc. edn., London, 1958), pp.55-6. Most contemporary estimates, however, put the figure between 30 and 60 recruits. For the names of the Manchester Regiment's 13 officers brought to trial, see Farrer Papers, L1/55/5/13 (Miscellaneous Transcripts), p.631.

4. Chirk Castle MSS. E.2840: T. Price to J. Myddelton, 7 Jan. 1745-6.

5. Hon. Richard Barry (c.1720-87), of Marbury, Chesh. 2nd son of the Earl of Barrymore. M.P. for Wigan, 1747-61. Lieutenant R.N. 1740; Commander 1745. Tory.

Chevalier. Characteristically, it contained not the news, but merely the further promise, of a Welsh rising.[1] As for Lord Barrymore, 'the Pretender's General', he sat out the Rebellion in the Falcon Inn at Chester, drinking treasonable healths in the company of relatives and friends, and planning (always planning) to join the insurgents.[2] Once again, as in 1715, the Stuarts and their allies had placed their trust in the 'wine-created valour' of the English Jacobites; once again they had been deceived.

As the Hanoverian army moved north through Cheshire in pursuit of the fleeing Scots, the Duke of Cumberland expressed himself pleasantly surprised at 'finding the greatest Zeal & affection ... on the arrival of the King's Troops', and learning that except at Manchester and Ormskirk there had been no 'marks of disaffection shewn, since the Rebels came into England'.[3] The Highlanders' ill-disciplined retreat turned even the country people against them: 'The Pretender had I believe some that were not his Enemies, as well as many Friends,' wrote Joseph Yorke to his father from Macclesfield, 'but this proceeding has made the King many Friends; If I had a shilling for Every Blessing I get in these Counties, I should have a very Good Estate.'[4]

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1. Sedgwick, History of Parliament, i.74-5, 442; ii.545.
2. Addit. MSS. 32707, f.439: P. Bostock to Newcastle, 20 July 1746.
3. P.R.O., S.P. 36/76, ff.355-7: Cumberland to Newcastle, 11 Dec. 1745.
4. Addit. MSS. 35354, ff.150-1: J. Yorke to Hardwicke, 11 Dec. 1745.

Not of course that all were so fickle in their allegiances. Party feeling continued to run high throughout the northwest, and particularly in Manchester, where charges of collaboration with the rebels were levelled against the town's Tory office-holders.[1] At Chester, too, a state of mutual antagonism quickly reasserted itself between the opposing parties; so that, for example, in January, after consulting with Fazakerley, Bootle, Wilbraham and Warburton, Sir Robert Grosvenor flatly refused to allow the Cheshire Assizes to be held inside the city boundaries, on the legal technicality that Chester was a separate county in its own right.[2] In March, a Crown lawyer was sent down from London to begin sifting through the mountains of evidence, being assembled by zealous Whig Justices[3] against those who had taken part in, or given their support to the Rebellion.[4] Such preparations were undertaken in a continuing atmosphere of alarm and suspicion, in which context the Lancashire Catholics were regarded with particular hostility. Thus one outside observer could predict that 'unless ye old Laws are putt into Execution or some new ones enacted to prevent the Growth of Popery, a rebellious Spirit will soon be daring if not

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1. The Diary of Richard Kay, 1716-1751, of Baldingstone, near Bury: A Lancashire Doctor, ed. W. Brockbank and F. Kenworthy (Chetham Soc., 3rd series, xvi. 1968), pp.105-6: 15 Jan. 1745-6. For the details of charges brought against the Manchester constables, their deputies, &c., see Jarvis, Collected Papers, ii.237-54.

2. Grosvenor MSS.: W. Falconer to Grosvenor, 25 Jan. 1745-6; ibid.: Grosvenor to Falconer, 30 Jan. 1745-6.

3. Those most active were: T.Percival, W. Horton, R. Duckinfield, J. Bradshaw, R. Entwisle (Manchester); A. Harrison, J. Fenton, M. Drinkell (Lancaster); Sir H. Hoghton (Preston); J. Baskervyle (Cheshire).

4. P.R.O., S.P. 44/133, p.93: Newcastle to Derby, 13 Mar. 1745-6, with similar letters to Hoghton, Peploe, et. al. For affidavits collected, see P.R.O., S.P. 36/81/82, passim.

triumphant.'[1] In spite of the enthusiastic reception given by the inhabitants of Preston and Manchester to news of Cumberland's victory at Culloden, these Tory strongholds were unable to cast off completely their mantles of disaffection.[2] From Ormskirk it was reported in May that, 'so far from damping the Spirits of the Papists', the news of the rebels' defeat had made them 'rather seem more desperate'; it was rumoured, so Newcastle was informed, 'that they intend privately to do Mischief to the Town ... or its Inhabitants, and those in the Neighbourhood, who have shewn themselves Friends to our present happy Establishment.'[3] Indeed, outbreaks of sectarian violence had been occurring both at Ormskirk and in Liverpool since the end of April, but it was the Catholics rather than their Protestant Neighbours who found themselves on the receiving end. The Government was at length obliged to send in troops for the purpose of restoring order.[4] Even before this intervention, Tory reaction, as evidenced in a letter from Liverpool printed in the Gentleman's Magazine, was openly sympathetic to the Catholic's plight:

> As the Romans in general behav'd themselves very dutifully throughout the country [i.e. Lancashire] even when the pretender was there; and as all these abuses are committed without the mobs assigning any cause but their religion, it is hoped the legislative power will take their extraordinary sufferings into consideration, and not suffer these plunderers to abuse their authority, and enrich themselves by such riotous unlawful methods. 5

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1. Addit. MSS. 35588, f.210: Sir T. Abney to Hardwicke, 2 Apr. 1746.

2. General Evening-Post, 3-6 May 1746; P.R.O., S.P. 36/83, f.174: Ld. Malpas to Ld. Cholmondeley, 26 Apr. 1746.

3. P.R.O., S.P. 36/83, f.280: C. Stanley to Newcastle, 16 May 1746.

4. De Hoghton MSS., DDHo/475/105: Derby to Hoghton, 2 May 1746; P.R.O., S.P. 36/83, ff.341-2: J. Bromfield (Mayor of Liverpool) to Newcastle, 23 May 1746; P.R.O., S.P.44/133, p.149: Newcastle to the Secretary at War, 29 May 1746.

5. Gentleman's Magazine (1746), xvi.324.

The trial and execution of rebel prisoners during the latter half of 1746[1] did nothing to lessen party tensions; but it was the trial of the Scottish peers in London which aroused the most political controversy, especially when Randle Wilbraham agreed to act as defence counsel for Lord Balmerino, despite the Lord Chancellor's opinion that he 'would as soon be hanged as plead such a cause'.[2] The biggest flurry in Tory circles was caused in March 1747, however, during the trial of Lord Lovat, when Lord Murray of Broughton let slip the names of Barrymore, Wynn and Sir John Hynde Cotton in connection with the abortive invasion plans of 1743-4; but the point having been made, the Government wisely determined not to press the matter further.[3]

There were others in the northwest, though, equally guilty of disaffection to the Hanoverian establishment, particularly at Manchester, where the teachings and example of Dr. Deacon and the fellows of Manchester Collegiate Church still managed to keep alive the spirit of nonjuring orthodoxy. In June 1746, one Whig Justice of the Peace described the situation thus:

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1. For details of the trial proceedings at Carlisle and York, see Jarvis, Collected Papers, ii.255-302; for those at Southwark, see Sir Michael Foster, The Report of Some Proceedings of the ... Trial of t Rebels (Oxford, 1762).

2. H. Walpole to Mann, 1 Aug. 1746, cited in Sedgwick, History of Parliament, ii.538.

3. Sedgwick, History of Parliament, i.75; ii.545; Horace Walpole's Correspondence, xix. 379-82: H. Walpole to Mann, 20 Mar. 1746-7.

> The Manchester People are in high spirits & Every night the streets resound w.th the Cries of Down with the Rump Down with King George and the Hanoverians .... On the 10th of June the Whole Party showed away the Men in White Roses & some in Plaid Wastcoats, the Ladies in Plaid Ribbands and the 29th of May was also observed with due decency .... You will by this see the Loyalty we were masters of w.n the Duke was pursuing the Rebels is on the Decline greatly w.ch I can attribute to nothing so much as the Clergy. Clayton's morning Lectures have been I am told Trumpets of Sedition 1

By October, with the heads of Thomas Siddal and one of Deacon's sons fixed up at the Exchange, just as that of Siddal's father had been set up thirty years before, the mood of the town had scarcely improved, to Whig eyes at any rate.[2] The Tories, for their part, denied the charges levelled against them, and during the next few months took part in an acrimonious exchange of letters in the national press that aimed to settle the matter one way or the other.[3] Yet no compromise could be reached, and the argument persisted down to 1751 at least without any sign of reconciliation.[4]

Clearly, though, whatever the true state of affairs in Manchester, there were many Lancashire Whigs who felt profoundly insecure, and who resented bitterly what they saw as the government's total lack of interest

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1. Addit. MSS.32707, f.310: T. Percival to ? , 14 June 1746. John Clayton was Chaplain of Manchester College.

2. Diary of Richard Kay, p.114: 9 Oct. 1746; Addit. MSS.35397, ff.37-8 T. Birch to Hardwicke, 11 Oct. 1746.

3. Reprinted in Gentleman's Magazine (1746), xvi. 579-80, 637-8, 688-91, 716-7.

4. Addit. MSS. 32724, ff.121-2: Bp. Peploe to Newcastle, 19 Feb. 1750-1.

in their predicament. Certainly, Lord Willoughby of Parham[1] spoke for many others when he complained to a friend of 'the incorrigible Jacobitism of his Countrymen, & the Neglect of the Government in not supporting in any manner the few Whigs in Lancashire, who are overpowered even in the Commission of Peace';[2] and again, in January 1747, when he told Sir Henry Hoghton: 'Our Commission of the Peace is going from bad to worse. Last week I heard of three being appointed in your neighbourhood, all Tories, as I think ....'[3] Such sentiments as these at least help to explain the persecuting spirit in which many Whigs approached their political enemies, especially the Catholics; and if such fears were exaggerated, or even groundless in reality, they nevertheless gained some measure of credibility at the time, both from the studied inactivity of the ministry and the intemperate behaviour of Tory extremists. Till like Lord Gower, their former leader, they were prepared to break publicly and irrevocably with their Jacobite and pseudo-Jacobite associates, moderate Tories were condemned to remain what they had been for a generation or more: objects of suspicion, hostility, and ridicule.

The re-constitution of the Pelham ministry during the early months of 1746[4] finally extinguished any faint hope that might have remained of a coalition of parties and a real share in Government for the Tories. Sir John Hynde Cotton's efforts to rally his party behind Lord Granville

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1. Hugh, 5th Baron Willoughby of Parham (1713-65), of Shaw Place, Lancs. Presbyterian Whig. Enjoyed the patronage of Ld. Hardwicke.

2. Addit. MSS. 35397, ff.37-8: T. Birch to Hardwicke, 11 Oct. 1746.

3. De Hoghton MSS., DDHo/475/126: Willoughby to Hoghton, 14 Jan. 1746-7. For the Tories in the Lancashire Commission of the Peace, see Appendix B.

4. Owen, Rise of the Pelhams, pp.293-306.

had done little to ingratiate him with the Duke of Newcastle, who was now, in spite of repeated entreaties from Lord Chesterfield, wholly opposed to any formal alliance with gentlemen of Cotton's persuasion. Though the Whig Old Corps were ready enough to accept Lord Gower, once he had parted company with his former party colleagues, like their friends in the country they remained deeply suspicious of making further general concessions to their old opponents. ' ... It was the dread, and apprehension of taking in Tories,' Newcastle warned Chesterfield, 'that hurt us, with our great friends in the House of Lords, and the bulk of the party in the House of Commons: and it is those we must stick by; and it is those that have stuck by us.'[1] The Tories, for their own part, were disinclined to re-enter negotiations with the ministry in any case. 'I dread ... all Consultations,' Wynn told Cotton in November 1746; 'if by any channel any Part of the administration have anything to Offer, for the Constitution, let them shew the least Test, the least Proof in Parliament, & you will find Country Gentlemen attend from all Quarters.'[2] No such overtures were expected, however, and country gentlemen could do little but bemoan the melancholy prospect of public affairs.[3]

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1. Private Correspondence of Chesterfield and Newcastle, pp.116-21: Newcastle to Chesterfield, 5 Mar. 1745-6. See also ibid., pp.113-16, 122: Chesterfield to Newcastle, 27 Feb. & 11 Mar. 1745-6. But cf. Owen, Rise of the Pelhams, pp.308-9, where the author seems surprised by the ministry's failure to achieve its objective of 'breaking the old Tory party', and blames the Tories for their intransigence.

2. P.R.O., S.P. 36/89, ff.267-70: Wynn to Sr. J. H. Cotton, 16 Nov. 1746 -- copy inclosed in H. Potts to A. Stone, 19 Nov. 1746.

3. Grosvenor MSS.: Sir T. Mostyn to Grosvenor, 18 Nov. 1746.

In fact, though a languid correspondence with the Stuart Court, was kept up for some time by such as Wynn,[1] the Tories had but one realistic recourse left open to them, and that, as George II grew older, an increasingly attractive one: to work for a rapprochement with the Prince of Wales, Bolingbroke's 'Patriot King'.[2] The Prince and his party had lent their more or less consistent support to the Government since Walpole's fall in 1742, but during 1746 they started to drift once more into open Opposition, and on that footing began to prepare an appropriate strategy for the next General Election, due in 1748. On 4 June 1747, however, wishing to make best use of the Prince's unpreparedness, and the wave of anti-Jacobite sentiment still sweeping the country in the aftermath of the late Rebellion, the ministers persuaded the King to grant them a premature dissolution of Parliament.[3] Aware of the difficult situation in which he was now placed, the Prince endeavoured to salvage what he could by coming to an agreement with the Tories. That same evening he communicated to the gentlemen of the Opposition the 'most positive Assurances ... of his upright Intentions', and invited all well-wishers to the country and constitution 'to coalize & unite with him'. His appeal was accompanied by a declaration, setting out the principles by which he intended to govern his conduct when at last he

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1. See Sedgwick, History of Parliament, i.75-8; ii.545.

2. Bolingbroke's original title for The Idea of a Patriot King (written in 1738 but not published until 1749) was The Patriot Prince. For the work's associations with Prince Frederick and his circle at Leicester House, see Jeffrey Hart, Viscount Bolingbroke: Tory Humanist (London, 1965), pp.71-80, 83, 88.

3. Sedgwick, History of Parliament, i.56-7; Owen, Rise of the Pelhams, pp. 310-12.

came to the throne. In it he promised to select his ministers without regard to party distinctions; to expand the militia; reduce the number of military and naval personnel sitting in the House of Commons; grant an inquiry into administrative abuses; and limit his Civil List expenditure to £800,000 a year. Fourteen prominent Tories, including Wynn, Grosvenor and Fazakerley, met to consider these proposals, and in reply assured His Royal Highness that they would 'constantly & steadily use their utmost Endeavours to support his wise & salutary Purpose, that the Throne may be strengthened, Religion & Morality encouraged, Faction & Corruption destroyed, the purity & Essence of Parliament restored, & the Happiness & Welfare of our Constitution preserved.'[1]

However, the dissolution of Parliament, which actually occurred on 18 June, caught not just the Prince but everyone else as well totally unready for the fray; and the writs for new elections being issued almost immediately made it all but impossible to contemplate undertaking a normal election campaign. In Cheshire, Lord Cholmondeley's bankruptcy,[2] together with Lord Dysart's threat to oppose any candidate set up in the Whig interest,[3] ruled out any possibility of a county contest, with the

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1. Addit. MSS. 35870, ff.129-30: Minutes of a meeting at Carlton House, 4 June 1747. The Prince's declaration, though not the Tories' response, is printed in Owen, Rise of the Pelhams, pp.312-3. See also pp.313-14 for the arguments advanced at this meeting in favour of the Tories 'coaliting with the Prince'.

2. Horace Walpole's Correspondence, xix. 339-43, 402-5: H. Walpole to Mann, 5 Dec. 1746 & 19 May 1747; Addit. MSS.32710, ff.130-2: Cholmondeley to Newcastle, n.d., [but endorsed Jan. 1746-7]; Cholmondeley MSS., DCH/L/35: correspondence, Aug. 1745-June 1747, relating to Lord Cholmondeley's debts.

3. Addit. MSS.32711, f.383: Dysart to Newcastle, 16 June 1747; ibid., f.407: Newcastle to Dysart, 18 June 1747. Dysart's pique resulted from the ministry's refusal to help secure his election as one of the 16 Scottish Representative Peers.

result that both the sitting Tory Members were returned unopposed. It must, therefore, have come as something of a surprise when at the end of June a Whig candidate, in the shape of James Mainwaring, Junior,[1] took the field at Chester, and proceeded to mount a determined campaign against the second Tory Member, Philip Henry Warburton. The latter's chances of hanging onto his seat were not improved by a persistent rumour that Grosvenor, his patron and colleague, was leaving his friends and dependants free to use their second votes as they chose;[2] and, indeed, such was Sir Robert's apparent indifference to the political affairs of Chester, that the Tory corporation were at length obliged to declare a joint interest between him and Warburton on their own initiative, and without his consent.[3]

The coolness existing between the two men is not easy to explain. Both were Cycle members, and both had been active during the Rebellion in defence of the Hanoverian establishment. The choice of Warburton as candidate in 1742, in preference to Philip Egerton of Oulton,[4] perhaps indicates some personal association with Sir Watkin Wynn, since he rather than Grosvenor appears to have been the prime mover in the city at that date. Grosvenor, by contrast, when he thought of the northwest at all, was more inclined to favour Wynn's Denbighshire rivals the Myddeltons, with

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1. James Mainwaring, Junr. (1702-49), of Bromborough, Chesh. Whig. Son of Ald. James Mainwaring of Chester. Capt. of the Invalids; Baron of the Exchequer and Chester.

2. Grosvenor MSS.: P.H. Warburton to Grosvenor, 27 June 1747; ibid.: E. Partington to Grosvenor, 27 June 1747.

3. Ibid.: W. Cowper to Grosvenor, 2 Jan. 1747-8.

4. N.L.W. MSS.3582E/75: Barrymore to F. Price, 13 Apr. 1742. Philip Egerton (d.1776), of Oulton, Chesh. & Acton, Denb., also a Cycle member, was the first Tory mention for the vacancy created by the death of Sir Charles Bunbury.

whom he shared a political interest at Holt.[1] Thus, while there is no hard evidence of an open breach between Grosvenor and Wynn, nevertheless the suggestion allegedly made to Sir Robert, that Whig opposition at Chester would be dropped if he agreed to take another partner,[2] perhaps implies that Warburton was suspected of harbouring pro-Jacobite sympathies. Whatever the truth of the matter, the two Tory candidates were returned at the head of the poll. Subsequently, however, two petitions were lodged against the validity of Warburton's election; but after a hearing at the Bar of the House of Commons in February 1748, the return was upheld, though not before the passage of a resolution which determined the right of election to rest solely with such freemen as were resident within the city and its liberties. Thus, at one fell swoop, the Tory squires of at least eight surrounding counties were disenfranchised: the honorary freemen who for thirty years or more had formed the cornerstones of an electoral regime so elaborately built up by the Grosvenors and Sir Watkin Wynn.[3]

In Lancashire, meanwhile where memories of the rebel occupation might have given them an irreducible advantage over their Tory opponents, the Whigs manifested a lethargy that was little short of contemptible. 'Our elections have not answer'd my expectations, through a general want of

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1. Chirk Castle MSS. E.2853: Grosvenor to R.^{d} Myddelton, 23 June 1747.

2. Grosvenor MSS.: Grosvenor to E. Partington, 23 Jan. 1747-8. The pollbook for this election shows an unusually large number of electors splitting their vote: i.e. voting for Grosvenor and Mainwaring.

3. Commons Journals, xxv.425, 492, 497-8, 504-5. An extensive correspondence relating to the petition can be found in the Grosvenor MSS. among the papers of Sir Robert Grosvenor.

Candidates,' wrote Lord Willoughby to Philip Yorke. '[A]pplications were made to all the Whigg Gentlemen in the County, and offers made of bringing them in with a trifle of expence, but all to no purpose ....'[1] In Lancaster, where Francis Reynolds had been returned at a by-election in 1745, caused by the death of Sir Thomas Lowther, the other Opposition candidate, Robert Fenwick, was allowed back unmolested, despite the apparent collapse of the Country interest in the town after Lowther's demise. Likewise at Preston, no effort was made to unseat either Fazakerley or James Shuttleworth, though as Willoughby noted the townsfolk 'refus'd to Chair the members when elected and told them publickly, they were chosen, because no Whigg could be prevaild on to stand.'[2] In the event, there were only two contests: at Wigan and for the county.

The ferment of electoral activity had begun in Wigan as far back as 1743, on a rumour that Lord Barrymore was on the point of death.[3] The speculation was renewed a year later, when, after the earl's arrest on suspicion of treason, the joint interest between him and Sir Roger Bradshaigh finally collapsed; and by November 1744 it was reported that Peter Bold was receiving encouragement from Alexander Leigh, Sir Roger's erstwhile confidant, to offer himself for the borough at the next election.[4] By the middle of 1746, the lines of cleavage in the old joint accord were becoming more

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1. Addit. MSS. 35605, f.298: Willoughby to Yorke, 1 Sept. 1747.
2. Ibid., f.298: Willoughby to Yorke, 1 Sept. 1747.
3. Crawford MSS., 49/1/-: Sir R. Bradshaigh to (his son) R. Bradshaigh 16 Aug. 1743.
4. Ibid., 47/2/-: G. Winstanley to Sir R. Bradshaigh, 2 Nov. 1744.

obvious, with Lord Barrymore appearing to have got the better half of those in the corporation who counted for anything. As one stalwart supporter professed to Bradshaigh in May: 'I do think Scotland can't produce more ungratefuler Rebels to the Establish'd [sic] then the generality of these da[mn]'d Wiganers are to you who has serv'd em in all kinds when desir'd.'[1] Two months later, in a dispute over the appointment of a new Town Clerk, Barrymore successfully backed the recorder, Richard Clayton,[2] for the job, and by August it was widely believed that at the next election Clayton and Richard Barry would offer themselves jointly on the Tory interest.[3] It now seemed certain too that, after many years as Bradshaigh's chief supporters in the corporation, Leigh and Edward Holt were ready to throw in their lot with the Tories, who were already canvassing their supporters throughout the county.[4] These defections were a serious blow to Bradshaigh's interest in the borough. As a Whig friend there informed him, he was 'at a great loss in not having a proper Substantial Mannaiger in Wigan, who shou'd be a Man of Sense and Substance.'[5] Early in the new year, however, a long-threatened split occurred in the burgeoning Tory ranks as Holt, 'seeing the Recorder having more interest in Town & Country' than himself, declared his own intention of standing for the borough.[6] Unfortunately for Bradshaigh, though, Holt found little support, and was

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1. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: G. Winstanley to Bradshaigh, 18 May 1746. See also ibid.: same to same, 5 May & 13 June 1746.

2. Richard Clayton (?1703-70), of Adlington, Lancs. M.P. for Wigan, Mar 1747-1754. Recorder of Wigan, 1743-70; K.C. 1768; Chief Justice of Common Please in Ireland, 1765-70.

3. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: G. Winstanley to Bradshaigh, 7 July, 3 & 29 Aug. 1746.

4. Ibid.: same to same, 5 Oct. & 25 Nov. 1746.

5. Winstanley to Bradshaigh, 2 Jan. 1746-7, cited in Cox, 'Sir Roger Bradshaigh and the Electoral Management of Wigan', loc. cit., p.161.

6. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Winstanley to Bradshaigh, 8 Jan. 1746-7.

obliged to back down. Sir Roger therefore, had little choice but to make the best of a bad job and begin marshalling such supporters as he had left. The Court Leet, it was suggested, might, if properly handled, help him create new Whig burgesses, and Bishop Peploe might be able to exert some influence over those wavering in their allegiance, especially among the clergy.[1] Moreover, it remained clear that there were some, like Alexander Leigh himself, who upon reflection were deeply unhappy at the prospect of abandoning a political compromise which had succeeded in preserving a tolerable peace in the borough for more than thirty years; as late as February 1747, Leigh was still prepared to stand by his engagements to support the joint interest of Bradshaigh and Lord Barrymore, provided only that the two men would patch up their differences.[2] Sir Roger, though, now found this arrangement totally unacceptable, and against a background of rumours that he was intending to stand down, began to canvass for single votes.[3] On 25 February, however, he died suddenly, seventy-two years old and £8,000 in debt, and twenty-four hours later Peter Legh was busily employed asking votes for Clayton as his successor.[4] At the ensuing by-election, the recorder was duly returned without a contest. Bradshaigh's eldest son, Roger, who now succeeded him as 4th Barnonet, had been settled at Haigh since 1742, while his father resided

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1. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Winstanley to Bradshaigh, 9 & 13 Jan. 1746-7.
2. Ibid.: A. Leigh to Bradshaigh, 14 Feb. 1746-7.
3. Kenyon MSS., DDKe/9/108/6: Bradshaigh to G. Kenyon, 18 Feb. 1746-7.
4. Sedgwick, History of Parliament, i.482; Hist. MSS. Comm., Kenyon MSS., no: 1229, p.491: P. Legh to G. Kenyon, 26 Feb. 1746-7.

chiefly in London. He had little interest in politics, and when at the General Election a few months later Sir Thomas Bootle contemplated pushing his own candidacy at Wigan, he was informed by Lord Derby that Sir Roger 'is determined to shake off all communication with that Borough in regard to Parliamentary Affairs, so that He does not think of being present so far as to give his own Vote', and would leave his tenants free to vote for whomsoever they chose.[1] The Prince of Wales offered to approach Barrymore on Bootle's behalf,[2] but in the end Sir Thomas decided not to intervene, leaving Clayton and Barry free to annihilate two 'foreign' Whigs, John Savile[3] and Serjeant Poole.[4]

As for the county, there, as Lord Willoughby explained after the election, 'the people were so much incens'd against Old Shuttleworth upon account of his conduct during the Rebellion, that they demanded a Poll for Mr. Bold, without his knowledge or consent, and carried it on for three or four days, 'tho his friends did all in their power to put an end to it.'[5] Thomas Birch, the Secretary of the Royal Society, was likewise informed by friends in Lancashire of 'a better Spirit rising in that County'. For as he told Philip Yorke, 'if Mr. Bold had not abandon'd the Contest, even

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1. Royal Archives, Windsor Castle, Bootle MSS. (preserved among the papers of Frederick, Prince of Wales)/54124: Derby to Bootle, 14 June 1747 [consulted on microfilm at the History Faculty Library, Oxford].

2. Ibid./54063: Prince Frederick to Bootle, 21 June 1747.

3. John Savile (1719-78), of Methley Hall, nr. Leeds. M.P. for Hedon, 1747-54; for New Shoreham, Dec. 1761-1768. Whig. Created Baron Pollington [I], 1753; Earl of Mexborough [I], 1766.

4. David Poole (d.1762), of Liverpool, Lancs. Inner Temple, 1725; Lincoln's Inn, 1741, Serjeant 1747. Serjeant-at-Law in the Duchy of Lancaster, and Attorney & Serjeant in the Co. Pal. of Lancs. 1752-8. Whig.

5. Addit. MSS.35605, f.298: Willoughby to P. Yorke, 1 Sept. 1747.

while he had an increasing Majority, M.r Shuttleworth would have been excluded as a Jacobite, the Imputation of which expos'd him to all possible Insults, from the people in general.'[1] At Lancaster, his coach was 'overturn'd and broke to pieces by the Freeholders'; he was unable to appear in public, and readily admitted that he owed his life to the protection of his fellow Member, Lord Strange. '[B]y this,' commented Willoughby, 'you may see that our Common people are a great deal better affected upon account of the late rebellion, but as to the gentlemen, I think they are greater fools than ever, nothing is heard from them but down with the Rump, no Hanoverians, and such like seditious speeches.'[2] As for Lord Strange who was returned unopposed along with Shuttleworth, though not prepared to allow the old gentlman's person to be endangered, he was nevertheless 'so highly disgusted by the Behaviour of the Jacobites in Lancashire, & the Conduct of Mr. Shuttleworth's Friends with regard to himself in the late Election,' that he declared he was now 'fully convinc'd of the pernicious Designs of that Party, & ... resolv'd not to give the Government any more Disturbance in Parliament.'[3]

An even bigger split in Tory ranks occurred further south in Staffordshire, where Lord Gower's candidates found themselves fiercely opposed by a confederacy of local 'true blues' that included Sir Watkin Wynn and John Crewe, the latter being left free by the ease of his re-election

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1. Addit. MSS. 35397, ff.72-3: Birch to Yorke, 12 Sept. 1747.
2. Addit. MSS. 35605, f.298: Willoughby to Yorke, 1 Sept. 1747.
3. Addit. MSS.35397, ff.81-3: Birch to Yorke, 26 Sept. 1747.

in Cheshire to offer himself also in the neighbouring shire.[1] Contests throughout the county, and particularly at Stafford, were marred by the violence of an anti-Gower mob that included a substantial contingent deliberately sent in by Crewe from his own estates in Cheshire.[2] Nevertheless, in spite of such difficulties, Gower was still able to carry most of the Staffordshire seats for the Government, though owing his success 'almost entirely to the Whigs' who were said to have been 'indefatigable in his service'.[3] Even before the returns were all in, it was a self-confident and victorious Henry Pelham who wrote to Gower:

> Upon the whole the Parliament is an exeeding good one, and if fortune and good councill enable us to lay before them any reasonable system for the future government of Publick affairs, I am satisfied we shall meet with all the protection and assistance that a well meaning Administration can either desire or deserve. The fury of disappointment, added to the natural ill will a certain quarter have to your freinds, makes 'em talk most wildly; but there is not in my opinion the least reason to apprehend their power; .... [4]

The Prime Minister was of course right: though their dogged Opposition was maintained for a further decade or more, the Tory party was a broken reed.

In the spring of 1748, the daughters of wealthy Lancashire lawyer Isaac Greene[5] visited London for the first time. Their principal sponsors in society were Nicholas Fazakerley and his wife, at whose house in Grosvenor Square the two young ladies were introduced into a tightly-knit

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1. Sedgwick, History of Parliament, i.318-22.

2. Addit. MSS.32712, ff.288-9: Gower to Newcastle, n.d. [but endorsed July 1747].

3. Devonshire MSS.: H. Pelham to Ld. Hartington, n.d. [endorsed June, but more likely July 1747].

4. P.R.O. 30/29/1/11, ff.305-6: Pelham to Gower, 25 July 1747.

5. Isaac Greene (c.1678-1749), of Childwall, Lancs. Attorney. Tory.

circle of Lancashire and Cheshire families, most of them with political interests, and almost all of them Tories or Opposition Whigs. There they met Lord and Lady Strange; Sir Robert Grosvenor, Peter Bold, and the daughters of the late Daniel Pulteney; Pattens, Merediths, Carylls and many others: the ancient gentry families of two counties.[1] Yet if the social cohesion was apparently undamaged, many of the political certainties of past generations were crumbling away, soon to be lost for good. Jacobitism, never a majority creed, was discredited though still not dead, and spectacular public demonstrations of pro-Stuart zeal, like the Litchfield race-meeting of September 1747,[2] only served to drive even deeper the wedge between Jacobites and Hanoverians. Witness the example of George Venables Vernon,[3] who at the General Election only a matter of weeks before had reverted to Opposition after supporting the Government for more than two years, and had unsuccessfully contested the borough of Litchfield for the Tories against the combined might of Gower and his Whig allies. But Vernon was a staunch Hanoverian, and the open display of Jacobite fervour in his own former constituency was sufficient to convince him of his error. In November, his brother-in-law, Lord Harcourt, wrote approvingly of his change of heart, and added tartly: 'If I was a real friend of the Jacobites, I should have wished my friends would have appeared at Derby,

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1. R.Stewart-Brown, Isaac Green: A Lancashire Lawyer of the Eighteenth Century including the Diary of Ireland Green, 1748-9 , (Liverpool, 1921), pp.30-2, & the Diary, passim.

2. Devonshire MSS.: Anon. to T. Johnson, 4 Oct. 1747; Sedgwick, History of Parliament, i.319; Feiling, The Second Tory Party, pp.49-50.

3. George Venables Vernon (1710-80), of Kinderton, Chesh. & Sudbury, Derbys. M.P. for Litchfield, May 1731-1747; for Derby, 1754-Apr.1768. Tory till 1744; went over to the administration as a New Ally; reverted briefly to Opposition in 1747, but thereafter supported the Government.

[i.e. in 1745] where they might have done service, instead of exposing themselves to the ridicule of mankind, who will be at a loss to say whether they are greater fools or cowards.'[1] In Lancashire, Staffordshire, and elsewhere the elections of 1747 showed clearly that Jacobitism had lost a great deal of whatever charismatic appeal it may once have possessed, and that the wearing of plaid waistcoats and white cockades was, in electoral terms, downright counter-productive. In marked contrast, when Peter Bold succeeded Shuttleworth as Knight of the Shire for Lancashire in 1749, it was reckoned his 'good fortune to stand well in the opinion of many of both Partys'.[2] Thus the deaths of Barrymore and Wynn in 1747 and 1749 respectively, in so far as they marked the virtual end of serious Jacobite activity in the northwest, only speeded up a process already well established. This did not betoken the immediate demise of the Tory party at Westminster, or of its electoral interests in the constituencies; but in both spheres the party's last pretensions to unity had been irrevocably shattered by the traumas of the preceding decade. The Tories remained aware of their identity, but the fight had finally gone out of them. Gradually, during the late '50s and early '60s, they were assimilated back into the respectable political life of the nation, but in the process their individuality was lost, and the meaning of Toryism itself was altered out of all recognition.

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1. The Harcourt Papers, ed. E.W. Harcourt (Oxford, 1876-1905), iii. 37-8: Harcourt to Vernon, 1 Nov. 1747.

2. Crawford MSS., 49/2/-: Derby to Sir R. Bradshaigh [4th Bart], 29 Dec. 1749.

7. The Best Established Interest.

As far as the general development of political parties is concerned, the years between the collapse of the Oxford ministry in the summer of 1714 and the consolidation of the Pelhamite regime in the General Election of 1747 still constitute a kind of historical no man's land: an uncomfortable period of transition, during which the two-party system operating in the reign of Queen Anne gave way by degrees to the multi-party framework seen to be flourishing by the reign of George III. Moreover, this transformation is usually shown as having coincided with an equally significant shift from a political order largely based on fundamental differences of policy and principle to one wholly motivated by considerations of patronage and self-interest. However, in the light of what has already been said in the foregoing chapters, one should perhaps be wary of exaggerating either the extent of these changes or the suddenness with which they came about. For, in general terms, it is the central contention of the present study that the political structure of England in 1747 still possessed a good deal more in common with the circumstances obtaining in 1710 than with those existing after 1760.[1]

In the sphere of national politics, the thirty years or so which followed the Hanoverian Succession were a period of both innovation and decay, encompassing not only the establishment of single-party government and the construction of a reliable Court and Treasury party, but also the gradual erosion of constitutional differences and the ultimate failure of the Tories to re-assert themselves as an alternative party of government. Yet away from the confines of Westminster and the

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1. In essence, this assumes a substantial acceptance of the views put forward by Holmes (Age of Anne) and Namier (Structure of Politics) and a qualified rejection of those set out by Owen (Rise of the Pelhams).

Court, the changes were of a different order. By proscribing their political opponents from office in the provinces, and by concentrating the power of central government in their own hands, the Whigs were able to gain a permanent ascendancy over their rivals in the formal institutions of county administration. The eradication of Tory electoral interests, however, was another matter entirely. Prior to 1714, shires and boroughs across the country had been linked together by complex chains of influence and reciprocity, and although these were seriously disrupted in the traumatic aftermath of the Hanoverian Succession, they were not destroyed; rather, in the decades that followed, they were laboriously reconstructed and reinforced to meet the altered needs of a new generation.

Organizational continuity was perhaps the most remarkable feature of local politics in the years down to 1747, and indeed can still be traced as late as the 1760s. Thus, when Namier characterized the Whigs and Tories of that date as merely 'two sides in an organized quarrel',[1] he probably came nearer than he knew to explaining the significance which party denominations held for all those active in politics during the first half of the eighteenth century. Traditional party affiliations can, of course, be interpreted simply as the result of strong emotional identification with a particular group in society, in which context rational argument clearly has little place. According to this view, what voters hope to get out of their party's victory at the polls is the victory itself: 'as a visceral thrill, and as an assertion of their proper

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1. Namier, Structure of Politics, p.277. The comment refers specifically to the situation in Radnorshire, but seems capable of general application.

importance.'[1] Nevertheless, whilst it is by no means essential to assume radical differences of principle or prejudice in order to explain the continuance of party divisions in local society, there is plenty of evidence to suggest that such a dichotomy of principle did in fact exist far into the Hanoverian period, at least within the geographical area discussed in these pages.

In Cheshire, the initial successes enjoyed by the Northwich Compromise agreement of 1714 gave those naturally inclined to optimism some cause for believing that the old rifts might at last be healed. The efforts of one anonymous poetaster, preserved in the diary of a local Whig, managed to capture something of this mood:

> Though Anna is gone
> Think of her no more, think of her no more boys,
> Great George is now come
> Toss away your bumpers to him.
> Though the feuds be so big
> 'Twixt the Tory and Whig
> And the mischief pursuing
> Proves almost our ruin
> Like a prophet I know
> 'Twill be no more so,
> We've a King will unite
> Both High Church and Low.[2]

Party divisions did persist, however, and so too did the belief that they continued to reflect genuine differences of opinion. Thus, in 1729, Sir Richard Grosvenor could still advise Robert Myddelton 'not ... to enter into Engagem[en]ts with people of quite diferent principles to your owne';[3] and four years later his brother, Sir Robert Grosvenor, was ready to declare himself well assured that he and Sir Charles Bunbury

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1. J.R. Vincent, Pollbooks: How Victorians Voted (Cambridge, 1968), p.47. Although Professor Vincent's argument is formulated with specific regard to the voting behaviour of Victorian artisans, it would seem equally applicable to the gentry and freeholders of this period.

2. 'The Diary of Nehemiah Griffith, Esq., of Rhual, Mold, for the Year 1715', ed. Joseph C. Bridge, Journal of the Chester Arch. Soc., new series, xv (1909), 25.

3. Grosvenor MSS.: Sr. Rd. Grosvenor to Myddelton, 8 Sept. 1729.

were 'both very sincere in the same Cause & consequently can never disagree in our votes to promote ... the true & real Interest of our Country ....'[1] As late as 1747, a friend was telling Francis Price that he thought it 'incumbent on every man who professes Himself in ye Country Interest, to oppose those on ye Contrary; if he Can, Conveniently To Himself.'[2] The precise nature of the principles involved in these examples is not of course specified, but rather taken for granted by the correspondents concerned. Still, it would clearly be wrong to accept uncritically the contemporary Whig jibe that the essential hallmark of 'Tory principles' was an enduring commitment to the exiled Stuarts.

Jacobites there undoubtedly were, though perhaps significantly more prepared to drink the health of 'the King over the water' than to actively hasten his Restoration by the undertaking of 'real business'. Yet there were a good many other Tories who, when the need arose, showed themselves to be loyal defenders of the Protestant Succession. While such men rejected the more rigid interpretations of divine-right theory, they nonetheless retained an older, if somewhat vaguer conception of the duty of obedience: one defined for all that in terms of scriptural authority rather than of contract theory. One articulate proponent of such opinions was the Rev. Edward Bentham,[3] Fellow of Oriel College, Oxford, and in 1748 tutor to the eldest son of Sir Robert Grosvenor. In August, having perused a controversial pamphlet lately penned by Bentham,[4]

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1. Grosvenor MSS.: Sr. Robt. Grosvenor to Bunbury, 24 Feb. 1732-3.

2. N.L.W. MSS. 3578E/55: J. Robinson Lytton to Price, 3 May 1747.

3. Rev. Edward Bentham, D.D. (1707-76), of Oxford University. Fellow of Oriel College, 1731-54; Canon of Christ Church, 1754-76; Regius Professor of Divinity, 1763-76. See D.N.B., ii. 262-3.

4. A Letter to a Young Gentleman of Oxford (Oxford, 1748).

Grosvenor wrote reassuringly to its author. '[Y]ou need not be under the least concern that any representation of your political sentiments should hereafter render me uneasy at having placed my son under you,' Bentham was informed; for he had been recommended from the very first as a man 'well affected to the present happy Establishment, as all true tories by principale most certainly must be.'[1] In the substance of this last remark, Grosvenor may be taken as speaking for many other Hanoverian Tories, for whom, whether they liked it or not, the sovereign power ordained of God clearly resided in the uninspiring person of George II.

The dividing line between principle and prejudice, however, was an exceedingly narrow one, and traditional antipathies blended easily with religious and constitutional differences. The disturbances in Manchester during the summer of 1715 were a prime example of political action being animated by a spirit of deep sectarian animosity, that drew heavily upon folk-memories of the Civil War and Interregnum for its imagery. In his account of these disorders, George Kenyon referred to the opposing factions as 'the Dissenters' and 'the Church Party' respectively, and recorded a number of choice phrases used by the rioters. These ranged from the prosaic 'Down with the Rump' and 'Down with the Church: Down with the Rogues', to the more singular 'King Charles the 1st had justice Done him in having his head cut off'.[2] Even in the calmer atmosphere established after the failure of the 1715 Rebellion, explicit associations between political and religious adherence persisted, and as late as 1746 the worthy inhabitants of Rossendale, having risen up the previous year to harass the Jacobite army on its retreat through Lancashire, found

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1. Grosvenor MSS.: Grosvenor to Bentham, 29 Aug. 1748.

2. Kenyon MSS., DDKe/9/102/141: Memorandum of G. Kenyon, n.d. [but endorsed 28 May 1715].

themselves characterized in an anonymous letter as 'a new Regiment of Rossendale Plunderers [raised] under the Emphatical Denomination of Oliverian Murderers'.[1]

However, regarding the extent to which the political rivalries of this period were consciously linked with those of the preceding century, there can be no more convincing evidence than that provided by the words of a contemporary ballad, entitled 'Sir Robert Grosvenor and his Friends Triumphant, And his Adversaries put to Silence': probably written around 1733, following Sir Robert's election as Member for Chester.[2] The keynote is struck in the opening verse:

> Come on my brave Boys
> Let's Drink and be Wise,
> And each man stand his Station;
> To Church and to King,
> And to Grosvenor we'll Sing
> That's Loyal to the Nation:
> As for Oliver and Dick
> Onc't play'd a Damn'd Trick
> Tho' part of their Bones they lie rotten,
> And now Gentlemen,
> Dick's for tricking us again,
> Old Nol he is not forgotten.

With their familiar references to Oliver and Richard Cromwell, the effect of these opening lines is to establish a definite connection between the Protectorate and the present, and more especially between Richard Cromwell and Richard Manley, the defeated Whig candidate in the late election. This point having been made, the writer then proceeds to recount, with appropriate emphases, the salient features of Manley's part in promoting the Dee navigation scheme; his unsuccessful election campaign against Sir Robert; and the signal achievement of the Tory managers in frustrating this last

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1. Diary of Richard Kay, pp.105-6: 15 Jan. 1745-6.

2. A printed copy of this ballad, undated, is preserved in the Grosvenor MSS. among the papers of Sir Robert Grosvenor.

endeavour. The final verse, though, is a forthright re-affirmation of traditional Tory sentiments:

> Then down with the Pope
> Let him swing in a Rope,
> Since the firth day of November;
> Down with that curs'd String,
> That murder'd Charles our King,
> These things we well remember:
> And down boys with all those
> That are the Church's Foes,
> May the Church and King bear Sway boys;
> For it is the Freemen's Voice,
> To make Grosvenor their Choice,
> And to him we will sing Huzza boys.

It would be hard to find a clearer illustration than this of the historical frame of reference within which the political battles of this period were fought out.

Religious differences had been a primary factor in the initial formulation of party rivalries in local society, and they continued to be of major significance well into the eighteenth century. The generation of northwestern Tories who had lived through the Presbyterian ascendancy of the 1690s had no reservations whatsoever about continuing to style themselves as the Church party, or about seeing themselves as the only true champions of the Anglican settlement. In August 1704, Sir Henry Bunbury outlined the fundamentals of his own political creed in a letter to his good friend, Peter Legh:

> I Am sure It Is a peice of vanity In me to speak of Giveing any Advice even to the meanest of my voters But that I Know I Can with Confidence Assure them that It is the Service of my Countrey I undertake without any private Ends And that I only think this Can be Perform'd By Heartyly espouseing the Church of England as By Law Established In opposition Both to Popery and Presbytery. And If that Principle will Prevail I am At their service 1

Campaigning against Watkin Williams Wynn some thirty-five years later,

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1. Legh of Lyme MSS.: Bunbury to Legh, 15 Aug. 1704.

the Hanoverian Tory John Myddelton still thought it worth while to mention in his circular letters his 'indisputable Attachment to the Church of England on every Occasion'.[1]

There were of course many Whigs who, as sound churchmen themselves, scoffed openly at the Tories' pretended monopoly of Anglican virtue: a posture they evidently regarded as highly hypocritical. In 1702, one Cheshire Whig recounted with obvious relish the following piece of local gossip:

> we have had Sr. [G]eorge warburton declaring him selfe a pillar of the church & Tom Ashton and [William] Tatton of wittenshawe & [William] Davenport of Bramhall props of the church. they drew their swords sett a Barrell of pitch on fire & cutt a woodmans nose all most off for the service of the church & queen Anne & when that was done one of these gentlemen made a pritty wife drunk stript her naked & did the same by an other [woman?] her fellow & laid them both in one bed, wch occasion^{d} much talk to the prejudice of the pillars of the church. 2

A further cause of Whig resentment, as Samuel Peploe explained to Archbishop Wake in 1725, was the way in which High Church Tories tended to brand their Low Church opponents as heretics and dissenters: 'The truth, my Lord, is, the sincere friends to the Protestant Succession, are by too many among us, represented as Arians, or Presbyterians; & these characters are too readily believed by some who ought to make a more impartial inquiry ....'[3] The case of Alexander Cruden is a good example of what Peploe meant. During the 1720s, Cruden was employed as a reader and companion to the aging Lord Derby, but in 1729 he found himself summarily dismissed from his lordship's service at the instigation of

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1. Chirk Castle MSS. E.3602: Circular letter, 29 Jan. 1739-40.

2. Utkinton MSS., CR 63/691, f.262: S. Daniel to Sr. J. Crewe, 6 Nov. 1702. William Tatton (1674-1732), of Wythenshawe, Chesh. and William Davenport (1663-1706), of Bramhall, Chesh. were both Tory squires.

3. Wake MSS., Arch. W. Epist. 10/141: Peploe to Wake, 7 Feb. 1724-5.

one Mr. Clayton, a High Churchman in the earl's household, who regarded him as 'a rank Presbyterian'; and this despite his protestations that he was a conforming Anglican, and 'had behav'd with all moderation imaginable'. 'I did not desire to be deem'd of any party or denomination,' Cruden told Derby, 'and was a lover of all religious good people, and had given no foundation for any such accusat[io]n.'[1] Derby apparently was unimpressed by this argument, and the man was not re-employed.

This instance of blind intolerance was only one manifestation of the sectarian animosities which continued to divide northwestern Protestants long after the Hanoverian Succession had confirmed the religious toleration established in 1689. After the Tory election victory at Chester in October 1732, it was reported that all the Presbyterians' windows in the town of Shrewsbury were broken in for want of being illuminated in celebration of the event;[2] and at Bury in 1746 the local schoolmaster found himself harassed by neighbouring Tories, because he was not a member of the Anglican communion.[3] The following year, Dr. Richard Kay, himself a Presbyterian, noted in his diary:

> Church Bigotry it's to be feared is one great Sin in these Times; that they belong to the Church as by Law established seems to be Religion enough for Thousands; the serious devout Prayers of good Persons to God Almighty if delivered Extempore as they call it ..., are of little Account with a great many .... I doubt not there being great Numbers of serious good Persons in the Worship of the Church of England, but too many now a Days in that Profession run Matters into an Extream, place Religion in that wherein it really is not, say too much about their Church Priviledges, and tho' Christians yet discover several Errours and Weaknesses 4

Such sentiments as these would hardly have been out of place in the reign

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1. Bodl. MS . Rawlinson C.793, ff.13-17: Cruden to Derby, 20 Sept. 1729. See also ibid., ff.21-5: same to same, 17 Sept. 1729, where Mr. Clayton is identified as being a Tory.

2. Grosvenor MSS.: Robt. Grosvenor to Sr. T. Grosvenor, 20 Oct. 1732.

3. Diary of Richard Kay, p.116: 1 Dec. 1746.

4. Ibid., pp.123-4.

of Queen Anne, and stand in marked contrast to the latitudinarian views more frequently ascribed to the Church of the mid-eighteenth century.

Throughout the period of this study, religious affiliation continued to be a major determinant of electoral behaviour; even Sir Lewis Namier conceded that, as late as 1754, 'whatever genuine popular party feeling there was had a religious colouring'.[1] In 1715, the voters of Farndon in Cheshire were said to have opposed Sir George Warburton in the belief that, 'having deserted his Collegue [Charles Cholmondeley] by joyning w.th a Person of Known disaffection to ye Church & Clergy [i.e. Langham Booth], [he] had likewise deserted his old Principles.'[2] In 1718, John Gardner, a dissenting minister in Chester, produced a detailed account of the number and quality of Cheshire freeholders attending nonconformist congregations. He calculated that there were no fewer than 894 entitled to votes, and added that 'if ye Anabaptist brethren ... could make up, as he was informed they could, 100 voters; then the Dissenters of Cheshire would make up near a fourth part of the voters of that county.'[3] However, the contemporary assumption that Dissenters were the mainstay of the Whigs' electoral strength is incapable of general substantiation, given the difficulties of identification. Only in the case of the Quakers, who are recorded in pollbooks as having affirmed rather than swearing the oaths, is their conclusive proof of overwhelmingly Whig sympathies.[4]

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1. Namier, Structure of Politics, p.90.

2. Grosvenor MSS.: J. Fowler to Sr. Rd. Grosvenor, 16 Apr. 1715.

3. Urwick, Nonconformity in Cheshire, p. lxi: J. Gardner to Mr. Tong, 11 Jan. 1717-18. Gardner's account, the details of which are reproduced in full, formed part of the broader survey begun in 1715 by the Rev. Dr. John Evans.

4. See, especially, the Cheshire pollbooks of 1715, 1722 and 1727.

The direct contribution which Anglican clergymen made towards the electoral success of the Tories is more easily demonstrated. The party preferences of those voting in Lancashire and Cheshire elections between 1713 and 1747 are analysed in detail in Appendix A(ii),[1] which shows conclusively their predominantly Tory sympathies. In 1715, of the 66 clergymen voting in Cheshire, 33 plumped for Charles Cholmondeley, 4 plumped for Sir George Warburton, and 13 supported both Tory candidates; only 12 voted for the Compromise, while 1 plumped for Langham Booth, and 3 split their votes between him and Cholmondeley. In 1722, the demonstration of Tory strength was even more spectacular: of the 75 clergymen identified as voting in Cheshire, no fewer than 55 voted for Cholmondeley and John Crewe, whilst a further 5 gave single votes to one or the other; only 8 plumped for Booth, though 7 more split their votes between him and the Tory candidates. Moreover, it would seem that on this occasion a number of churchmen were determined to make an impressive public display of their political principles, for no fewer than 21 clerics came to the hustings in a block on the opening day of the poll to cast their votes for the Tory interest.[2] The overall pattern was repeated in the Cheshire election of 1727, when, out of 55 clergymen polled, 34 voted for Cholmondeley and Crewe, 14 voted for Sir Robert Salusbury Cotton, and 7 voted across party lines.

However, with no pollbook surviving for the Cheshire contest of 1734, and with none at all for a county election in Lancashire, it is impossible to say with any accuracy how quickly or how completely this

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1. See below, pp. 317-60.

2. Cheshire R.O., QDV/1/9: Cheshire county pollbook, 1722, p.9. Voters are recorded in the order in which they came to poll.

Tory predominance among the clergy was undermined; or, indeed, whether it had ever existed to the same degree north of the Mersey. At Liverpool in 1734, for example, out of 45 clergymen casting votes in the election, only 6 did so for the candidates in the Country interest, whereas 39 voted for the Whigs. But as the pollbook makes clear, no fewer than 35 of these Whig voters had been enfranchised since 1731, during the period of their party's supremacy in the borough,[1] and the principle of selection thus involved must raise serious doubts as to how representative a sample of Lancashire clergymen this can be. Similar difficulties are met with in trying to interpret the details of clerical voting in the Tory-dominated city of Chester. Here, in 1734, of 21 clergymen going to the polls, 18 voted for the Tories, and only three for the Whigs. By 1747, the total had risen to 27, of whom 20 voted for the Tories, 6 for the Whigs, and 1 across party lines. Other contemporary accounts, though, make no distinction between the politico-religious sympathies of Lancashire and those of its southerly neighbour, but they do add some illustrative detail that helps to corroborate the picture already delineated. In 1722, for instance, members of the Rev. James Woods' dissenting congregation at Chowbent in Lancashire were evicted from their chapel by the Tory lord of the manor, Richard Atherton, in consequence of their steadfast adherence to the Whig cause during the General Election of that year.[2] Indeed, after this contest it was recorded by one Tory obsrver that, whereas those appearing for Sir John Bland and Richard Shuttleworth had included 'several Persons of Quality, & all the Gentlemen of Estates worth & honour in the County togeather w.th the Clergy and principal Men of the Landed Intrest', those appearing for Sir Henry Hoghton had comprised 'the

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1. An exact List of the Persons Polled at Liverpool, pp.11-14.

2. Hibbert-Ware, Lancashire Memorials, ii.252.

Joint Intrest of all the Presbuterians Independants Anabaptists & Quakers'.[1] While this account possibly exaggerates the social and religious cleavage between the two interests, it is probably accurate enough in its general orientation, and the resulting pattern would seem to accord quite closely with that already identified in Cheshire.

As to how this pattern may have altered during the remainder of the period with which this study is concerned, some tentative conclusions can perhaps be drawn from the surviving evidence of contemporary correspondence. For example, by the 1730s there is growing indication of an incipient rift developing between the Dissenters and the Whig establishment over the contentious issue of repealing the Test and Corporation Acts. According to an informant of Lord Egmont, the idea of bringing up the question of repeal in Parliament 'was begun in Lancashire ... by Daniel Pulteney with design to distress Sir Robert Walpole, for if he complied with the Dissenters and consented to the repeal he would lose the Churchmen; if he complied not he would lose the Dissenters.'[2] Walpole contrived to avoid the issue until 1732, and to a group of Liverpool Dissenters writing in January 1733, the Whig alliance still looked impregnable enough:

> It's plain the Whigs & Dissenters have been strong eno' to chuse Whig Parliam[en]ts Ever since the Accession of this Royal Family; the Nations of Liberty have grown much, and the Rights of Conscience have been more fully Explained, so that true Whiggism must needs be much stronger every year; and no doubt it w^{d} be found so at any new Election.

Nevertheless, delays in pressing for repeal had already, they believed, threatened the long-term integrity of the Whig interest. Moreover, by now publishing their plans in advance of the parliamentary session, the Committee of Protestant Dissenters in London had given needless

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1. P.R.O., S.P.35/31, f.252: Anti-Rumpolian to Mr. Sharpe, 26 Apr. 1722.
2. Hist. MSS. Comm., Egmont Diary, ii.244: 13 Mar. 1735-6.

hostages to fortune, and had allowed their opponents time to close ranks against them:

> ... the High Ch[urch] whether W[hi]g or T[or]y are alarmed, and may be Expected to do as much against any w[ho]m they may suspect well inclined to the Repeal in ord[e]r to prevent it; as they w^d^ out of Resentment, if it were done now. Some Diffidence will be unavoidable betwixt us and the Whigs. The H[igh] Ch[urch] will be spirited, and the Dissenters discouraged, not knowing who are their Friends, Or whether they have any at all among their fellow Subjects, in a Time of Trial. 1

This particular agitation was soon swallowed up by the Excise Crisis, but the divisions identified above remained and festered. In the General Election of 1734, the government were obliged to pull out all the stops in order to prevent the votes of Dissenters going to candidates in the Country interest, and in general were highly successful in playing upon their fears of renewed persecution in the event of a Tory Parliament being returned to Westminster. As a result, several dissenting communities publicly declared their intention of remaining loyal to the Whig ministry, including those of Chester and Lancaster.[2] However, from Liverpool no such affirmation was forthcoming, and it seems clear that a number of the town's Dissenters cast their votes in this election for the Country party candidates, Bootle and Cunliffe. John Hardman,[3] a prominent Liverpool merchant, and a signatory of the letter cited above, was one of those known to have done so, and in the years that followed he came to play an increasingly important role in the councils of the Country Coalition in the northwest.

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1. Cholmondeley (Houghton) MSS. 76/1: Part of a letter from Dissenters in Liverpool to the Committee of Protestant Dissenters in London, 12 Jan. 1732-3. For the Anglican Whigs' side of the argument, cf. the f ars of Edmund Gibson: Bodl. MS. Dep . c. 237 (Gibson Papers), ff.31-2: Queries Concerning the Bishops and Clergy, n.d. [c.1735].

2. Langford, The Excise Crisis, pp.116-18.

3. John Hardman (c.1694-1755), of Allerton Hall, nr. Liverpool, Lancs. M.P. for Liverpool, 1754- Dec. 1755. Opposition Whig. At his election, he stood on the independent 'Tory' interest, opposed to the Whig corporation and backed by the Dissenters: see Namier and Brooke, History of Parliament, i.317.

At first, High Tory extremists like Watkin Williams Wynn remained vehemently opposed to reaching any kind of accommodation with the Dissenters, and in 1736 Wynn himself led the debate in the House of Commons for those, both Whigs and Tories, who were against repealing the Test. 'I was highly complimented by ye Ministry Folks,' he told his father in March, '[though] whether they deal in sincerity or not, I will not pretend to say; in y^{s} instance their Sentiments & our tally'd tho upon different Principles, theirs were founded in policy our upon ye Basis of our constitution in Church & State ....'[1] However, Sir Thomas Aston and a number of others in the Whig Opposition were in favour of repeal,[2] and by the winter of 1741-2 even Wynn found himself compelled by expediency to co-operate closely with Hardman and his friends at Liverpool in order to bring about the overthrow of the Walpole regime.[3]

The Liverpool experience was probably exceptional, though not unique, and it seems clear that the majority of Dissenters in both Lancashire and Cheshire remained firm in their allegiance to traditional Whiggism. Nevertheless, it does go some way towards demonstrating the breadth of support which the Country Coalition enjoyed in the northwest during the 1730s and '40s.

If the Tories' attitude to the Dissenters remained ambivalent at best, their relations with the Catholics saw a general improvement during the first half of the eighteenth century. In Lancashire, where they were particularly numerous, the social respectability of the Catholic gentry was clearly established by the 1720s. Indeed, despite their eleventh-hour

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1. Wynnstay MSS. C.97: Wynn to Sr. W. Williams, 25 Mar. 1736.

2. Hist. MSS. Comm., Egmont Diary, iii. 47: 30 Mar. 1739.

3. N.L.W. MSS. 3581E/19: Wynn to Hardman, 29 Dec. 1741. The extract printed in Hist. MSS. Comm., 15th Rep. VII, p.324 gives Francis Price as the addressee; but see N.L.W. MSS. 3581E/24: G. Dickens to Price for the correct identification of the recipient.

reticence about joining the Catholic rebels in 1715, most northwestern Tories were on good terms with their Catholic neighbours from the 1690s onwards.[1] From Easter 1714 to Easter 1715, Nicholas Blundell, himself a devout Romanist, actually served as churchwarden of Sefton parish, and during his term of office seems to have enjoyed the full confidence and support of his Anglican neighbours.[2] Social intercourse between Anglican ministers and Catholic priests was not uncommon,[3] and when his friend Father Aldred died in 1728, Blundell could write in the Halkirk Burial Register the following epitaph: 'Mr. Robert Aldred ... was a Laborious good Missioner, a Fasatious pleasant Man, and very well beloved by Protestants as well as Catholics.'[4] Of course, those inclined to favour the Pretender had particular reason to be tolerant of Roman Catholics, but writing from Montpellier in 1718, John Byrom displayed a remarkable degree of oecumenical zeal, even for a Jacobite. '[Though] perhaps you would scruple to go to mass, &c.,' he told a close friend, 'for my part I have been at it several times, and for what external ceremonies there are, I see nothing to fright one from it, nor indeed from any way of communion with 'em, if they would excuse one from believing so and so ....'[5] There were, however, limits to toleration. Sir John Bland, for example, grew so worried in the 1730s at the number of popish converts in the vicinity of his Yorkshire estates, that he felt obliged to pay out of his own pocket for the maintenance of an Anglican minister to officiate in the area.[6] Still, there is little evidence to suggest that many Anglicans

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1. Great Diurnal of Nicholas Blundell, passim.
2. Ibid., ii. p.xi.
3. Ibid., ii. note p.277.
4. Ibid., iii. note p.234.
5. Journal and Remains of John Byrom, i. 40: Byrom to J.Stansfield, 21 Jan. 1718 (N.S.)
6. Hist. MSS. Comm., Egmont Diary, ii. 229-30: 6 Feb. 1735-6.

in the northwest bore their Catholic neighbours any real malice. Indeed, there were lawyers like Thomas Bootle and Isaac Greene who went out of their way to protect Papists from malicious prosecution in the courts, and a number of Justices of the Peace, including Peter Bold and Foster Cunliffe, who had a reputation for being especially sympathetic in recusancy cases.[1] The greatest hostility shown towards the local Roman Catholic population came from Protestant Dissenters. On 5 November 1739, the dissenting congregation at Bury was treated to a cautionary thanksgiving sermon on the subject of deliverance from the Popish Plot;[2] and between 1744 and 1750, Sir Henry Hoghton and his Presbyterian associates provided the driving force behind moves to invoke the full rigour of the penal laws against more than 3,000 Lancashire Catholics.[3]

The amount of influence which the Catholic gentry were able to exert in elections is difficult to assess: in Cheshire their interest was negligible, but in Lancashire their territorial power could be of crucial significance. The Quaker diarist, William Stout, believed that Catholic intervention was the critical factor enabling the Tories to defeat Sir Henry Hoghton in the Lancashire election of 1722 -- an opinion, incidentally, in which Hoghton himself fully concurred.[4]

Nonjurors and Jacobites constitute another group whose electoral importance is hard to calculate. Even their numbers are difficult to estimate with any measure of accuracy; for whilst the lists of likely

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1. Lancashire R.O., Blundell of Ince Blundell MSS., DDIn/60/40-45: Correspondence relating to the prosecution of Robert and Catherine Blundell, 1 Mar. 1735-6 to 25 June 1736.

2. Diary of Richard Kay, p.29.

3. See above, p.261.

4. Autobiography of William Stout, p.186; Blenheim MSS., D.I. 34: Hoghton to Sunderland, 6 Apr. 1722.

supporters compiled by the Pretender's agents are wildly optimistic and notoriously inaccurate,[1] the official records are equally unsatisfactory, since they tend to lump Nonjurors and Catholics together quite indiscriminately.[2] These technical obstacles apart, though, there remains the overriding problem of definition. If the term Jacobite is reserved for those actively involved in treasonable communication with the Stuart Court and its agents, then the numbers so described must be comparatively few; but if, on the other hand, one extends the definition to include every Tory squire who ever toasted the health of King James III, or every ale-house bucko who was ever hauled up before the Justices of the Peace for damning the Duke of Brunswick, then the Jacobite ranks must be considerably augmented. Many Whig contemporaries were convinced of the existence of a vast reservoir of Jacobite sentiment among the common people, particularly in rural areas. Writing from Gawsworth Hall on King George's birthday in 1722, a visiting Whig lady thought fit to comment on local efforts to mark the occasion. 'Our bells have rung ever since four this morning,' she told a friend, 'which is more proof of Lady Mohun's power than the people's inclinations.'[3] Similarly, on the approach

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1. See, for example, Stuart Papers, 65/16: Memorandum re possible supporters in the event of a rising, 30 Aug. 1721; and ibid., 253/51: Ld. Balhaldy's memorandum concerning the state of parties in England, 25 Oct. 1743 (N.S.). Both documents are merely lists of the principal Tory squires in each county, and include a number of prominent Hanoverians as well as several likely Jacobites.

2. So-called Registers of Papists' Estates, for instance, include the names of Protestant Nonjurors: see J.H.E. Bennett and J.C. Dewhurst, eds., Quarter Session Records Etc. of Chester, 1559-1760 (Lancs. & Chesh. Record Soc., xciv. 1940), pp.26-30; R. Sharpe France, Register of Estates of Lancashire Papists, 1717-88 (Lancs. & Chesh. Record Soc., xcviii, 1945; and cviii, 1960), passim.

3. Letters to and from Henrietta, Countess of Suffolk, ed. J. Croker p.91: Mrs. Bradshaw to Mrs. Howard, 28 May [1722]. Lady Mohun was the wife of the Hon. Charles Mordaunt.

of the Highland army in 1745, a Manchester Whig noted that 'Some marks of Joy & Hope very evidently shew themselves, & the topicks of absolute Monarchy & hereditary Right (which were always gratefull) are now more resumed than before among us. These you will think shew the inclinations of people, and perhaps their Intentions, if Opportunity favours .... '[1]

Manchester, of course, was widely regarded as a focus for Jacobite activity in the northwest. More than anything else, this reputation for disaffection rested on the presence there of Dr. Thomas Deacon, one of the most prominent Nonjurors in England.[2] Deacon and those whom he gathered about him shared many attitudes in common with the local Tory squirearchy, but they differed from the majority of their Tory neighbours in remaining deeply committed to the rigid principles of pre-Revolution Toryism: non-resistance, legitimate succession, and passive obedience to legally constituted authority. A number of Deacon's followers were active in the Stuart cause, and several, including one of his own sons, were executed for their part in the 1745 Rebellion. Among these was one James Bradshaw, who had served as a captain in the Manchester Regiment, and in whose scaffold speech the central tenets of a Nonjuror's creed were clearly set out:

> When I first joined the King's forces [i.e. the Manchester Regiment], I was induced to it by a principle of duty only, and I never saw any reason since to convince me that I was in the least mistaken ....
> I die a member of the Church of England, which I am satisfied would flourish much more under the reign of a Stuart than it does now, or has done for many years. The friends of the House of Hanover say they keep out Popery; but do they not let in infidelity, which is almost become (if I may so say) religion established? ...
> I am convinced that these nations are inevitably ruined, unless

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1. Addit. MSS.32705, f.198: Anon. to Sr. Rowland Wynne, 14 Sept. 1745.

2. For a full account of this remarkable man, see H. Broxap, The Life of Thomas Deacon (Manchester, 1911); idem, 'Some New Facts concerning Thomas Deacon', Trans. Lancs. & Chesh. Antiquarian Soc., xxix (1911), 70-88.

> the royal family be restored, which I hope will soon happen, for I love my country, and with my parting breath I pray God to bless it. I also beseech Him to bless and preserve my lawful sovereign, King James the Third, the Prince of Wales, the Duke of York, to prosper all my friends, and to have mercy upon me. 1

Not all Nonjurors, however, were as anxious to risk their necks as Bradshaw and his friends. Several, like Peter Legh of Lyme, preferred to involve themselves in legitimate political activity, satisfying their scruples by refusing to take the oaths of allegiance to the Hanoverian establishment, but in all other respects accepting the political status quo. Their political influence was of necessity indirect, since by refusing the oaths they effectively disenfranchised themselves, and were by the same token excluded from holding any form of public office. For those with a substantial number of borough freemen or county freeholders among their tenants, there remained considerable scope for influencing the outcome of parliamentary elections, and Legh could add to this the vicarious pleasure of seeing William Shippen returned to five successive Parliaments as one of the Members for his pocket borough at Newton. But not all were so fortunate. The maintenance of rigid nonjuring principles was an ethical luxury that few Tories could afford, if they were intent upon avoiding political impotence. Therefore, if men like Shippen could bring themselves to swear the oath of allegiance in order to take up their seats in the House of Commons, then less celebrated Jacobites could do likewise in order to send them there. Thus, in 1722, William Shrigley caused no little astonishment by appearing on the hustings to vote for Cholmondeley and Crewe; indeed, so incredulous was the clerk who recorded his vote, that against Shrigley's name he added the marginal note: 'took ye oaths'. [2]

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1. Hist. MSS. Comm., Kenyon MSS., no.1222, pp.477-8: Declaration of James Bradshaw, 28 Nov. 1746.

2. Cheshire R.O., QDV/1/8: Cheshire County Pollbook, 1722, p.22.

In the light of these observations, then, it would seem that Nonjuring, like Jacobitism, was an inexact expression, comprehending a broad range of political and religious attitudes, and varying degrees of scrupulousness. Only in its most extreme forms did Nonjuring set itself and its devotees apart from the mainstream of Anglican Toryism; for the most part, it came to constitute an increasingly anachronistic, slightly eccentric fringe activity.[1]

The last area of principle with which I propose to deal concerns the Tories' attitude towards government; for, after all, it was on the basis of more or less common assumptions about the importance of re-asserting traditional Country values that Tories and Opposition Whigs came to co-operate with one another during the 1730s and early '40s.[2] Modern historians have tended to stress the view that formal opposition was regarded as unconstitutional in the first half of the eighteenth century. 'The proper attitude for right-minded Members [of Parliament],' wrote Namier,

> was one of considered support to the Government in the due performance of its task. What other grounds could there be for a 'formed opposition' than disloyalty to the established order (e.g. Jacobitism) or a selfish, factious conspiracy of politicians to force their way into offices higher than they could obtain by loyal co-operation with their Sovereign and his Ministers? 3

Clearly, such views as these carried considerable weight with contemporaries

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1. For fuller discussion of the many varied aspects of Jacobitism and Nonjuring in this period, see G.H. Jones, The Mainstream of Jacobitism (Cambridge, Mass., 1954); J.H. Overton, The Nonjurors: Their Lives, Principles and Writings (London, 1902); Bennett, The Tory Crisis in Church and State, passim.

2. See, for example, Kramnick, Bolingbroke and His Circle. For a more cynical view of the Opposition's 'Country' programme, see Quentin Skinner, 'The Principles and Practice of Opposition: The Case of Bolingbroke versus Walpole', in Neil McKendrick, ed., Historical Perspectives: Studies in English Thought and Society (London, 1974), pp. 93-128.

3. Namier, Structure of Politics, p.212.

on both sides of the House of Commons, and several Tories were uncomfortably aware of the dilemma they faced; but whereas Jacobites could oppose the King's ministers consistently, on the grounds that their proper allegiance lay elsewhere, Hanoverian Tories with strong views on the royal prerogative were in a more difficult position. Writing in July 1734 on the subject of a recent parliamentary division, Lord Barrymore, as yet in his pre-Jacobite phase, was certain about his own attitude. 'I think the opposition was vain & rediculous,' he told Sir Roger Bradshaigh, 'and Interfaring directly w.th the proper province off the L.^{ds} off the Treasury. If Sr. R[obert] W[alpole] had given way to that he wou'd bee often attack'd and bee less regarded then a man in his station ought to bee.'[1] Likewise, in the debate on the Spanish Convention in 1739, Nicholas Fazakerley, though opposed to the treaty itself, made it plain that he did not deny the ministry's right to have concluded it. 'As for myself, Sir,' he added, 'I am far from either censuring or envying any Gentleman, who has the Honour of enjoying the Royal Favour.' Indeed, he believed Walpole to be 'as well qualify'd for a First Minister as any Man in this Empire.'[2] Nevertheless, theory and practice were two very different things, and there was plenty of precedent going back to the Revolution of 'formed opposition' being carried on by both Whigs and Tories, whose aim it had been to join or replace their opponents in the service of the Crown.

However, if by one descent the Tories were heirs to a tradition of considered support for government, by another they were heirs to a

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1. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Barrymore to Bradshaigh, 19 July 1734.
2. Gentleman's Magazine, ix (1739), 697.

separate Country tradition, in which all courtiers and ministers of whatever party were proper objects of suspicion and mistrust. One should perhaps recall Lord Barrymore's remarks on the occasion of the Whig split in 1717: 'Noebody has more thorough Contempt for ministers & what is Call'd men in greate offices then I have. I cannot remember they ever did the true service of their Countrey ....'[1] Many rank-and-file Tories in the provinces evidently held similar convictions. For example, in 1726, having wished Sir Roger Bradshaigh good fortune in his efforts to obtain some suitable employment from 'ye Great men' in the ministry, Alexander Leigh thought fit to add: 'I cannot help y.t suspition w.ch I have of 'em, and wish you cou'd safely trust to any thing they say.'[2]

At the root of such prejudices was the very real fear, widespread among country gentlemen, that the growing assertiveness of central government was threatening to overturn the existing social order, and with it their own special monopoly in the field of local administration. Naively perhaps, they wanted government that was both cheap and unobtrusive: hence their opposition to standing armies, placemen and foreign entanglements, and their inveterate hostility to those they termed 'the moneyed interest'.[3] Above all else, however, they wanted government that was responsive to the needs and interests of their own class. Speaking in 1734 to a Commons' motion in favour of repealing the

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1. Crawford MSS., 47/2/-: Barrymore to Bradshaigh, 27 Apr. 1717.

2. Ibid.: Leigh to Bradshaigh, 4 Feb. 1725-6.

3. See Norman Baker, 'Changing Attitudes towards Government in Eighteenth-Century Britain', in Anne Whiteman, J.S. Bromley and P.G.M. Dickson, eds., Statesmen, Scholars and Merchants: Essays in Eighteenth-Century History presented to Dame Lucy Sutherland (Oxford, 1973), pp.202-19, and especially pp.206-7. Also cf. Kramnick, Bolingbroke and his Circle, pp.56-83.

Septennial Act, Watkin Williams Wynn proceeded to set out his views on the proper functions and qualities of those sent up to Westminster as elected representatives:

> Parliament, Sir, is the great Council of the Nation, the Business of this House in particular is to represent to his Majesty the Grievances of the People, to inform his Majesty if any of his Ministers or Officers make an ill use of the Power he delegates to them, and to impeach and prosecute such evil Ministers. Now, I should be glad to know who are the most proper Representatives for these Purposes, Gentlemen who have large Properties in the Country, who are independent of the Ministers and Officers of the Crown, and who by living in the Country are perfectly acquainted with the Circumstances of the People; or Gentlemen who for their chief Support depend upon the Ministers and Officers of the Crown, who know nothing of those they represent, and are not only ignorant of their true Interests, but are really indifferent about their Welfare 1

This picture of benign paternalism on the part of the landed classes was clearly not shared by those in the opposite interest. ' ... Country Gentlemen hate to be Rival'd by the industrious Merchant and Tradesmen,' declared a Whig pamphleteer in Chester at the height of the Dee navigation dispute; 'they never consider that Trade is the life of every City, and Navigation the life of Trade.'[2]

Nevertheless, such views as Wynn's were by no means the monopoly of High Tories. Even Lord Egmont, who was generally on good terms with Walpole down to 1734, resented the government's attitude towards the landed interest. Writing in his diary, he deplored 'the neglect the ministry show of the ancient gentry and men of fortune in the disposal of employments and favours, which they choose to bestow on little and unknown persons.'[3] More significant perhaps was the reasoned criticism

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1. Gentleman's Magazine, iv. (1734), 580.

2. [A Letter] to the Citizens of Chester, n.d. A printed copy of this handbill is preserved among the papers of Sir Robert Grosvenor.

3. Hist. MSS. Comm., Egmont Diary, i.41. Cf. ibid., pp.85-7.

of the ministry formulated by the Duke of Somerset, the patron of Thomas Bootle, and a longstanding opponent of Walpole. In 1740 he told Lord Hardwicke:

> ... as my Principles hathe their Foundations Established on the Fundamentall Principles of the true old whigs in Former times when the Libertys & the Propertys of the People were their cheifest care & consideration much more in those days, then it seemeth now to bee by the present whiggs in this Generation for most of the modern actions are not consistent with those old Principles. 1

Many of the Whigs who went into Opposition in the 1720s and '30s would surely have concurred in these sentiments. Moreover, it is hard to escape the conclusion that these declarations, contained as they are in private letters and diaries, represent the authentic expression of sincerely held beliefs, even if the more public utterances of the Opposition, like that of Wynn's, are open to the charge of being little more than ex post facto justifications of factious self-interest or covert disaffection. Just as in the 1690s the Old Whigs of Harley's New Country group had discovered that they had more in common with the Tories than with the Junto Whigs, so now in the 1730s it appeared that others of similar persuasion were belatedly coming to a similar conclusion.

However, it would be wrong to argue from this, as some have done,[2] that country gentlemen, as a class, were all constitutionally averse to holding office; on the contrary, the formation of a 'Patriot' administration was seen by many as the indispensable prerequisite for ensuring that the principles already outlined were put into practice. 'Men and Measures' was the clarion call of the Opposition. Furthermore, whilst many Tories and Country Whigs clearly had no personal desire for

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1. Addit. MSS. 35586, f.263: Somerset to Hardwicke, 24 July 1740.

2. See, for instance, Dickinson, Bolingbroke, p.273; Owen, Rise of the Pelhams, pp. 71-5.

power, there were many others of the same denominations who obviously did. In 1710, Robert Harley had experienced no real difficulty in forming a viable Tory administration out of the raw materials at his disposal; likewise, at the beginning of 1742, Argyle and the other leaders of the parliamentary Opposition do not seem to have doubted their ability to construct an alternative ministry. Writing to Sir Francis Leicester on 17 February, Randle Wilbraham was clearly anticipating the immediate and complete overthrow of Walpole's government, and the substitution of a broad-bottomed administration, formed from the ranks of the Opposition. 'Argyles, Prince's Men, Old Whigs & even Tories,' he predicted, 'are to have a Share in Power. ... Mirabile dictu.'[1] Evidently the prospect was as exciting as it was unexpected.

In the event, Argyle's dream of a broadly-based, coalition ministry was wrecked by the defections of Pulteney and Carteret, and by the obstinacy of the King, who refused to take in the Tories. Nevertheless, the latter's hopes of breaking into the ministry lingered on through the spring, and by the summer rumours were once again rife that a revolution at Court was imminent. In June, Legh Master wrote to Peter Legh the Younger, in order to clarify his own situation if a change were in fact to occur.

> When ye Alteration was lst: in ye Ministry, It was hinted to me, that it w.d not be impossible for me to gett into ye Commission of Customs or Excise if agreeable to me. My answer was, that, if ye Administration was to be in ye Hands of those w.th whom I had always voted, I shd have no Objection, but Matters not flowing in that Channell as was at first generally expected, I had laid aside all thoughts of that overture till ye day before I left London, when I was by Great Authority & w.th Good Confidence

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1. Leicester-Warren MSS., DLT/LL.5, bundle 1: Wilbraham to Leicester, 17 Feb. 1741-2.

> assur'd many & Great Changes w^d^ be made gradually on ye Principles of ye Broad Bottom, that the L.^ds^ Gower Bathurst & Cobham w^d^ certainly all be in Place & others in ye same way of thinking be provided for By degrees & withall that it was believ'd I might be in ye Commission of Excise .... On such Principles I thought (I hope with ye Approbation of my Friends) I might with Reason & Honour do my Best to forward this Motion. ... As I w^d^ neither act counter to ye Opinion of my Friends, or ye Principles I have always profess'd, or sacrifice either ye one or ye other to my Interest, neither w^d^ I out of any Caprice wantonly trifle away & loose ye Opportunity of serving my Family & Friends as in such a Place I might have an opportunity of doing. 1

Masters' reactions are clearly not those of a man contemptuous of holding office; neither are they those of an unprincipled place-hunter. Rather he would seem to have a good deal in common with scores of his political opponents who, by dint of remarkable good fortune, had been able to combine service to the government with loyalty to their party and principles for more than a quarter of a century.

* * *

The ideological and organizational survival of the Tories in Lancashire and Cheshire was in many ways remarkable. During a period of more than thirty years, which saw the decimation of their party at Westminster, and its virtual extirpation from many other parts of the country, they not only survived, but actually prospered. Notwithstanding the differences between their own Jacobite and Hanoverian wings, nor the tremendous institutional resources possessed by their opponents, it was the Tories and not the Whigs who, in the county communities of the northwest, could fairly claim to be (in Thomas Assheton's phrase) 'the best established interest'.

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1. Legh of Lyme MSS.: Master to P. Legh, Jr., 26 June 1742.

Appendix A -- Analysis of Votes Cast in Lancashire and Cheshire Elections between 1713 and 1747.

The voting record of all those identified as esquires, knights, baronets or peers,[1] either in the pollbooks themselves or in Commissions of the Peace, is set out below in section i); the votes of clergymen are given in section ii). Those listed in the latter category are all assumed to have been Anglicans unless marked with an * , in which case they are known to have been Dissenters. Wherever positive identification has been possible, biographical details have been added. In compiling this analysis the following sources have been used:

Column

1 The Poll taken at Wigan, 3 Sept. 1713 (Kenyon MSS., DDKe/66 [5]).

D = Derby Interest: those for Bradshaigh and/or Kenyon.
F = Finch Interest: those for Barrymore and/or Bridgeman.[2]
S' = Split: those for Barrymore and Kenyon.
S" = Split: those for Barrymore and Bradshaigh.

2 The Poll taken at Clitheroe, 3 Sept. 1713 (Lancashire R.O., Municipal Borough of Clitheroe Records, MBC/83).

D = Derby Interest: those for Stanley and Lister.
T' = Tory: those for Lister and Harvey.
T" = Tory: those single for Lister.

3 The Poll taken in Cheshire, 16 Feb. 1714-15 seq. (Cheshire R.O., QDV 1/1-7).

C = Compromise: those for Booth and Warburton.
T = Tory: those single for Cholmondeley.
2T = Tory: those for Cholmondeley and Warburton.
(T) = Tory: those single for Warburton.
W = Whig: those single for Booth.
S = Split: those for Booth and Cholmondeley.

4 The Poll taken in Cheshire, 4 Apr. 1722 seq. (Cheshire R.O., QDV 1/8-15).

T = Tory: those for Cholmondeley and Crewe.
T' = Tory: those single for Cholmondeley.
T" = Tory: those single for Crewe.
W = Whig: those single for Booth.
S = Split: those for Booth and either Cholmondeley or Crewe.

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1. Those designated gentlemen have been omitted. A test sample, however showed that their political preferences were in roughly the same proportions as those of their social superiors.

2. Probably Orlando Bridgeman (1671-1721), of Clifton, Warwks. M.P. for Wigan, 1701 and 1702-5.

Column

5 The Mayoral Poll taken at Wigan, 2 Oct. 1725 (Wigan Court Leet Roll, no. 133).

C = For Barrymore as Mayor.
@ = Against Barrymore as Mayor.

6 The Mayoral Poll taken at Wigan, 1 Oct. 1726 (Wigan Court Leet Roll, no. 135).

C = For Master as Mayor.
@ = Against Master as Mayor.

7 'Proposals on the Part of Peter Bold': The Agreement whereby Barrymore stood down at Wigan in favour of Bold, 23 Aug. 1727 (Crawford MSS., 47/3/191).

@ = Those signing the Agreement.

8 The Poll taken in Cheshire, 30 Aug. 1727 (Cheshire R.O., P4/19/2; and Grosvenor MSS.)

T = Tory: those for Cholmondeley and Crewe.
T' = Tory: those single for Cholmondeley.
T" = Tory: those single for Crewe.
W = Whig: those single for Cotton.
S = Split: those for Cotton and either Cholmondeley or Crewe.

9 The Poll taken at Chester, 24 Aug. 1727 (Grosvenor MSS.)

G = Those for Sir Richard and Thomas Grosvenor.
B = Those single for Bunbury.
S = Split: those for Bunbury and one of the Grosvenors.

10 Lists of those appearing at Chester in the Tory and Whig Interests at the Election for Mayor, Oct. 1732 (Cheshire R.O., Crewe (Cowper) MSS., DCC/9 [Tories]; Wynnstay MSS. L. 1218 [Whigs]).

T = Those appearing in the Tory Interest.
W = Those appearing in the Whig Interest.

11 The Poll taken at Chester, 15-18 May 1734 (Grosvenor MSS.)

T = Tory: for Grosvenor and Bunbury.
W = Whig: for Manley and Williams.
S = Split: for Grosvenor or Bunbury and Manley or Williams.

12 The Poll taken at Liverpool, 29 Apr.- 4 May 1734 (Printed Pollbook [Liverpool, 1734]: copy in Rare Books Sequence in Liverpool City Library, H q 324.242 PAR).

T = Country party: those for Bootle and Cunliffe.
T' = Country party: those single for Bootle or Cunliffe.
W = Whig: those for Brereton and Gildart.
S = Split: those for Bootle or Cunliffe and Brereton or Gildart.

Column

13 The Poll taken at Preston, 8 May 1741 (Printed Poll List [Preston, 1741]: Kenyon MSS., DDKe; and Lancashire R.O., Lancashire Miscellanea, DDPr/131/3).

T = Tory: for Fazakerley and Shuttleworth.
W = Whig: for Reynolds.

14 The Poll taken at Chester, 22-27 July 1747 (Printed Pollbook [Chester, 1747]: copy in Grosvenor MSS.)

T = Tory: for Grosvenor and Warburton.
W = Whig: single for Mainwaring.
S = Split: for Grosvenor and Mainwaring.

In the biographical remarks, the following abbreviations have been used:

C = Curate; M = Minister; P = Prebend; R = Rector;
V = Vicar.

HSC = High Sheriff of Cheshire; HSL = High Sheriff of Lancashire.

(C) = Cheshire; (D) = Denbighshire; (Dy) = Derbyshire;
(F) = Flintshire; (L) = Lancashire; (S) = Staffordshire;
(Sh) = Shropshire; (Y) = Yorkshire.

Appendix A i) -- Esquires, &c.

Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Remarks
ACTON, Richard (n.d.), of Gloverstone (C)										T					
ALDERSEY, Robert (1670-1730) of Aldersey & Spurstow (C)			S	W											
ALDERSEY, Thomas (1673-1741), M.D. of Chester & Aldersey (C)											T				
ALLANSON, John (n.d.)					@	@									
ALSAGER, John (n.d.), of Alsager (C)				T											
AMSON, John (c.1685-1735), of Lees (C)			T	W											HSC, 1711
ASHTON, Hugh (n.d.)						@									
ASHURST, Thomas (1672-1744), of Ashurst (L)	D				C	C						T			
ASSHETON, John (d.1758), of Middleton (L)						C									
ASSHETON, Sir Ralph, 3rd Bart. (c.1692-1765), of Middleton (L)						C									HSL, 1739
ASSHETON, Ralph (1696-1792), of Cuerdale (L)					C						T				
ASSHETON, Strange (n.d.), of Penketh (L)										T					
ASSHETON, Thomas (1678-1759), of Ashley (C)	C	T		C	@	T				T					
ASSHETON, Thomas, Jr. (n.d.), of Holford (C)													T		
ASTLEY, Hamilton (n.d.), of Preston (L)												S			
ATHERTON, Richard (1700-26), of Atherton (L)															
BAGOT, Sir Walter Wagstaffe, 5th Bart. (1702-68), of Blyfield (S)													T		
BAMFORD, William (n.d.)						@									
BANKS, Robert (1699- ?), of Winstanley (L)													T		HSL, 1742
BANKS, Thomas (1697- ?), of Wigan (L)												W			
BANKS, William (1695- ?), of Winstanley (L)											T		T		

Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Remarks
BARNSTON, Roger (1683- ?), of Chester (C)			C	W				W							
BARNSTON, Trafford (1708- ?), of Churton & Chester (C)										W		W			HSC, 1735
BARROW, Ralph (n.d.), of Northwich (C)											T			T	
BARROW, Samuel (n.d.), of Shepenhall (C)								S							HSC, 1719
BARRY, Hon. Arthur (n.d.), of Marbury (C)														T	
BARRY, James, 4th Earl of Barrymore [I] (1667-1748), of Rock Savage & Marbury (C)	F			T		C		T				T			
BARRY, Hon. John (n.d.), of Marbury (C)														T	
BARRY, Hon. Richard (c.1720-87), of Marbury (C)														T	
BASKERVYLE, John (1706-84), of Withington (C)										W		W			
BAYLEY, James (n.d.), of Wistaston (C)				S				T"							HSC, 1717
BAYLEY, James, Jr. (n.d.), of Stapeley (C)				T				S							
BAYLEY, Weston (n.d.), of Madeley (S)				T											
BENNETT, Henry (d.1741), of Chester (C)								S	G	W	W				HSC, 1734
BIRD, George (c.1660-1723), of Broxton (C)		T	T												
BIRKENHEAD, John (d.1720), of Backford (C)		T													
BLACKBURNE, Jonathan (1646-1725), of Orford (L)	D														HSL, 1715
BLACKBURNE, Thomas (n.d.), of Latchford (C)		C		C			@	W							
BLACKBURNE, William (n.d.), of Latchford (C)		C	W	C				W							
BLUNDELL, Bryan (n.d.), of Liverpool (L)												T			
BOLD, Peter (1705-62), of Prescot (L)							@			T					
BOOTH, George (d.1719), of Chester (C)		C													

Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Remarks
BOOTH, Henry (1687-1726), of Dunham (C) & London			C												
BOOTH, John (n.d.), of Boughton (C)			C	W											
BOOTH, Lawrence (1664-1731), of Twemlowe (C)				W											
BOOTH, Lawrence (1696-1748), of Twemlowe (C)											T			T	
BOOTH, Robert (n.d.), of Salford (L)														T	
BOOTH, Thomas (1695-1786), of Twemlowe (C)										T				T	HSC, 1737
BOOTLE, Edward (1694-1752), of Clayton (L) & London												T			
BOOTLE, Robert (1693-1758), of London												T			
BRADSHAIGH, Sir Roger, 3rd Bart. (1675-1747), of Haigh (L)	D				C	C						W			
BRADSHAIGH, Sir Roger, 4th Bart. (c.1710-79), of Haigh (L)					C	C						W			
BRADSHAIGH, William (d.1725), of Haigh (L)	D														
BRADSHAW, Henry (1666-1736), of Marple (C)			C	W											HS Derbys., 1701
BRADSHAW, Thomas (1672-1744), of Marple & Stretton (C)			C												
BRAYNE, John (n.d.)	D						@								
BRERETON, Humphrey (n.d.), of Burrowes (D)								W							
BRERETON, Thomas (d.1756), of Shotwick Park (C)				W	C			W		W	W			W	
BREREWOOD, John (n.d.), of Chester (C)														T	
BRIDGE, Ralph (n.d.), of Huxley (C)		2T								T	T			T	
BROCK, William (c.1676-1734), of Upton (C)								T	S	T					HSC, 1732
BROMHALL, John (n.d.), of Nantwich (C)				S											HSC, 1718

Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Remarks
BROOKE, George (n.d.), of Norton Priory & Moore (C)								W				W			Brother of Sir Thos.
BROOKE, Peter (c.1695-1764), of Mere (C)				S		C				T					HSC, 1728
BROOKE, Pusey (n.d.), of Norton Priory (C)												W			Son of Sir Thos.
BROOKE, Richard (n.d.), of Acton Grange (C)				W				W				W			Brother of Sir Thos.
BROOKE, Sir Thomas, 3rd Bart. (c.1664-1737), of Norton Priory (C)			C	T				T		T					HSC, 1720
BRUEN, Benjamin (n.d.), of Stapleford (C)										T					
BRUEN, Jonathan (1663-1715), of Stapleford (C)			(T)												
BUNBURY, Sir Charles, 4th Bart. (1708-42), of Stanny (C)										T	T				
BUNBURY, Sir Henry, 3rd Bart. (1678-1733), of Stanney (C)			2T	T				T		T					
BUNBURY, Joseph (n.d.), of Boughton (C)										T					
BUSHELL, William (n.d.), M.D. of Preston (L)					C							W			HSL, 1734
BUTTERWORTH, Thomas (n.d.), of Manchester (L)	C				C							W			
BYRNE, Sir John, 3rd Bart. (c.1705-1742), of Timogue, Ireland, & Stanthorne (C)										T					HSC, 1740
CARPENTER, James (n.d.)					C										
CARRINGTON, Thomas (n.d.), of Chester & Grange (C)	T									T	T				
CASE, Jonathan (c.1653- ?), of Redhassles (L)					@										
CASE, Thomas (d.1748?), of Redhassles (L)												T			
CAWLEY, Cawley Humberstone (n.d.), of Gwersyllt (D)										T			T		
CHADDOCK, Robert (n.d.), of Preston (L)					C							W			

Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Remarks
CHAMBRES, John (d.1746), of Plas Chambres (D)										T					
CHAMBREY, Charles (n.d.), of Tushingham (C)			T	T				S							
CHETHAM, Samuel (1676-1745), of Castleton (L)					@		@					T			HSL, 1738
CHETHAM, Thomas (n.d.), of Mellor (Dy)								T							
CHISENHALL, Sir Edward, Kt. (n.d.), of Chisenhall (L)	F				@										
CHOLMONDELEY, Charles (1685-1756), of Vale Royal (C)				T						T	T				
CHOLMONDELEY, Hon. James (1708-75), of Cholmondeley (C)										W		W			
CHOLMONDELEY, Seymour (1690-1739), of Vale Royal (C)			T												
CHURCH, William (n.d.), of Betton (Sh)				T"											
CLAYTON, Richard (1703-70), of Adlington (L)					@	@								T	
CLAYTON, William (n.d.), of Adlington (L)							@			T					
CLAYTON, William (d.1715), of Liverpool (L)	F														
CLEIVELAND, William (1695-1724), of Liverpool (L)				T											
CLOUGH, Hugh (n.d.), of Newhall (C)												W			
CLOWES, Robert (n.d.) of Langley (C)				T				T							
CLUTTON, Thomas (n.d.), of Chorlton (C)		T						T							
COMBERBACH, Roger (d.1757), of Chester & Hoole (C)				T				W	G	W	W	W		S	
COMBERBACH, Roger, Jr. (1720-71), of Chester (C)														S	
COOPER, Thomas (n.d.), of Bolton (L)	S'														

Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Remarks
CORE, Thomas (n.d.), of Liverpool (L)												W			
COTTON, Sir Lynch Salusbury, 4th Bart. (c.1705-75), of Combermere (C) & Llewenny (D)								W				W			
COTTON, Sir Robert Salusbury, 3rd Bart. (1695-1748), of Combermere (C) & Llewenny (D)				W											
COTTON, Sir Thomas, 2nd Bart. (c.1672-1715), of Combermere (C) & Llewenny (D)			C												HSC, 1713
COTTON, Thomas (n.d.), of Westminster & Abbey Court (C)								W							
COWBAND, Thomas (n.d.)					C										
COWPER, Thomas (1696-1736), of Chester (C)			T	T					S						
COWPER, William (1701-76), M.D. of Chester (C)								T			T			T	
COYTMORE, Richard (n.d.), of Plas On (F) & Chester (C)										T	T			T	
CRACHLEY, Thomas (n.d.), of Daniel's Ash (?)										T	T				
CREWE, Charles (1710- ?), of Crewe & Warmingham (C)										T	T			T	
CREWE, John Offley (1681-1749), of Crewe (C) & Madeley (S)				T						T					
CREWE, John, Jr. (1709-52), of Crewe (C) & Madeley (S)										T	T			T	
CROOKE, Richard (n.d.), of Macclesfield (C)	D		C	W				W							
CROOKE, Samuel (n.d.), of Crooke (L)	D														HSL, 1717
CROXTON, James (1685-1755), of Guilden Sutton (C)								W			W			W	HSC, 1750
CUNLIFFE, Foster (1682-1758), of Liverpool (L)								S	G		T			W	

Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Remarks
DANIEL, John (1685-1736), of Daresbury (C)				T		C	@	T"							HSC, 1730
DANIEL, Sir Samuel, Kt. (n.d.), of Over Tabley (C)	S'														
DAVENPORT, George (1682- ?), of Calveley (C)			2T												HSC, 1722
DAVENPORT, Humphrey (1670-1726), of Stockport (C)				T											
DAVENPORT, John (c.1655-1733), of Woodford (C)			C	W											
DAVENPORT, Peter (?1664- ?), of Bramhall (C)								T							
DAVENPORT, Peter (?1677-1747), of Prestbury (C)				W				W		W		W			Kt., 1744
DAVENPORT, Richard (d.1771), of Calveley (C)										T					
DAVENPORT, William (1697-1729), of Bramhall (C)				T				T							
DAVIES, Robert (n.d.), of Llanerch (?)										T				T	
DAVIES, Robert (d.1739), of Manley (C)				T		C	@	T	S	T					HSC, 1729
DICKENS, George (n.d.), M.D. of Liverpool (L)					@	@						T			
DOD, Peter (n.d.), of Chester & Hampton (C)		T	T												
DOD, William (1686-1739), of Edge (C)				T				T		T					HSC, 1736
DOD, William (n.d.), of Hampton (C)										T					
DOMVILLE, Richard (n.d.), of Lymm (C)				T'											
DOMVILLE, William (1658-1718), of Lymm (C)			C												
DONE, Samuel (n.d.)	D														
DUCKENFIELD, Sir Charles, 2nd Bart. (1670-1742), of Duckenfield (C)	D		C	S				W				W			
DUCKENFIELD, Sir Robert, 1st Bart. (c.1642-1729), of Duckenfield (C)			C												HSC, 1675
DUCKENFIELD, Robert (1687-1748), of Manchester (L)				W	C			W				W			HSL, 1741

Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Remarks
DUCKENFIELD, Sir William, 3rd Bart. (d.1758), of Duckenfield (C)												W			HSC, 1751
DYMMOCK, Edward (n.d.), of Acton (C)										T					
EATON, George (n.d.), of Poole (C)											T				
EDWARDS, Sir Francis, 3rd Bart. (c.1699-1734), of Shrewsbury (Sh)								W		T	T				
EDWARDS, William (n.d.), of Eaton (Sh)										T	T				
EGERTON, John (1697-1770), of Broxton (C)								T		T				T	
EGERTON, John (1656-1733), of Oulton (C)			C	W						T					
EGERTON, John (1679-1724), of Tatton (C) & Reese (Sh)			C	W											
EGERTON, John, Jr. (1710-38), of Tatton (C)										T					
EGERTON, Philip (1694-1776), of Oulton (C) & Acton (D)				W				T		T				T	HSC, 1743
ELCOCKE, Francis (n.d.), of Whitepoole (C)										T				T	
ELLIS, Peter (n.d.), of Wrexham (D)										T					
ELLIS, Robert (n.d.), of Cros-newydd (D)										T				T	HS Denb., 1732
ENTWISLE, Bertie (d.1723?), of Foxholes (L)	D														
EVERED, William (n.d.), of Liverpool (L)											T	T			
EYTON, Charles (n.d.), of Chester (C)								W							
EYTON, Thomas (?1682-1757), of Lower Leeswood (F)										T	T			T	
FALCONER, William (d.1767), of Chester (C)										T	T			T	
FARINGTON, Henry (n.d.), of Preston (L)													T		
FARINGTON, William (1675-1717), of Shawe Hall & Worden (L)	F														

Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Remarks
FARRELL, William (n.d.), of Broxton (C)										W		W			
FILLINGHAM, Thomas (n.d.)					C										
FINNEY, Samuel (n.d.), of Fulshaw (C)												W			
FORD, James (n.d.), of Wigan (L)					C							W			
FORSTER, Thomas (n.d.)													T		
FOULKES, Charles (n.d.), of Chester (C)									S	T	T				
FOULKES, Edward (n.d.), of Chester (C) & Plas Issa (F)			2T	T				T							
FOULKES, Hugh (1673-1731), of Boughton (C) & Llechred (D)				T					S						
FOULKES, James (n.d.), of Mertyn (?)										T				T	
FOULKES, Robert (d.1787), of Boughton (C) & Llechred (D)										T				T	
FOX, Ignatius (n.d.), of Holywell (F)									G	T					
FRODSHAM, Peter (1702-65), of Elton (C)														T	
FRODSHAM, Thomas (1671-1727), of Elton (C)		T													
GAMUL, William (d.1726), of Crabwall (C)	T	T													
GAMUL, William, Jr. (d.1750), of Crabwall (C)								T		T	T				
GASTRELL, Edward Peregrine (d.1772), of Chester (C)										T	T			T	
GASTRELL, Peregrine (d.1748), of Chester (C)										T	T			T	
GERRARD, James (n.d.), of Wimboles Trafford (C)		W						W		W					
GIBSON, Robert (1676-1731), of Lancaster (L)						C									
GLEGG, Arthur (1666-1737), of Gayton (C)												W			

Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Remarks
GLEGG, John (1712-49), of Caldey Grange (C)										W					
GLEGG, John (d.1768), of Irby & Backford (C)								W				W			
GLEGG, Robert (d.1723), of Gayton (C)			C	W											
GLEGG, William (1704-39), of Caldey Grange (C)								W				W			
GLEGG, William (1706-58), of Gayton (C)								W							
GLYNNE, Sir John, 6th Bart. (1713-77), of Hawarden & Broadlane (F)										T	T			T	HS Flints., 1751-2
GOODWIN, John (n.d.), of Liverpool (L)												W			
GORDON, Charles (n.d.), of Chester (C)								W							
GORE, William (n.d.), of Bickerstaffe (L)												T			
GOWER, Hon. William Leveson (c.1696-1756), of Stonepark (S)														W	
GREEN, Edward (1705-56), of Poulton Lancelyn (C)										T				T	HSC, 1748
GREENE, Isaac (c.1678-1749), of Childwall (L)												T			
GREEHALGH, William (n.d.), of Myerscough (L)				C											HSL, 1729
GRIFFIN, Edmund (n.d.), of Nantwich (C)			T												
GRIFFITH, Nehemiah (n.d.), of Rhual (F)										W		W			
GROSVENOR, Sir Richard, 4th Bart. (1689-1732), of Eaton (C)	T	T						T							
GROSVENOR, Sir Robert, 6th Bart. (1695-1755), of Eaton (C) & Swell Court (Somerset)		T						T	T		T			T	
GROSVENOR, Sir Thomas, 5th Bart. (1693-1733), of Eaton (C)	T	T						T							
GWILLIAM, Edward Lloyd (n.d.), of Golborne (L) & Chester (C)		W						W							

Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Remarks
HALL, Thomas (1702-48), of Hermitage (C)										T				T	HSC, 1745
HALLOWES, Samuel (n.d.)	D														
HALSTED, William (d.1727), of Lymm (C)				W											
HAMILTON, Arthur (n.d.), of Liverpool (L)												W			HSL, 1735
HAMILTON, Thomas (n.d.)					C										
HARDMAN, John (c.1694-1755), of Liverpool (L)												T			
HARDWARE, John (1664- ?), of Bromborough (C)			C												
HARVEY, Edward (1658-1736), of Coombe (Surr.)		T'													
HAYFORD, Dennis (n.d.), of Millington (C) & Clowne (Dy)			C												
HEATH, Robert (n.d.), of Marbury (C)				T				W							
HESKETH, Alexander (d.1718?), of Aughton (L)	D														
HESKETH, Roger (1711-91), of Meols (L)											T				HSL, 1740
HESKETH, Thomas (?1699-1735), of Rufford (L)					@ C @					T					
HEYWARD, Hugh (n.d.), of Lincoln's Inn, London													T		
HILL, Sir Rowland, 1st Bart. (1705-83), of Hawkstone (Sh)									T	T			T		HS Salop., 1732
HOCKENHULL, George (c.1643-1716), of Prenton (C)		T													
HOCKENHULL, James (n.d.), of Shotwick Pk. (C)		2T													
HOGHTON, Benjamin (n.d.), of Walton (L)	D														HSL, 1721; uncle of 5th Bt.
HOGHTON, Sir Henry, 5th Bart. (1679-1768), of Walton-le-Dale (L)	D				C							W			
HOGHTON, Philip (n.d.), of Walton (L)					C							W			Brother of 5th Bt.

Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Remarks
HOLFORD, Alexander (d.1759), of Davenham & Moulton (C)			T					T		T				T	
HOLFORD, Thomas (n.d.), of Warrington (L)				T											
HOLLINSHEAD, Thomas (n.d.), of Ashenhurst (S)								W							
HOLT, Robert (d.1740?), of Wigan (L)	F				C	C						T			
HOPE, George, Jr. (n.d.), of Broughton (F)										T	T			T	
HORTON, Thomas (c.1686-1757), of Chadderton (L)												T			HSL, 1737
HOUGHTON, Thomas (n.d.)	S'														
HOWARD, James (n.d.), of Boughton (C)			C	W											
HUGHES, John (n.d.), of Liverpool (L)												T			
HULTON, Charles (n.d.), of Hulton & Preston (L)	D				@	@									
HULTON, Henry (1665-1731), of Hulton (L)	F				@	@									
HULTON, William (n.d.), of Chester & Boughton (C)			T						S	T	T			T	
HUNT, John (n.d.), of Chester & Boughton (C)			C												
HUNT, Thomas (n.d.), of Mollington (C)								W		W					
HURLESTON, Charles (d.1734), of Newton (C)			T	T		C			G	T					HSC, 1727
HURLESTON, John (d.1720), of Newton (C)			2T												
HYDE, Robert (n.d.), of Cattenhall (C) & Nerquis (F)			2T							T				T	HSC, 1739
JERVIS, John (n.d.), of Bradwell (C)								W							
JODRELL, Francis (1690-1757), of Twemlowe (C)				W						W					HSC, 1716
JOHNSON, Sir Thomas, Kt. (1664-1728), of Liverpool (L)	D														

Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Remarks
JONES, Peter (n.d.), of Rualt (D)														T	
JONES, Thomas (n.d.), of Chester & Churton (C)				T				T	S	T	T				
KELSELL, Richard (n.d.), of Halton (C)					C			W				W			
KENDRICK, Thomas (n.d.)					@										
KENYON, George (1665-1728), of Peel (L)	D	D				@									
KENYON, George (d.1780), of Peel (L)					@	@								T	
KENYON, Thomas (1668-1731)	D				@	@	@								
KING, Thomas (n.d.), of Combermere (C)								W							
KYNASTON, Corbet (1690-1740), of Hordley (Sh)				T											
KYNASTON, Edward (1709-72), of Hardwick (Sh) & Garth & Bryngwyn(Montgomery)										T	T			T	
LAMBE, John (n.d.), of Shrewsbury (Sh)										T					
LAWRENCE, Herbert (n.d.), of Aldford (C)				W				W							
LAWRENCE, Roger (n.d.), of Chester & Broxton (C)	C														
LEA, John (n.d.), of Sandbach (C)				W											
LECHE, John, Jr. (n.d.), of Carden (C)				T						T					HSC, 1753
LEE, John (1697- ?), of Darnhall (C)				W						W		W			
LEE, Robert (1686-1720), of Wincham (C)	C														
LEECH, John (1681- ?), of Peckforton (C)	T														
LEGH, Charles (1697-1781), of Adlington (C)												W			HSC, 1747
LEGH, Francis (c.1696-1740?), of Ridge (C) & Shirndale (Dy)				T				T							
LEGH, George (1703-80), of East Hall, High Legh (C)												W			

Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Remarks
LEGH, Henry (1679-1757), of East Hall, High Legh (C)			C	W				W		W		W			
LEGH, Peter, Jr. (1707-92), of Calveley & Lyme (C)										T	T			T	HSC, 1742
LEGH, Richard (n.d.), of Booths & Torkington (C)				W											
LEGH, Robert (1673- ?), of Chorley (L)								W				W			
LEGH, Thomas (n.d.), of Chorley (L)												W			
LEGH, Thomas Pennington (1680-1743), of Booths (C)								W		W		W			
LEIGH, John (d.1729), of Oughtrington (C)								T							
LEIGH, William (d.1741), of West Hall, High Legh (C)				W											
LEIGH, William (n.d.), of Westhoughton (L)	D			@	@										HSL, 1731
LEYCESTER, Ralph (?1699-1777), Of Toft (C)								S		W		W			HSC, 1746
LISTER, Richard (n.d.), of Rowton (C)														T	
LISTER, Thomas (1688-1745), of Gisburne Park, nr. Clitheroe (Y)		T"			C										
LIVESEY, William (1688-1729), of Livesey (L)					@	@									
LLOYD, Charles (n.d.), of Trenewydd (Sh)											T				
LLOYD, Edward (n.d.), of Horsley (?)										T				T	
LLOYD, Eubule (n.d.), of Pen-y-Llan (?)										T	T			T	
LLOYD, Francis (n.d.), of Crosemere (Sh)										T				T	
LLOYD, Humphrey (n.d.), of Chester (C)			(T)												
LLOYD, John (n.d.), of Pentrehobin (F)										T	T				

Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Remarks
LLOYD, Richard (n.d.), of Hirseth (?)										T					
LLOYD, Richard (N.D.), of London														T	
LLOYD, Salusbury (d.1734), of Leadbrook (F)										W	W	W			
LLOYD, Thomas (n.d.), of Overton (F)										T	T				
LONGUEVILLE, Sir Thomas, 4th Bart. (d.1759), of Prestatyn (F)														T	
LONSDALE, Miles (1702-74), of Bury (L)														T	
LOWE, James (1676-1724), of Newton (C)			C	T											
LOWE, Robert (1683-1750), of Middlewich (C)								W							
MADDISON, George (n.d.)					C										
MAINWARING, Edward (n.d.), of Whitmore (S)										T					
MAINWARING, George (1699-1741), of Chester & Bromborough (C)											W	W	W		
MAINWARING, James (1673-1749), of Bromborough (C)	S	W						W	S	W	W	W		W	
MAINWARING, James, Jr. (1702-49), of Bromborough (C)									B	W	W	W		W	
MAINWARING, James (1694- ?), of Macclesfield (C)		W													
MAINWARING, Roger (?1673-1752), of Chester & Kermincham (C)	C	W						W							
MAINWARING, Sir Thomas, 3rd Bart. (1681-1726), of Baddiley (C)		T													
MAISTERSON, Thomas (n.d.), of Nantwich (C)												W			
MAISTERSON, William (1692- ?), of Nantwich (C)											W		W		
MANLEY, Richard (n.d.), of Chester (C)		T									W		W		

Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Remarks
MARKLAND, Robert (n.d.), of Pemberton (L)	F				@	@									
MARSDEN, Thomas (n.d.)	D														
MASSIE, John (c.1651-1730), of Coddington (C)			T												
MASSIE, Richard (d.1770), of Coddington (C)										T				T	
MASSY, Richard (1665- ?), of Audlem (C)			T												
MASTER, Legh (c.1694-1750), of Newhall, Ashton-in-Makerfield (L)					@	C	@				T				
MATHER, Thomas (d.1745), of Chester (C)			S					T	G		T				
MATHER, Thomas, Jr. (n.d.), of Chester (C)														W	
MAWDESLEY, Alexander (n.d.), of Wigan (L)												T			
MAWDESLEY, Robert (1704-32), of Mawdesley (L)					@										
MAYLIN, Robert (n.d.), of Manchester (L)				W											
MEREDITH, Amos (1688-1745), of Henbury (C)	2T	T								T					
MEREDITH, George (1665-c.1729), of Altrincham (C)	C														
MILTON, John (n.d.), of Halston (?)														T	
MOLYNEUX, Rigby (n.d.), of Preston (L)												W	W		HSL, 1749
MORETON, Edward (n.d.), of Ellesmere (Sh)										T					
MORETON, Thomas (n.d.), of Christioneth (?)										T					
MORETON, William (c.1696-1763), of London								T							
MORGAN, Edward (n.d.), of Chester (C) & Golden Grove (Carmn)									S	T	T			T	
MOSTYN, John (n.d.), of Segrwyd (?)														T	
MOSTYN, Sir Roger, 3rd Bart. (1673-1739), of Mostyn (F)	2T							T							

Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Remarks
MOSTYN, Samuel (n.d.), of Calcot (?)										T	T			T	
MOSTYN, Sir Thomas, 4th Bart. (1704-58), of Mostyn (F)								T		T				T	
MYDDELTON, John (1685-1747), of Chirk Castle (D)								W		T	T				
MYDDELTON, Robert (1678-1733), of Chirk Castle (D)				T											
MYNSHULL, Samuel (n.d.), of Chester (C)				W				W	S						
MYTTON, Charles (n.d.), of Chester (C)										T					
NICHOLLS, Edward (n.d.), of Chester (C)														T	
NORRIS, Edward (1663-1726), of Utkinton (C) & Speke (L)			C	S											
NORRIS, Richard (n.d.), of Liverpool (L)	D							W							HSL, 1718
NOWELL, Alexander (1682-1747), of Gawthorpe (L)							C				T				
NOWELL, Roger (1675-1725), of Read (L)	D	T'													
OLDFIELD, Leftwich (n.d.), of Leftwich (C)			C												
OSBALDESTON, Alexander (1677-1747), of Blackburn (L)							@				T				
OWEN, Arthur (n.d.), of Brymbo (D)										T					
OWEN, John (n.d.), of Upholland (L)	S"			C							W				
OWEN, Thomas (n.d.), of Wigan (L)				C											
OWEN, William (n.d.), of Partington (C)														T	
PAGE, Leigh (n.d.), of Hawthorn (C)								T		T	T				HSC, 1733
PARKER, Banastre (1697-1738), of Extwisle & Cuerden (L)							@				T				

Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Remarks
PARKER, Gerrard (n.d.), of Audley (S)										T	T				
PARKER, John (d.1768), of Fallows (C) & Breightmet (L)				T				T		T				T	HSC, 1725; HSL, 1732
PARKER, Thomas (n.d.), of Bradkirk Hall (L)		T'													
PARRY, Humphrey (n.d.), of Pwllerlog (F)										T	T				
PATTEN, Paul (n.d.), of Bagillt (F)														T	
PATTEN, Thomas (1690-1772), of Warrington (L)									B	T		T			
PEMBERTON, John (n.d.), of Liverpool (L)					C				G			T			
PENNANT, David (n.d.), of Downing (F)										T	T			T	
PENNANT, Edward (n.d.), of Bagillt (F)										T	T				
PENNANT, John (n.d.), of Bagillt (F)										T	T				
PENNANT, Peter (n.d.), of Chester (C) & Beighton (?)										T	T				
PERCIVAL, Richard (n.d.), of Liverpool (L)					C							T			
PICKERING, John (c.1674-1747), of Thelwall (C)	S"				C			W				W			
PIGOT, Robert (n.d.), of Eaton (C)		T						T	G	T	T			T	
PIGOT, Robert, Jr. (n.d.), of Chetwynd (Sh)										T				T	
PIGOT, Thomas (n.d.), of Peplow (Sh)										T	T				
PIGOTT, Thomas (n.d.), of Manchester (L)						C									
POLE, Charles (1695-1779), of London & Holcroft (L)												T			
POLE, German (n.d.), of ? (Dy)												T			
POLE, William (n.d.), of Liverpool (L)												W			
POOLE, Sir Francis, 2nd Bart. (c.1682-1763), of Poole (C) & Lewes (Sussex)								W							

Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Remarks
PRICE, Francis (d.1749?), of Bryn-y-pys (F)										T				T	
PRICE, Robert (n.d.), of Bathafern (F)										T					HS Flints., 1732
PRICE, Thomas (n.d.), of Glynne (D)										T	T			S	
PRICE, William (n.d.), of Vaynol (F)														T	
PUDSAY, Ambrose (n.d.), of Bolton Hall, Craven (Y)		T"													
PULESTON, John (n.d.), of Pickhill (?) & Hafod-y-wern (?)										T					
PULESTON, John, Jr. (n.d.), of Pickhill (?)										T					
PULESTON, Richard (n.d.), of Wrexham (D)										T	T				
PULESTON, Thomas (n.d.), of Emral (F)								W		T					
RAVENSCROFT, Thomas (c.1710-76), of Leftwich (C) & Pickhill (?)										T				T	
RAWSTORNE, Lawrence (n.d.), of Preston (L)												T			
RAWSTORNE, William (n.d.), of New Hall (L)	S"											T			
READ, Bagot (n.d.), of Chester (C)										T	T			T	
REYNOLDS, Francis (d.1773), of Strangeways, Manchester (L)												W			
RHODES, Gregory (n.d.), of Rippon (Y)										T					
RICHMOND, Silvester (1665-1746), of Liverpool (L) & Acton Grange (C)	S"		C	T		C	@								
ROBERTS, David (n.d.), of Hafod-y-bwch (?)										T					
ROBERTS, Edward (n.d.), of Chester (C)										T					
ROBINS, William (n.d.), of Stafford (S)								T"							
ROBINSON, Jonathan (n.d.), of Boughton (C)									G	T					

Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Remarks
ROBINSON, William (n.d.), of Gwersyllt (D)										T					
RODE, Christopher (n.d.), of Eaton (C)			C	W				T							
RODE, Randle (n.d.), of Eaton (C)										T					
ROWNEY, Thomas (?1693-1759), of Oxford (Oxon)														T	
RUTTER, Richard (1688-1758), of Moore (C)								W				W			HSC, 1726
SEWELL, Joseph (n.d.), of Chester (C)										W	W				
SHAKERLEY, Geoffrey (1706-33), of Somerford (C)										T					
SHAKERLEY, George (1682-1756), of Hulme Hall (C) & Gwersyllt (D)										T					
SHAKERLEY, Peter (d.1726), of Hulme Hall (C)	D		C	T											
SHAKERLEY, Peter (1709-81), of Somerford (C)														T	
SHARPLES, John (n.d.), of Sharples (L)												W			
SHAW, William (n.d.), of Preston (L)				C									W.		HSL, 1746
SHRIGLEY, William (n.d.), of Manchester (L)			2T	T											
SHUTTLEWORTH, Richard (1683-1749), of Gawthorpe (L)		T'					@					T			
SMITH, John (n.d.), of Oldhaugh, Warmingham (C)			T	T											
SMITH, Thomas (n.d.)	D			@											
SPENCER, John (d.1740), of Huntington (C)			T	T				T	G	T					HSC, 1740
SQUIRE, William (n.d.), of Liverpool (L)	D														
STANDISH, Sir Thomas, 2nd Bart. (d.1756), Duxbury (L)				@	@	@								T	
STANLEY, Hon. Charles Zedenno (d.1715), of Knowsley (L)	D	D													

Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Remarks
STANLEY, Sir Edward, 5th Bart. (1689-1776), of Bickerstaffe (L) -- afterwards 11th Earl of Derby												T			HSL, 1723
STARKEY, James (c.1649-1728), of Congleton (C) & Darley (Dy)				T											
STARKEY, John (1708- ?), of Wrenbury (C)					@										
STARKEY, Thomas (c.1654-1715?), of Wrenbury (C)			T												
STARKIE, Nicholas (d.1727?), of Preston (L)	D				@										
STARKIE, Piers (c.1686-1760), of Huntroyd (L) & Barnton (C)		T'			@	@									
STEERES, Thomas (n.d.)					C										
SWETTENHAM, Edmund (1691-1768), of Somerford Booths (C)				T											HSC, 1721
SWETTENHAM, Thomas (1694-1748), of Birtles & Swettenham (C)		W								W					
SWETTENHAM, William (1670- ?)		W													
TATTON, William (1674-1732), of Wythenshawe & Stockport (C)	(T)						T								
TAYLOR, William (n.d.), of Ridding (?)								S							
TEMPEST, James (n.d.), of Wigam (L)					C										
THICKNESSE, Ralph (1693- ?), of Balterley (S) & The Oaks (C)							S								
THORNYCROFT, Edward (c.1655-1726), of Thornycroft (C)	C	S													
TONGE, William (n.d.), of Preston (L)					C							W	W		
TOWNLEY, Thomas, Sr. (d.1737), of Royle (L)						C	@								

Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Remarks
TOWNSHEND, John (n.d.), of Holt (D)									G	T					
TOWNSHEND, Robert (n.d.), of Chester & Christleton (C)										T	T			T	
TRAFFORD, William (n.d.), of Duckenfield (C)				W											
TRAFFORD, William (n.d.), of Switherley (S)								T"							
TYNDALE, Thomas (n.d.), of Bathsford (Somerset)											T				
TYRER, George (n.d.), of Liverpool (L)												T			
TYRER, Thomas (n.d.), of Liverpool (L)												T			
VAUGHAN, Edward (n.d.), of Bodidris (D)														T	
VAUGHAN, Evan Lloyd (c.1709-91), of Bodidris (D)										T					
VAUGHAN, William (?1707-75), of Corsygedol (Merion)											T			T	
VAWDREY, Edward (n.d.), of Hale (C) & Warrington (L)	F		2T		@										
VAWDREY, Thomas (n.d.), of Hale (C) & Warrington (L)								T		T					
WALL, Lawrence (n.d.), of Moor Hall (L)					C							W	W		
WALLEY, Charles (n.d.), of Saighton (C)				W				W	G						
WALLEY, Robert (n.d.), of Chester (C)														T	
WALLEY, Thomas (n.d.), of Manchester (L) & Stanthorne (C)										T				T	
WALMISLEY, John (n.d.), of Wigan (L)	S"				@	@									
WALTHALL, Peter (d.1744), of Huxley (C) & Whitchurch (Sh)			2T	T											

Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Remarks
WALTHALL, Richard (1676-1729), of Wistaston (C)				T											HSC, 1715
WARBURTON, Sir George, 3rd Bart. (1675-1743), of Arley (C)										T					
WARBURTON, Hugh (n.d.)										W		S			
WARBURTON, Sir Peter, 4th Bart. (c.1709-76), of Arley (C)										T				T	
WARBURTON, Peter (d.1727), of Hefferstone Grange (C)				T											
WARBURTON, Philip Henry (1700-60), of Hefferstone Grange (C)											T			T	
WARBURTON, Robert (n.d.), of Chester & Great Budworth (C)			C					T							
WARBURTON, Thomas (c.1655- ?), of Chester & Winnington (C)	C	T													
WARD, John (c.1669-1749), of Capesthorne (C)								T							
WARREN, Talbot (1686-1734), of Poynton (C)					@										
WARRINGTON, George (n.d.), of Aigberth (L)												W		W	
WETTENHALL, Gabriel (d.1735), of Hankelow (C)	S	T						T		T	T				
WHITAKER, William (n.d.), of Bosley (C)		W						W				W			
WHITEHALL, Broughton (n.d.), of Broughton (F)										T	T				
WHITLEY, Robert (n.d.), of Hawarden (F)										T					
WHITLEY, Thomas (n.d.), of Aston (F)										T	T			T	
WHITMORE, William (c.1649-1727), of Thurstanston (C)	T														
WHITNEY, Robert (n.d.), of Whitchurch (Sh) & Newhall (C)	2T														

Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Remarks
WHYTTEL, Christopher (n.d.), of Chelford (C)				W											
WIDNESS, William (n.d.), of Manley (C)												W			
WILBRAHAM, Ralph (c.1655-1722), of Dorfold (C)			T												
WILBRAHAM, Randle (1633-1732), of Nantwich (C)			C	T											HSC, 1714
WILBRAHAM, Randle (?1695-1770), of Rode Hall, nr. Congleton (C)								T		T					
WILBRAHAM, Roger (1694-1754), of Nantwich (C)										T					
WILLIAMS, Edward (n.d.), of Ystumcolwyn (Montg)										T	T				
WILLIAMS, Edward (n.d.), of Nerquis (F)										T					
WILLIAMS, John (d.1737), of Chester (C) & Bodelwyddan (F)				W				W	S	W	W				Uncle of Sir Watkin Wynn
WILLIAMS, John, Jr. (d.1788), of Lincoln's Inn and Bedelwyddan (F)									B	W	W	W		W	Cousin of Sir Watkin Wynn
WILLIAMS, John (n.d.), of Ruabon (D)														T	
WILLIAMS, Kyffin (c.1697-1753), of Bodelwyddan (F)									S	W	W	W		T	Cousin of Sir Watkin Wynn
WILLIAMS, Richard (?1699-1759), of Penbedw (D)										T	T			T	Brother of Sir Watkin Wynn
WILLIAMS, Robert (?1695-1763), of Bryn-y-Fynon (D)										T	T			T	Brother of Sir Watkin Wynn
WILLIAMS, Sir William, 2nd Bart. (d.1740), of Llanforda (Sh) & Glascoed (D)									S	T	T				Father of Sir Watkin Wynn
WILLIS, Daniel (d.1763), of Whiston (L)												T			HSL, 1745
WILLIS, Thomas (d.1727), of Halsnead Park (L)	@	@													
WINCKLEY, John (n.d.), of Preston (L)	@		@										T		
WINGFIELD, Borlace (n.d.), of Preston (L)										T					

Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Remarks
WINSTANLEY, Ralph (n.d.), of Haigh (L)	D				C	C						W			
WORSLEY, Charles (d.1753), of Bushton & Platt (L)					C							W			
WRIGHT, Clutton (n.d.), of Nantwich (C)			C					W							HSC, 1710
WRIGHT, Henry (1689-1744), of Mobberley (C)			C	W				S				W			
WRIGHT, John (n.d.)	F														
WRIGHT, William (d.1770), of Offerton (C)				W				W		W					
WYNN, Thomas (n.d.), of Dyffrynallyd (F)								W							
WYNN, Robert (n.d.), of Garthowynn (?)										T				T	
WYNN, Sir Watkin, 3rd Bart. (?1693-1749), of Wynnstay (D)									G	T	T			T	
WYNNE, Sir George, 1st Bart. (1700-56), of Leeswood Hall (F)								T							
WYNNE, Robert (d.1782), of Garthmeilo (Merion) & Plas Newydd (D)														T	
YATES, Joseph (c.1689-1773), of Peel (L)															HSL, 1728

Appendix A ii) -- Clergymen.

Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Benefices
ADAMS, Rev. James (n.d.)														T	R. of Bebington (C), 1739-53.
ALDCROFT, Rev. Charles (d.1749)				T					G		T				R. of Wallesey (C), 1718-49.
ALDERSEY, Rev. Samuel (1673-1741), of Aldersey & Spurstow (C)			T			@									R. of Wigan (L), 1714-41.
ALLANSON, Rev. Edward (n.d.)	F		2T		@										R. of Grappenhall (C), 1708-22.
ALLEN, Rev. Dr. Thomas (d.1732)			W					W							Dean of Chester, 1722-32; R. of Stoke, & Archdeacon of Stafford (S).
ASHTON, Rev. Thomas (n.d.), of Shotwick (C)												W			
AUBREY, Rev. Thomas (d.1758)			T	T				T		T	T			T	R. of Eccleston (C), 1704-58.
BALDWIN, Rev. John (d.1793)												W		S	R. of St. Martin's Chester, 1739; M. of St. Peter's Chester; C. of Stretford (L), 1741-7; P. of Chester, 1741-4; V. of Upholland (L), 1747-58; R. of North Meols (L), 1748-93.
BALDWIN, Rev. Thomas (d.1753)					C	C						W			R. of Liverpool (L), 1721-53; V. of Leyland (L), 1748-53.
BANKS, Rev. James (d.1774)												W			V. of Blackrod (L).
BANKS, Rev. James (d.1743)	F				@	@	@								R. of Bury (L).
BANN, Rev. Nathaniel (n.d.)			T	T											C. of Blackley (L), 1705-12; R. of St. Anne's Manchester (L), 1712-?
BARNES, Rev. Charles (n.d.), of Newton (C)				T				T							
BARNET, Rev. Daniel (d.1737)			C	T				S							R. of Baddiley (C), 1691-1737.
BAXTER, Rev. Robert (n.d.)			2T	T											C. of Lower Peover (C), 1719-48.
BELL, Rev. Thomas (d.1725)					@										R. of Liverpool (L), 1717-25; V. of Eccles (L), 1724-5.

Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Benefices
BELLIS, Rev. Robert (n.d.), of Ince (C)			T	T											
BELLIS, Rev. Samuel (n.d.), of Ashton-on-Mersey (C)				T											
BENNETT, Rev. William (n.d.), of Barrow (C)								T							
BOARDMAN, Rev. John (d.1775)								W							R. of Grappenhall (C), 1722-75.
BRADSHAIGH, Rev. Thomas (n.d.)	D														
BRADSHAW, Rev. William (d.1767)								T		T					R. of Pulford (C), 1720-67.
BRISCALL, Rev. Michael (n.d.), of Tarporley (C)			S	T											
BROCON, Rev. Edward (N.D.), of Malpas (C)			T												
BROOKE, Rev. Thomas (d.1757)		T					S		W		W				Dean of Chester, 1733-57; R. of Lymm (C) 1720-8; of Dodleston (C), 1739-57; of Nantwich (C), 1720-57.
BROOKE, Rev. Thomas (d.1757)								T							V. of Walton (L), 1722-57; R. of St. Mary's Chester, 1737-44.
BROWNELL, Rev. Nathaniel (d.1719)	C														R. of Halsall (L), 1683-1719.
BROWNELL, Rev. William (n.d.), of Aughton (L)			W												
BUCK, Rev. John (n.d.), of Bolton (L)											W				
CARTWRIGHT, Rev. John (d.1731)								T							V. of Middlewich (C), 1719-31.
CHEANEY, Rev. John (n.d.), of Dean (L)	C														
CHESSHYRE, Rev. Robert (d.1740)	2T		T												V. of Runcorn (C), 1686-1740.

Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Benefices
CHORLEY, Rev. John (n.d.), of Salford (L)												W			
COLE, Rev. Edward (n.d.), of Wrenbury (C)								W							
* COOPER, Rev. John (n.d.), of Duckenfield (C)								W							Dissenting M. at Hyde (C).
COPLAND, Rev. James (d.1739)				T"											C. of Witton (C)
COPLEY, Rev. John (c.1664-1732), of Manchester (L)							@								Fellow of Manchester, 1706-32.
COWPER, Rev. John (1671-1719), of Kinderton (C)			T												V. of Middlewich, 1702-19.
COWPER, Rev. Peter (1705-82)										T				T	V. of Ashby de la Zouche (Leics.); R. of Sutton (Dy).
CRACHLEY, Rev. John (n.d.), of Chester (C)														T	
CREWE, Rev. Dr. Joseph (d.1782)														T	R. of Barthomley (C), 1739-58; R. of Astbury (C), 1758-82.
CREWE, Rev. Dr. Randle (d.1777)														T	R. of Warmingham (C), 1747-77; R. of Barthomley (C), 1758-77.
* CULCHETH, Rev. Thomas (d.1757?)												W			Dissenting M. at Macclesfield (C).
CULM, Rev. Benjamin (n.d.), of Chester (C)											T				
DALE, Rev. Joseph (d.1751?)			(T)												R. of Taxal (C), 1726-7; Headmaster of Stockport School, 1703-51.
DAVENPORT, Rev. Warren (1698-1749), of Stockport (C)				T											

Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Benefices
DAVIES, Rev. Samuel (d.1743)			T												R. of Tattenhall (C), 1701-43.
DENNIS, Rev. Barnes (n.d.), of Pulford (C)			T												
DENNIS, Rev. Jacob (n.d.) of Chester (C)			2T												
DENSON, Rev. Robert (d.1751), of Wervin (C)				T											V. of Backford (C), 1720-51.
DERBYSHIRE, Rev. Thomas (d.1744), of Leftwich (C)				T											R. of Davenham (C), 1725-44.
DOCKERILL, Rev. John (d.1730)			T					T							R. of Handley (C), 1709-30.
DOD, Rev. John (n.d.), of of Wilmslow (C)								T							
DOD, Rev. William (d.1716), of Edge (C)			T												R. of Malpas (C), 1680-1716.
DUCKWORTH, Rev. James (d.1735)	T	T													V. of Weverham (C), 1712-35.
DUGARD, Rev. William (d.1747)							T								R. of Warmingham (C), 1714-47.
DUKE, Rev. Samuel (n.d.), of Chester (C)											T				
EDGLEY, Rev Samuel (n.d.)	T														
EDWARDS, Rev. Cornelius (n.d.), of Church Minshull (C)				T											
EDWARDS, Rev. John (n.d.), of High Offley (S)				T											
EDWARDS, Rev. Thomas (n.d.), of Wrexham (D)											T				
EDWARDS, Rev. William (n.d.), of Tarvin (C)								T							

Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Benefices
EGERTON, Rev. Philip (1662-1727)			C	W											R. of Astbury (C), 1704-27; R. of Christleton (C), 1717-27.
EGERTON, Rev. Thomas (d.1762)								T							R. of Warrington (L), 1719-23; R. of Sefton (L), 1722-62; C. of Cheadle (C), 1722-62.
ELLISON, Rev. Thomas (d.1763)												W			R. of Hoole(C), 1732-63; C. of Chorley (L), 1733-63.
EVANS, Rev. William (d.1739), of Audlem (C)			T												R. of Barthomley (C), 1726-39.
EVERARD, Rev. Joseph (n.d.), of Congleton (C)				T											
FINCH, Hon. Rev. Edward (1664-1738	F														R. of Wigan, 1707-13; P. of York, 1704-38; P. of Canterbury, 1710-38.
FINCH, Hon. Rev. Henry (d.1728)	F														R. of Winwick (L), 1692-1725; Dean of York, 1702-28.
FLETCHER, Rev. John (n.d.)										T					R. of Hawarden (F).
FOGG, Rev. Dr. Arthur (d.1739)	F		2T	T				T							R. of Thurstanston (C), 1702-16; R. of Dodleston (C), 1716-39; P. of Chester, 1702-39.
FOGG, Rev. Dr. Lawrence (d.1718)			2T												Dean of Chester, 1692-1718.
FORSHALL, Rev. Edward (n.d.), of Bebington (C)											T				
FORSHALL, Rev. John (d.1718)			2T												R. of Wallasey (C), 1702-18.
FOWLER, Rev. John (n.d.), of Farndon (C)				T				T							
FRODSHAM, Rev. Robert (d.1758)											T		T		R. of Baddiley (C), 1737-58; R. of Rosthorne (C), 1738-58.

Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Benefices
GARDNER, Rev. Lawrence (d.1750), of High Arton (Sh)				S											R. of Coppenhall, 1721-50.
GIBBONS, Rev. George (d.1720)			C												R. of Nantwich (C), 1711-20.
GREEN, Rev. Thomas (d.1747), of Poulton Lancelyn (C)				T				T							R. of Woodchurch (C), 1705-47.
GRIFFITHS, Rev. Robert (d.1728)			T	T											V. of Eastham (C), 1695-1728.
HADDON, Rev. John (d.1766)					@	@									R. of Warrington (L), 1723-66.
HALL, Rev. William (1693-1769)				S								W			R. of Gawsworth (C), 1724-69.
HAMMOND, Rev. John (c.1652-1724)			S												R. of Gawsworth (C), 1684-1724.
HANSON, Rev. Jonathan (n.d.), of Macclesfield (C)								T							
HARPUR, Rev. William (n.d.), of Malpas (C)								W							
HARRISON, Rev. William (n.d.), of Stand Pilkington (L?)												W			V. of Holcombe (L), 1757-60.
HARVEY, Rev. Robert (d.1755)					@	@									C. of Horwich & Westhoughton (L).
HARVEY, Rev. Thomas (n.d.), of Foulkes Stapleford (C)			T	T											
HARWARE, Rev. Joseph (d.1745)								W							R. of Swettenham (C), 1715-22; V. of Acton (C), 1722-45.
HAYWARD, Rev. John (d.1730)								T							V. of Rosthorne (C), 1726-30.
HAYWARD, Rev. Thomas (d.1757)				S	@	@		T							V. of Garstang (L), 1723-31; Headmaster of Warrington Grammar.
HAZLEHURST, Rev. Randle (n.d.), of Sandbach (C)								W							
HENCHMAN, Rev. Charles (c.1671-1741)			2T	T											V. of Gt. Budworth, 1699; R. of Alderley (C), 1714; Master of King's Chester; P. of Chester, 1718-41.

Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Benefices
HENLEY, Rev. Peter (n.d.), of Hatton (C)				S											
HICCOCK, Rev. John (n.d.), of Shotwick Pk. (C)			T												
HIGNETT, Rev. Samuel (n.d.), of Wareham (C)				S											
HINDLEY, Rev. Peter (n.d.), of Hargrave & Hatton (C)			T					W							
HINDLEY, Rev. Robert (d.1721)	F														R. of Aughton (L), 1701-21.
HODSON, Rev. John (d.1752)			T												R. of Thurstanston (C), 1705-52.
HOPLEY, Rev. John (n.d.), of Overton (C?)								T							
HULTON, Rev. Edward (d.1763?)												W			C. of Blackley (L), 1716-63.
HURT, Rev. Richard (n.d.)					C										
HYDE, Rev. Joshua (n.d.), of Over Peover (C)			C												
INCE, Rev. Thomas (d.1766)									S		T				R. of Handley (C).
JEBB, Rev. Richard (n.d.), of Bidston (C)												W			
JONES, Rev. John (d.1751)												W			C. of Flixton (L), 1723-51.
* JONES, Rev. Joshua (n.d.)												W			Dissenting M. at Cross St. Manchester (L), 1725-40.
JONES, Rev. William (n.d.), of Frodsham (C)												W			
KELSALL, Rev. Theophilus (d.1735)			T	T								T'			V. of Childwall (L), 1722-35.
KIPPAX, Rev. Archippius (d.1718)	S'														V. of Ormskirk (L), 1692-1718.

Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Benefices
KNIGHT, Rev. Henry (n.d.), of Newton (L?)												W			
LANCASTER, Rev. Nathaniel (n.d.)								S		W		W			R. of St. Mary's Chester, 1725-38.
LANCASTER, Rev. Peter (c.1689-1763)				S				T							V. of Bowden (C), 1716-63.
LEES, Rev. Joseph (d.1753)			2T												V. of Over (C), 1706-53.
LEFTWICH, Rev. Thomas (n.d.)				T											C. of St. Michael's Chester, 1700.
LEIGH, Rev. Egerton (1702- ?), of West Hall, High Legh (C)								S							R. of Lymm (C), 1728-49; R. of Middlewich; Canon of Hereford.
LEIGH, Rev. Dr. George (n.d.), of Halifax (Y)												W			
LEIGH, Rev. Peter (c.1648-1728)			T	T				T							R. of Aldford (C), 1677-28.
LEIGH, Rev. Peter (d.1719), of West Hall, High Legh (C)			2T												R. of Lymm (C), 1710-19; R. of Whitchurch (Sh); V. of Gt. Budworth (C).
LEVER, Rev. Samuel (n.d.)							@	@							
LONGFORD, Rev. John (n.d.), of Malpas (C)								T							
LOW, Rev. George (n.d.), of Northwich (C)								S							
LOW, Rev. Samuel (n.d.), of Bunbury (C)												W			
LOWE, Rev. Joseph (n.d.)								W							
MACHELL, Rev. John (n.d.), of Chester (C)							T								
MADDOCK, Rev. Thomas (n.d.), of B.N.C. Oxford & Liverpool (L)											W		W		

Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Benefices
MAINWARING, Rev. Edward (d.1780), of Bromborough (C)														W	V. of Weverham (C), 1735-65; P. of Chester, 1747-80; R. of West Kirkby (C), 1761-80; R. of Coddington (C), 1755-80.
MAINWARING, Rev. Thomas (n.d.), of Muccleston (C)				T											
MALLORY, Rev. George (d.1732), of Mobberley (C)				T				T							
MAPLETOFT, Rev. John (d.1761), of Neston (C)				T							T				V. of Neston (C), 1719-61; R. of West Kirkby (C), 1730-61; P. of Chester, 1719-61; Vice-Dean of Chester.
MARBURY, Rev. James (d.1725)			2T												R. of Davenham (C), c.1686-1725.
MARKHAM, Rev. Ralph (d.1732), of Vale Royal (C)	T	T	@												R. of Tarporley (C), 1717-32.
MARSHALL, Rev. Richard (n.d.), of Tarvin (C)				T											
MARTIN, Rev. William (n.d.), of Liverpool (L)				W				W				W			
MASSEY, Rev. Robert (d.1776), Chester (C)											T			T	R. of Eccleston (C), 1758-76.
MATHER, Rev. Roger (c.1719-68), of B.N.C. Oxford														T	
MAWDESLEY, Rev. Thomas (d.1769)												T			V. of Astley (L), 1732-69.
MERCER, Rev. John (n.d.)										T					R. of Eccleston (L)
MILWARD, Rev. Richard (d.1744), of Eccleshall (S)								W							V. of Wybunbury (C), 1726-44; P. of Chester, 1738-44.

Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Benefices
MINSHULL, Rev. John (n.d.), of Coddington (C)				T											
MONTGOMERY, Rev. John (n.d.), of Acton (C)			T												
MOORE, Rev. Dr. Henry (d.1770)				T											R. of Malpas (C), 1713-70; R. of Wilmslow (C); sometime Chaplain to Queen Anne.
MOORE, Rev. Peter (n.d.), of Wybunbury (C)								W							
MORETON, Rev. Edward (n.d.), of Ellesmere (Sh)														T	
MORRALL, Rev. William (n.d.)					@										
MORREY, Rev. Peter (d.1719)			T												V. of Neston (C), 1692-1719.
* MOTTERSHEAD, Rev. Joseph (1688-1771)												W			Principal Dissenting M. at the Cross St. Chap. Manchester (L), 1717-71.
MURREY, Rev. Robert (n.d.), of Chester (C)														W	
NICHOLLS, Rev. Benjamin (d.1765), of Manchester (L)														W	V. of Eccles (L), 1748-65.
NICHOLS, Rev. William (n.d.), of Chester (C)														W	
NICHOLSON, Rev. Francis (n.d.), Stockport (C)				T'											
NORRIS, Rev. Edward (n.d.), of Heaton Norris (C)			C	S											
NORRIS, Rev. Gabriel (n.d.), of Gorstitch (L)														W	

Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Benefices
OLIVER, Rev. John (n.d.), of Chester (C)			T	T				T	G		T				V. of Audlem (C), 1696-1714; R. of West Kirkby (C), 1717-30; P. of Chester.
OTTIGE, Rev. William (n.d.), of Chester (C)			T												
OULTON, Rev. Charles (n.d.), of Chester (C)											T				V. of St. John's Chester, 1710.
* OWEN, Rev. Dr. John (n.d.), of Warrington (L)												W			Dissenting M.
* OWEN, Rev. John, Jr. (n.d.), of Warrington (L)												W			Dissenting M.
PARKER, Rev. William (n.d.), of Preston (L)													W		
PARRY, Rev. Thomas (n.d.), of Chester				T											R. of St. Bridget's Chester, 1720.
PEPLOE, Rev. Robert (d.1739?)								@							V. of Rainford (L), 1722-39.
PEPLOE, Rev. Samuel, Jr. (1702-81)												W	W		V. of Preston (L), 1727-43; P. of Chester, 1727-81; Archdeacon of Richmond, 1729; Warden of Manchester, 1738-81; R. of Northendon & Tattenhall (C), 1743-81; Chancellor of Chester, 1748.
PETERS, Rev. Richard (n.d.), of Liverpool (L)												T			
PHILPOT, Rev. Nathaniel (n.d.), of Norton (C)													T		
PIGOT, Rev. Henry (c.1628-1722)			S'												V. of Rochdale (L), 1662-1722.

Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Benefices
PILKINGTON, Rev. Dr. William (d.1755)												T			R. of Croston (L), 1703-55.
PLUMBE, Rev. Thomas (d.1769), of Windsor (Berks)												W			R. of Aughton (L), 1735-69; R. of Mobberley (C), 1733-69.
POOLE, Rev. Hugh (d.1739)				T				T		T	T				R. of Bebington (C), 1716-39.
PORTER, Rev. Thomas (n.d.), of Harthill (C)			T	T				T							
PRATCHETT, Rev. Thomas (n.d.), of Talke (C?)			T												
PRESCOTT, Rev. John (n.d.)				T		C				T	T			T	R. of Waverton (C), 1716-46; P. of Chester, 1714-46: deprived, 1746.
PRICE, Rev. Richard (n.d.), of Drayton (Sh)								W							
PULFORD, Rev. Thomas (n.d.) of Wrexham (D) & Harthill (C)							G		T				T		
PURNELL, Rev. William (d.1764?)												W			C. of All Saints, Newton, nr. Manchester (L)
RADLEY, Rev. Samuel (n.d.), of Wrenbury (C)	W														
RICHARDSON, Rev. James (d.1773)	T														R. of Tilston (C), 1719-73.
ROBERTS, Rev. Thomas (d.1740)								T							R. of Frodsham (C), 1725-40.
ROBINSON, Rev. James (d.1741)	W														V. of Knutsford (C).
RODE, Rev. James (n.d.), of Biddulph (S)	T'														
RODE, Rev. Thomas (d.1731)								T							R. of Astbury (C), 1727-31.
ROUGHLEY, Rev. Henry (n.d.), of Liverpool (L)												W			

Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Benefices
ROWLAND, Rev. John (d.1743)											T				R. of Lawton (C), 1733-43.
SEMELL, Rev. Cuthbert (n.d.), of Chester (C)										W		W			
SIMPSON, Rev. Dr. William (n.d.), of St. George's (Middx)											T				
SMITH, Rev. John (n.d.), of Ashley (L)				W											
SMITH, Rev. Richard (n.d.), of Woodchuch (C)				T				T							
SMITH, Rev. William (n.d.), of Moore (C)				T											R. of Trinity Chester, 1735.
STANLEY, Rev. John (1692-1781)												T			R. of Liverpool (L), 1726-50; R. of Winwick (L), 1740-2, 1764-81; R. of Bury (L), 1743-78; R. of Halsall (L), 1750-7.
STONES, Rev. John (d.1736)		T	T						T	T					R. of Coddington (C), 1710-36.
STYAL, Rev. Harry (c.1687-1742)			T		T										R. of Stockport (C), 1717-42.
SUMNER, Rev. John (n.d.), of Wigan (L)	D														
SWINTON, Rev. John (n.d.), of Knutsford (C)					W				W						V. of Middlewich (C), 1731-7.
* TAYLOR, Rev. Gilbert (d.1716), of of Crawdenbrook (C)	C														Dissenting M. at Tintwisle (C).
TEY, Rev. Robert (n.d.), of Chester (C)		T	T		S										
THANE, Rev. Dr. John (d.1727)		T	T												R. of Northenden (C); Archdeacon of Chester, 1707; P. of Chester, 1686-1727.

Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Benefices
Thomas, Rev. John (n.d.), of Chester & Christleton (C)								T	G	W	W				C. at Christleton (C); M. at Ince (C).
TURNER, Rev. John (d.1720)			T												V. of Backford (C), 1691-1720.
* TURNER, Rev. John (n.d.), of Liverpool (L)												W			Dissenting M. at Warford (C), to 1730; at Liverpool (L), from 1730.
TURTON, Rev. William (d.1728), of Malpas (C)				T											R. of Malpas, 1719-28; R. of Standish (L), 1713-22.
* VALENTINE, Rev. Thomas (d.1755), of Crumsell (L?)												W			Dissenting M. at Frodsham, to 1731; at Blackley (L), 1731-55.
* VAWDREY, Rev. William (n.d.), of Thornton (C)			C	W											Dissenting M. at Allostock (C), 1718-19; at Nantwich, 1719-28.
VAUGHAN, Rev. Griffith (d.1726), of Hinstock (Sh)				T											R. of Barthomley (C), 1721-6; R. of Coppenhall, 1681-1721.
WALKER, Rev. John (n.d.), of Manchester (L)												W			
WALL, Rev. John (d.1725)			C												R. of Rosthorne (C), 1672-1725.
WARD, Rev. George (d.1734)			2T					T							V. of Leigh (L), 1696-1734.
WARD, Rev. John (n.d.), of Tarporley (C)			S												
WEEVER, Rev. Richard (d.1736)			T	T				T							R. of Wistaston (C), 1704-36; R. of Barrow (C), 1707-36.
WELLES, Rev. Thomas (c.1663-1729)			2T	T				T							V. of Sandbach (C), 1695-29; R. of Muccleston (C).
WHITAKER, Rev. John (n.d.), of Platt (L)												W			

Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Benefices
WHITAKER, Rev. Thomas (d.1767)												W			R. of Ashton-on-Mersey (C), 1730-67.
WICKSTED, Rev. William (d.1731)				T				S							V. of Audlem (C), 1716-31.
WILBRAHAM, Rev. Hugh (n.d.), of Chester (C)				T											V. of St. Mary's Chester, 1715-24.
WILLCOCK, Rev. Thomas (n.d.), of Chester (C)				T				T			T			T	
WILLIAMS, Rev. Arthur (n.d.)										W	W	W			Arch-Deacon of St. David's; V. of St. Mary's Chester, 1731.
WILLIAMS, Rev. Geoffrey (d.1757)			(T)					T		T	T				R. of Trentham (S); R. of Astbury, 1731-57.
WILLIAMS, Rev. Richard (n.d.)														T	R. of Hawarden (F)
WILLIAMSON, Rev. John (n.d.), of Liverpool (L)												T			
WILLIAMSON, Rev. Samuel (d.1785), of Oxford												W			R. of Barrow (C), 1754-85.
WINTERBOTTAM, Rev. James (n.d.), of Manchester (L)												W			
WOLSTENHULME, Rev. Henry (d.1772)												W			R. of Liverpool (L), 1753-72.
WOOD, Rev. Matthew (d.1716)		C													V. of Bowden (C), 1708-16
WOODFALL, Rev. Thomas (n.d.), of Stockham (C)		C	T												
WORSELEY, Rev. John (n.d.), of Warrington (L)		(T)	T'					T							
WRIGHT, Rev. John (n.d.), of Pickton (C)		T													
WRIGHT, Rev. Thomas (n.d.) of Haslington (C)			T"												

Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Benefices
WROE, Rev. Dr. Richard (c1641-1717)	D														R. of West Kirkby(C), 1696; P. of Chester, 1678-1717; Warden of Manchester.
WYNNE, Rev. Ellis (d.1755), of Congleton (C)														T	M. of Marton (C), 1741-55.
WYNNE, Rev. William (n.d.), of Tower (F)														T	
YATES, Rev. John (d.1732), of Lower Peover			(T)												R. of Lymm (C), 1719-32
YOUNG, Rev. John (d.1742)					C										R. of Brindley (L), 1722-42.

Appendix B -- Tories in the Commissions of the Peace for Lancashire and Cheshire, 1713-1747.

i) Lancashire

Since no pollbook survives for the Lancashire county elections of 1722 and 1741, the identification of Lancashire Tories is not a simple matter. Three criteria have been used in drawing up the list used in this appendix: (a) identification from votes cast in other elections [see Appendix A]; (b) identification in contemporary correspondence, diaries, parliamentary division lists, &c.; (c) removal from the Commission between 1714 and 1716 for reasons other than death. All honorary appointments have been omitted. The Commissions selected for analysis are as follows:

Column

1 Commission dated 27 Feb. 1713-14 (L[ancashire] R.O., QSC/151).

2 Commission dated 5 Aug. 1715 (L.R.O., QSC/155).

3 Commission dated 3 Nov. 1715 (L.R.O., QSC/156).

4 Commission dated 17 Mar. 1715-16 (L.R.O., QSC/157).

5 Commission dated 4 Sept. 1717 (L.R.O., QSC/160).

6 Commission dated 22 Mar. 1722-3 (L.R.O., QSC/169).

7 Commission dated 14 Mar. 1726-7 (L.R.O., QSC/177).

8 Commission dated 5 Feb. 1727-8 (L.R.O., QSC/179).

9 Commission dated 2 Aug. 1736 (L.R.O., QSC/185).

10 Commission dated 28 July 1742 (L.R.O., QSC/190).

11 Commission dated 16 July 1745 (L.R.O., QSC/192).

12 Commission dated 15 Aug. 1747 (L.R.O., QSC/193).

ii) Cheshire

The identification of Cheshire Tories is almost solely on the basis of pollbook evidence. All honorary appointments have again been omitted. The Commissions analysed are as follows:

Column

1 Commission dated 9 July 1713 (C[heshire] R.O., QJC/3).

2 Commission dated 4 Dec. 1714 (P.R.O., C.234/5).

3 Commission dated 22 Dec. 1715 (P.R.O., C.234/5).

4 Commission dated 22 Mar. 1716-17 (C.R.O., QJC/4).

5 Commission dated 6 Feb. 1722-3 (C.R.O., QJC/8).

6 Commission dated 9 Nov. 1727 (C.R.O., QJC/10).

7 Commission dated 2 Mar. 1733-4 (C.R.O., QJC/12).

8 Commission dated 23 Nov. 1739 (C.R.O., QJC/13).

9 Commission dated 9 Mar. 1743-4 (C.R.O., QJC/14). [This last Commission remained in force until 26 Jan. 1749-50.]

The appearance of a name in any Commission is indicated with an * . Where the date of death is known, this is indicated by an / in the column for the first Commission issued after that date. Where there are special reasons to account for a Tory Justice's continuing presence in the Commission, or where political affiliations are known to have altered, details are given in the Remarks column. Tories who became Whigs are only included if they were still reckoned as Tories at the time of their first appointment to the Commission. Country Whigs are also included, and are identified by 'CW' in the Remarks column.

Appendix B i) -- Lancashire

Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Remarks
ALLANSON, John	*	*											
ASSHETON, Sir Ralph, 3rd Bt. of Middleton					*	*	*			*	*	*	
ASSHETON, Ralph, of Cuerdale						*	*	*					
BAMFORD, William	*	*											
BANKS, Thomas, of Winstanley & Wigan	*	*											
BARRY, James, 4th Earl of Barrymore	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	M.P. for Wigan, 1714-47.
BELLINGHAM, William	*	*											
BENNISON, Thomas, of Hornby	*												
BENNISON, William, of Hornby									*	*	*		
BLAND, Sir John, 4th Bt.	*	*	/										
BLAND, Sir John, 5th Bt.	*	*									/		
BLUNDELL, Bryan, of Liverpool							*			*	*	*	
BLUNDELL, Edward, of Prescot	*	*	*	*	*								Serjt.-at-Law in D. of L. to 1717.
BOLD, Peter, of Prescot									*	*	*	*	Elected M.P. for Lancs. 1736.
BOOTH, Robert, of Salford								*	*	*	*	*	
BOOTLE, Thomas, of Lathom			*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	CW
BRADSHAW, George	*	*											
BRENNAND, William	*	*											
BROOKE, Richard	*	*											
BUCKLEY, William	*	*											
BUTLER, Alexander	*	*											

Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Remarks
BUTTERWORTH, Alexander	*	*											
BYROM, Joseph	*	*							/				
CASE, Jonathan, of Redhassles	*	*	*	*	*	*	/						CW?
CASE, Thomas, of Redhassles							*	*	*	*	*	*	CW?
CAWTHORNE, John				*	*	*				*	*	*	
CHETHAM, Samuel, of Castleton	*	*				*	*		*	*	*	/	
CHISENHALL, Sir Edward, Kt., of Chisenhall	*	*											
CLAYTON, Richard, of Adlington	*	*											
CLAYTON, Richard, Jr., of Adlington									*	*	*	*	
CLAYTON, William, of Liverpool	*	/											
DRAKE, William	*	*											
EGERTON, Holland	*	*				*	*	*	/				Became 2nd Bt. in 1729.
FARINGTON, George, of Shawe Hall							*		/				
FARINGTON, Valentine, M.D.	*	*											
FARINGTON, William, of Shawe Hall	*	*	*	*	*	/							
FAZAKERLEY, Nicholas	*	*											
FAZAKERLEY, Nicholas, of Prescot	*	*							*	*	*	*	Elected M.P. for Preston, 1732
FLEETWOOD, Edward	*	*											
FLEETWOOD, Henry, of Penwortham	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	/	M.P. for Preston to 1722
FLEMING, Sir William, 1st Bt. of Rydal (Cumb)	*	*							/				
GIBSON, Robert, of Lancaster	*	*							/				
GREENFIELD, William	*	*											
GREENHOUGH, Henry	*	*											
HARRISON, John	*	*											

Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Remarks
HESKETH, Robert, of Meols	*	*											
HESKETH, Roger, of Meols	*	*	*	*	*	/							
HESKETH, Roger, Jr., of Meols									*	*	*	*	
HESKETH, Thomas, of Rufford						*	*	*	/				M.P. for Preston, 1722-7.
HEYSHAM, Robert, of Lancaster	*	*	*	*	*	/							M.P. until 1722.
HEYSHAM, William, of Lancaster	*	*	*	*	/								M.P. for Lancaster to 1716.
HOLT, Edward, of Wigan										*	*	*	
HOLT, Robert, of Wigan		*							*	/			
HORTON, Thomas, of Chadderton	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	CW
HOWARD, Henry	*	*											
HULTON, Charles, of Hulton & Preston	*	*											
HULTON, Henry, of Hulton	*								/				
KENYON, George, of Peel	*	*											
KENYON, Thomas	*	*											
LATUS, Ferdinand	*	*											
LEECH, John	*	*											
LISTER, Thomas, of Gisburne Pk. (Y)	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	/		M.P. for Clitheroe.
LEGH, Peter, of Lyme (C) & Haydock	*	*									/		
LEGH, Thomas, of Lyme (C) & Haydock	*	*			/								
LONSDALE, Miles, of Bury									*	*	*	*	CW
MARSDEN, Thomas	*												
MASTER, Legh, of New Hall, Ashton-i-md.							*	*	*	*	*	*	Elected M.P. for Newton, 1727

Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Remarks
MASTER, Legh, Jr., of New Hall, &c.										*	*	*	
MOORE, Sir Cleve, 2nd Bt. of Moore Hall	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	/				
NOWELL, Alexander, of Read												*	
NOWELL, Roger, of Read	*	*	*	*			/						
NOWELL, Roger, Jr., of Read							*		/				
OSBALDESTON, Alexander, of Blackburn	*	*										/	
PARKER, Banastre, of Cuerden						*	*		/				
PARKER, Edward, of Browsholme	*	*	*			/							
PEARSON, Luke	*	*											
PEMBERTON, John, of Liverpool			*	*	*	*	*	*					CW
PENNINGTON, Sir William, 1st Bt. of Muncaster (Cumb.)	*	*							/				
PENNY, James	*	*											
PENNY, William	*	*											
POOLE, Josiah, of Liverpool						*	*						CW?
PULTENEY, Daniel							*	*	/				CW
RADCLIFFE, Alexander, of Foxdenton	*	*							/				
RADCLIFFE, Alexander, of Leigh	*	*											
RAWLINSON, Christopher, of Greehead	*	*							/				
RAWSTORNE, William, of New Hall, nr. Preston	*	*				*	*	*	*	*	*	*	
RISHTON, Edward, of Autley	*	*				/							
SAWRY, William	*	*											
SHAKERLEY, Peter, of Hulme Hall (C)	*	*	*	*	*	*	/						Prominent Hanoverian

NAME	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Remarks
SHUTTLEWORTH, Richard, of Gawthorpe	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	M.P. for Lancs.
SMITH, Thomas	*	*											
STANDISH, Sir Thomas, 2nd Bt., of Duxbury	*	*											
STANDISH, Thomas, of Duxbury											*	*	
STARKIE, Nicholas, of Preston	*	*	*	*		*	*	/					
STARKIE, Piers, of Huntroyd	*	*						*	*	*	*	*	
TEMPEST, James, of Wigan										*	*		
THORPE, Samuel	*	*											
TOWNLEY, Thomas, of Royle	*	*								/			
TOWNLEY, Thomas, Jr., of Royle												*	
TYRER, George, of Liverpool							*						
VALENTINE, Richard	*	*											
VAUDREY, Edward, of Warrington	*	*	*										
WARREN, Edward, of Poynton (C)	*	*				/							
WILLIS, Thomas, of Halsnead Pk.	*	*											
WINCKLEY, John, of Preston	*	*				*	*	*	*	*	*	*	

Appendix B ii) -- Cheshire

Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Remarks
ALDERSEY, Thomas, of Spurstow & Aldersey	*	*	/							
AMSON, John, of Lees	*	*						/		Later became a Whig
ASSHETON, Thomas, of Ashley	*	*								
ASTON, Sir Thomas, 4th Bt., of Aston						*	*	*	/	CW
BARRY, James, 4th Earl of Barrymore				*	*	*	*	*	*	M.P. for Wigan.
BLAND, Sir John, 4th Bt.	*	*	/							
BLAND, Sir John, 5th Bt.			*	*	*	*	*	*	/	M.P. for Lancs. to 1727.
BOOTH, Lawrence, of Twemlowe	*	*								
BROOKE, Sir Thomas, 3rd Bt., of Norton Pr.	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	/		
BRUEN, Jonathan, of Stapleford	*	*	/							
BUNBURY, Sir Henry, 3rd Bt., of Stanney	*	*	*	*	*	*	/			
CHOLMONDELEY, Charles, of Vale Royal	*	*	*	*						Continued as M.P. for Cheshire till 1756.
CHOLMONDELEY, Robert, of Holford	*			/						
CHOLMONDELEY, Seymour, of Vale Royal						*	*	/		
CLAYTON, William, of Liverpool	*	*	/							
CRAMPTON, Robert	*									
CREWE, John Offley, of Crewe	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	M.P. for Cheshire, 1722-7; formerly Whig.
DALTON, William	*									
DANIEL, John, of Daresbury	*	*	/							
DAVENPORT, George, of Calveley	*	*	*	*	*	*	/?			
DAVENPORT, Humphrey, of Stockport	*	*	*	*	*	/				
DAVIES, Robert, of Manley	*							/		

NAME	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Remarks
DRAKE, Montague Garrard, of Malpas& Shardeloes (Bucks.)						*	/			M.P. for Amersham.
EGERTON, John, of Oulton	*	*	*	*	*	*	/			Prominent Hanoverian.
EGERTON, John, Jr., of Broxton						*	*	*	*	
FRODSHAM, Thomas, of Elton	*					/				
GAMUL, William, of Crabwall	*					/				
GLASIEUR, Thomas, Jr., of Lea	*									
GROSVENOR, Sir Richard, 4th Bt., of Eaton	*	*	*	*		*	/			M.P. for Chester to 1732.
GROSVENOR, Sir Robert, 6th Bt., of Eaton									*	Had been M.P. since 1732.
HOLFORD, Thomas, of Warrington	*									
HURLESTON, Charles, of Newton					*	*	*	/		
HURLESTON, John, of Newton	*	*	*	*	/					
LEE, Robert, of Wincham	*									
LEECH, John, of Peckforton	*	*								
LEGH, Peter, of Lyme	*								/	
LEGH, Thomas, of Lyme	*	*								
LEICESTER, Sir Francis, 3rd Bt., of Tabley	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	/	
LEIGH, Rev. Peter, of Aldford				*			/			
LEIGH, Rev. Peter, of Lymm	*	*	*		/					
LOWE, James, of Nantwich			*	*	*	/				
MAINWARING, Sir Thomas, 3rd Bt., of Baddiley	*	*	*	*	*	/				
MASSIE, John, of Coddington	*						/			
MASSY, Richard, of Audlem	*	*								
MEREDITH, Amos, of Henbury	*	*								Died 1745.

Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Remarks
MEREDITH, Sir William, 2nd Bt., of Henbury	*	*	*	*	*					Died 1752.
MOSTYN, Sir Roger, 3rd Bt., of Mostyn (F)	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	/		Prominent Hanoverian.
MATHER, Thomas, of Chester	*									Died 1745; Recorder of Chester from 1719.
OLDFIELD, Leftwich, of Leftwich	*	*								
OLDFIELD, William, of Bradwell	*					/				
RODE, Christopher, of Eaton	*									
SHAKERLEY, George, of Gwersyllt (D) & Hulme H.	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	
SHAKERLEY, Peter, of Hulme Hall	*	*	*	*	*	/				Prominent Hanoverian.
STARKEY, Thomas, of Wrenbury	*	*	/							
VAUDREY, Edward, of Hale & Warrington (L)	*	*								
WALTHALL, Richard, of Wistaston	*	*	*	*	*	*	/			
WARBURTON, Sir George, 3rd Bt., of Arley	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	/	Prominent Hanoverian.
WARBURTON, Philip Henry, of Grange						*	*	*	*	
WARBURTON, Thomas, of Winnington	*	*	*	*	*	/?				
WARD, John, of Capesthorne	*									Died 1749.
WARREN, Edward, of Poynton	*	*		/						
WARREN, John, of Poynton	*	*					/			
WETTENHALL, Gabriel, of Hankelow				*	*	*	*	/		
WHITMORE, William, of Thurstanston	*	*	*	*	*	*				
WILBRAHAM, Randle, of Nantwich	*	*	*	*	*	*	/			
WILBRAHAM, Randle, Jr., of Rode Hall				*	*	*	*	*	*	

Appendix C -- Members of the Cycle of the White Rose.

The following is a list of the 34 gentlemen from North Wales and the northwest of England known to have been Cycle members before 1748. Two Cycle lists survive [both preserved in N.L.W. MSS. 14941C]: one from the period 1722-3; the other from 1746-8. Only seven names are common to both lists, and are marked (&) below; the remainder are marked (1) or (2) according to the list in which they appear.

Dr. Apperley (2)
Cawley Humberstone Cawley, of Gwersyllt (D) (2)
Richard Clayton, of Adlington (L) (1)
Robert Davies, of Gwysaney (?) (&)
William Edwards, of Eaton (Sh) (1)
Philip Egerton, of Acton (D) & Oulton (C) (&)
Robert Ellis, of Cros-newydd (D) (1)
Kenrick Eyton (&)
Thomas Eyton, of Lower Leeswood (F) (&)
Sir Robert Grosvenor, Bart., of Eaton (C) (2)
Sir John Glynne, Bart., of Hawarden (F) (2)
William Hanmer (2)
Thomas Holland (1)
George Hope, of Broughton (F) (2)
Robert Hyde, of Cattenhall (C) & Nerquis (F) (2)
Edward Kynaston, of Hardwick (Sh) (2)
Edward Lloyd, of Horsley (?) (2)
Eubule Lloyd, of Pen-y-Llan (?) (&)
Sir Thomas Longueville, Bart., of Prestatyn (F) (2)
William Owen, of Partington (C) (2)
Francis Price, of Bryn-y-Pys (F) (2)
John Puleston, of Pickhill (?) (&)
John Puleston, Jr., of Pickhill (?) (2)
Thomas Puleston, of Emral (F) (1)
Thomas Ravenscroft, of Pickhill (?) & Leftwich (C) (2)

Bagot Read, of Chester (C) (2)
John Robinson, of Gwersyllt (D) (1)
George Shakerley, of Gwersyllt (D) (1)
Philip Henry Warburton, of Hefferstone Grange (C) (2)
Richard Williams, of Penbedw (D) (2)
Rev. Richard Williams, Rector of Hawarden (F) (2)
Robert Williams, of Bryn-y-Fynon (D) (2)
Sir Watkin Williams Wynn, Bart., of Wynnstay (D) (&)
Ellis Young (2)

The political interests of these gentlemen can be gauged by looking at their voting behaviour in Appendix A

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30306	Fairfax Correspondence
32686-9, 32692-3, 32695, 32699, 32701-14, 33004, 33057, 33061	Newcastle Papers
34736	West Papers
34817	Walthall Papers
35351, 35354, 35397, 35584-89, 35598, 35600, 35602, 35605, 35870, 36138	Hardwicke Papers
36913-14	Aston Papers
39923	Jacobite and Other Letters
46400	Puleston Papers

Egerton MSS.

2000	Treason Trial Briefs, 1746

Sloane MSS.

3323	Miscellaneous Papers

Stowe MSS.

228	Hanover State Papers
749	Anstis Papers
750	Parker Correspondence

Loan 29	Portland (Harley) Papers

(2) Public Record Office:

Chancery Papers

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C.234/5	Fiats for Commissions of the Peace, Cheshire, 1706-1929

Duchy of Lancaster Records

D.L. 20	Judges' Commissions; Fiats for Commissions of the Peace, Lancashire, from 1727; Commissions of Oyer & Terminer and Gaol Delivery

Privy Council Papers

P.C. 2/98-101	Council Registers, 1743-50

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MS. Dep. c. 237	Gibson Papers
MS. Hearne's Diaries 49, 51, 65, 110, 112, 120	Diaries of Thomas Hearne
MS. Rawlinson C. 793	Cruden Letterbook
MS. Rawlinson D. 842	Miscellaneous Papers
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MS. Willis 48	Browne Willis Papers

b) Cambridge University Library:

Cholmondeley (Houghton) MSS.

c) John Rylands University Library of Manchester:

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d) Manchester Central Library:

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N.L.S. MSS.

7044	Yester Papers

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e) Liverpool Record Office, City Libraries, Liverpool:

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f) Staffordshire Record Office, Stafford:

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Blenheim (Sunderland) MSS.

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c) Christ Church, Oxford:

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KEY
Rivers
County Boundaries
Dee Navigation
PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCIES
TOWNS
Seats of Gentry referred to in text
Scale: 1inch = 5miles
0
5
WESTMORLAND
Part of Lancashire
Kendal
Holker
R. Kent
R. Lune
LANCASTER
YORKSHIRE
R. Ribble
R. Hodder
Garstang
R. Wyre
CLITHEROE
R. Ribble
Read
Gawthorpe
PRESTON
Cuerdale
Penworthan
Blackburn
Halifax
LANCASHIRE
R. Douglas
Rufford
Ormskirk
Haigh
WIGAN
Middleton
Heaton Park
Foxdenton
Ashton-in-Makerfield
Haydock
NEWTON(-le-WILLOWS)
Manchester
Knowsley Park
Croxteth Park
LIVERPOOL
Hoylake
R. Mersey
Warrington
Stockport
Dunham Massey
Norton Priory
Rock Savage
Aston
Frodsham
Arley
Knutsford
Lyme
R. Bollin
Broomborough
Rhuddlan
Rhodeloyddan
CAEWYS
FLINT
Stanney
Shotwick Park
Northwich
Macclesfield
CHESHIRE
FLINTSHIRE
CHESTER
Vale Royal
Winsford
Middlewich
Hawarden
DENBIGH
R. Clwyd
Aulton
Bunbury
R. Dane
Eaton
R. Dee
RUTHIN
CAERGWRLE
Crewe
Leek
Cholmondeley
DENBIGHSHIRE
HOLT
Nantwich
Wrexham
STAFFORDSHIRE
Mavbury
NEWCASTLE-under-LYME
MONTGOM-ERYSHIRE
R. Dee
Wynnstay
Coulbarmere
Madeley
Part of Flints.
OVERTON
Whitchurch
SALOP.