

THE UNIVERSITY OF WINCHESTER

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Winchester Electors c. 1832- c. 1886: An Electoral Register-based Socio-Political Study

Richard James Aldous

Doctor of Philosophy

February 2014

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ABSTRACT FOR THESIS

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The mid-nineteenth-century British electoral system is explored through the contents of the electoral registers and their associated legislation. The impact of these is addressed through an examination of the national system of parliamentary representation applying from 1832 and then 1868. This reveals the importance to achieving a Commons majority, particularly for the Conservative party, of winning a majority of seats in small English boroughs.

Winchester is shown to be representative of these boroughs. 'Winchester Man' is advanced as the archetypal elector of this era. His environment and nature are then addressed. He is found to have a relatively short life as an elector. This is found to correspond with the peak of his socio-economic standing during his lifecycle.

Increased mobility of the population and 'Winchester Man's' short 'elector life' are shown to add to uncertainty amongst party officials as to his political loyalty. This challenges the somewhat deterministic views of earlier writers on the subject who see the revision courts as absolutely deciding the outcome of future contests. The increasing incidence of contested elections is claimed to arise from this level of uncertainty.

The revision court was the scene of partisan activity but some electors crept through the registration process 'under the radar' or with their presumed loyalty untested. 'Winchester Man's' electoral behaviour is then explored. This is shown to be intrinsically of a politically partisan nature but tempered by initial diffidence. Much partisanship, perhaps stirred by the clear political divide in the revision court, remained latent due to the failure of the political parties regularly to field two candidates in a two-seat borough. Even when two candidates from the same party stood they often did not unite on a common 'ticket'. This failed to encourage partisan voting behaviour particularly for those already in the habit of 'splitting'.

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Richard J. Aldous

24 February 2014

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INTRODUCTION

The so-called ‘Great Reform Act of 1832’¹ represented the outcome of great parliamentary battles spread over almost 18 months.² To achieve its passage through the otherwise obdurate House of Lords, this conflict led to compromise between the Whig framers of the initial proposals and some of its opponents therein.

The Whigs from the outset sought to introduce a registration system in order to reduce the cost and, above all, the scope for tumult and disorder at elections.³ This was seen as arising from the lengthy period available for polling which since 1785 had been limited to a maximum of a mere fifteen polling days per constituency, and in the case of boroughs to eight days in 1828.⁴ Such a period was required as the right of any putative voter to vote could be, and frequently was, challenged as he sought to vote.⁵ During this time, with the Army legally excluded from within two miles of the polling place⁶ and no effective police force, law and order

¹ The so-called ‘Great Reform Act’ comprised five acts – an Act addressing the franchise, redistribution of seats and electoral arrangements such as registration, together with a Boundary Act for each of England and Wales; and Ireland and a single Act for Scotland. The Acts are 2 Will. IV c.45 (Representation - England and Wales) and 2 & 3 Will. IV c.88 (Representation –Ireland); 2 & 3 Will. IV c. 64 (Boundaries – England and Wales) and 2 & 3 Will. IV c. 89 (Boundaries – Ireland); and 2 & 3 Will. IV c. 65 (Scotland – boundaries defined in Schedule M). N. Gash, *Politics in the Age of Peel: A study in the Technique of Parliamentary Representation 1830-1850* (London, 1953), 34 and 67 is in error in indicating that there were six Acts. Extracts from 2 Will. IV c. 45 and 2 and 3 Will. IV c. 65 can be found at H.J. Hanham, *The Nineteenth Century Constitution: Documents and Commentary* (Cambridge, 1969), 262-70 (the latter Act however erroneously described as ‘2 Will. IV, c. 65’).

² From 1 March 1831 to 7 August 1832 – for detailed chronology see M. Brock, *The Great Reform Act* (London, 1973), 391-2.

³ Brock, *Great...*, 139.

⁴ P. Salmon, *Electoral Reform at Work: Local Politics and National Parties 1832-1841* (Woodbridge, 2002), 19 and J. Cannon, *Parliamentary Reform 1640-1832* (Cambridge, 1972), 209.

⁵ F. O’Gorman, *Voters, Patrons and Parties: The Unreformed Electorate of Hanoverian England, 1734-1832* (Oxford, 1989), 134-5.

⁶ O’Gorman, *Voters...*, 255. After 1832 with multiple county polling places, usually the larger towns, this proved a challenge. In 1835 the 23rd Welsh Fusiliers, then in Winchester, had to disperse to Stockbridge, Alresford, Wickham and Botley – *Hampshire Chronicle* 5 January 1835. (Hereafter *HC*.) Although the constituency elections comprising a General Election were spread over a period of about a month until 1918 (See Note 9 below) compliance with this requirement could effectively have

was clearly an issue. Partisan feeling roused by the election was further inflamed by the supply of free alcohol for supporters and the need to accommodate and 'lubricate' a 'reserve' of voters. This reserve being held in case they were required to ensure the poll was kept open whilst opponents were ahead and the arrival of 'outvoters' was awaited.⁷

Even with the safeguards introduced in 1832, and subsequently, the risk of riot and tumult remained high given the quality and availability of police even after police forces were required by statute.⁸ Later, despite increasingly effective police forces, in order to spread the policing load, the polling in individual constituencies for a general election remained spread over a period of about a month until after World War One.⁹ This only ceased with the 1918 Representation of the People Act which introduced the concept of a single national election day for Great Britain and Ireland.¹⁰

This situation is reflected in the peregrination of Sir James Graham in 1841. On 28 June, after some time promoting the Conservative cause in Weymouth and Bridport as well as his own campaign, he was returned unopposed for Dorchester.¹¹ He then proceeded to the Carlton Club, from where he may very well have exercised his vote 'as an old Scot & Lot Voter' in the Westminster constituency¹² on 1 July.¹³ Graham then travelled via East Cumberland, where he

sent the local garrison on 'manoeuvres' through the local area avoiding the county poll and those of various boroughs.

⁷ O'Gorman, *Voters...*, 152-4 and 135-7. 'Outvoters' were those not resident in the constituency but qualifying to vote as freemen, owners of freehold property etc.. They were notorious for adding to the costs of election - J.A. Phillips, *Electoral Behavior in Unreformed England: Plumpers, Splitters and Straights* (Princeton, 1982), 78.

⁸ D. Richter, 'The Role of Mob Riot in Victorian Elections, 1865-1885', *Victorian Studies* Vol. 15 No. 1 (September 1971), 23-4.

⁹ M. Pugh, *The Making of Modern British Politics 1867-1939* (Oxford, 1982), 4-5 writes of a two or three week period. F.W.S.Craig, *British Parliamentary Election Results 1832-1885* (London, 1977), 627 indicates that the time from first to last result was 29 days in 1880 and 39 days in 1832, lesser durations occurring in between. As late as January 1910 the polls were held and results declared over a four week period – *McCalmont's Parliamentary Pollbook of All Elections 1832-1918* (edited by J.Vincent and M. Stenton, Brighton, 1971), *passim* shows uncontested seats (e.g. Birmingham West) declared on 14 January; the first contested seats declaring on 15 January (e.g. Winchester and Southampton); and the final poll on 10 February (Edinburgh and St. Andrews Universities). The issue of whether early results affected later ones could be the subject of an interesting psephological study. N. Blewett, *The Peers, The Parties and the People: The General Elections of 1910* (London, 1972) 134-41 and 197-8 made some tentative steps in this direction.

¹⁰ 7 & 8 Geo. V, c64, s21(1).

¹¹ Graham to Bonham various 22 to 28 June 1841 – Peel MSS - BL Add. MSS 40616 Serials 198-208.

¹² Graham to Bonham 25 August 1843 – Peel MSS BL Add. MSS 40616 Serial 275.

¹³ Date from *McCalmont* 309.

had property and presumably voted as well as showing close interest in the contest,¹⁴ to his earlier avowed intent of voting in Wigtonshire.¹⁵

The electoral register was intended to ensure clarity in advance as to which adult males (aged over twenty-one) were qualified to vote. It thereby facilitated the reduction of the polling period to two days in 1832 and, for borough constituencies after 1835, one day only.¹⁶ The construction of the borough register in the first instance by the parish overseers, for £10 householders and holders of residual ‘ancient-rights’,¹⁷ and by the Town Clerk, for freemen, facilitated the application of further qualification tests for the franchise. (Most of these tests did not apply in the county constituencies – whose voters, on the whole, were viewed as being sufficiently ‘respectable’ or, if we follow Professor Moore, ‘deferential’.) From the outset the Whigs sought to ensure the ‘independence’ and ‘respectability’ of those being enfranchised. The restriction of the freeman franchise to those residing within seven miles of the main polling place¹⁸ removed an element seen as disreputable and disruptive. The other tests required detailed local knowledge only available to the parish overseers.

These tests helped overcome a practical problem for those framing the legislation. On the one hand it was felt that for new London boroughs a £20 franchise would be necessary to ensure the ‘independence’ of electors. As the qualification for jury service outside London, under Peel’s 1825 Act, a £20 franchise had a supporting logic. However in some boroughs it was seen as likely to fail to create a sufficiently large electorate to ensure its collective ‘independence’ from outside influence.¹⁹ The franchise was therefore set at occupation of property of £10 ‘clear yearly value’²⁰ but subject to a number of other tests to ensure ‘respectability’. Some of these tests were tightened to secure the support of a group of Tory ‘Waverer’ peers led by Lords Wharncliffe and Harrowby. The Whig Prime Minister, Lord Grey, convinced Wharncliffe that the conditions were such as to virtually equate the £10 householder franchise to £20 or £30. It thereby assured the respectability of the new electorate. Those at the other end of the spectrum of supporters of the measure, the Radicals, saw between a quarter

¹⁴ Graham to Bonham 8 July 1841 – Peel MSS BL Add. MSS 40616 Serials211-3.

¹⁵ Graham to Bonham 4 July 1841 – Peel MSS BL Add MSS 40616 Serials209-10. The Wigtonshire poll closed on 15 July – *McCalmont* 317.

¹⁶ Gash, *Politics...*, (London, 1953), xi n and 128 n.

¹⁷ Salmon, *Electoral...*, 255.

¹⁸ 2 Will. IV, c. 45, s. 32.

¹⁹ Brock. *Great...*, 137.

²⁰ 2 Will. IV, c. 45, s. 27.

and two-thirds of £10 householders being disqualified as a result.²¹ No doubt both positions contain a strong element of rhetorical exaggeration but also a degree of common truth.

Application of these tests required the detailed local and financial knowledge of the parish overseer. First the same test, as for freemen, of residence within seven miles for six months was applied. Then the qualifying property had to have been in the possession of the potential voter, by ownership or rental, for at least the twelve months prior to the commencement of registration on 31 July. The property during that time had to have been rated for the poor rate and the individual to have paid by 20 July all poor rates and assessed taxes due by 6 April (changed to 5 January by Evans' Act of 1848²²). The individual had also not to have received parish poor relief or alms during the previous year.²³ Furthermore in addition to the souring of £10 householder enfranchisement by its link to timely payment of rates and assessed taxes there was the additional 'tax' of a one shilling annual registration fee.²⁴ Moreover this was a fee not paid by freemen or other ancient rights voters and only upon initial registration by county voters.²⁵

It will be argued in this thesis²⁶ that whilst these tests may have ensured the 'respectability' of the borough electorate they failed to ensure its stability. Indeed their application, combined with the geographic and economic mobility of the individuals concerned, ensured that the presence on the register of a large element of the electorate at any time was only of a temporary or transient nature. In 'key marginal seats' this appears to have led to a sufficiently high degree of uncertainty as to the outcome to lead to a level of contests well above the norm. In these constituencies the outcome of the registration battles, central to Salmon's work,²⁷ was not so clear cut as to effectively render the result of any election fought on that register such a foregone conclusion as to render a contest futile.

It is argued here that Winchester, the case study underpinning this thesis, is a representative key constituency in the period from 1832 until 1868. A position which continued to be so, albeit to a lesser extent, following the extension of the franchise in 1867 and 1868 and the introduction of the secret ballot in 1872. This latter situation pertained until the

²¹ Salmon, *Electoral...*, 186 citing correspondence in the Harrowby MSS.

²² 11 & 12 Vict., c. 90.

²³ Salmon, *Electoral...*, 185 and 254.

²⁴ 2 Will. IV, c.45, s.56.

²⁵ Salmon, *Electoral...*, 25.

²⁶ See p. 1111 below.

²⁷ Salmon, *Electoral...*

Redistribution Act of 1885. The place thereafter of Winchester, as a single seat borough, is beyond the scope of this study.

Throughout the period from 1832 until 1885 it is argued that the archetype of the 'key elector' for securing a majority in the House of Commons was 'Winchester Man'. Aspects of his social and economic experience are then addressed together with his electoral behaviour. The idea that he was essentially a partisan voter supporting a political party permeates this study. This is found to be encouraged by the actions of the local party representatives in the courts revising the electoral register. On the other hand it is found to be thwarted and frustrated by the failure of the parties to regularly field two candidates for Winchester's two seats. Indeed on occasions it is seen to be thwarted by the failure of two candidates running for the same cause to unite their efforts.

The thesis concludes that the period from 1832 to 1885 is one of transition from a period of 'interests' and 'influence' to one of effective party political 'machines'. However it appears that at times the electors were latently more partisan than the candidates or their parties permitted them to be.

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CHAPTER 1
HISTORIOGRAPHICAL REVIEW

Electoral politics from the Great Reform Act of 1832¹ through to the implementation of the 1884/5 Reform Acts has been the subject of many studies but few have covered the entire period or dealt with the subject on a broad front. One of the few covering the entire period is that of 1915 by Charles Seymour exploring the details of the 1832, 1867/8 and 1884/5 Reforms and intermediate legislation as applied in England and Wales.² Indispensable as Seymour is, he nevertheless focused on electoral law and its impact on electoral practice; not on elections and their outcomes.

Many studies address limited periods, types of constituency or localities; none has hitherto addressed the nature and composition of the electorate from the detailed contents of the electoral registers. Besides limitations on time and other resources for research; there are good and bad reasons for this. One good reason for concentrating upon one type of constituency is that until the 1884 Representation of the People Act and 1885 Redistribution of Seats Act there were significant differences between the franchise in, and the nature of, English county and borough constituencies. Moreover until 1884-5 there were differences in the franchise in the three kingdoms comprising the United Kingdom. Differences in the nature of boroughs however continued thereafter – a significant minority of those in Scotland and a majority of those in Wales being groupings of towns carved out of their counties; rather than single towns or cities, as was the case in England and Ireland.³ This justifies a focus on one of the component parts of Britain. Then, as ever, there is the tension between breadth and depth of study.

Some works have significant political and electoral content but seek to address other issues. For example the title of John Foster's *Class Struggle and the Industrial Revolution: Early industrial capitalism in three English towns* reveals its focus. Nevertheless the title hides the degree to which it addresses the local political struggle in towns avowedly chosen 'because of

¹ See p. 11, Note 1 above.

² C. Seymour, *Electoral Reform in England and Wales: The Development and Operation of the Parliamentary Franchise 1832-1885* (New Haven, 1915).

³ From 1885 in Scotland 12 out of 29 borough seats were for such burgh district constituencies and in Wales 9 out of 13 -derived from *McCalmont's Parliamentary Pollbook of All Elections 1832-1918* (edited by J.Vincent and M. Stenton, Brighton, 1971), Blue pp. 1-272.

their contrasting forms of economic organization, each representing a distinct form and phase of the country's development'.⁴ This later description sounds all-embracing; and it does, indeed, embrace both newly enfranchised boroughs (Oldham and South Shields) and an old established one (Northampton). However it ignores those elements of the economic and electoral systems of the day so embarrassing to the avowedly Marxist historian⁵ – the agricultural workforce, farmers and townspeople of the rural counties, county towns, small cathedral cities and market towns where, until just after 1851, half the population lived.⁶

A more balanced survey of the electoral system as a whole in the two decades after 1832 was at the core of Norman Gash's 1953 work;⁷ to which should be added his later work on Conservative Parliamentary and Electoral Organization, both of which are Westminster focused.⁸ Although describing the 1832 Reform Acts as 'both a landmark and a turning-point' Gash immediately states 'it would be wrong to assume that the political scene in the succeeding generation differed essentially from that of the preceding one'.⁹ Others have concluded that there were significant elements of continuity running through 1832. In 1989 Frank O'Gorman in a wide-reaching study of English electoral politics in the Hanoverian period concluded with claims for a very high degree of continuity into the post-Reform period stating 'the continuities are far more apparent than the upheavals'.¹⁰ One aspect of O'Gorman's continuity was the level of partisan voting; consistent voting for a 'party' by the same individuals.¹¹ However in 1982 and 1992 John A. Phillips argued strongly that partisanship grew after 1832, indeed that 'Reform generated and strengthened partisanship'.¹²

⁴ J. Foster, *Class Struggle and the Industrial Revolution: Early industrial capitalism in three English towns* (London, 1974), 1.

⁵ Foster, *Class...*, 337.

⁶ E.J.Evans, *The Forging of the Modern State: Early Industrial Britain 1783-1870* (3rd Edition, Harlow, 2001), 367.

⁷ N. Gash, *Politics in the Age of Peel: A study in the Technique of Parliamentary Representation 1830-1850* (London, 1953).

⁸ N.Gash, 'The Organization of the Conservative Party, 1832-1846. Part I: The Parliamentary Organization', *Parliamentary History*, Vol. 1 (1982), 137-59 and 'The Organization of the Conservative Party 1832-1846. Part II: The Electoral Organization', *Parliamentary History*, Vol. 2 (1983), 131-52.

⁹ Gash, *Politics...*, x.

¹⁰ F. O'Gorman, *Voters, Patrons and Parties: The Unreformed Electorate of Hanoverian England, 1734-1832* (Oxford, 1989), 392-3 – quotation from note 22.

¹¹ O'Gorman *Voters...*, 368-83 and 389.

¹² J.A. Phillips, 'The Many Faces of Reform: The Reform Bill and the Electorate', *Parliamentary History*, Vol 1 (1982), 115-135 and *The Great Reform Bill in the Boroughs: English Electoral Behaviour, 1818-1841* (Oxford, 1992), 300 – the quotation is from the latter.

Ten years after Phillips' later work, Philip Salmon revisited the post-Reform decade casting much new light particularly upon the work of parties at constituency level.¹³ Whilst recognising elements of continuity, in rituals such as chairing successful candidates, treating and bell ringing;¹⁴ Salmon emphasised two major contributions to increased partisanship at elections - electoral registration, in both borough and county constituencies; and the 1835 Municipal Corporations Act, in the boroughs only, and then, it should be added, only in the majority of them which were subject to it.¹⁵

The emergence of registration as a key issue in Salmon's work to a large extent hid the fact that John Prest, a quarter century before in an oft neglected book, had been the first 'to interpret the politics of the 1830s and 1840s as a continuous registration conflict in which the Conservatives first seized the initiative and then lost it to the Anti-Corn Law League and to the Reformers'.¹⁶ The coverage of the entire 1840s and to a lesser degree the period thence to the 1867/8 Reform by Prest balances the impression one might form from Salmon's work that electoral registration was almost always more effectively exploited by the Conservatives. Another, and one much cited by Salmon, who gave earlier prominence to registration is Paula Radice. Addressing the same decade as Salmon she cites William Biggs of Leicester's deterministic view of this aspect of the electoral process.¹⁷

What is clear is that the absence of registration as a significant element in the 'mix' has led to an imbalance in the analysis contained in otherwise admirable works. It is only mentioned a dozen times in some 450 pages by Gash and receives no sustained treatment. In Fraser's otherwise admirable but 'strangely unsung work'¹⁸ one cannot but feel that registration is 'the elephant in the room', especially when the political significance of Poor Law administration is addressed and the electoral registration process only secures a reference within a quotation.¹⁹ However Salmon's work was such as to win significant converts. In 1989 O'Gorman had declared

¹³ P. Salmon, *Electoral Reform at Work: Local Politics and National Parties 1832-1841* (Woodbridge, 2002).

¹⁴ Salmon, *Electoral...*, 94-5 and 101-9.

¹⁵ Salmon, *Electoral...*, 146-209 and 210-237 respectively.

¹⁶ J.Prest, *Politics in the Age of Cobden* (London, 1977) – the quotation is from the flyleaf.

¹⁷ P.K.V. Radice, 'Identification, Interests and Influence: Voting Behaviour in four English Constituencies in the Decade after the Great Reform Act' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Durham, 1992), 266 – for quotation from Biggs see p. 1133 below.

¹⁸ Salmon, *Electoral...*, 193.

¹⁹ D. Fraser, *Urban Politics in Victorian England: The Structure of Politics in Victorian Cities* (Leicester, 1976), 66.

‘registration was little more than a streamlined means of locating voters’.²⁰ When reviewing Salmon’s book, although still inclined to see greater continuities through 1832, he admitted: ‘The registration clauses are indeed of the greatest importance and the politicization of local structures a development of great significance.’²¹

Both O’Gorman and Phillips argue that the post-1832 decade was exceptional. O’Gorman points to the incidence of six general elections in eleven years (1830, 1831, 1832, 1835, 1837 and 1841).²² He might have added the elections for guardians under the Poor Law Amendment Act and the first reformed municipal elections as adding to the heady electoral climate in that period. Referring to the small group of boroughs he had studied so thoroughly for so long Phillips claims: ‘The notable shift to partisanship found in some of these boroughs did not survive the 1840s, and the very [sic] altered circumstances of the 1850s must have reshaped some constituencies beyond recognition.’²³ Close examination reveals that the assertion is based largely upon the case of the Great Yarmouth by-election of 1848. However it is also stated that in 1847 Great Yarmouth had retained its previous level of partisanship – at a time when Corn Law Repeal fissures on the Conservative side were even fresher. Examination of *McCalmont* reveals one reason for increased splitting²⁴ in 1848. There was only one Conservative candidate fighting two Whig/Liberals for the first time since 1832, whereas all intervening contests had been between two pairs of candidates.²⁵

In many respects the period from Corn Law repeal in 1846 to the Reform of 1867/8 is seen as one of confusion in British high politics. This arose from the schism in Tory/Conservative ranks over the former issue and the gradual absorption of the Peelites into Liberal and Conservative ranks thereafter. Other than in 1857 and 1865 the Peelites held the balance of power after each general election,²⁶ something alien to historians living through an age of two-party politics. So it is hardly surprising that some, such as Phillips, see the period from 1832 to 1841 as a period of highly partisan constituency politics and then see a breakdown of partisanship in the 1840s and 1850s. It should also be added that the 1850s were a decade of

²⁰ O’Gorman, *Voters...*, 392.

²¹ F. O’Gorman, Review of Salmon, *Electoral...*, *English Historical Review*, Vol. cxviii, No. 478 (September 2003), 1016-8.

²² F. O’Gorman, Review..., 1018.

²³ Phillips, *The Great...*, 300-1.

²⁴ The casting of two votes by a single elector, one for a candidate for each side or party.

²⁵ *McCalmont’s...*, 343-4.

²⁶ Evans, *The Forging...*, 487, Table B. vi.

relative prosperity in which politics, particularly under Palmerston, focused upon foreign affairs, such as the Arrow Incident, rather than 'bread and butter' domestic issues. On such issues many Conservatives were 'at one' with Palmerston whereas many on the more radical wing of his party were not. In Winchester it appears, at this stage of this study, that the split over Corn Law repeal at the 1847 General Election of the previously successful East:Escott Conservative pairing 'let in' the Liberal John Bonham Carter. Subsequently, as at national level, Conservative organisation was in such disarray as to only field one candidate in 1852 and 1857. This allowed Carter to establish a personal vote, which narrowly withstood the challenge of two Conservatives in 1859. The inability of the Liberals to seize the second seat in either 1852 or 1857 was indicative of the inherent strength of Conservative support, particularly for the well established East.

Michael Bentley looking at high politics in the 1850s and 1860s has described it as a 'black hole' and states that 'Confusion was the legacy of repeal among politicians'.²⁷ Indeed he portrays it as a period of transition in which Gladstone, under Palmerston's protective wing, transformed himself from a Peelite into a Liberal.²⁸ John Charmley also sees it as a period of fractured and unstable governments of both sides. On the Conservative side, despite his efforts to downplay Disraeli's role after 1846, he sees it as a period during which Disraeli made himself acceptable to the Conservative party as a potential leader before going on 'to make them the "national" party'.²⁹ Richard Davis sees the confusion in Westminster reflected in local, or low, politics regarding the period as 'chaotic and uncertain'³⁰

Tom Nossiter in progressing through to 1874 both in his local study of County Durham (and to a lesser degree Northumberland) and in his progression into a wider analysis of English counties and boroughs had no problems with that split. However in certain respects he 'finessed' it by concentrating on the percentage of seats held by Liberals.³¹ Also it appears that in coming up with his maps of the distribution of Conservative support in boroughs in 1847,

²⁷ M. Bentley, *Politics Without Democracy 1815-1914: Perception and Preoccupation in British Government* (London, 1984), 428 and 127

²⁸ Bentley, *Politics...*, 203-4.

²⁹ J. Charmley, *A History of Conservative Politics since 1830* (Basingstoke, 2008), 31-47.

³⁰ R.W. Davis, *Political Change and Continuity, 1760-1885: A Buckinghamshire Study* (Newton Abbot, 1972), 198.

³¹ T.J. Nossiter, *Influence, Opinion and Political Idioms in Reformed England: Case Studies from the North-East 1832-74* (Hassocks, 1975), 204-7.

1852, 1857 and 1859 and of 'swing' he must have treated both Protectionist and Peelite candidates as Conservative.³²

Interestingly Nossiter also claims that 'Local, yet not parochial, seems to be the paradox of politics in the provinces before 1868'.³³ Perhaps locally, especially in boroughs, the Conservative 'schism' mattered less than in Westminster; or was resolved within the local 'party' in candidate selection, so was less of an issue in the election. However in Winchester, Aldous found at the General Elections from 1832 to 1841 national issues had, what some would see as, surprising prominence in the speeches made at election time other than by, the 'old school' Whig, Mildmay.³⁴

In 1953 Norman Gash issued the challenge that: 'Only on an established basis of local history can national history of this kind be written'.³⁵ He immediately contributed a short study of Berkshire including its boroughs, especially Reading, published within his much broader seminal analysis of post-1832 electoral politics.³⁶ Others such as Richard Davis, Derek Beales and Paula Radice have strongly supported the approach to issues of electoral politics through more local studies.³⁷

A number of published studies of English counties covering our period, some embracing the politics of their boroughs, followed Gash. R.W. Davis's study of Buckinghamshire gave Aylesbury borough quite some attention, with even less given in turn to Wycombe, Buckingham and Marlow.³⁸ However a period of 125 years and five constituencies covered in 227 pages allows little scope for deep analysis. R.J. Olney addressed the county divisions of Lincolnshire with little attention, if any, paid to the boroughs.³⁹ Edwin Jaggard, more recently, addressed Cornwall; but inevitably in focusing on 'county politics' in a large county with seven boroughs the latter individually received little attention in a slim monograph covering a century.⁴⁰ Tom Nossiter undertook a similar task, covering the period to 1874, in a much more industrial setting,

³² Nossiter, *Influence...*, 181-92.

³³ Nossiter, *Influence...*, 185.

³⁴ Aldous, 'Conservative Voters in Winchester 1832-41 – An Initial Assessment', (unpublished MA dissertation, University of Winchester, 2009), 58, 62-4, 68-71 and 73-4.

³⁵ Gash, *Politics...*, xvii.

³⁶ Gash, *Politics...*, 270-320.

³⁷ Davis, *Political...*, 12 and Radice, 'Identification...', xi (quoting Beales) and 601-2.

³⁸ Davis, *Political...*

³⁹ R.J. Olney, *Lincolnshire Politics 1832-1885* (Oxford, 1973).

⁴⁰ E. Jaggard, *Cornwall Politics in the Age of Reform, 1790-1885* (Woodbridge, 1999).

County Durham; progressing from the county's divisions to its boroughs and thence to some England-wide analysis of trends in the boroughs.⁴¹

The early county studies referred to pollbooks but made little use of them. John Vincent brought pollbooks, of both boroughs and counties, to the fore.⁴² Next, simple computer analysis was brought to bear upon the pollbook data of several counties -including Hampshire, but not boroughs, in a much earlier period (the early eighteenth century) by W.A. Speck and his associates.⁴³ D.C. Moore's study of Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire and Northamptonshire made extensive use of pollbook data. However it is almost entirely concerned with the county constituencies. Boroughs are only really addressed in terms of urban freeholder 'penetration' of the county electorates.⁴⁴ Moore's major contention was, as summarised in an earlier essay, of

...the electoral importance of what might be called the "deference community," the community of men who lived in close contact with one another, who had the same occupation or were connected by the same "interest," and – most important of all – who recognised the same individual, or individuals, as their social, economic, and ideological leader or leaders.⁴⁵

Later Moore contended that his 'deference' theory applied to boroughs as well. 'Nor were networks of debt and loyalty limited to the countryside. They existed in many boroughs, where their political impact was considerable.'⁴⁶ However it appears this contention relates to the period after 1850, as Patrick Joyce's work on Lancashire and the West Riding is cited.⁴⁷ Moreover although Moore asserts 'there was no urban patrician class to speak of in Britain in the mid-nineteenth century' he proceeds to state that the 1832 Reform Act 'provided the urban elites with constituencies of their own – in such a way as provided the rural elites with a respite

⁴¹ Nossiter, *Influence...*

⁴² J.R. Vincent, *Pollbooks: How Victorians Voted* (Cambridge, 1967).

⁴³ W.A. Speck and W.A. Gray, 'Computer Analysis of Poll Books: An Initial Report', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, Vol. xliii, (May 1970), 105-12; and W.A. Speck, W.A. Gray and R. Hopkinson, 'Computer Analysis of Poll Books: A Further Report', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, Vol. xlvi, (May 1975), 64-90.

⁴⁴ D.C. Moore, *The Politics of Deference: A Study of the Mid-Nineteenth Century English Political System* (Hassocks, 1976).

⁴⁵ D.C. Moore, 'Social Structure, Political Structure, and Public Opinion in Mid-Victorian England', in R. Robson (ed.), *Ideas and Institutions of Victorian Britain: Essays in Honour of George Kitson Clark* (London, 1967), 36.

⁴⁶ D. C. Moore, 'The Landed Aristocracy', in G.E. Mingay (ed.), *The Victorian Countryside*, (London, 1981), Vol. 2, 378.

⁴⁷ P. Joyce, *Work, Society and Politics: The culture of the Factory in Later Victorian England* (Hassocks, 1980) and P. Joyce, 'The factory politics of Lancashire in the later nineteenth century', *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 18, No. 3 (September 1975), 525-53.

from the political effects which the growth of towns had been having on the counties.⁴⁸ Clearly a member of the urban elite was no patrician – in Winchester in the 1830s much leadership came from those who lived on their estates across the county and country – Mildmay, the Barings, the Duke of Buckingham – rather than residents.

Moore also made important points relating to the issues of constituency boundaries. These must have been important in the period given that two of the five Acts comprising the 1832 Reform package were Boundary Acts as was a significant part of another; in 1868 there was a significant Boundary Act for England and Wales; and in 1884 Salisbury was insistent on redistribution and a Boundary Commission before allowing the passage of the franchise Bill through the Lords. Gash had ‘pointed the way’ for Moore describing the work of the Boundary Commissioners and demonstrating the massive enlargement of some boroughs in 1832 to preserve them.⁴⁹

Gash saw the emphasis of Boundary Commissioner work as the preservation or ‘rehabilitation’ of existing boroughs and the consequent inclusion of surrounding rural and agricultural areas as creating boroughs which in character, but not franchise, were essentially county constituencies. After 1832 Shaftesbury, Wareham, Christchurch, Petersfield, Midhurst, Wilton and Droitwich ‘boroughs’ each covered an area of thirty-five to fifty square miles. Moore saw the thrust as securing the exclusion of urban elements from county constituencies and applying to newly enfranchised boroughs as well.⁵⁰ Where there was no ‘convenient’ borough to use for this purpose he argues that the county was split in such a way as ‘to isolate whatever urban areas might remain’.⁵¹ Moreover Moore argues that this concern with ‘urban penetration’ permeated discussions of electoral reform proposals throughout the 1850s and 1860s.⁵² What Moore seems to fail to note is that a successful effort to exclude the urban (borough) from the rural (county) constituency inevitably introduced a rural element into the borough electorate.

There have been fewer widely publicised studies of electoral politics in the English boroughs in the period. Malcolm Thomis’s study of Nottingham just enters our period.⁵³ Derek

⁴⁸ D. C. Moore, ‘The Gentry’, in G.E. Mingay (ed.), *The Victorian Countryside*, (London, 1981), Vol. 2, 385-6.

⁴⁹ Gash, *Politics...*, 67-72 and 432-3.

⁵⁰ Moore, *The Politics...*, 170-7.

⁵¹ Moore, *The Politics...*, 177-8

⁵² Moore, *The Politics...*, 377-84 and 393-6.

⁵³ M.I. Thomis, *Politics and Society in Nottingham 1785-1835* (New York, 1969).

Fraser's work took the story of Nottingham forward alongside those of Birmingham, Leicester, Leeds, Liverpool and Manchester.⁵⁴ Peter Taylor's study of Bolton 1825-50⁵⁵ focuses upon local agitation particularly for municipal reform but makes no use of pollbooks or any other parliamentary election analysis. But these were industrial towns, of various types (as were Nossiter's), which represented a minority of borough seats even after the 1832 Reform. Overall old established boroughs which were cathedral cities, county towns or market towns remained far more representative of the borough 'sector' than thriving and growing industrial towns and cities.⁵⁶ Edwin Jaggard recently argued that in this period smaller boroughs, such as Winchester, were politically important and representative of a 'vibrant political milieu'.⁵⁷

John A. Phillips, the doyen of borough studies, addressed the politics of established boroughs either side of the 1832 Reform.⁵⁸ His work however focused on eight boroughs with unusually large pre-Reform electorates. Of these one was among the seven largest (>5,000) such electorates of all English boroughs, five from amongst the thirty-six next largest (1001-5000) and two from the next twenty-two (601-1000). There were at least 137 boroughs with smaller pre-Reform electorates.⁵⁹ The franchise spread was somewhat more representative – six predominantly freeman, one potwalloper and one scot and lot.⁶⁰ Nevertheless overall his sample is far from representative of the spread of pre-Reform boroughs. Radice's boroughs were also biased towards those with large pre-Reform electorates, Leicester being amongst the group with the largest electorates and Durham City amongst the next group down. Only Guildford was near the average size of pre-Reform electorate.

⁵⁴ Fraser, *Urban....*

⁵⁵ P. Taylor, *Popular Politics in Early Industrial Britain; Bolton 1825-1850* (Keele, 1995).

⁵⁶ See analysis in Aldous, 'Conservative...', 51-2 and Appendix 2.

⁵⁷ Jaggard, 'Small Town Politics in Mid-Victorian Britain', *History*, Vol. 89, No. 293, January 2004, 3.

⁵⁸ J.A. Phillips, *Electoral Behavior in Unreformed England: Plumpers, Splitters and Straights* (Princeton, 1982) and Phillips, *The Great....*

⁵⁹ The eight boroughs studied by Phillips are Beverley (1000+ - Freemen), Bristol (5,000+ -Freemen/40/-freeholder), Colchester (1,000+ - Freemen), Great Yarmouth (1,000+ - Freemen), Lewes (600+ - Scot and Lot), Northampton (1000+ -Potwalloper), Norwich (1000+ - Freemen/40/- freeholder) and Shrewsbury (1,000+ - Freemen). Electorate figures are for 1830 and from M. Brock, *The Great Reform Act* (London, 1973), 20-1 (the relevant electorate size bands he uses are 5000+, 1001-5000 and 601-1000). For the respective franchise qualifications see pp. 66-8 below. For a comprehensive glossary of these and other terms applying prior to 1832 see J.H. Philbin, *Parliamentary Representation, 1832 England and Wales* (New Haven, 1965), xxvii-xxxv.

⁶⁰ Based on predominant franchise in 1830 (legal rulings changed the franchise in various boroughs over the years and some had more than one qualification) in England there were 38 scot and lot, 14 potwalloper, 35 burgage, 29 corporation, 80 freeman and 6 freeholder boroughs. Brock, *The Great....*, 20-2. See pp. 62-4 below for franchise definitions.

In a contribution reviewing the historiography of the boroughs between 1820 and 1872, Miles Taylor claimed to identify a number of weaknesses or errors in the conclusions drawn from the extant work based upon parliamentary pollbooks.⁶¹ Contributions to Taylor and Lawrence's volume however omit a significant element of the electoral scene in the period – the smaller boroughs. David Eastwood addressed the county constituencies and did battle with Moore's 'deference thesis' – it appears no one can agree with Moore, yet they dare not ignore him nor feel confident he has been discredited.⁶² Taylor's 'urban electorate' is found in boroughs with over 1000 voters – a variable number (1832 – sixty-four; 1852 –seventy-seven with 147 seats; and 1866 - eighty). His argument is that these boroughs contained eighty-two per cent of the English borough electorate in 1852. So these boroughs, diverse as his taxonomy indicates they were, contained in his view 'the typical English urban voter'.⁶³ He sees the typical borough voter as a member of the most numerous category rather than that electing the most MPs.⁶⁴ This approach may well be valid for looking at a social phenomenon; but it, detaches, in so many respects, 'low politics' from 'high politics' – any link between the voter and the determination of the hue of the government is severed.

In so many ways Taylor's chosen subset is atypical. It contains a disproportionate number of the boroughs newly enfranchised in 1832 – twenty out of forty-one with thirty-nine out of their sixty-three seats. *En passant* Taylor mentions that smaller boroughs 'may have returned more MPs' than the larger boroughs he examines.⁶⁵ In 1832 Taylor's sixty-four constituencies returned 127 MPs – it appears however that Taylor omitted one constituency with a qualifying size of electorate, the four-seat City of London.⁶⁶ At the same time the English counties returned 142 members and its universities four. Putting the City of London to one side,

⁶¹ M. Taylor, 'Interests, parties and the state: the urban electorate in England, c. 1820-72' in J. Lawrence and M. Taylor (eds), *Party, State and Society: Electoral Behaviour in Britain since 1820* (Aldershot, 1997), 50-78.

⁶² D. Eastwood, 'Contesting the politics of deference: the rural electorate, 1820-60' in Lawrence and Taylor (eds), *Party...*, 27-49. Joseph Coohill's review of Salmon's *Electoral...* (*Parliamentary History*, Vol. 23, Part 2 (2004), 286-8) however sees Moore's deference analysis as fatally flawed following Salmon's reappraisal of the pollbook data.

⁶³ Taylor, 'Interests...', 54 and notes 21 and 22 therein.

⁶⁴ The most numerous category of voter on the 1832 electoral register was the county voter (341,290) not the borough voter (274,125) or university voter (4,791). Taylor's larger boroughs did contain 71.6% of borough voters (78.3% if City of London included – see next paragraph). These figures, of course, include plural qualifications in more than one constituency. Figures derived from those in *McCalmont's...* as tabulated in Aldous, 'Conservative...', Appendix 5.

⁶⁵ Taylor, 'Interests...', 54.

⁶⁶ See figures at Aldous, 'Conservative...', Appendix 2.

that leaves 191 English MPs elected to represent 121 smaller boroughs- as many as Wales, Scotland and Ireland combined (190).⁶⁷ All other significant groupings of constituencies therefore outweighed Taylor's in terms of their representation.

Are the smaller boroughs Taylor ignores in large part another category with a 'rural-urban' or 'urban-rural' electorate? Some such as Halifax, Warrington and Whitehaven are probably not; but equally he has problems with some of his larger boroughs - 'Colchester, Exeter, Lincoln and Norwich were essentially large market towns deriving their prosperity from the agricultural hinterland'⁶⁸ – it is noteworthy the latter three are also cathedral cities and county towns, as is Winchester. Using the concept of this 'rural-urban' category it is possible (in very simplistic terms) to argue that from 1832 to 1880 in England the Liberals dominated the 'urban electorate'; the Conservatives the 'rural electorate'; and that elections were decided (subject to what happened in Ireland, Scotland and Wales combined) by the 'rural-urban' electorate as the key political battleground. Surely the major reason for studying the electorate is to see its influence upon the choice of government and the policy of that government. The smaller English boroughs of the 'rural-urban' category are a more significant grouping in this regard.

Indeed the historian of the 1857 and 1859 General Elections concluded that (for those contests) party leaders, whips and agents focused their efforts upon smaller boroughs in southern England.⁶⁹ In 1857 sums from the targeted central Conservative fund were spent in Weymouth and Lymington; and the somewhat larger Southampton and Portsmouth.⁷⁰ Such smaller boroughs, especially in the South, were therefore seen, by contemporary political leaders either as a key battleground; or, at least, one where centrally inspired, or supported, efforts might achieve something by way of gaining or retaining seats. Their attention was not fixed on Taylor's larger boroughs. In this context Winchester may be viewed as a key marginal, particularly from a Conservative perspective. Between 1832 and 1880 the Conservatives only won an overall majority at two general elections, those of 1841 and 1874 (during the 1852 and 1859 Derby minority administrations Peelites held the balance of power after the General

⁶⁷ See Aldous, 'Conservative...', Appendices 2 and 5 based on *McCalmont's*..... Figures for England in Brock, *The Great...*, 310-1 include Monmouthshire, Monmouth Borough District and the newly enfranchised Merthyr Tydfil under England.

⁶⁸ Taylor, 'Interests...', 64.

⁶⁹ Jackson, 'The British General Elections of 1857 and 1859', (Unpublished D. Phil. Thesis, Oxford, 1980), cited in Jaggard, 'Small...', 6.

⁷⁰ Jackson, 'The British...', 219.

Elections).⁷¹ In Winchester these were the two occasions on which the Conservatives won both of the borough's seats. At all other elections, other than the 1832 'Reform' landslide, the representation was shared. The Liberals did not need to win both Winchester seats to be in power, the Conservatives did.

Salmon's examination of the detail of party registration activity focused on six county constituencies.⁷² He did however, building on Fraser's earlier work, emphasise the importance in boroughs of controlling Poor Law administration to assist partisan registration activity.⁷³ His work brought to the fore the annual electoral registration battle at constituency level, which certainly occurred in Winchester. In 1835 a Conservative Association for the purpose of registration was formed in the city. It was shortly followed by a Reform Association covering the entire county for the same purpose. The annual revising barristers' courts from 1835 to 1840 were hard fought registration battlegrounds. The only possible direct evidence of outside assistance is the Weymouth man appearing for the Whigs at the 1840 court.⁷⁴ The Conservative candidate of 1837 and 1841, Bickham Escott, however had in 1835 fought West Somerset, a campaign followed by a very active and, for the Conservatives, ultimately successful registration campaign.⁷⁵ It is quite possible that he brought lessons to Winchester to be applied by his supporters.

From 1831 to 1841 there was a general increase in partisan voting in Winchester.⁷⁶ This growth runs in parallel with the ever fiercer contesting of registration in the borough and perhaps also from the realisation of its 'key marginal' status. The elections of 1835, 1837 and 1841 saw a surprising amount of what might be regarded as 'party' language and argumentation in Winchester. This was also reflected in conflict at municipal elections. With the fracturing of 'two-party politics' upon Corn Law Repeal the level of partisanship in Winchester would appear to have fallen away significantly. However closer examination of the pollbook data reveals two

⁷¹ Evans, *The Forging...*, 487. It appears that Evans in his figures assumes O'Connellites and other such Irish MPs supported Whig/Liberal administrations.

⁷² North Devon, South Lincolnshire, Bedfordshire, West Somerset, North Wiltshire and the West Riding - Salmon, *Electoral...*, 146-82.

⁷³ Salmon, *Electoral...*, 185-209.

⁷⁴ Aldous, 'Conservative...', 70 and 89-92.

⁷⁵ Salmon, *Electoral...*, 165-8.

⁷⁶ 1831 – 53%; 1832 – 68%; 1835 – 60%; 1837 82%; and 1841 93% of votes cast. Aldous, 'Conservative...', 60, 66, 72 and 76. Other than in 1841 there were three candidates for 2 seats which would tend to encourage a level of splitting. In 1835 one Whig/Liberal candidate, the influential Mildmay, refused to formally declare his support for the other – perhaps explaining the apparent dip in partisanship then.

significant points. Firstly Conservative partisanship was generally higher than Whig/Liberal partisanship averaging thirty-two per cent of votes cast from 1832 to 1865 inclusive against twenty-seven per cent. Unsurprisingly on both 'sides' partisanship was higher when voters were offered two candidates by their party, giving them the opportunity to cast a 'straight' vote. They then did not face the choice between plumping for their sole candidate and deciding which of the opposing party's candidates was the less undesirable to cast a 'split' vote for in combination with that of their own party. However this 'straight' partisanship was much more marked on the Conservative side than on the Whig/Liberal one. In contests where offered the option of a 'straight' vote the Conservatives averaged forty-two per cent of votes cast as opposed to the Whig/Liberals twenty-eight per cent. Ignoring the three-cornered election of 1847 the worst Whig/Liberal level of partisan votes was in 1857 (under ten per cent) when two candidates were fielded, clearly not on a united platform. By contrast the Conservatives' worst performance with two candidates was in 1865 (just over seventeen per cent). Discounting these two occasions when there was apparently disunity in the party the Conservatives did markedly better when fielding two candidates, garnering just short of fifty per cent of the votes cast at such elections; than the Whig/Liberals who could only collect thirty-one per cent. It seems that the main obstacle to Conservative success in Winchester was their failure from 1841 to 1865 to consistently field two candidates on a united platform. For when they did there appears to have been latent partisan support.

The criticism by Taylor of the partisanship view is based on the argument that national parties were 'reluctant to dirty their hands in the wheeling and dealing of electoral registration and nomination of candidates'.⁷⁷ This view previously made, in relation to the Whigs, by Ian Newbould - that they rejected central election management as 'an insidious democratic inroad on the aristocratic preserve' and a 'euphemism for Radicalism'⁷⁸ - was already challenged, in its earlier manifestation, by Peter Mandler⁷⁹ only to be refuted by Salmon.⁸⁰ The latter demonstrating that the relative failure of the Whigs, in terms of registration, through to 1841 was down to over-centralisation; a lack of local autonomy; and a power struggle between the original, somewhat Radically tainted, Reform Association and the newer, significantly more

⁷⁷ Taylor, 'Interests...', 69.

⁷⁸ I.D.C. Newbould, *Whiggery and Reform, 1830-1841: the politics of government* (London, 1990), 10 and 32.

⁷⁹ P. Mandler, *Aristocratic Government in the Age of Reform: Whigs and Liberals 1830-1852* (Oxford, 1990), 164.

⁸⁰ Salmon, *Electoral...*, 54-7.

Whig, Reform Club. This concern of Whig grandees to ensure control of the party apparatus was reflected in the structure in Hampshire – a county level Reform Association, run by the likes of the Bonham Carters, closely directing the work of local committees in places such as Winchester.

In relation to the Conservatives, Taylor falls into the trap he accuses others of having stumbled into – applying a late twentieth-century perspective to their analysis. Before 1867 the ‘party machine’ was not the great controlling behemoth seen today it was very modest in size comprising a few individuals – so it had to act in entirely different ways. Given that it lacked significant resources and there was popular suspicion of parties; ‘localism’ so long as broadly congruent with ‘central’ goals was to be preferred. Moreover the ability to ‘perform’ locally required local men of standing to be involved for ‘registration was a matter of local tactics that could only be effectively conducted by local men’.⁸¹ So it was important to have, at least, the impression that activity was locally inspired and led. That is even if it resulted from formal, or informal, dissemination of ‘best practice’ from the ‘central committee’.⁸² Salmon sees this level of autonomy as the key to the Conservatives’ relative success through to 1841:

This Conservative suspicion of external interference meant that their constituency organisations became genuinely integrated into the various political milieux in which they were established. Conservative associations frequently tailored both their activities and their policies to suit local circumstances.⁸³

Salmon’s work on registration restores the view of party conflict in the constituencies. Indeed in some cases the registration court may be seen as the arena in which some later uncontested constituencies were secured ‘by other means’. His frequent references to Bonham and Granville Somerset for the Conservatives and Parkes and Coppock for the Whigs/Liberals make clear the role of central party organisation in all this. Moreover this shines through despite his efforts to question the importance attached by Gash to Bonham’s role.⁸⁴

At the same time Salmon’s work challenges Taylor’s revisionist view that ‘...the Victorian representative system did not place a high premium on *individual* voter or even group preference. Rather, the reformed electoral system after 1832 was designed to reduce corruption

⁸¹ Gash, ‘...The Electoral Organization’, 146.

⁸² Gash, ‘...The Electoral Organization’, 140.

⁸³ Salmon, *Electoral...*, 61.

⁸⁴ Salmon, *Electoral...*, 49.

and facilitate the representation of interests.⁸⁵ The reason a party supported a claimant or objected to the inclusion of somebody at the revision court was because of his personal preference for one party or the other. It was important that the local interest (shipping, mining or whatever) be represented but most importantly by 'our party'. A significant step to secure that was to support individuals or groups (such as the cathedral prebendaries) favourable to one's party and oppose those antipathetic to it in the registration process and especially in the revision court. Nevertheless it should be borne in mind that, as Jeremy Mitchell argues, the individual voter's political allegiance, or preference, is largely determined by his 'social network' and 'that in stressing the relative importance of a single social factor such as religious affiliation, or social dependence, other accounts have been examining only one partial network.'⁸⁶

For all that is good about Salmon's work there are gaps in it that need to be addressed. It does not address the registration process in a borough in any depth. It stops in 1841. It tends to approach from the direction of the local political agent and party machine and deal with the assessment of party performance at the aggregate level. It does not work 'from below'; up from the individual voters and their votes recorded in pollbooks and individual electors recorded in electoral registers. Nor does it link the registers to pollbooks.

Given the importance determined above⁸⁷ of the smaller English boroughs, especially in the South, to winning nineteenth-century General Elections there are surprisingly few in-depth studies concentrating on a single southern borough. The one probably nearest to matching that specification is Robert Sykes' study of electoral politics in Guildford and West Surrey for the century to 1886.⁸⁸ For the decade after 1832 the study is deepened by Radice.⁸⁹ Guildford however had the eighteenth smallest 1832 electorate of the 110 pre-Reform boroughs retaining two seats. Winchester was thirty-fifth smallest with an electorate 57 per cent larger.⁹⁰ Moreover Sykes's study predated the major works of Moore, Phillips and Salmon. In relation to the latter it made no use of electoral registers.

⁸⁵ Taylor, 'Interests...', 64.

⁸⁶ J.C. Mitchell, *The Organization of Opinion: Open Voting in England 1832-68* (Basingstoke, 2008), 139.

⁸⁷ See p. 277 above.

⁸⁸ R. Sykes, 'Politics and Electoral Behaviour in Guildford and West Surrey 1790-1886' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Surrey, 1977).

⁸⁹ Radice, 'Identification...'

⁹⁰ See Appendices 2 and 5 of Aldous, 'Conservative...'. 1832 electorates: Guildford 342 and Winchester 537.

The historiography of Winchester rarely gets further than touching upon the political scene in the city. There is no in-depth study of Winchester's politics in this period. James, in the definitive brief modern history of Winchester devotes one paragraph to nineteenth-century 'Politics' and that relates to the corporation and the report of the Municipal Corporations Commissioners in 1835.⁹¹ Carpenter Turner draws heavily upon *The History of Parliament* for her coverage of eighteenth-century politics and draws only upon political posters in addressing the early 1830s, as an introduction to the impact of municipal reform. Thereafter her focus is on municipal affairs; until a passing reference to the 1880 General Election is linked to the declining power of the Liberals in municipal affairs.⁹² There is more analysis of Winchester's political scene, albeit at the end of our period and beyond, in two pages of Henry Pelling's survey of the whole of Britain than in any of the histories of the city.⁹³ The nearest to a political study of any depth are a brief article addressing a half-century in less than six pages of text⁹⁴ and an MA dissertation, which scratches the surface of Winchester's parliamentary electoral politics in the 1830s.⁹⁵ Jaggard's article contains some results of analysis of Winchester pollbooks by a third party, the methodology of which is not explained, and the surrounding commentary to which is very much from secondary sources.⁹⁶

Depth studies of Winchester embracing this period have addressed the impact of the railway;⁹⁷ the development of the High Street;⁹⁸ the management of Winchester Corporation property holdings;⁹⁹ and suburban development after 1850.¹⁰⁰ These socio-economic studies, understandably, at best touch on the political dimension. This study adds a socio-political aspect to that corpus of work whilst contributing to debates as to the wider nature of the electorate

⁹¹ T.B. James, *Winchester: From Prehistory to the Present* (Extended and Revised Edition, Stroud, 2007), 144.

⁹² B. Carpenter Turner, *A History of Winchester* (Chichester, 1992), 126-7, 133-4 and 168-70.

⁹³ H. Pelling, *Social Geography of British Elections 1885-1910* (London, 1967), 131-2.

⁹⁴ R. Cook, 'Dishing the Whigs in Winchester', *Journal of Liberal History*, Vol. 53 (Winter 2006-7), 12-17.

⁹⁵ Aldous, 'Conservative...'

⁹⁶ Jaggard, 'Small ...', 12 note 31, 17, 18 and 20-1.

⁹⁷ M.A. Allen, 'A Railway Revolution? A Census-Based Analysis of the Economic, Social and Topographical Effects of the Coming of the Railway upon the City of Winchester c. 1830- c. 1890', (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Southampton/King Alfred's College, 1999).

⁹⁸ J.M.Cooper, 'Aspects of the development of Winchester's High Street 1550-2000, with special reference to the period since 1750', (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Southampton/King Alfred's College, 2001).

⁹⁹ P.A. Crossley, 'Winchester Corporation Nineteenth Century Leases: A Review of Financial Aspects as a Source of City Building History', (unpublished PhD thesis, University College Winchester, 2002).

¹⁰⁰ C.S. Grover, 'The suburban development of Winchester from c. 1850 to 1912' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Winchester, 2008).

and the electoral and political system in the boroughs between 1832 and 1874. It therefore embraces the 1867-8 Reform¹⁰¹ and the introduction of the secret ballot.

The 1867-68 Reform has received significantly less attention than that of 1832. In 1966 F.B. Smith having noted that there had previously been only two full-scale studies of it (in 1868 and 1920) declared:

The Second Reform Act is the 'Serbonian Bog' of British constitutional history in the nineteenth century. It has never received the minute and lucid investigation that has been devoted to its predecessor of 1832 and it lacks the elegant conclusiveness which is attributed to the Act of 1884. Instead, it lies sprawling between them avoided or hastily reconnoitred by the armies of historians who have traversed the region.¹⁰²

On its centenary both Smith and Maurice Cowling set about remedying this deficiency. Their works however only addressed the high politics of the passage of the Acts of Parliament not their subsequent operation.¹⁰³ Smith however makes frequent references to Disraeli's use of intelligence received from Conservative agents out in the constituencies as to the perceived impact of proposed changes. The 1867-68 Reform had, however, already found its Gash with H.J. Hanham's 1959 work on elections and party management in the period when Gladstone and Disraeli dominated the national political stage.¹⁰⁴

Further interest in the 1867-68 Reform was not inspired by Hanham, Smith and Cowling perhaps because the Irish Question, the rise of Labour and the 'strange death' of the Liberal Party proved so seductive. In 1987 John Walton produced a slim work which scratched the surface of the electoral system in force from 1868.¹⁰⁵ In 2000 Catherine Hall, Keith McClelland and Jane Rendall appeared to revisit the subject. However their interests – respectively race; the working class role in securing the passage of Reform; and women's suffrage are at best tangential to the operation of the post 1867-68 electoral system.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰¹ Comprising four Acts a franchise and a boundary act for each of England and Wales; and Scotland. Ireland had had a franchise reform in 1850 and was left untouched in 1867-8.

¹⁰² F.B. Smith, *The Making of the Second Reform Bill* (Cambridge, 1966), 1.

¹⁰³ Smith, *The Making...* and M. Cowling, *1867 Disraeli, Gladstone and Revolution: The Passing of the Second Reform Bill* (Cambridge, 1967).

¹⁰⁴ H.J. Hanham, *Elections and Party Management: Politics in the time of Disraeli and Gladstone* (Hassocks, 1959, with new Introduction 1978)

¹⁰⁵ J.K. Walton, *The Second Reform Act* (London, 1987).

¹⁰⁶ C. Hall, K. McClelland and J. Rendall, *Defining the Victorian Nation: Class, Race, Gender and the Reform Act of 1867* (Cambridge, 2000).

More recently the history of parliamentary reform in the 1850s and 1860s has been revisited by Robert Saunders.¹⁰⁷ Saunders succeeds in placing the 1867-68 Reform in a much broader context. Starting in 1848 he relates it, to some degree, to agitation 'out of doors'; but his major focus is once more on the machinations within Westminster, rather than the workings of the 1832 and 1867 Reform electoral systems. Nevertheless for those examining the workings of the 1832 system, even within a single constituency, light is cast upon the dangers of using rating data in determining the relative economic status of individuals. For in addressing the debates about whether to opt for a 'rating' or a 'rental' franchise; how to exclude those with rentals of less than £6; and whether the latter would be achieved surreptitiously by excluding 'compounders' he writes:

'Rating' and 'rental' were different ways of valuing property. 'Rental' value was shorthand for the 'gross estimated rental' based upon the sum for which a property could be rented over a year. 'Rating' was an assessment for the purposes of taxation, and was calculated by making a deduction – which varied from parish to parish – from the gross estimated rental. This meant that a £6 rental qualification was significantly more generous than a £6 rating...In parishes which had adopted the Small Tenements Act, the rates on tenements below £6 were paid not by the occupier but by the landlord, a system known as 'compound householding'...Unfortunately...the deduction from the gross estimated rental varied dramatically, not just between parishes but between different types of property. The assessment was made by parish committees, which might be tempted to fiddle the valuation for political advantage. Furthermore, the Small Tenements Act was voluntary in operation, applying only where local authorities chose to invoke it.¹⁰⁸

There were echoes of these issues at the 1837 revising barristers' court in Winchester when the Whig attorney, Twynam, attacked his Conservative counterpart, Bridger, for having reduced the rating assessments in St Thomas parish by twelve and a half to twenty-five per cent, to reflect the state of repair and cost of insurance. If applied across the borough, Twynam alleged this approach would have disenfranchised up to one-third of the Winchester electorate.¹⁰⁹

Historians cannot be blamed for falling into the trap of treating rateable values as comparable between parishes and boroughs for many contemporary politicians thought this to be the case. In 1859 in a note with the title 'Reasons for not adopting a Rated occupation

¹⁰⁷ R. Saunders, *Democracy and the Vote in British Politics, 1848-1867* (Farnham, 2011).

¹⁰⁸ Saunders, *Democracy...*, 120.

¹⁰⁹ *Hampshire Chronicle* 30 October 1837.

franchise' Sir Philip Rose, Disraeli's national party agent, referred to 'the general impression that an £8 rated value is equivalent to and would be preferable to the present £10 actual value'. He proceeded to debunk this myth with illustrations from Boston and Dover. In Boston the two parishes comprising the borough rated a £10 house at £5 and £6 10 or £7 respectively so a £8 rating franchise would have greatly reduced the borough's electorate. On the other hand in Dover the position was such that the same putative franchise would have added nearly a thousand voters, increasing the electorate by about half.¹¹⁰ This clearly was a 'Serbonian Bog' for contemporary politicians as well as present day historians.

Andrew Jones's work on the passage of the 1884 Franchise Act and the 1885 Redistribution Act casts little light on the electoral system before and after 1885.¹¹¹ His focus is once again upon the high politics of the passage of the legislation. There are, however, a number of articles which address the varying degrees of enfranchisement and disenfranchisement across the period from 1868 until the 1918 Representation of the People Act. Several of the articles focus upon other issues such as the rise of the Labour Party and the decline of its Liberal counterpart. The most useful are those by Blewett, Davis, Tanner, and Matthew, McKibbin and Kay.¹¹² Many of these cover, in whole or part, periods after 1885. This raises questions as to whether they are fully representative of the period from 1868 to 1885. In 1885 the vast majority of constituencies became one seat entities. As a consequence of this aspect of the redistribution of seats places such as Liverpool, previously always a single borough but from 1867 returning three MPs, were split into a number of constituencies. In Liverpool's case there were nine.¹¹³ As a consequence short to medium-term disfranchisement for having moved may very well have increased.

Clearly throughout the period covered by this study there are a number of methodological challenges to be faced. It is therefore timely to turn to the sources used and the methodology applied in this study for the period from 1832 until the 1880s.

¹¹⁰ Disraeli MSS 308/1 fols 216-9 – Manuscript note 'Reasons for not adopting a Rated occupation franchise' dated 22 February 1859 signed 'PR'.

¹¹¹ A. Jones, *The Politics of Reform 1884* (Cambridge, 1972).

¹¹² N. Blewett, 'The Franchise in the United Kingdom 1885-1918', *Past & Present* No. 32 (Dec 1965), 27-56. J. Davis, 'Slums and the Vote, 1867-90', *Historical Research*, Vol. 64, No. 155 (October 1991), 375-88. J. Davis and D. Tanner, 'The Borough Franchise after 1867', *Historical Research*, Vol. 69 (1996), 306-27. HCG Matthew, RI McKibbin and JA Kay, 'The Franchise Factor in the rise of the Labour Party', *English Historical Review*, Vol. 91, No. 361 (Oct 1976), 723-52.

¹¹³ *McCalmont's...*, 156 Blue pp.

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CHAPTER 2
SOURCES AND METHODOLOGY

SOURCES

Electoral Registers

This study attempts to exploit the detailed contents of the parliamentary electoral registers for the borough of Winchester for the period from the General Election of 1832 to that of 1874. For this period there are available a continuous run of thirty-one registers from 1832 to 1862 together with registers for the years 1864, 1866, 1868, 1869 and 1878.¹ These registers come in two forms. From 1832 to 1842 they are in the form of manuscript lists written in volumes of Winchester City's records bearing the title 'Borough Registry'.² Thereafter they are printed lists published by local printers in accordance with statutory requirements.³

The data in electoral registers is, until 1868, quite simple. Only from then does the register include entries for lodgers on a different basis, including for example occupations. Organised by parish, with a separate section for freemen, the contents are broadly similar throughout being:

Serial Number –present in the registers from 1836 onwards, albeit there are occasional duplications and omissions. To make the data compatible and therefore easier to manipulate 'invented serial numbers' have been applied to the entries in the 1832 to 1835 registers.

Surname

Forename

¹ With the exception of the 1863 register all were located in the Hampshire Record Office. That for 1863 was viewed on microfilm at the British Library. Neither R.H.A. Cheffins, *Parliamentary Constituencies and Their Registers since 1832* (London, 1998), 14-5 and 213; nor J.S.W. Gibson, *Electoral Registers 1832-1948; and Burgess Rolls* (Bury, 2008), 25, lists any other registers for Winchester.

² HRO W/B/9/1-4.

³ HRO W/B9/1/8-30 and W/B9/2/83.

Nature of Qualification – usually ‘House’ but sometimes ‘Shop’ or ‘Mill’ and, particularly in the earlier years, a composite such as ‘House and Garden’. From 1844 onwards there is some description of the qualification of those moving home. **(See Below.)**

Location of Qualification – rarely anything more than a street name. **(See Below.)**

Place of Abode – usually only a street name with rare references to the parish within which it is located, when not the same parish.

Qualification. In registers produced after the implementation of the 1843 Registration Act⁴ there are, under the ‘qualification’ column, indications of voters who have moved with wording such as ‘from a house to a house’ followed by the name of one street above another in the ‘place of abode’ column; the upper street being the voter’s new location.⁵ These ‘move qualifications’ could, as in the 1844 case of Henry Brownjohn, be between parishes.⁶ The generally accepted view of the 1832 Reform legislation has been that the rule requiring twelve months occupation of the property prior to 31 July could lead to exclusion from the register until that period of occupation had at least elapsed by the time of an annual registration round. This is reflected in the number of those on the 1840 register prevented from voting in the 1841 Winchester election on the grounds of having changed residence.⁷

Location. In Winchester’s registers, despite Mitchell’s assertion that the use of house numbers in street addresses became more common after the introduction of the penny post in 1840,⁸ house numbers do not appear in Winchester’s registers until the 1870s. This is other than to identify electors on the very rare occasions those with the same fore and surnames in the same parish lived in the same street. For a period, exceptionally, Hyde Street in St Bartholomew Hyde, had entries bearing house numbers.

For each parish a list was prepared by its overseers and a list of freemen, for the borough as a whole, provided by the town clerk. Within a parish an individual would only be listed once; even though they might possess more than one qualifying property there. However

⁴ 6 Vict. c. 18.

⁵ For example Henry Biddle of St Faith in the 1851 register moving from Romsey Road to Front Street – Serial 747 HRO W/B9/1/16a.

⁶ For example Henry Brownjohn of St James’s Crescent, St Faith in the 1844 register the property location being described as ‘St James’s Crescent from Colebrook St’, the latter being in St Peter Colebrook parish – Serial 34 HRO W/B9/1/9.

⁷ See pp. 155 below.

⁸ J.C., Mitchell, *The Organization of Opinion: Open Voting in England 1832-68* (Basingstoke, 2008), 169.

upon consolidation of these lists into the borough register; no effort was made at the revising barristers' court to remove duplication arising either from the possession of qualifying properties in more than one parish; or from being a resident freeman who also owned a qualifying property in one or more parishes.

It does appear that in the first registration round in 1832 the Winchester authorities attempted to remove the double counting of freemen by striking them through in their parish entries and marking them with an 'F'.⁹ In the next four years it appears this policy was to some degree implemented before the full rigours of registration were applied. So, for example, Charles Wittman Benny appears three times in each register for 1837 to 1858 as a householder in both High Street in St Lawrence parish and Kingsgate Street in St Michael and as a freeman; whereas from 1832 to 1836 inclusive he had only one entry, as a freeman. This therefore requires the psephologist to undertake a degree of adjustment to determine the size of the electorate and to exercise great care in attributing voters to parishes.

Salmon sees such 'inflation' of the electorate, from duplicate entries, amounting to 10 to 20 per cent in pre-1835 registers.¹⁰ The findings from the Winchester registers for 1832 to 1866 inclusive indicate a far lower level of duplicate entries – between 4.3 and 8.6 per cent of gross entries, with an average of 6.0 per cent. However the average for registers applying at General Elections from 1835 (when pollbook data increases the ability to be certain about duplicate entries) is, at 6.7 per cent, almost a full point higher. This level of duplication can be seen in **Table 2.1 Below**.

The register applied to elections for the year from 1 November in the year in which it was drawn up.¹¹ From 1835 to 1874 the dates of general elections fell such that the register applicable to an election was that assembled and revised in the previous summer and autumn; so, for example, the 1864 register was applicable for the 1865 General Election. Exceptionally for the 1832 General Election the register produced in that year applied.

⁹ For example William Barnes senior of Southgate Street, St Thomas – HRO W/B8/1/2.

¹⁰ P. Salmon, *Electoral Reform at Work: Local Politics and National Parties 1832-1841* (Woodbridge, 2002), 22.

¹¹ Salmon, *Electoral...*, 22.

Table 2.1: Net Electorate and Growth Rates

Year	Gross Electors	Multiple Entries	Net Electors	Annual Growth %	Growth over 1832 %
1832	579	49	530	N/A	N/A
1833	566	41	525	-0.9	-0.9
1834	559	38	521	-0.8	-1.7
1835	576	36	540	3.6	1.9
1836	615	38	577	6.9	8.9
1837	599	26	573	-0.7	8.1
1838	605	26	579	1.0	9.2
1839	618	33	585	1.0	10.4
1840	647	50	597	2.1	12.6
1841	639	47	592	-0.8	11.7
1842	628	40	588	-0.7	10.9
1843	650	40	610	3.7	15.1
1844	659	40	619	1.5	16.8
1845	653	36	617	-0.3	16.4
1846	684	35	649	5.2	22.5
1847	710	31	679	4.6	28.1
1848	658 ¹²	29	629	-7.4	18.7
1849	720	33	687	9.2	29.6
1850	761	41	720	4.8	35.8
1851	788	47	741	2.9	39.8
1852	799	47	752	1.5	41.8
1853	814	50	764	1.6	44.2
1854	811	55	756	-1.0	42.6
1855	806	49	757	0.1	42.8
1856	842	57	785	3.7	48.1
1857	834	51	783	-0.3	47.7

¹² Data completeness checks have been conducted on this year – all parishes are present and the decrease 1847 to 1848 and the increase 1848 to 1849 is relatively evenly distributed across parishes.

1858	854	72	782	-0.1	47.5
1859	903	57	846	8.2	59.6
1860	914	48	866	2.4	63.3
1861	899	44	855	-1.3	61.3
1862	902	48	854	-0.1	61.1
1863	933	53	880	3.0	66.0
1864	960	64	896	1.8	69.1
1866	1,020	59	961	7.3(2 Years)	81.3

Sources: Winchester Electoral Registers 1832-66 (See Bibliography).

Pollbooks

Unlike electoral registers pollbooks were not statutory documents. They were produced by local printers and published for sale to those interested in local politics. For Winchester there are one or two published pollbooks for each general election from 1835 to 1868 inclusive.¹³ There are no material differences in the data they contain as to voting at the same election. The Ballot Act of 1872 rendered their production thereafter impossible. It appears that no pollbook for 1832 was published for Winchester.¹⁴

As unofficial publications their structure is variable. Winchester's for 1835 and 1837 attributed voters to parishes, with freemen in a separate listing; thereafter there was no such effort and voters were listed alphabetically with annotating symbols to indicate freemen. Those on the register who did not vote were sometimes listed as a separate group in an appendix; occasionally reasons why some had not voted being included.

Doubtless the basis of the pollbook was the electoral register, so as to determine the record of who had not voted. However a level of editing was clearly undertaken using local knowledge. The 1841 pollbook by Warren¹⁵ demonstrates this editing of the register to arrive at the pollbook. The election was fought on the register prepared in 1840. That register included

¹³ See Bibliography.

¹⁴ None is held in the Institute of Historical Research reference collection. It is not listed in J. Sims (ed.), *A handlist of British parliamentary poll books* (Leicester, 1984); nor does it appear in H.J. Hanham's listing in Dod, C.R., *Electoral Facts 1832-1853 Impartially Stated* (2nd ed., London, 1853 – reprinted Brighton, 1972 with an Introduction by H.J. Hanham), lxxxi-cxlv; nor in J.S.W. Gibson and C. Rogers, *Poll Books 1696-1872: A Directory to Holdings in Great Britain* (4th Edn, Bury, 2008).

¹⁵ HRO W/B9/2/82.

the names of John Mant and Charles Wells. These gentlemen died before the election¹⁶ and do not appear in the 1841 pollbook, although it includes the names of one hundred electors who did not vote. In the light of this, one method of attempting to establish whether two voters with the same names are duplicate entries is to examine the pollbook to see whether that name appears only once or more often.

The Census, Newspapers and Trade Directories

The data about individuals (especially that relating to age and abode) and their families and households contained within the census enumerators' books for 1841 to 1871 was used selectively to refine linkages made from the electoral register data.¹⁷ It was also used in determining the linkage of information as to deaths from the burial registers.¹⁸ In general census data can be viewed as reliable. Tillott, in a review of findings from the use of 1851 and 1861 census data on 56,000 people, concluded that 'continued examination of the returns suggests very strongly they are reliable and that for almost all purposes the extent of error...is slight'.¹⁹ Care was taken to heed Tillott's specific warnings and advice.²⁰

As censuses occur each decade; pollbooks reflect elections at up to seven year intervals; and electoral registers are annual: use was also made of the information on deaths in the *Hampshire Chronicle*; the one Winchester-based newspaper published throughout the period, and hence that with the most coverage of events within the borough. This was especially useful in determining whether a string of entries for the same name represent a single voter or a father and son, bearing the same name, in sequence following the death of the father. Both the *Hampshire Chronicle* and trade directories were used to determine possible relocations, especially of shopkeepers and tradesmen.

Trade directories²¹ were used with care bearing in mind Jane Norton's warning that 'It would be misleading to regard them as either precise or accurate'.²² However of directories 'it

¹⁶ *Hampshire Chronicle* (hereafter *HC*) 30 November 1840 and 22 February 1841.

¹⁷ See pp. 48-53 below.

¹⁸ See pp. 58 and 124-5 below.

¹⁹ P.M. Tillott, 'Sources of Inaccuracy in the 1851 and 1861 censuses' in E.A. Wrigley (ed.), *Nineteenth-century society: Essays in the use of quantitative methods for the study of social data* (Cambridge, 1972), 82-3.

²⁰ Tillott, 'Sources...', 82-133.

²¹ For listings of relevant trade directories J.E. Norton, *Guide to the National and Provincial Directories of England and Wales, Excluding London, Published Before 1856* (London, 1950 – corrected edition

can be said that most of those who were economically “significant” appear, but they do not constitute the majority of householders’.²³ Therefore they are a good source in relation to a stratum of society forming a considerable part of the £10 householder electorate between 1832 and 1868. Amongst other issues directories help to address are which craftsmen are masters, and trade on their own account and potentially employ others; and the issue of ‘dual occupations’ not revealed by the census.²⁴

Burial Registers

Parish registers are much used by historical demographers and genealogists especially for the period prior to the introduction of state-controlled General Registration on 1 July 1837.²⁵ The scant details provided by the publicly available General Register Office index (name, registration district, reference number and, from June 1866, age)²⁶ are insufficient for accurate matching to individuals in electoral registers. Death certificates contain more detail but at £9.25 each²⁷ are too expensive to use for a project of this scale. Fortunately Winchester has readily available burial registers for all the Anglican parishes and the Cathedral together with those of the Roman Catholic burial ground and the Winchester Cemetery Company.²⁸ There is no evidence of independent Non-Conformist burials prior to the opening of the company’s cemetery in 1840. In this period cremation was not practised so there is no expectation of data in the records of those in Southampton and Basingstoke.

The entries in the burial registers vary in detail depending *inter alia* upon the incumbent, curate or officiating minister and the circumstances of the parish. Usually the entry contains name, age and street. However in some cases the usage in the burial register varies from that in the electoral register. In the St John burial register there is frequent usage of ‘The Lawn’ as if it were a street. There was a Lawn Street. But of the thirty-one individuals identified

1984) and G. Shaw and A Tipper, *British Directories: A Bibliography and Guide to Directories published in England and Wales (1850-1950) and Scotland (1773-1950)* (Leicester, 1988) were consulted.

²² Norton, *Guide...*, 16.

²³ D.R. Mills, *Rural Community History from Trade Directories* (Aldenham, 2001), 14.

²⁴ Mills, *Rural...*, 27-9 and 25 and Tillott, ‘Sources...’, 116-7.

²⁵ Indeed in the earlier period one genealogist has written that whilst ‘the Anglican church was a religious institution, it was also a branch of the state’, A.Adolph, *Tracing Your Family History* (London, 2005), 97.

²⁶ A.Adolph, *Tracing Your Family History* (London, 2005), 52.

²⁷ ‘Most Customers Want to Know/What certificates can be ordered and how much does it cost’, 14 June 2013, gro.gov.uk.

²⁸ For details see Bibliography.

in the electoral registers as residing there, only five were in St John parish, the vast majority (twenty) were in St Maurice and the remainder (six) in St Peter Colebrook. The names referred to as being from 'The Lawn' appear to link to electoral register entries for Eastgate Street, Water Lane and Deangate; all close to, but not within, St John parish.

In the cases of the parishes of St Peter Colebrook and St Mary Kalendar, which did not have their own parish churches, the entries in other parishes' burial registers (primarily those of St Maurice, St John and St Peter Cheesehill) most often just record the home parish. The lack of street data makes matching to electoral register entries less certain. Similar problems arise in relation to those buried, presumably by choice, outside their own parish. The creation of Holy Trinity parish from parts of St Maurice, St Mary Kalendar, and possibly a minor part of St Peter Colebrook in 1859; and Christchurch from St Faith in 1860²⁹ caused similar problems, as these new units functioned only as ecclesiastical, not civil, parishes. In the case of Holy Trinity the use of the names of St Mary Kalendar and St Peter Colebrook become increasingly rarely used in the cemetery registers. The last usages in the Cemetery's register for unconsecrated ground (that used by Non-Conformists and, on occasions, Roman Catholics) are October 1869 for St Mary Kalendar and January 1871 for St Peter Colebrook. Where names and other details seem to match and the 'home parish' is given as St Maurice it has been assumed that the elements of these parishes not included in Holy Trinity were treated *de facto* as part of a 'Greater St Maurice'. The Cathedral had its own burial register, containing few interments, these contain patchy details besides name and age usually parish or street and rarely both, but sometimes only 'Winchester'. There was also a burial register for Winchester College, this has not been accessed. The indications are that it contains few burials.³⁰

The Roman Catholic burial register, understandably, takes no cognisance of Anglican parochial structure. The Cemetery Company register, which plays an increasing role as many of the parochial graveyards were closed in the latter part of the period,³¹ generally carries both

²⁹ B. Carpenter Turner, *A History of Winchester* (Chichester, 1992), 147-50. In the case of Holy Trinity Carpenter Turner refers only to St Maurice however cemetery register entries relating to individuals in streets in the other two parishes appear as coming from Holy Trinity. There is no contemporary map of the boundaries of Holy Trinity parish. For Christchurch there is '*A Map of the District Chapelry of Christchurch Winchester*' (1861) – HRO W/K4/1/26.

³⁰ See p. 59 below.

³¹ The burial registers for the parishes have final entries: St Swithin – 5 September 1849, St Lawrence – 21 October 1852, St Michael – 16 March 1855, St Maurice – 20 April 1855, St Bartholomew Hyde – [?] May 1855, St Thomas – [?] 1855 and St Matthew, Weeke – 8 April 1863. The Cathedral, St Andrew Chilcomb, St Faith, St John and St Martin Winnall still had 'live' burial registers in 1880.

parish and street so provides good grounds for matching to the electoral register. It also provides scope to identify Non-Conformists as there was an unconsecrated area of the cemetery available for their use (and occasionally Roman Catholics). Their funerals were conducted by their own minister who is identified in the register entry as officiant. In the early period this was only William Thorn, the Independent minister. It would seem reasonable to assume that he acted for all Non-Conformist denominations at the time rather than to use the entries to infer a particular strength for the Independents.

METHODOLOGY

Databases

Methodology is generally driven by the nature of the sources being used and the research questions being addressed.³² This thesis rests upon the linking and analysis of data from electoral registers and pollbooks informed by data from other sources such as the Census, burial registers and the local newspaper. When dealing with large amounts of relatively well structured data, as found in long runs of such sources, the question of the most appropriate approach to use for data manipulation and analysis instantly arises. The word 'data' immediately turns attention to the use of a database.

There is an extensive literature on the nature of databases and their use by historians. These highly technical debates essentially divide database structures into two types – source-oriented and model-oriented.³³ The major advocate of source-oriented databases has been Manfred Thaller, who has written extensively on the subject.³⁴ Thaller's essential argument is that the integrity of the source document should not be lost through its inclusion in a computerised system. When the source document is essentially of a narrative type, such as a will, he makes a very important point. The will may have some structure but not necessarily one

³² Examples include the search for reasons for departure from the register or age on entry thereto.

³³ The best summary of the debate is P. Denley, 'Models, Sources and Users: Historical Database Design in the 1990s', *History and Computing*, Vol.6, No. 1 (1994), 33-43.

³⁴ These contributions include M. Thaller, 'The Need for a Theory of Historical Computing', in P. Denley, S. Fogelvik and C. Harvey, *History and Computing II* (Manchester, 1989), 2-11; 'The Historical Workstation Project', *Computers and the Humanities*, Vol. 25 (1991), 149-62; 'Historical Information Science: Is There Such a Thing? New Comments on an Old Idea', *Discipline Umanistiche e Informatica: Il Problema dell'Integrazione (Seminario Roma, 8 ottobre 1991)* in T. Orlandi (ed.) 'Contributi del Centro Linceo Interdisciplinare 'Beniamino Segre'', 87, (Rome, 1993), 51-86; and 'What is "source oriented data processing"; what is a "historical information science"?' a paper given at Uzhgorod, Ukraine in 1992 and published in Russian – unsourced English transcript kindly provided by Dr Mark Allen, University of Winchester and quoted from and cited in Denley, 'Models...', 36 and 42 note 7.

of rigorously defined parts, or order of parts. Then it is crucial to a full understanding of the parts to know their immediate context.

The approach of Thaller and his supporters perhaps reflects the leanings of the German school of historiography towards document publication, for the focus is on maintaining the integrity of texts.³⁵ This approach makes little reference to numerical or ‘near numerical’ data. As the intention here is to analyse the contents of the source documents, rather than to produce copies of them for publication, the source-oriented approach has not been applied with its full rigour. Nevertheless the gist of certain elements of additional textual content is held in non-numeric fields to assist the application of historical judgement.

The approach which has been put forward as the exact opposite of the source-oriented approach is the model-oriented database. The model-oriented database is almost exclusively built on relational database software. This approach has been widely adopted by British historians, because of its wide and ready availability and the availability of support from those in other disciplines and from university IT staff. However there are pitfalls in the approach and these arise from the word ‘model’. As Denley puts it:

The design of a relational database entails the preparation of a conceptual model of the “world” being represented, and the breaking down of components of information into discrete chunks which are interrelated according to very strictly defined rules....Many historical sources have complex structures, which can be reflected in the design of a relational database, but often the relational model in practice pushes historians with complex sources into making some harsh compromise decisions which involve sacrificing some features of the source – its integrity, its internal structure, or the original eccentricities of the text.³⁶

Therefore at the start of a piece of work the historian has to define the ‘model’ of the world to be examined.

As often the purpose of historical research is to determine from sources the nature of a realistic ‘model’ of the subject under examination this can potentially be very much a case of ‘getting the cart before the horse’. For if the proposed model proves invalid it appears another ‘model’ has to be created from scratch and populated with data. The ‘model’ approach is best applied where very specific research questions can be designed in advance and the nature and structure of the data is well known before it is used. In its full rigour this approach is best applied *ab initio* in circumstances such as that where a ‘model’ has been generated by the

³⁵ See for example R. Hartel, ‘To Treat or not to Treat: The Historical Source Before the Input’, *Historical Social Research*, Vol. 14:1 (1989), 25-38.

³⁶ Denley, ‘Models...’, 34.

examination of a data set in one location or population. The model's applicability is then tested in another population or location where similar sources are available with a comparable data structure. Therefore it is less easy to apply the approach, in the first instance, when breaking new ground as is the case here.

This study takes a 'middle way' albeit one which is closer to the relational/model-oriented database than to the source-oriented database. This decision is driven in large part by the nature of the sources being used. Although these largely use text, that text is highly structured and in many respects it is 'near numerical'. For example there are a limited number of combinations of candidates for which an elector may vote at a specific election. These can be described upon input by standard abbreviations – for instance a 'straight'³⁷ Conservative vote for East and Escott in the 1837 and 1841 General Elections has been described by the abbreviation 'East/Esc'; albeit in the original pollbook it is represented by two horizontal bars under column headings which may be different abbreviations. There are a limited number of parishes and/or streets in which he can qualify to vote; and any minor discrepancy in their descriptions in the source is of no significance to this investigation, so they can be 'standardised' at input.

At the same time there are occasional useful elements in an entry in the electoral registers which are non-standard and textual and can aid the exercise of judgement as to the validity, or otherwise, of links or the determination of whether an entry represents a 'duplicate' entry for an individual in a second parish or as a freeman. In some cases the copy of the register has been used, in whole or part, for canvassing purposes and bears annotations, some in the form of symbols as to voting intentions. These have been recorded in narrative form. The core printed element of the registers under 'Location of Qualification' or 'Nature of Qualification' from 1844 onwards can contain useful information particularly as to the movement of electors.³⁸ In 1844 John Beale in his entry for the parish of St Thomas and St Clement is described as located in 'High street, from Kingsgate street St. Michael'.³⁹ The descriptions vary somewhat over time, and occasionally within registers – perhaps reflecting how the overseers of different parishes recorded them. In 1859 John Bevis, the younger is recorded in St Thomas and

³⁷ A 'straight' is a vote, in a two seat constituency, for two candidates from the same party.

³⁸ A provision of the 1843 Registration Act (6 Vict. c. 18 s. 49) required the publication of the approved electoral register and its availability for purchase. Doubtless a measure to prevent chicanery by politically motivated Town Clerks withholding it from opponents.

³⁹ 1844 Electoral Register printed by Gilmour, Serial 465 – HRO WB9/1/9

St Clement as qualified by 'House in succession'.⁴⁰ Other entries are far more informative such as that in 1851 for Henry Biddle in St Faith who qualified 'from a house to a house' and the location entry is presented as 'Front St' printed above 'Romsey Road'.⁴¹

Given the vast majority of entries under 'Place of Abode' in the registers are exactly the same as the entries for 'Location of Qualification', this has been recorded in the database only on an 'exception basis'.

The approach adopted in this study can be seen as a pragmatic compromise between the two common approaches; but much closer to that of the model-oriented database. For in the case of sources central to the study such as electoral registers and pollbooks all the data and the gist of any additional text or symbology is recorded in the database. However for other sources, such as newspapers, burial registers and the census, which are being 'mined' for data relating to those already recorded in those 'central sources'; only data relating to them is recorded. On occasions what is recorded is only the relevant portion of that individual's 'dataset' in the other source.

Electoral Registers

Electoral Registers are a source which has been relatively untapped by electoral historians to date.⁴² The issue of registration was brought to the fore by Salmon in 2002 but his work made little if any use of the data in the registers, in particular the data on individual electors.⁴³ For Winchester, Aldous began to use the data from the 1830s to fill in data gaps in the poll books and to establish cohorts of voters by year of first registration.⁴⁴ This study takes that work much deeper and covers a far longer period.

The data in electoral registers is, until 1868, quite simple.⁴⁵ Given its consistent structure by parish (with an additional list of freemen) and the desire to identify individual electors over the period, five fixed fields for each record in the database were established:

<u>Surname</u>	<u>Forenames</u>	<u>Qualification</u>	<u>Street</u>	<u>Parish</u>
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⁴⁰ 1859 Electoral Register printed by Barclay, Serial 42 – HRO WB9/1/23.

⁴¹ 1851 Electoral Register printed by Tanner, Serial 747 – HRO WB9/1/16a.

⁴² See critique of the historiography at pp. 158-68 below.

⁴³ Salmon, *Electoral...*

⁴⁴ R.J. Aldous, 'Conservative Voters in Winchester 1832-41 – An Initial Assessment', (MA dissertation, University of Winchester, 2009), 88-100.

⁴⁵ See pp. 37-8 above.

Qualification was completed with the description of the qualifying property unless a freeman, in which case that was entered. Street was the location of the qualifying property, usually a street although for extra-parochial areas such as the Cathedral Close or College this might be a lengthy narrative asserting that extra-parochial status; in the case of freemen it was the far more general location given, usually 'Winchester'. For freemen the term 'Freeman' was used as a parish descriptor for completeness and ease of sorting based on that field.

As the registers are organised by parish, for the purposes of entry each year's data was entered in that order beginning with 1832. The serial number (for 1832-5 the 'invented serial number' produced to ensure compatibility⁴⁶ and data completeness during entry) was entered under a field bearing that year as descriptor. Subsequent years' data was entered year by year alongside that for the previous year such that if the same name, qualification etc. appeared in sequential years in the same parish (or the list of freemen) it appeared in the same record. From 1868 an additional field for the Polling District was introduced as the register for each of the four Winchester polling districts began at 'Serial 1'. For 'new names' new records were created. Additionally a 'difference column' was added alongside each year's data to contain narrative information about any differences from the original entry in an earlier year. These differences include changes to the description of the qualifying property; information as to property 'succession';⁴⁷ any difference of place of abode from qualifying property; the slightly different spelling of a name; or a change to location within the parish. In this latter case it was generally assumed that the same surname:forename combination within a parish was the same person. For this, and other purposes, a gap in presence on the register of up to four years was allowed to permit a period of absence from Winchester or disqualification through receipt of poor relief or non-payment of rates.

After 1864 the four year rule had to be relaxed given gaps in the sequence of registers in 1865, 1867 and from 1870 to 1877 inclusive. After careful review of all the circumstances surrounding them eight out of twenty-nine cases with a gap of five or more years including 1865 or/and 1867 were retained and not split into two records. Thirty cases with a gap from 1869 to 1877 inclusive were found and retained as these individuals were only omitted from one of the available registers – that of 1869. Records with a gap from 1870 to 1877 inclusive were retained

⁴⁶ See p. 377 above.

⁴⁷ See pp. 47-8 above.

given no intermediate registers are available – there are 811 such records. It is recognised that this approach will probably have introduced a number of false linkages, however, many of these were removed at a later stage by the application of census and burial register data.⁴⁸ Moreover for purposes such as determining the number of short-term, or transient, electors⁴⁹ this will lead to an under rather than over-estimate of the numbers.

Using the above approach a database containing 6,255 different records was created for the thirty-three year continuous run of registers from the 1832 to 1864 and those for 1866, 1868, 1869 and 1878.⁵⁰ Given that the registers were structured on a parochial basis with an additional category of freemen these records would inevitably contain a number of duplicate entries and a number of records which should be linked as a single record, but were not because of movement between parishes. A copy of the original database was taken as a ‘working database’ and sorted by surname and forename. Then a line-by-line review of it was conducted for two purposes – the identification of duplicate entries and the linking of otherwise unlinked entries.

There was increasing objection over time to the payment of the registration shilling and the requirement of prompt rate payment for the £10 household franchise.⁵¹ Therefore in the case of removal of duplicates arising from the freeman franchise it could not be expected that duplicate entries for freemen would exactly correspond to their period on the register as freemen. However given that freemen, if resident within seven miles, were automatically included on the register at no cost. It was very unlikely for a freeman to disappear from the register as such and appear as qualified on the more rigorous basis as a £10 householder.

Nevertheless, particularly in the case of freemen where their residence was merely described as ‘Winchester’, the presence of two or more records bearing the same surname:forename combination in the same period is not conclusive proof of a duplicate entry. However for the general elections from 1835 to 1868 inclusive there are pollbooks which record both voters and those who did not vote. Making the assumption that the pollbooks are comprehensive, or as comprehensive as to make little difference to the results, it was therefore possible to check whether at an election there were two or more electors of the same name.

⁴⁸ See pp. 423-5 above.

⁴⁹ See pp. 130 below.

⁵⁰ There are no known surviving electoral registers for Winchester for 1865 and 1870-7 and due to the ongoing Reform debates no registers were produced anywhere in 1867 - R.H.A. Cheffins, *Parliamentary Constituencies and Their Registers since 1832* (London, 1998), 14-5 and 213.

⁵¹ Salmon, *Electoral*, 202.

Where there were fewer electors of that name in the pollbook than in the relevant electoral register⁵² the data in the pollbook was used to determine which entries (or years within entries) were duplicates. Despite some clear pointers, such as a record of a place of abode different from the qualifying property, which made any record with the same name at the place of abode a duplicate in years where both appeared. This full rigour could not be applied to records which related solely to years where the register did not apply to a general election. Therefore it is recognised that some duplicates will remain within the 'sifted data' in those years. It is also possible in the event of death that some voters on some occasions may not have been recorded in pollbooks as not voting⁵³ and therefore erroneously removed as duplicates.

When approaching the issue of linking records arising from movement between parishes it became clear that there was at times short-term duplication of records. For example John Beale whose movement described in the 1844 register was cited earlier⁵⁴ appears in both the 1844 and 1845 registers in Kingsgate Street, St Michael from which he moved; and High Street, St Thomas to which he moved.⁵⁵ In consequence of this narrative information his entries for those years in St Michael were removed as duplicates. As a result of the review of all possible duplicates 224 complete and 210 part records were removed from the 'working database'.

It is recognised that there are two basic approaches which might have been adopted to nominal record linkage. The first involves the application of a rigorous and rigid algorithm to accept or reject a potential record linkage and essentially passes decision-making thereafter to the computer. This approach has been advocated and applied by Mitchell and Cornford,⁵⁶ and Radice⁵⁷. In some cases such as Radice's the algorithm can be quite complex. The second approach employs the more fluid exercise of historical judgement by the researcher. This was advocated by Wickham, who claimed that 'the manual approach to poll book analysis, because

⁵² See pp. 41-3 above.

⁵³ See p. 42 above.

⁵⁴ See p. 47 above.

⁵⁵ 1844 Electoral Register printed by Gilmour, Serials 319 and 465 – HRO WB9/1/9; and 1845 Electoral Register printed by Tanner, Serials 299 and 443 – HRO WB9/1/10.

⁵⁶ J.C. Mitchell and J. Cornford, 'The Political Demography of Cambridge 1832-68', *Albion*, Vol. 9, No. 3, (Autumn 1977), 249-51.

⁵⁷ P.K.V. Radice, 'Identification, Interests and Influence: Voting Behaviour in four English Constituencies in the Decade after the Great Reform Act' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Durham, 1992), 73-92.

of its subjective nature, allows the researcher a necessary measure of discretion when identifying an individual elector through the process of record linkage'.⁵⁸

There are potential pitfalls in both approaches. In defining the conditions for a valid linkage in an algorithm there is a clear risk that the criteria for linkage can be set so rigorously that a significant number of such linkages might be deemed invalid. These might merely arise from some aspect, or quirk, of the source for one particular year. If not picked up this might lead to a skewing of the results of analysis arising from use of the validated linked records. It can be argued that the historian working through the data as it is input and determining links/non-links will readily pick up on such source quirks and be able to exercise an appropriate judgment, quite possibly based upon consulting other sources. On the other hand it may be argued that the historian's judgments may not be entirely consistent so some invalid linkages may get through and some valid ones lost.

The view adopted here is that the algorithmic approach is likely to exclude far more valid linkages than the historical judgement approach will include invalid ones. Therefore, to secure the more representative set of linkages, the approach adopted has not been that of the rigid and complex algorithm but of the exercise of historical judgement. This judgement or, it could be argued, empathy with the source and its data, was acquired and developed as the data for each year's register was entered into the database alongside that of earlier years. It also permits the full exploitation of narrative information as to place of abode and relocation which is far from uniform in nature or format. In difficult cases it also allows the use of data not incorporated in the data base, such as that in trade directories and the census. Moreover given the annual nature of the registers available until 1864 false links are far less likely given their proximity to each other in time and space.⁵⁹ Throughout the approach of looking at the individual case in the round and then making a judgment has been adopted. It is believed that this is more likely to avoid systematic bias and to minimise error.

The next stage undertaken was that of exercising historical judgement and manually linking records from different parishes bearing the same name. Where there was narrative 'movement' description the links are likely to be very sound but this might be less so in other cases. However given the experience of minor overlaps, or gaps, about the time of narrative

⁵⁸ M.J. Wickham, 'Electoral Politics in Berwick-upon-Tweed 1832-1885' (unpublished M. Phil thesis, University of Durham, 2002), 82.

⁵⁹ R.J. Morris, 'Does nineteenth-century nominal record linkage have lessons for the machine-readable century?', *Journal of the Society of Archivists*, (October 1985), 505.

'movement' information the view was taken that at this stage where one record added to another achieved continuity, filled a gap, or led to a combined record which had gaps in it of less than four years⁶⁰ a link should be made. This approach will clearly create a number of false links and thereby overstate the level of continuity in the electorate and its longevity. At the same time it will lead to an understatement of the level of turnover and transience in the Winchester electorate. Given the latter is one of the marked findings of this study it will be difficult to criticise that finding as exaggerated. This exercise reduced the number of records to 4,886. The duplicate removal and linking exercises had therefore reduced the number of records by 1,369 (almost 22 per cent). Of the 4,886 records remaining, 4,370 (89 per cent) are not the result of any linkage activity.

Pollbooks

Pollbooks for nineteenth-century Winchester are well structured for entry into a database having clearly defined columns (or entries such as sub-headings which satisfy the requirement of a column) such as surname, forenames, parish or/and street, occupation, basis of qualification (freeman or £10 householder), votes cast (or not – if abstained or absent) and occasional commentary, especially as to reasons for not voting. Not all fields are present in any one poll book as these were private publications, but this is no obstacle as fields which are absent can be left blank in the entries for that particular poll book. It is possible however to determine some of the missing data from other sources as Aldous did for the parish data missing from the 1841 Winchester poll book using the applicable electoral register.⁶¹

In 1977 Mitchell and Cornford pointed to the possibility of, and began to explore, the benefits of longitudinal life cycle information on voting behaviour.⁶² This approach being later further exploited by John Phillips.⁶³ Such an approach raises the issue of 'nominal record linkage' – was 'Fred Smith' in the poll book of year *x* also 'Frederick Smith' in the poll book for the next election on from year *x*? This issue first arose on a large scale in demographic history.⁶⁴ In the case of this study the driver is the data from the electoral registers, which being annual has far

⁶⁰ See p. 49 above.

⁶¹ Aldous, 'Conservative...', 97-9.

⁶² Mitchell and Cornford, 'The Political...', 244-5, 249-51 and 256-7.

⁶³ For example J.A. Phillips, 'From Municipal Matters to Parliamentary Principles: Eighteenth-Century Borough Politics in Maidstone', *Journal of British Studies*, Vol. 27, No. 4, (Oct. 1988), 341-5.

⁶⁴ An early paper on these problems is R.S. Schofield, 'The Standardization of Names and the Automatic Linking of Historical Records', *Annales de Demographie Historique*, 1972, 359-64.

shorter gaps than between pollbooks. This reduces the likely of false linkages.⁶⁵ The records, linked or otherwise, from the analysis of the electoral registers have been applied to the pollbook data for Winchester for the purposes of longitudinal analysis.

Voter cohorts, by first year of registration, were also examined to determine whether there are marked differences in the level of partisanship between them. The results of this exercise were examined to determine whether the year of first registering or of first voting is more significant in contributing to future partisanship. Account was taken of the political issues current in the years examined. This level of analysis is only possible through the greater granularity afforded to the pollbook data by using it in combination with that from electoral registers. It was hoped to widen this work to refine cohorts on a socio-economic basis, however this proved problematic.

Rate Books and the Search for Indicators of Wealth

The use of rate book data to assess the property wealth of electors was pioneered by Neale⁶⁶ and Nossiter⁶⁷ in the 1970s. As a measure of overall wealth the data is an indicator, not an absolute measure – wealth might be held in bank accounts, Government or other stock, a business or property elsewhere, or indeed property that is leased out to others. Even if all this data were available on a national or global basis it would only give gross wealth for it ignores debts, mortgages etc. From local rate books it is possible to fill in some of the gaps; for many contain details of the owner of the property as well as the occupier. Thus across a borough it may be possible to determine a reasonable approximation to an elector's apparent wealth and standing in the eyes of the local electors and wider population.

Although any result so obtained will always be partial, it clearly arrives at a more representative figure than the approach adopted by Paula Radice. In looking at Guildford and Leicester, she only counted domestic property and then only the highest value one per voter;

⁶⁵ Morris, 'Does nineteenth-century ...', 505.

⁶⁶ R.S. Neale, *Class and Ideology in the Nineteenth Century* (London, 1972), 69-73 and *Bath: A Social History, 1680-1850* (London, 1981), 357-61.

⁶⁷ T. Nossiter, *Influence, Opinion and Political Idioms in Reformed England: Case Studies from the North East, 1832-1874* (Hassocks, 1975), 172-3 as foreshadowed in his 'Aspects of Electoral Behaviour in English Constituencies, 1832-1868' in E. Allardt and S. Rokkan (eds), *Mass Politics: Studies in Political Sociology* (New York, 1970), 176.

moreover the entire value of jointly owned property was attributed to each and every owner rather than a share.⁶⁸

In using sources it is most often best to take full account of how contemporaries viewed them before deciding how to utilise them. This is very much the case for rate book data when used in the context of the post-1832 borough franchise.

A printed document marked 'Secret' put to the Derby-Disraeli cabinet in 1859 bearing the title 'On the Relation of Rating to Value', and apparently 'Part Z' of a comprehensive electoral reform package, asserts confidently that 'An 8l.[£8] Rating has been stated to be almost universally equivalent to a 10l. [£10] Value. It is assumed to be so in the Revising Barrister's Court...'⁶⁹ Tables produced to prove the point however can be interpreted as emphasizing the equivalence as opposed to the precision of the relationship. When applied to North and South Hampshire they show gross rental values, presumably from Income Tax sources, which are 19.6 per cent and 26.2 per cent above rated values as opposed to the 25 per cent one would expect were a £8 rating value to equate to a £10 gross rental. The figure for England as a whole shows only an 18.7 per cent increase from rated to gross rental value.⁷⁰

It is clear that there was a commonly held view in high political circles in the 1850s that the rated value of a property bore a directly proportional relationship to its gross rental value. However those, such as Rose, dealing with the mechanics of the electoral system found things were far from uniform on the ground.⁷¹ In examining politics at the voter level in a constituency the view of Rose the 'operator' and tactician is preferable to that of strategists such as Russell, Derby and Disraeli.

Consequently the following approach might be applied. The rated values of the electors in each parish could be determined and where the lowest value found for an elector (on the electoral roll as a householder in that parish) in a parish is below £10 the values found in the rate book will, for the purposes of inter-parish comparison, be adjusted pro rata upwards such that all have at least £10 gross rental value of property in the parish. For example if the lowest value of property in a parish for a £10 householder on the register is £9 all values are increased

⁶⁸ P.K.V. Radice, 'Identification....', 64-5.

⁶⁹ Disraeli MSS - Dep Hughenden/43/2/13 p. 97. The document starts at p. 97 and is in the style and pagination of other documents within the same box marked as Derby's and Disraeli's personal copies.

⁷⁰ Disraeli MSS - Dep Hughenden/43/2/13 pp. 98-9. Disraeli MSS - Dep Hughenden/43/2/16 in ordering boroughs by wealth uses figures from returns for Schedules A, B and D of the Income Tax – hence the inference as to the source.

⁷¹ See pp. 34-5 above.

by 1/9 (c.11 per cent). There are weaknesses in this approach. There may be a difference between rental and rateable value but the elector with the lowest rateable value has a property which still has a rateable value at or above £10. There may be a significant time difference between an electoral register and the nearest available ratebook, such that the elector's circumstances have changed. Any results obtained would have to be treated with great care and heavily caveated.

There are pointers to the level of difference between the rated value and 'Real Annual Rental or Value' in the 1837 Municipal Boundary Commissioners Report which under 'Poor Rates: Proportion of the Real Annual Value' records St John's Ward as rated at 'Between one-half and full'; St Maurice Ward at 'Between one-fourth and full'; and St Thomas Ward at 'Between one-third and full'.⁷² Unfortunately the differences are only given by ward not parish; as they are expressed as ranges they could either reflect a variation between the treatment of different types of property within a parish, or consistency of treatment within each parish but variations between parishes.

For the purposes of determining the relative property wealth of voters within a parish to compare their voting behavior it would make no difference whether the original or revalued data is used. However for consolidating property wealth across the borough by individual the revalued data would have to be used to attempt to get as near to consistency as possible.

The 'property wealth approach' also ignores the relative propensities of individuals to consume, possibly conspicuously, and accumulate capital or wealth. For wealth may be inherited but can only fund one's consumption if it yields interest or dividends; is mortgaged or otherwise used as security for loans; or sold. The existence from 1842 of Income Tax might possibly have provided an insight into income as all with income in excess of £150 per annum were subject to it. However the system was not as we know it today – there was no tax assessment based upon an individual's overall income, in part because there was for many years no personal allowance - merely a threshold at which one started paying tax on all one's income. Instead, apparently based on the assumption that recipients would automatically exceed that threshold, those paying rent, interest or dividends to an individual were expected to deduct tax from their gross payment 'at source' and pay the sum over to the local Collector of Taxes. In 1855/6, 63.5 per cent of the Income Tax yield was received in this manner. The remainder of

⁷² *'Report of the Commissioners appointed to report and advise upon the boundaries and wards of certain boroughs and corporate towns, (England and Wales) 'Part I, PP 1837(238), 1152.*

Income Tax was determined and collected by a network of local assessors, commissioners and collectors who dealt only with the income one received in their locality.⁷³ Therefore for indicators of wider wealth, income and propensity to consume we must look to other sources.

In 1967 Pelling categorised constituencies in the period 1885 to 1910 using the ratio of female domestic servants to households derived from summary census data as a proxy for 'social status'.⁷⁴ In 1975 Nossiter applied the approach using individual records from the census enumerators' books of 1851 and the 1852 Gateshead pollbook.⁷⁵ In 2009 Aldous applied a similar approach to Conservative and Whig partisan voters in Winchester pollbooks from 1835 to 1841 however he did analyse the data into three categories: male servants, female servants and other 'live in' employees.⁷⁶ This study would have continued this latter work using data from the censuses of 1851 to 1871, however the volume of data proved too great for the timeframe available. Aldous's study also drew upon the data as to age in the 1841 census.⁷⁷ This work has been continued here using data from 1871.

Testing the Methodology

Whilst conducting analytical work on those leaving the registers between 1832 and 1842⁷⁸ the robustness of links was tested. This was tested using information from the *Hampshire Chronicle* on deaths and departures from Winchester. Of the 479 such records this showed that only one, which had been assumed to have an acceptable gap in it of less than four years,⁷⁹ needed to be split. Philip Oades of Kingsgate Street had clearly died immediately before the gap⁸⁰ to be succeeded two years later by someone, perhaps a son, of the same name in the same street for merely a year.

⁷³ M. Daunt, *Trusting Leviathan: The Politics of Taxation in Britain 1799-1914* (Cambridge, 2001), 184-6 and M. Daunt, *State and Market in Victorian Britain: War, Welfare and Capitalism* (Woodbridge, 2008), 83.

⁷⁴ H. Pelling, *Social Geography of British Elections 1885-1910* (London, 1967), 22-3.

⁷⁵ Nossiter, *Influence...*, 172-3.

⁷⁶ Aldous, 'Conservative...', 85-7.

⁷⁷ Aldous, 'Conservative...', 83-5.

⁷⁸ See pp. 132-7 below.

⁷⁹ See p. 49 above.

⁸⁰ *HC* 19 February 1838.

The same exercise indicated that of 1,089 records starting in those years there was evidence in the *Hampshire Chronicle* to suggest a further twenty-three (2 per cent) might require splitting. This arises from evidence that the individual whose record apparently extends beyond the period might be more than one individual, the first of whom died in that decade. Nevertheless this level of doubt suggests that the methodology is generally robust and provides a reasonable basis upon which to draw conclusions with some confidence.

Death was the major cause of departure from the register identified from the *Hampshire Chronicle*.⁸¹ With the very few cases of other causes identified therefrom requiring considerable effort to determine an alternative, more concentrated, source of death data was considered – burial registers. In a period in which cremation was not practised these can be quite comprehensive.

The use of burial register data across the same decade proved more fruitful.⁸² A combination of this data and that from the *Hampshire Chronicle* led to the splitting, or de-linking, of seventeen records on the basis of evidence for the period from 1 July 1832 to 31 December 1842. Once again this suggests a bias in the initial entry and linking methodology towards false linkages but not a very significant one. Moreover the identified false linkages were then removed.

The examination of both the *Hampshire Chronicle* and of burial registers requires a considerable amount of effort. Therefore the findings from the two sources were compared for the period from 1 July 1832 to 31 December 1842. An initial examination from both sources revealed 160 deaths of apparent electors reported in the *Hampshire Chronicle* and 170 in burial registers. However, only 129 cases were found to be common to both sources. So there were thirty-one cases in the *Hampshire Chronicle* not found in burial registers and forty-one cases in burial registers not found in that news paper. The latter finding was not very surprising as the *Hampshire Chronicle* did not claim to be comprehensive in this regard. It probably reported the upper strata of the electorate, those who had formed part of its readership, and noteworthy cases of others – noting great age or loyal service. This bias could be expected to be more

⁸¹ See pp. 132-6 below.

⁸² See p. 136 below.

pronounced after the franchise extension of 1867. What caused more concern were the thirty-one reports in the newspaper not found in the burial registers.

These thirty-one cases were examined closely. Four were understandably missing from Winchester burial records as their deaths were reported as occurring outside of Hampshire.⁸³ One, a freeman, had his place of residence outside Winchester identified in the electoral register and his burial was found in the registers of Twyford parish.⁸⁴ A third 'source', the *Hampshire Burial Index 1400-1841*,⁸⁵ was then consulted. This revealed eight cases where there was a burial with a similar name (and in six cases age – in the other cases the *Hampshire Chronicle* had not given an age) at a similar date in another Hampshire parish not very far from Winchester.⁸⁶ The same 'source' indicated that two cases⁸⁷ were recorded in Winchester College's burial register, a source then unknown to the author.

The last two if sourced from that register would have increased the total from burial registers to 172, of which 131 were in common with the *Hampshire Chronicle*. Of the remaining twenty-nine, thirteen were definitely buried outside of Winchester and it is possible others may have been. Given the amount of time taken to thoroughly search and match either source to the electoral register database was considerable a choice was faced as to which source to use through to 1880 (a year beyond the validity of the last register available).

As the figure obtained for deaths from searching the parish registers (adjusted up for the two College entries) was 7.5 per cent higher than that obtained from the *Hampshire Chronicle*, and deaths were clearly the major identifiable reason for leaving the register, it was decided to only use the burial registers for the remainder of the period. The figures thus obtained should however be treated with care as probably minima as the *Hampshire Chronicle* figures indicate a considerable number of deaths the burial register matching exercise was not capturing – up to 16.9 per cent more. However the absence of some of these additional deaths

⁸³ William Blandford (Farnham), Benjamin Holloway (Weymouth), Richard Sheppard (London) and Edward Street (near Salisbury). *HC* 30 January 1837, 9 December 1833, 13 April 1835 and 26 August 1833.

⁸⁴ Thomas Cordery. *HC* 13 April 1840.

⁸⁵ Hampshire Genealogical Society, *Hampshire Burial Index 1400-1841* (Portsmouth, 2011) - a CD-ROM.

⁸⁶ Joseph Culley (Crawley), Daniel Dipnall (Upham), Edward Godrich (Tichborne), Peter John James Lee (Millbrook), Thomas Pern (Bentworth), William Prior (Fareham, St Peter and St Paul), John Street (Otterbourne) and George Taylor (Headbourne Worthy). *HC* 5 August 1834, 14 May 1835, 2 December 1836, 24 December 1838, 23 January 1837, 3 September 1836, 14 December 1840 and 28 January 1836.

⁸⁷ Richard Hopkins and Rev. Harry Lee. *HC* 8 January 1838 and 12 February 1838.

may well be explained by another, and earlier, reason for leaving the electoral register – departure from the borough and qualifying property therein.

CHAPTER 3

THE NATIONAL SCENE 1832-1867 AND THE CASE FOR 'WINCHESTER MAN'

This chapter places the Winchester borough constituency in its national context. It reviews how representative Winchester was of a much wider part of the national electoral system. It then proceeds to make the case for 'Winchester Man' as representing the 'swing voter' of the mid-nineteenth century.

The British Electoral System before the Reforms of 1832

Before examining the electoral system following the reforms of the so-called 'Great Reform Act' of 1832, it is worthwhile to examine the unreformed system immediately prior to those reforms. This helps to reveal where the major changes were made in 1832 and the considerable amount of continuity thereafter.

The seats in the House of Commons were distributed between the elements of the United Kingdom as shown in **Table 3.1 below**. The major features of House of Commons arithmetic were firstly that almost three-quarters of MPs represented English constituencies. Secondly over sixty per cent of all MPs sat for English boroughs. Of these the overwhelming majority, 390 of 402, were from two-seat boroughs – including Winchester. Moreover, it has become a commonplace to emphasise the over-representation of southern England, in which Winchester is firmly embedded, in the distribution of these borough seats.¹ These boroughs together with their two four-seat and four one-seat cousins however had a wide range of franchise arrangements.

¹ For example H. Cunningham, *The Challenge of Democracy: Britain 1832-1918* (Harlow, 2001), 30.

Table 3.1: Distribution of Seats by 'Electoral System' to 1832

	<u>Counties</u>		<u>Boroughs</u>		<u>Universities</u>		<u>Total</u>	
	No.	%	No.	%	No	%	No	%
England	80	12.2	402	61.1	4	0.6	486	73.9
Ireland	64	9.7	35	5.3	1	0.2	100	15.2
Scotland	30	4.6	15	2.3	0	0.0	45	6.8
Wales	14	2.1	13	2.0	0	0.0	27	4.1
Total	188	28.6	465	70.7	5	0.8	658	100.0

Source: Brock, 19-20. With erroneous inclusion of Monmouthshire and Monmouth Borough District in England, not Wales, corrected. Throughout the view taken here is that as Monmouth District followed the Welsh model of removing a number of relatively small towns from the county both it and the county should be treated as part of Wales. This matter of substance is taken to be more important than that of form, which in 1535 'joined' it to England (see Dod, 217).

Many boroughs had either unique local franchise qualifications or combinations thereof. Michael Brock in seeking to categorise the English boroughs in 1830 stated that 'The partition between the corporation boroughs and the smallest in the freeman group...is the thinnest of all'.² Unfortunately in the case of Winchester it appears that he erred, by placing the borough in the corporation category. By that date, the Winchester electorate of fewer than 150 freemen elected 'The Twenty-Four' who in turn elected the mayor etc.³ Frank O'Gorman placed Winchester in his category of freeman boroughs with small electorates.⁴ A comparison (**Table 3.2 below**) of the categorisation of English boroughs by Brock for 1830 and by O'Gorman for the period from 1734 to 1832 shows the diverse results that emerge from such efforts.

² M. Brock, *The Great Reform Act* (London, 1973), 20-2 – the quotation is from Note (3) to his Table 2..

³ Winchester Corporation Sixteenth and Seventeenth Books of Ordinances 1822-35 HRO W/B1/16 and 17.

⁴ F. O'Gorman, *Voters, Patrons and Parties: The Unreformed Electorate of Hanoverian England, 1734-1832* (Oxford, 1989), 44, note 59.

Table 3.2: English Borough Seats by Type Prior to 1832 Reform Act

	<u>Brock</u>		<u>O’Gorman</u>	
	No.	%	No.	%
Scot and Lot	38	18.9	43	21.4
Potwalloper	14	7.0	9	4.5
Burgage	35	17.4	30	14.9
Corporation	28	13.9	26	12.9
Freeman	80	39.8	90	44.8
Freeholder	6	3.0	3	1.5
Total	201	100.0	201	100.0

Source: Brock, 20-2. With the erroneous inclusion of Monmouth Borough District in England, not Wales, corrected in accordance with cross-checking with Dod; and Winchester moved from Corporation to Freeman. O’Gorman, *Voters*, 29-30, 32-3 ns12-3, 38-9 ns35 and 37-8, 44 n59, 55 n97, and 110. Adjusted for the disfranchisement of Grampound in 1821, the erroneous inclusion of the Welsh borough of Beaumaris and borough district of Monmouth, and the double-counting of Pontefract as both a burgage and a scot and lot borough. It is included here under the latter as this appears to be what it was by the nineteenth century.

In O’ Gorman’s case, the effort to summarise the position over a century was hampered by rulings by the House of Commons, which changed the franchise arrangements. A good example is Pontefract which, perhaps for this reason, he double-counts.⁵ In 1624 the franchise was determined to be that of inhabitant householders paying scot and lot (i.e. poor rates). In 1715 and 1750 it was ruled that the franchise should only be given to those tenants paying rent for certain burgages (i.e. land or/and buildings). The latter decision was then reversed in 1793.⁶

⁵ O’Gorman, *Voters...*, 32 note 12 and 44 note 59.

⁶ C.R.Dod, *Electoral Facts 1832-1853 Impartially Stated* (2nd Edn, London, 1853), 251.

The analysis by both Brock and O’Gorman shows the freeman franchise to have been the most common franchise type in English boroughs. It applied in some forty to forty-five per cent of cases. Winchester possessed this franchise and can therefore be viewed as a relatively typical pre-1832 borough in this regard. Nevertheless it should be noted, that with only 132 freemen on its freeman register in 1831,⁷ Winchester was probably near the lower end of the third quartile of freeman boroughs, counting down in terms of number of electors.⁸ Moreover some of the freemen had been granted their freedom as an honour rather than with the intent of enfranchisement. For example their Royal Highnesses Prince Leopold and the Duke of Cumberland and Sir William Parry, the Arctic explorer, would not have been expected to participate as electors were a contest to occur.

The likelihood of a contested election occurring was, in large part, determined by another aspect of the nature of a borough. This was its degree of ‘openness’. In this regard O’Gorman defined five categories of borough. The first was the ‘venal’ category where electors readily sold their votes to the highest bidder. A good example was Stockbridge, with a scot and lot franchise. The second group were the ‘proprietary’ boroughs. In these ownership of certain pieces of property secured the vote. The purchase of sufficient of those properties secured effective ownership of the seats. Most of these boroughs, such as Petersfield, had the burgage franchise but some were scot and lot. The third category he described as ‘corporation’ boroughs. Most had a franchise restricted to the mayor and corporation, as at Andover, but some had a freeman franchise. In the later case the corporation had sufficient influence to deliver enough freeman votes to ensure control. The corporation could if free of external influence, as in the case of Abingdon in 1796, seek a candidate on the terms it chose.⁹ The fourth, and largest, category was that of the ‘patronage’ boroughs where a wealthy patron, or patrons, had sufficient influence to secure the result he wished. As these included many scot and lot and freeman boroughs with sizeable electorates, such as Southampton, exercise of the right as patron might only be secured at considerable expense. The final category comprised the ‘open’ boroughs. Here electoral contests were frequent and the electorate large, such as Westminster. Moreover the contest was such as to make victory very much an open question.¹⁰

⁷ Sixteenth Book of Ordinances HRO W/B1/16.

⁸ Derived from figures in Table 2 at Brock, *The Great...*, 20.

⁹ The Diary of Charles Abbot, Lord Colchester as quoted in E.N.Williams, *The Eighteenth-Century Constitution 1688-1815: Documents and Commentary* (Cambridge, 1960), 158.

¹⁰ O’Gorman, *Voters...*, 28-58.

O’Gorman’s estimates, with minor corrections, of the numbers of each type of borough on this basis are shown in **Table 3.3 below.**

**Table 3.3: English Borough Seats Prior to the 1832 Reform Act:
An Alternative Typology**

<u>Description</u>	<u>Number</u>
Venal	19
Proprietorial	45
Corporation	35
Patronage	81
Open	21
TOTAL	201

Source: O’Gorman, 28-58. Without Grampound (disfranchised 1821) and Beaumaris and Monmouth District (deemed to be Welsh). Treating Pontefract as patronage as correct by 1830.

So where does Winchester fit into this typology? In the century starting with the 1715 General Election the borough was only contested four times out of a possible eighteen.¹¹ This is a rate of contestation almost identical to that found by O’Gorman for similar freeman boroughs with small electorates in the period from 1741 to 1774. But it is somewhat below his figures for the periods before and after that and for a wider range of borough types.¹²

To the extent that there were contests for the control of the borough’s seats, they were fought by the purses of the Pentons and the Dukes of Bolton and Chandos for control of the corporation. It was the corporation which had the power to create freemen and therefore

¹¹ 1715, 1734, 1747 and 1812 - R. Sedgwick (ed.), *The House of Commons 1715-1754* (London, 1970), Vol. I, 256-7; L. Namier and J. Brooke (eds), *The House of Commons 1754-1790* (London, 1964), Vol. I, 303; and R.G. Thorne (ed.), *The House of Commons 1790-1820* (London, 1986), Vol. II, 193-4.

¹² O’Gorman, *Voters...*, 110 - Table 3.3.

electors – but unlike in Abingdon it was not free to ‘wheel and deal’ in relation to its seats; it had instead to heed its patrons’ voices. As Jeremy Black has commented of this period, ‘The views of the electors of Winchester were given little weight’.¹³ In the 1790s the Chandos interest passed by marriage to the Grenvilles and the Penton interest was sold to the Mildmays. After some friction, at the 1812 General Election and 1818 by-election; a quiet ‘power share’ emerged between the Grenville Duke of Buckingham and the Mildmay family. The general elections of 1818, 1820, 1826 and 1830 were uncontested with Paulet St John Mildmay holding his family’s seat in the Whig interest and Buckingham being represented by James Henry Leigh (1818-23) and Sir Edward Hyde East (1823-31) in the Tory interest.¹⁴ Prior to 1831 Winchester fitted well into the Namierite view of borough mongering politics.¹⁵

However even at the 1830 general election nomination evidence of the fracturing of politics, following Canning’s premiership¹⁶ and Wellington and Peel’s Catholic Emancipation, had emerged.¹⁷ Hyde East’s proposer, Littlehales, noted that East had often united with Mildmay in opposition to the Government in the last session.¹⁸ The next year saw both fear for civil order in the wake of the ‘Swing Riots’ with calls for Mildmay to head an armed protection force for the city; and petitioning for Reform.¹⁹ By Winchester standards, a revolutionary event was seen on 2 May 1831– a general election contest in which political views and statements played a significant role.

In terms of O’Gorman’s taxonomy of English boroughs it fits very readily into his ‘patronage’ category on the eve of the 1832 Reform Act. This is a category which contained forty per cent of English boroughs and was by far the most numerous type. It was also far from

¹³ J. Black, ‘Winchester and its Patron: The Elections of 1783 and 1784’, *Proceedings of the Hampshire Field Club and Archaeological Society*, Vol. 46 (1991), 159.

¹⁴ For a fuller account of this period’s politics see R.J. Aldous, ‘Conservative Voters in Winchester 1832-41 – An Initial Assessment’, (unpublished MA dissertation, University of Winchester, 2009), 33-8.

¹⁵ As expounded in the seminal works L. Namier, *The Structure of Politics at the Accession of George III* (2nd Edition, London, 1957) and *England in the Age of the American Revolution* (2nd Edition, London, 1961).

¹⁶ R.A.Gaunt, ‘The Fourth Duke of Newcastle, the Ultra-Tories and the Opposition to Canning’s Administration’, *History*, Vol. 88, No. 292 (2003), 568-86. Interestingly given his role in Winchester politics; Gaunt categorises Buckingham, who supported Catholic Emancipation (unlike his son Chandos), as a ‘High Tory’ not an Ultra-Tory – Gaunt ‘The Fourth...’, 575.

¹⁷ For accounts of the 1830 General Election and the disintegration of the Wellington government see J. Cannon, *Parliamentary Reform 1640-1832* (Cambridge, 1972), and E.J.Evans, *The Forging of the Modern State: Early Industrial Britain 1783-1870* (3rd Edition, Harlow, 2001), 261-2.

¹⁸ HC 2 August 1830.

¹⁹ HC 14 February 1831 – both reported in the same edition.

unusual in being the subject of a 'compromise' agreement between two powerful interests with different political leanings. At the 1831 General Election Mildmay controversially cast a plump vote for his Tory opponent James Buller East, rather than his supposed fellow Reformer, William Bingham Baring. When challenged by his supporters he openly confessed to the existence of such an agreement. The *Hampshire Chronicle* reported that he 'admitted that an understanding had for some years subsisted with the Corporation that the Duke of Buckingham should return one Member for Winchester, and Lady Mildmay [his mother] the other, and in case of opposition they should unite.'²⁰

As elsewhere, the patrons' 'rights' to parliamentary nomination did not come cheap. A mere three examples of this 'cultivation' of the constituency follow. The mayor and aldermen had to be entertained at the Duke of Buckingham's local country seat. Venison, other game, wine and spirits for the feasts of various local societies had to be provided by both patrons. Money, bread, beer, coal and clothes were provided by the Mildmays for relief of the poor (and probably more importantly in terms of control of their parliamentary seat thereby the relief of those who paid poor rates).²¹

The Battle For The 'Great Reform Act' 1832

The genesis of, battle for and eventual passage of 'The Great Reform Act' of 1832 has been covered in many works.²² In Winchester, as already indicated²³, at the 1831 General Election the Reform issue exposed to public view the depth of the established 'power share' agreement. In fact it not only exposed it, but shattered it. For although Mildmay's supporters excused him, on the grounds that he 'had been influenced by a pledge...sanctioned by custom'; they also secured pledges from him that 'the coalition was severed' and that 'the compact between the Houses of Mildmay and Buckingham was dissolved.'²⁴

The period from 1830 to 1832 saw Winchester involved in many political and associated events in a way common to much of southern England. In November 1830 Swing riots swept through the vicinity and Winchester's patron, the Duke of Buckingham, formed what some historians have described as a near 'feudal levy' to defend his nearby estate at Avington.²⁵ In

²⁰ *Hampshire Chronicle* 9 May 1831. (hereafter *HC*.)

²¹ *HC* 13 February 1832, 24 October 1831 and 9 January 1832 respectively.

²² Brock, *The Great...* remains the best and most detailed account of the 'high politics' involved.

²³ See above on this page.

²⁴ *HC* 9 May 1831.

²⁵ E.J., Hobsbawm G. Rudé, *Captain Swing* (London, 1973 – revised edition), 92. For the local progress of the Swing riots see D. Kent, *Popular Radicalism and the Swing Riots in Central Hampshire*, Hampshire

December 1830 the Special Commission in Winchester tried 285 Swing rioters; 101 received capital sentences, of whom only three were executed.²⁶ Fears about civil disorder persisted into 1831 with calls in February for Mildmay, the representative of the other patron, to head an armed protection force for the city.²⁷

The publication of the Grey Ministry's first Reform Bill on 1 March 1831 shocked many erstwhile supporters of parliamentary reform in a non-specific form.²⁸ It appears that Mildmay shared in the shock of his fellow Whig MPs, such as John Campbell of Stafford who the next day in his diary wrote:

We are quite appalled. There is not the remotest chance of such a Bill being passed by this or any House of Commons...This really is a revolution...It is unquestionably a new constitution.

The general sentiment is that the measure goes a good deal too far. It is applauded by the Radicals and by *some* Whigs, but it is very distasteful to a great part of the Whig party.²⁹

For as late as the General Election in May 1831 following the Bill's Commons defeat on its Second Reading Mildmay refused to join the general clamour for the Bill as proposed by the Government. He declared himself to be in favour of crushing the 'worm' within the timber of the constitution; but he could not support 'the Bill, the whole Bill, and nothing but the Bill' (the popular cry at this election). His grounds were that the Bill had never been through its Committee Stage in the Commons. This would allow its amendment 'to remove his present objections'. However 'on its leading principles he had made up his mind' and wanted abolition of 'nomination to boroughs' and 'an extension of the elective franchise'. It appears that his stumbling block was the extent of disfranchisement of boroughs and the redistribution of their seats.

Mildmay's position on this appears to have been very close to that of the Tory candidate, East, who declared: 'With respect to the all engrossing Bill for a Reform in Parliament, he must at once confess he was not the strenuous advocate of that measure'. Nevertheless he

Papers 11 (Winchester, 1997) and B. Afton, "'A Want of Good Feeling": A Reassessment of the Economic and Political Causes of the Rural Unrest in Hampshire, 1830', *Proceedings of the Hampshire Field Club and Archaeological Society*, 43 (Winchester, 1987), 249-53.

²⁶ Hobsbawm and Rudé, *Captain....*, 220-1 and Appendix II.

²⁷ HC 14 February 1831.

²⁸ Brock, *The Great....*, 160-3.

²⁹ From *The Life of Lord John Campbell*, quoted in D.G. Wright, *Democracy and Reform 1815-1885*, (Harlow, 1970), 121.

claimed to seek 'total abolition of that system of corruption which was an innovation on the Constitution, and ought to be extinguished, whether detected in close boroughs or in rotten boroughs'. Moreover he was willing 'to admit the justice of the principle of extending the elective franchise to all large towns; but he was not one of those who advocated a violent spoliation of chartered rights, and, therefore could not agree to the great extension proposed by the Bill'.³⁰ Again disfranchisement of existing boroughs was East's key objection.

The Winchester-based *Hampshire Chronicle*, no doubt to retain readership³¹ among the widest possible respectable, newspaper reading, element of the population, rarely took an overt and firm political stance. However its selection of articles from other publications may be deemed to have a slight 'pro-Reform' bias. However shortly after the publication of the first Reform Bill it became as strident as it ever did in describing the Bill's proposals as 'this bold and comprehensive plan' which 'appears to be more extensive than was anticipated by the most zealous advocates of Reform'.³² It clearly shared the concerns of two of the three candidates at the subsequent General Election. It should be noted that the third, William Bingham Baring, was an avowed Reformer. He declared that dealing with the very worst boroughs, such as Gatton and Old Sarum, whilst leaving others untouched was not enough. He pointed to the denial by the Wellington Administration of the transfer of seats from East Retford to Birmingham – doubtless to question the Tory East's Reform credentials. He claimed that of twenty-six Hampshire MPs 'four alone were nominated by the people, and the remainder were returned through private interest'.³³

It was not only in the General Election of 1831 that Winchester saw the issue of parliamentary reform to the fore. In its rôle as county town Winchester played host to Hampshire's County Meetings, essentially gatherings of county freeholders summoned to consider great political issues, usually with a view to petitioning Parliament.³⁴ These meetings brought the major issues of the day into the public arena within Winchester. In the 1820s they were used by the Whigs as a tool in county politics. That of March 1830 on agricultural distress

³⁰ All references to these election speeches from HC 9 May 1831.

³¹ In 1835-6 it had an estimated circulation of 1,000 – Extract from July 1836 '*Companion to the Newspaper*', 136-7 contained in HRO bundle 3A00W/B7/1.

³² HC., 7 March 1831. Being Winchester-based the *Hampshire Chronicle* provides the most extensive coverage of events in Winchester. The Southampton based *Hampshire Advertiser* focuses upon that city, the Isle of Wight and Portsmouth often making only fleeting reference to Winchester events.

³³ HC 9 May 1831.

³⁴ R. Foster, *The Politics of County Power: Wellington and the Hampshire Gentlemen 1820-52* (Hemel Hempstead, 1990), 108-10.

was 'hijacked'; passing resolutions calling for Reform as a precondition of relief by malt tax abolition and reduced county rates.³⁵ 1831 saw two further county meetings in March and October – both were focused on Reform and addressed by Cobbett.³⁶ The first followed the publication of the first Reform Bill but preceded its narrow passage through its Second Reading in the Commons. The October meeting followed the rejection of the second Reform Bill by the Lords.

The citizenry of Winchester was not inactive on the Reform issue. In March 1831 'A numerous Meeting of the united parishes of St Mary Kalendar, St Maurice and St Peter Colebrook' was held at St John's House. It unanimously agreed resolutions 'declaring the necessity of a Reform in the national Representation, and expressing approbation of the measure introduced by Ministers to produce so desirable an object.' It agreed petitions agreed for presentation to the respective Houses of Parliament by the Earl of Radnor and Mildmay.³⁷

There were also less respectable manifestations of support for Reform. Following the controversial events at the General Election Mildmay was chaired in accordance with the usual requirements of election ritual. This was a relatively disorderly tradition which involved large numbers of the unenfranchised – often in a paid capacity.³⁸ East despite retaining his seat, perhaps wisely given the popular feelings about the result, declined a charring. What followed the same evening broke the accepted conventions of Winchester political behaviour by breaking its thick coating of deference. Figures labelled 'Mildmay the Rat' were paraded in coffins and burnt before the George Inn (presumably the location of his Committee Room) and Eastgate House (his mother's Winchester residence).³⁹

George Hollis, a Winchester attorney, secretary of the local Pitt Club and Tory election agent in the county at various points from 1806 to 1831, tried to place the blame for this action on Henry Carey Brown. Hollis was a supporter of the *ancien regime* in Winchester, having voted for Mildmay and East in the 1831 election.⁴⁰ From 1796 to 1823 he was county treasurer. Accusations as to his peculation of, or incompetence with, county funds rolled on into the

³⁵ Foster, *The Politics....*, 110-2.

³⁶ HC 21 March and 31 October 1831.

³⁷ HC 21 March 1831.

³⁸ F. O'Gorman, 'Campaign Rituals and Ceremonies: The Social Meaning of Elections in England 1780-1860', *Past and Present*, No. 135 (May, 1992), 89-91.

³⁹ HC 9 May 1831.

⁴⁰ From the *de facto* pollbook in Sixteenth Book of Ordinances W/B1/16..

1830s.⁴¹ This alone might cause concern as to the accuracy of his claims. Brown, an unenfranchised builder employing journeymen, went to considerable lengths (affadavits were sworn by his journeymen including one named by Hollis) to prove that neither he nor his journeymen nor his premises were involved in making the coffins, draping or bearing them in the procession.⁴²

Later in the less than salubrious Silver Hill area a Political Union was reported to meet at The Angel in January 1832.⁴³ It was probably more radical and lower class than those recorded by LoPatin as providing local 'police forces' during and after the burning of Nottingham Castle and the Bristol Riot of October 1831.⁴⁴ Those riots had followed the Second Reading defeat of the Second Reform Bill in the Lords on 8 October 1831. The majority for rejection of the measure was forty. Included in the majority were twenty-one bishops, who if they had voted with the Government would have carried the Bill by two votes.⁴⁵ Across the country bishops were physically attacked and burnt in effigy on Guy Fawkes night. Although the Bishop of Winchester's main residence was at Farnham Castle, which was barricaded, his somewhat dilapidated Wolvesey Palace adjacent to the Cathedral Close in Winchester was guarded.⁴⁶

The passage of the Third Reform Bill through its Third Reading in the Lords on 4 June 1832, following the King's agreement to create fifty to sixty Whig peers should they be required to secure its passage, was met with much celebration in Winchester. Unprecedented illuminations were put in place including 'well executed transparencies, exhibiting pictures of Earl Grey, others bearing inscriptions complimentary to his Majesty's Ministers, and some allegorical designs in allusion to the passing of the Reform Bill'. In the Cathedral Close the famously Tory Dean and Prebendaries illuminated their homes and ordered the Close gates to

⁴¹ For a full account and analysis of the Hollis case see R.E. Foster, 'The Decline and Fall of George Hollis: "Old Corruption" and Reform at Hampshire Quarter Sessions c. 1815-40', *Southern History*, Vol. 29 (2007), 59-82. For the continuing attempts to recover funds from Hollis etc. see for example HC 9 January 1832.

⁴² HC 23 and 30 May and 6 June 1831.

⁴³ HC 9 January 1832.

⁴⁴ It does not appear in the lists in N.D. LoPatin, *Political Unions, Popular Politics and the Great Reform Act of 1832* (Basingstoke, 1999), 57, 182 n. 57, 177 and 213 n7. For Nottingham see R.A. Gaunt, 'The Fourth Duke of Newcastle, the "Mob" and Election Contests in Nottinghamshire, 1818-1832', *Midland History*, Vol.33, No.2, (Autumn 2008),197. For Bristol see E.Pearce, *Reform: The Fight for the 1832 Reform Act* (London, 2003), 204-5 and J.A. Phillips, *The Great Reform Bill in the Boroughs: English Electoral Behaviour, 1818-1841* (Oxford, 1992), 66-71.

⁴⁵ Brock, *The Great...*, 246-7.

⁴⁶ O. Chadwick, *The Victorian Church Part 1* (London, 1966), 25-9 – citing the *Journal of Mary Frampton* in relation to Wolvesey Palace.

be kept open late to allow free access to and from the city centre. The claim that 'those gentlemen who were known to be adverse to the principle of the Reform Bill, or who were opposed to some of its minor details, exhibited not less splendid decorative emblems of rejoicing than its most strenuous advocates'⁴⁷ may well have reflected a desire to protect their property rather than to celebrate the Reform Act's passage into law.

What is clear is that Winchester was involved in the mainstream of political debate throughout 1831 and 1832. Despite its patrons it showed signs of new independence and new life. Admittedly this was not to the degree shown in places such as Nottingham, Derby and Bristol and in other, more peaceful, respects Birmingham and London. Nevertheless Winchester was not quiescent during the battles for Reform.

'The Great Reform Act?'

The first point to make about the so-called 'Great Reform Act' of 1832 is that it was in fact a group of five acts. These comprised 'An Act to amend the Representation of the People' and a Boundary Act for each of England and Wales, and Ireland and a single act for Scotland bearing the former title but including detailed descriptions of burgh boundaries.⁴⁸ The Representation of the People Act for England and Wales, which will be the focus of the ensuing analysis, had three major elements to it – a redistribution of seats, a new franchise system and the introduction of an annual process of electoral registration.

What this act failed to reflect, on the surface, was the continuation of a different borough system in Wales from that in England. In Wales after 1832 all 'boroughs', including Cardiff and the newly enfranchised Merthyr Tydfil,⁴⁹ were in fact borough districts comprising a number of towns, many of them quite small, extracted from the county. For example

⁴⁷ HC 18 June 1832.

⁴⁸ The Acts are 2 Will. IV c.45 (Representation - England and Wales) and 2 & 3 Will. IV c.88 (Representation - Ireland); 2 & 3 Will. IV c. 64 (Boundaries – England and Wales) and 2 & 3 Will. IV c. 89 (Boundaries – Ireland); and 2 & 3 Will. IV c. 65 (Scotland – boundaries defined in Schedule M). N. Gash, *Politics in the Age of Peel: A study in the Technique of Parliamentary Representation 1830-1850* (London, 1953), 34 and 67 is in error in indicating that there were six Acts. Extracts from 2 Will. IV c. 45 and 2 and 3 Will. IV c. 65 can be found at H.J. Hanham, *The Nineteenth Century Constitution: Documents and Commentary* (Cambridge, 1969), 262-70 (the latter Act however erroneously described as '2 Will. IV, c. 65').

⁴⁹ Dod, *Electoral...*, 47 and 212.

Montgomery District comprised Montgomery, Llanfyllin, Lanidloes, Machynlleth, Newtown and Welshpool. These were small towns up to thirty miles apart.⁵⁰ By comparison English boroughs generally comprised a single city or town with a boundary enclosing only adjacent areas.⁵¹ English counties and county divisions consequently differed from Welsh county constituencies in that they provided the sole avenue to the franchise for inhabitants of the smaller market towns. If Hampshire had been in Wales, places such as Alton, Basingstoke, Fareham, Gosport, New Alresford, Odiham, Romsey, Stockbridge and Whitchurch would probably have been grouped into such a borough district with Andover or/and Winchester. This would have made the North and South divisions of the county even more landed, agricultural and rural in nature than they were. Although different in this regard from their Welsh counterparts English counties remained quite distinct from English boroughs. They had a different set of franchises and a different electoral registration system. In consequence when the English and Irish university seats are taken into account there were nine or ten distinct electoral systems in operation in the British Isles from late 1832. Their relative weight (in seats) is shown in **Table 3.4 below**.

Table 3.4: Distribution of Seats by 'Electoral System' 1832

	<u>Counties</u>		<u>Boroughs</u>		<u>Universities</u>		<u>Total</u>	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
England	142	21.6	322	48.9	4	0.6	468	71.1
Ireland	64	9.7	39	5.9	2	0.3	105	16.0
Scotland	30	4.6	23	3.5	0	0.0	53	8.1
Wales	17	2.6	15	2.3	0	0.0	32	4.9
Total	253	38.4	399	60.6	6	0.9	658	100.0

Source: Brock, 310-1. With erroneous inclusion of Monmouthshire, Monmouth Borough District and Merthyr Tydfil in England, not Wales, corrected in accordance with cross-checking with Dod and *McCalmont*.

⁵⁰ Dod, *Electoral...*, 218.

⁵¹ Gash, *Politics...*, 67-72.

The striking features of **Table 3.4** are that it shows that over 70 per cent of Commons seats were for English constituencies and over 60 per cent were borough seats. Moreover almost 70 per cent of English seats were for boroughs. This suggests that the key electoral battleground to determine the political shade of the British Government was likely to have been the English boroughs, which had almost half the seats in the Commons.

Of the 322 English borough MPs after the 1832 Reform measures⁵² 220 were from continuing two-seat boroughs, such as Winchester. They were, in this respect, unchanged from before Reform. Only forty-four were from new two-seat boroughs such as Manchester and Brighton. Another 142 MPs represented the English counties⁵³ where despite the addition of seats and division of most counties (including the separation of the Isle of Wight from Hampshire) there was considerable continuity. These latter with the 220 from continuing English two-seat boroughs constituted a majority of the House of Commons. Moreover there were also four members for the City of London, as before 1832, and thirty for the Schedule B boroughs which had lost one of their two members. In these latter the dynamics of representation might well have changed – for instance a ‘power share’ between patrons was now only possible by some arrangement such as alternating nomination election to election. But the borough had a continuity of representation and some form of political heritage. The three single-seat boroughs surviving in that state as before 1832⁵⁴ represented further continuity. This combination of continuing, but single-seat boroughs far out-weighted the nineteen new single-seat boroughs such as Salford and Cheltenham.⁵⁵ Overall 80 per cent (259 out of 322) of English borough MPs represented boroughs whose representation had continued through the Reforms of 1832. Continuity of parliamentary representation, as in the case of Winchester, was very much the norm.

The distribution of the 322 English borough seats continued to show a distinct bias towards the southern part of the country. 58 per cent (187 out of 322) of English borough MPs

⁵² The total of 324 at Brock, *The Great...*, 310 includes Merthyr Tydfil and Monmouth District in the English total. Whatever the niceties of Monmouthshire having been deemed part of England from 1536 the substance is that it was by nature a Welsh borough district comprising the towns of Monmouth, Newport and Usk, *McCalmont's Parliamentary Poll Book of All Elections 1832-1918* (8th ed., Brighton, 1971), 206. Merthyr Tydfil was in the distinctly Welsh county of Glamorgan.

⁵³ Brock, *The Great...*, 310 includes Monmouthshire in his figure of 144.

⁵⁴ Abingdon, Banbury and Bewdley. Brock, *The Great...*, 310 includes Monmouth District in this category.

⁵⁵ Brock includes Merthyr Tydfil in his total for this category.

after 1832 sat for boroughs south of a line from the Severn to the Wash.⁵⁶ In terms of two-seat boroughs with representation continuing from before 1832 the southern bias was slightly stronger with 62 per cent (69 out of 111) being in the South. Winchester was one of these southern boroughs.

In terms of the size of its electorate Winchester in 1832 with 537 registered electors had an electorate which ranked twenty-eighth in ascending order or forty-second in descending order of magnitude amongst such southern boroughs. The median electorate in this group was 720. Winchester was therefore in the central third of the spectrum of electorate size amongst these boroughs. It can be seen as quite representative of this group.⁵⁷

So far the assertions made as to the importance of the English boroughs in determining the political shade of the Government has not been put to the test. The twelve General Elections from 1832 to 1880 inclusive only twice, in 1841 and 1874, yielded an overall Commons majority for the Conservative Party. Whilst this statement is undisputed by any historian the precise number with firm allegiance to a party at any time in the period is far less certain. Some MPs, particularly early in the period, continued the tradition of proclaiming their independence from 'party'. Most of these, particularly in the county divisions, could be regarded with a reasonable degree of confidence, as Tory or Conservative.⁵⁸ The Radicals can at one level be regarded as the opposite wing of the Liberal Party from the Whigs. However they often voted against Whig/Liberal governments and moved motions, such as for the ballot or the abolition of church rates, which embarrassed such governments.⁵⁹

From 1846 until just after the 1859 General Election the existence of a relatively ill-defined Peelite grouping, distinct from the majority of the former Conservative party, further complicated matters. In that period there was also the additional complication of the use of the

⁵⁶ The line of most northerly counties included in 'the South' here are Gloucestershire, Oxfordshire, Northamptonshire, Huntingdonshire, Cambridgeshire and Norfolk. For details see Appendix 5 of Aldous, 'Conservative...'

⁵⁷ It should however be noted that the northern group of boroughs retaining both their former seats tended to have larger electorates such that Winchester ranked thirty-sixth in ascending order or seventy-sixth in descending order of magnitude in the combined group of 111 boroughs (median electorate 851). It was therefore just below the divide between the lower and central thirds of the combined spectrum.

⁵⁸ E.J.Evans, *The Forging...*, 488.

⁵⁹ B. Hilton, *A Mad, Bad and Dangerous People?: England 1783-1846* (Oxford, 2006), 517-9. See D.H.Close, 'The Elections of 1835 and 1837 in England and Wales' (unpublished DPhil thesis, Oxford, 1967), 209-12 for a definition of the Radical and other strands on the 'Whig' benches after 1832.

label 'Protectionist' by some candidates and MPs; and of 'Conservative', 'Free Trade Conservative' and Liberal Conservative by others.⁶⁰ This at a time when, those we would label as, 'Peelites' were laying claim to being the bearers of the true flame of the Conservative party, so often seen as established by the Tamworth Manifesto and the actions of the Peel Governments of 1834-5 and 1841-6.

On top of these complications must be laid that of the 105 Irish MPs 'who rejected precise English political labels'.⁶¹ In most calculations of House of Commons strengths O'Connellites, the Independent Irish grouping and Parnellite Home Rulers are counted in Liberal party numbers. In general this aligns with the party from which they could expect most on Irish issues. Nevertheless, even when in alliance with the Whig government, as under the Lichfield House Compact of 1835, the O'Connellites could be just as unruly bedfellows as the Radicals. The problems that the Parnellite Home Rulers, and later the Irish Nationalists, brought to Gladstone and the Liberal party in the 1880s and 1890s are well known.

Analysis of General Election results between 1832 and 1865 shows that the Conservative party's hopes for success relied heavily upon England. For, whether in its pre-1846 or subsequent Derbyite form, it never achieved a majority of the seats in the Celtic nations. (See **Table 3.5 below.**) Its majority in Wales at General Elections from 1835 to 1841 and 1857 to 1859 was largely irrelevant given the small number of Welsh seats. Its majority in Ireland in 1859 was marginal and out of keeping with its general performance there.⁶²

⁶⁰ For example see J.B. Conacher, *The Peelites and the Party System 1846-52* (Newton Abbot, 1972), 30-1.

⁶¹ Evans, *The Forging...*, 488. This overview of the position in the Commons owes much to the succinct notes in this reference.

⁶² In arriving at these figures the maximum number of 'Peelites' have been assumed in 1847 (118) and 1852 (72) using the appendices in Conacher, 230-5. In both cases the winners of subsequent by-elections have been excluded. In 1852 three who were unseated on petition have been included in accordance with the general policy followed throughout that figures are taken as at completion of the General Election round. Additionally two who subsequent to the election declared themselves Liberals have been included. Both in Conacher, 30. As the individuals listed could be relied upon by neither Stanley/Derby and Disraeli nor by Russell and Palmerston they are taken as the initial putative Peelite strength in the Commons. As there is no readily available source for Peelite membership in 1857 and 1859 and they effectively joined the Whig/Liberal Government immediately after the 1859 General Election, no adjustment is made to the figures for those years. It is appreciated that this may lead to some overstatement of Conservative strength. Nevertheless given the source used is *McCalmont...* which shows many Peelites such as Cardwell and Gladstone as Liberals in 1859 (*McCalmont...*, 228-9) this overstatement in that year is likely to be slight if any. Evans, *The Forging...*, 487 indicates a much diminished Peelite strength in 1857 (27) and 1859 (23) albeit he starts from a lower base (1847 - 91).

Table 3.5: Conservative Performance in the Celtic Nations 1832-1865

	<u>Seats</u>	<u>1832</u>	<u>1835</u>	<u>1837</u>	<u>1841</u>	<u>1847</u>	<u>1852</u>	<u>1857</u>	<u>1859</u>	<u>1865</u>
Ireland	105	33	40	33	43	32	37	48	55	49
Scotland	53	10	15	20	22	8	12	16	15	12
Wales	32	14	18	19	21	12	15	19	17	14
Total	190	57	73	72	86	52	64	83	87	75
%		30.0	38.4	37.9	45.3	27.4	33.7	43.7	45.8	39.5

Source: Analysis based upon constituency entries in *McCalmont*. Excludes Peelites and those of doubtful allegiance to Derby based on Conacher, 230-5 in 1847 and 1852.

However when attention is turned to the Conservative performance in England (**Table 3.6 below**) a different picture emerges. Except in 1832 and 1857 (the latter by a very narrow margin) it was better in England, and more often than not considerably better. For the purposes of this analysis borough constituencies have been divided into 'Large' and 'Small' categories based upon the electorate for 1832 given in *McCalmont*. 'Large' boroughs are those with 1,000 or more electors in that year. Unlike Taylor's study, and to a lesser extent Jaggard's, boroughs are neither promoted from 'Small' to 'Large' during the period nor demoted for loss of electorate.⁶³ What is clear is that the Conservatives secured a majority of English county seats at all General Elections other than the 'Reform' election of 1832. However given the numbers involved this was never a firm enough basis upon which to build a Commons majority. That was only achieved in 1841 when they achieved a majority in the 'Small' boroughs whilst still being in a minority in the 'Celtic nations' and the 'Large' boroughs. So it would appear that it was the electorate of the English counties and 'Small' boroughs which determined whether or not the Conservatives secured a Commons majority. Winchester was one of those small English boroughs.

⁶³ M. Taylor, 'Interests, parties and the ste: the urban electorate in England, c. 1820-72' in J. Lawrence and M. Taylor (eds), *Party, State and Society: Electoral Behaviour in Britain since 1820* (Aldershot, 1997), 54 note 21. E. Jaggard, 'Small Town Politics in Mid-Victorian Britain', *History*, Vol. 89, No. 293, January 2004, 8, Table 2.

Table 3.6: Conservative Performance in England 1832-1865

	<u>Seats</u>	<u>1832</u>	<u>1835</u>	<u>1837</u>	<u>1841</u>	<u>1847</u>	<u>1852</u>	<u>1857</u>	<u>1859</u>	<u>1865</u>
Counties	142	41	73	99	122	92	106	91	97	96
Boroughs	322	77	133	139	156	71	101	107	117	122
'Large'	131	23	49	50	52	21	29	35	37	41
'Small'	191	54	84	89	104	50	72	72	80	81
Universities	4	4	4	4	4	2	2	4	3	4
Total	468	122	210	242	282	165	209	202	217	222
%		26.1	44.9	51.7	60.3	35.4	45.0	43.5	46.8	47.4

Source: Analysis based upon constituency entries in *McCalmont*. Excludes Peelites and those of doubtful allegiance to Derby based on Conacher, 230-5 in 1847 and 1852.

The number of seats varied slightly with disfranchisement for corruption and piecemeal enfranchisement. Borough seats fell to 320 in 1847 and 318 in 1852 rising to 319 in 1865. County seats rose to 145 in 1865.

Bold = Majority in Category

Both Caroline Jackson and Edwin Jaggard have pointed out that 'small' English boroughs were the focus of the efforts of the party organisers of both parties in the 1850s and 1860s.⁶⁴ In his article Jaggard argued that 'these [small] towns, which elected almost one-third of the membership of the House of Commons, exhibited a far more vibrant political milieu than was previously thought.'⁶⁵ As illustrated above, he also pointed out that 'Only twice between 1832 and 1880, in 1841 and 1874, did the Conservatives manage to win a majority of small town seats, and on both occasions they returned to government...the Pontefracts, Banburys and Winchesters were therefore crucial, and they were generally Liberal strongholds.'⁶⁶

⁶⁴ C.F. Jackson, 'The British General Elections of 1857 and 1859', (Unpublished D. Phil. Thesis, Oxford, 1980), 33, 36 and 40; and E. Jaggard, 'Small Town Politics in Mid-Victorian Britain', *History*, Vol. 89, No. 293, January 2004, 3 and 7. Jaggard's definition of a small borough is more fluid than that used here – See p. 77 above.

⁶⁵ Jaggard 'Small Town...', 3.

⁶⁶ Jaggard 'Small Town...', 7.

An examination of the number of contested constituencies also points to the importance of small English boroughs to the Conservatives, in both the fighting of a General Election and its outcome. **Table 3.7 below** shows that other than in 1832 and 1837 (in the

Table 3.7: Uncontested Seats England 1832-1865

<u>Seats</u>	<u>1832</u>	<u>1835</u>	<u>1837</u>	<u>1841</u>	<u>1847</u>	<u>1852</u>	<u>1857</u>	<u>1859</u>	<u>1865</u>	
Counties	142	47	92	70	100	117	84	89	113	89
Boroughs	322	67	86	69	104	125	81	120	126	86
'Large'	131	12	18	10	30	31	21	30	38	25
'Small'	191	55	68	59	74	94	60	90	88	61
Universities	4	4	4	4	4	0	2	4	4	2
Total	468	118	182	143	208	242	167	213	243	177
%		25.2	38.9	30.6	44.4	51.9	36.0	45.9	52.4	37.8

Source: Analysis based upon constituency entries in *McCalmont*.

The number of seats varied slightly with disfranchisement for corruption and piecemeal enfranchisement. Borough seats fell to 320 in 1847 and 318 in 1852 rising to 319 in 1865. County seats rose to 145 in 1865.

Bold = Majority in Category

latter case only by the narrowest of margins) the vast majority of county seats were uncontested. This was especially so in 1841 and what might be termed 'the great non-General Elections' of 1847 and 1859. Indeed many Conservative gains, such as of the North Devon seats in 1837 and 1841, were achieved through prior registration activity rather than contested elections.⁶⁷

Although the Conservatives contested between 70 and 90 per cent of 'Large' Borough seats, they yielded relatively little for them. Perhaps these boroughs, such as Manchester as

⁶⁷ Salmon, *Electoral...*, 146-56.

Brighton, were contested for reasons of prestige or uncertainty given the size of the electorate. At their peak in 1841 the Conservatives won only 40 per cent of them.⁶⁸ However of the 'Small' boroughs seats some 30 to 50 per cent were uncontested.

'Our County and Cathedral towns may ...be fairly regarded as the representatives of the wealth and intelligence which gravitate naturally to such local centres.'⁶⁹ This statement made in a paper of 1859, prepared under the direction of Disraeli, drew the attention of the Conservative Cabinet to a group of borough constituencies far removed from those, such as Manchester and Birmingham, which feature so heavily in many narratives of the changes wrought by the 1832 Reform. These boroughs (including by definition Winchester) identified in the paper for the Derby-Disraeli Cabinet, represented both a putative area of advance for the Conservatives and a strong element of continuity in the electoral system from before 1832.

An examination of the boroughs, including Winchester, which were cathedral towns or cities⁷⁰ reveals a wide range of electorates in 1832 from 358 (Wells) to 10,309 (Bristol). These returned forty MPs, equally divided between 'Small' and 'Large' Boroughs. These boroughs were an area of progress for the Conservatives between 1832 and 1841; their seats rising from five to eighteen. Moreover these seats were mainly won in contested elections. An average of only 29 per cent of cathedral seats went uncontested between 1832 and 1865. This was in line with the overall level for English boroughs. The advance was even between 'Small' and 'Large' cathedral boroughs, although on many occasions far fewer 'Small' cathedral boroughs were contested.

Turning to county town boroughs⁷¹ which were not cathedral boroughs, these returned forty-seven MPs, of whom twenty-one represented 'Small' boroughs. Their electorates in 1832

⁶⁸ See Table 3.6 above.

⁶⁹ Disraeli MSS (Dep Hughenden) 43/2/7, pp. 4-5 (undated but one of a set the first of which refers to Bright's proposals of January 1859).

⁷⁰ Taken as Bristol, Canterbury, Carlisle, Chester, Chichester, Durham, Exeter, Gloucester, Hereford, Lichfield, Lincoln, Norwich, Oxford, Peterborough, Rochester, Salisbury, Wells, Winchester, Worcester and York. Gloucester and Bristol have both been included as historic cathedral cities despite being united into a single diocese in 1836. Ripon and Manchester created as dioceses in 1836 and 1847 have been excluded as lacking the heritage and culture of established cathedral seats. The City of London has been omitted despite the presence of St Pauls given the unique features of the seat (four members and the liveryman franchise). Moreover it was by no means the whole city being but a small part of the metropolis which contained other boroughs (Westminster, Southwark, Tower Hamlets). Some cathedral cities, such as Ely, were not parliamentary boroughs.

⁷¹ Taken here as Abingdon, Aylesbury, Bedford, Bodmin, Buckingham, Cambridge, Derby, Dorchester, Guildford, Hertford, Huntingdon, Ipswich, Lancaster, Leicester, Lewes, Maidstone, Newport (Isle of

ranged from 252 (Bodmin) to 5,220 (Nottingham). In these constituencies the Conservatives started from a much higher base. For in 1832 they won 32 per cent (fifteen) of these seats as opposed to 13 per cent of those for cathedral boroughs. This left less scope for gains. Nevertheless in 1841 57 per cent (twenty-seven) were won. The Conservative performance in the 'Small' boroughs of this type was better in 1832, with 43 per cent (nine) of the seats won. This left less scope for progress. Nevertheless in 1841 62 per cent (thirteen) of these seats were won, compared to 54 per cent (fourteen) in the 'Large' boroughs.

These county towns were more heavily contested than either cathedral boroughs or boroughs in general. Between 1832 and 1865 only 23 per cent of seats went uncontested. However a considerably higher proportion of 'Small' boroughs were uncontested. Winchester was both a cathedral city and the county town of Hampshire so fits into this grouping. As a borough with a small electorate it was part of the narrow minority in the combined group.

Given the strength of the Conservative party in county constituencies, those boroughs with significant rural areas might be seen as a potential area of advance. Norman Gash identified a category of 'bastard constituencies' or 'small "ruralized" boroughs'. He then listed thirty-five, such as Wilton and Wallingford, which were significantly enlarged in 1832 so as to meet the criteria required for continued enfranchisement.⁷² These boroughs therefore embraced large rural areas and to some degree, largely having a single seat, presaged the county divisions established in 1885. Of these three (Bodmin, Buckingham and Huntingdon) are already included in the group of county town boroughs. Of the remaining thirty-two 'Enlarged' boroughs only one, Beverley, crosses the 'Large' borough threshold and only marginally. So these are essentially 'Small' boroughs. Of their forty-one seats the Conservatives captured twelve (29 per cent) in 1832. In 1841 they took twenty-three (56 per cent). However these 'Enlarged' boroughs were not the scene of many contests an average of 53 per cent being uncontested between 1832 and 1865 inclusive.

Wight), Northampton, Nottingham, Shrewsbury, Stafford, Taunton, Truro and Warwick. County towns already included in cathedral boroughs, such as Norwich and Worcester, are excluded. Buckinghamshire is taken as in a transition with functions split between Aylesbury and Buckingham. Sussex is taken as having two foci for county activities – Lewes and Chichester (already included in cathedral boroughs). Newport has been included as the centre for the increasingly independent Isle of Wight with its unique single seat county division. Some county towns, such as Chelmsford and Appleby, were not parliamentary boroughs.

⁷² Gash, *Politics...*, 72-3 and 432-3.

As can be seen from **Table 3.8 below** cathedral and county town boroughs accounted for almost a third of Conservative gains in all boroughs from 1832 to 1841 whilst representing a little over a quarter of all borough seats. They therefore 'punched above their weight' in achieving electoral progress for the Conservatives. On the other hand the significantly enlarged boroughs contributed much more closely to their electoral weight. The electorate of Winchester, which as both a cathedral city and county town was one of this key group of boroughs for the Conservative party, is well worthy of study forming as it did part of that segment of the overall electorate which directly by its votes determined the colour of the British Government.⁷³ Moreover Winchester had an 1832 electorate which placed it in the 'Small'

Table 3.8: Conservative Performance in Selected English Boroughs 1832-1865

	<u>Seats</u>	<u>1832</u>	<u>1835</u>	<u>1837</u>	<u>1841</u>	<u>1847</u>	<u>1852</u>	<u>1857</u>	<u>1859</u>	<u>1865</u>
Boroughs	322	77	133	139	156	71	101	107	117	122
Of Which:										
'Large'	131	23	49	50	52	21	29	35	37	41
'Small'	191	54	84	89	104	50	72	72	80	81
Cathedrals	40	5	16	16	18	9	10	11	9	11
County Town	47	15	24	24	27	12	14	17	21	18
Enlarged	41	12	17	19	23	13	16	17	18	17

Source: Analysis based upon constituency entries in *McCalmont*. Excludes Peelites and those of doubtful allegiance to Derby based on Conacher, 230-5 in 1847 and 1852.

Bold = Majority in Category

⁷³ The argument, summarised in Cunningham, *The Challenge...*, 59-60, that the power to make or break a government in the mid-Victorian period lay more with the House of Commons than the electorate is recognised. However the electorate collectively determined the composition of the Commons and thereby created the options available to it for government formation.

Borough category so important to Conservative success in 1841. It is noteworthy that only twice between 1832 and 1880 did Winchester return two Conservative MPs – in 1841 and 1874, both years in which a majority Conservative administration was formed.

The focus so far has been on the distribution and redistribution of seats and to what degree they were contested with the size of the electorate only used as a means of categorization. But what had happened to the electorate? The greatest variation in continuity and change in English boroughs across the 1832 Reform divide was found in the size and composition of the electorate. The franchise changes relating to residence; payment of rates and assessed taxes; and registration, including the 'registration shilling' added to rate bills, reduced the electorate in many of the previously more 'open' boroughs. Although this was not necessarily immediate, as subject to residence 'historic rights' could be retained. For example the electorate of Preston fell from 6,300⁷⁴ prior to 1832 to 2,854 in 1852 but at the first post Reform Act election stood at 6,352.⁷⁵ However, overall the English borough electorate grew immediately as a consequence of the new £10 householder franchise by about forty per cent.⁷⁶ Growth in a borough's electorate as a consequence of the 1832 Reform was the far more typical experience. In Winchester's case the electorate rose from a nominal 132 freemen in 1831⁷⁷, 64 of whom were said to be resident;⁷⁸ to 537 resident freemen and £10 householders in 1832.⁷⁹ These are increases of 307 per cent on a nominal, and 739 per cent on a resident, basis.

A further element of change for most boroughs under the 1832 Boundary Act was the redefinition, or in some cases (such as Winchester) the definition of boundaries for the purposes of parliamentary elections. This was necessitated by the requirement that those qualifying to vote in a borough were to reside within seven miles of it. The boundary was emblematic of the significant amount of change contained within the 1832 Reform and presaged by it. Instead of using the corporation boundaries, which for Winchester broadly followed the old city walls; or the long established boundaries of parishes and extra-parochial areas the Boundary Commissioners drew straight lines between prominent geographical features such as turnpikes,

⁷⁴ J. Cannon, *Parliamentary....*, (Cambridge, 1972), 42 n2.

⁷⁵ Dod, *Electoral....*, 255 and *McCalmont....*, 241.

⁷⁶ Evans, *Forging....*, 483.

⁷⁷ Sixteenth Book of Ordinances W/B1/16.

⁷⁸ HC 9 May 1831.

⁷⁹ *McCalmont....*, 321.

the corners of woods and Winnall church tower. This boundary sliced through eight parishes and extra-parochial areas whilst wholly encompassing another eight.⁸⁰ This new parliamentary borough boundary was shortly thereafter adopted for the reformed municipal corporation under the 1835 Municipal Reform Act.⁸¹

There has been considerable debate as to whether the 1832 Reform increased the number of seats contested. This formed part of the Beales:O’Gorman exchange of 1992-3⁸² however the use in that exchange of the 1859 election as an ‘end marker’ may well be misleading as that election took place only two years after its immediate predecessor, so candidates’ purses may have been depleted,⁸³ and is compared with 1826, an election following a six-year Parliament. In Winchester, as will be seen, there was immense change on this front with every election from 1832 to 1865 contested compared with only four in the century from 1715.⁸⁴ It will later be argued that this level of contestation arose in large part from the introduction of annual electoral registration; compounded from 1836 by annual municipal elections and their associated, separate, registration round. These annual political events provided plentiful opportunities for politically inspired clashes; and ensured that the *ad hoc* election committees of candidates were replaced by more permanent party organisations. They also played a key role in shaping the nature of the Winchester elector of this period.

The Case for ‘Winchester Man’

It has been established above that Winchester has a very strong claim as a two-seat borough, in southern England, which retained that representation through the Reforms of 1832; had a relatively small electorate, but one considerably expanded by the franchise reform of 1832; and was a cathedral city and county town, to be viewed as representative of the key sector of constituencies for the return of a majority Conservative Government in the period from 1832 to 1867. In twenty-first century political terminology Winchester might be viewed as a ‘key marginal’.

⁸⁰ For a description extracted from the Boundary Act see HRO W/A4/34 and for a map showing the relationship to parish etc boundaries see Gale’s 1836 Map of Winchester - HRO 11M59/E2/7694.

⁸¹ HC, 27 February 1832 and 25 April 1836 – the two boundary descriptions almost match word for word.

⁸² D. Beales, ‘The Electorate before and after 1832: the Right to Vote, and the Opportunity’, *Parliamentary History*, Vol. 11 (1) (1992), 149 and F. O’Gorman, ‘The Electorate Before and after 1832: A Reply’, *Parliamentary History*, Vol. 12 (2) (1993), 177-8.

⁸³ Jackson, ‘The British...’, 227-8.

⁸⁴ See p. 65 above.

The 1850s Conservative leadership targeted boroughs with the characteristics of Winchester. Evidence for this appears to be contained in the 1859 Election Diary of Sir Philip Rose, who was the *de facto* national agent of the party. The diary was largely written in pencil and efforts made to erase the contents, perhaps to avoid charges for corruption under the 1854 Corrupt Practices Act. The diary is accompanied by a typescript note by someone who has made strenuous efforts to decipher the remaining pencil traces. The note also includes the following interpretation of its contents:

The notebooks contain, on pages 23 to 30, some lists of names, both of people and of places, with amounts of money attached to them.

There has been a deliberate attempt to erase the lists, which were written in pencil.

The lists may refer to money coming in or money going out (much more likely the latter since it would be odd to record incoming money from places, and at any rate it is most unlikely that donations to the central fund came from outside the parliamentary party). Therefore, these lists probably refer to money spent by the party in 1859.

But they could also be simply amounts requested, not necessarily granted by the party. Or they could be agents' advice of how much money required from the party by candidates. Or they could be a record of amounts which candidates or local parties were prepared to put up on account.

The lists are not necessarily complete. If they are, it is noticeable how few constituencies had financial relations with the central organisation'

Two of the lists contain references to Winchester with the sums of £300 and £200 attached. In these lists Winchester is in the company of other boroughs of a similar genre such as Bedford, Bridport, Chester, Lewes, Salisbury, Taunton and Worcester – once more a distinctly southern bias is obvious in the lists.⁸⁵

In the late-twentieth and early twenty-first centuries there has been a trend to come up with an archetype of the key group of voters in target constituencies. Terms such as 'pebbledash man' and 'Holby City woman' have been used but more apposite here are 'Essex Man', 'Mondeo Man' and 'Worcester Woman'.⁸⁶ With the Conservative targeting of Winchester, and its ilk,

⁸⁵ Sir Philip Rose's Election Diary 1859 – Bodleian MS.Eng. Hist. e. 343. The references to Winchester are on pp. 23-4.

⁸⁶ For descriptions see M. Streeter, 'Election '97: This time, prime target is Mondeo Man', *The Independent*, 10 April 1997 and D. Hamilton '[Constituency Profile of] Worcester' in G. Callus and I. Dale, *The Total Politics Guide to the 2010 General Election* (London, 2009), 194.

there is a strong case for the comparable mid-nineteenth-century archetype to be viewed as 'Winchester Man'.

But what were the determinants of the electoral behaviour of 'Winchester Man'? An understanding of the environment within which he lived and voted would contribute to answering this question. This environment is addressed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4

THE ENVIROMENT OF 'WINCHESTER MAN' : HIS BOROUGH CONTEXT

This chapter explores the context within which 'Winchester Man' lived and voted. Using the case study example of Winchester it addresses the role and nature of the city and borough. First it considers the role and influence of the cathedral and Anglican Church in Winchester, this is the aspect which probably provided Winchester's major links to the national scene. It proceeds to address another major influence in the city, that of Winchester College. The city's fortunes and its socio-economic position are then considered. The position of Winchester as an administrative centre for the county of Hampshire is then examined. Finally the political context of Winchester is addressed.

The Position of Winchester in Hampshire and Beyond

Winchester has a long history stretching from Iron Age settlements either side of the River Itchen; through a period as Venta Belgarum, a Roman *civitas* or regional administrative centre; thence to become capital of Saxon Wessex (also briefly of England) and the location of a minster. The Norman Conquest was followed by construction of the cathedral priory and, two centuries later, by St Cross Hospital and Winchester College.¹ The architectural representations of two major influences favouring the Conservative cause throughout the period, the Cathedral Chapter and the College, were thus in place from a very early date.

The Bishop, Diocese, Dean and Chapter

In the eighteenth century Winchester diocese was much sought after by senior clerics and gained only by translation from a lesser see.² Both Richard Willis (1723-34) and Brownlow North (1781-1820) were politically well connected – the latter the half-brother of the Prime

¹ The definitive brief modern history of Winchester is T.B. James, *Winchester: From Prehistory to the Present* (Extended and Revised Edition, Stroud, 2007). Other general histories of the city are B.B. Woodward, *A History and Description of Winchester* (Winchester, c1860 – reprinted Alresford, 1974) – a typically antiquarian Victorian work - and B. Carpenter Turner, *A History of Winchester* (Chichester, 1992).

² For a list of Winchester's bishops and their previous sees, see Woodward, *A History...*, 123-127; for an example of the desirability of Winchester see W.R. Ward, (ed.) *Parson and Parish in Eighteenth-Century Hampshire: Replies to Bishops' Visitations* (Winchester, 1995 - being Volume XIII in the *Hampshire Record Series*), x.

Minister, Lord North. North's family were well provided for; when he died 'the chapter was something of a family club, since two sons, two sons-in-law and three more distant relatives all held stalls there'.³ Equally well politically connected was Pitt's former tutor, Bishop Sir George Pretymen Tomline, Bart. (1821-27).⁴ He secured a stall for his son, George Thomas Pretymen to add to his chancellorship of Lincoln Cathedral and three lucrative livings.⁵ Although by the 1850s Prebendary Pretymen was seen as 'something of a relic of a bygone age... [who] still gave great dinners at Winchester and equipped his servants with yellow livery'; he did pay some attention to his duties – splitting his year into three months at Winchester, three at Lincoln and the rest in his parishes.⁶ This was a lifestyle which led to his inclusion on the electoral register, together with other canons, being challenged. The challenges were unsuccessful; both before Winchester's revising barristers in 1835, on the basis that 'their houses were unoccupied except during their official and occasional residences',⁷ and in 1836 before the Mayor when the municipal electoral register was revised.⁸

Besides the extensive patronage it gave him,⁹ Winchester was, for its bishop, a rich and lucrative diocese. The Ecclesiastical Revenue Commissioners' Report of 1835 showed the

³ P. Barrett, *Barchester: English Cathedral Life in the Nineteenth Century* (London, 1993), 7.

⁴ For an outline of Bishop Tomline's career see G.M. Ditchfield, 'Tomline, Sir George Pretymen Tomline, fifth baronet, (1750-1827)', *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/>, accessed 10 July 2009. For the elevation of politically well connected tutors such as Pretymen and Huntingford, Bishop of Gloucester (1802-15), then Bishop of Hereford (1815-32) and Warden of Winchester College (1789-1832) see F.M.L. Thompson, *English Landed Society*, 82-5; C.W. Holgate (ed.), *Winchester Commoners 1800-1835* (Salisbury, 1893), 36; and T.F. Kirby, *Annals of Winchester College* (Winchester, 1892), 416.

⁵ *The Clergy List For 1845* (London, 1845, published by C.Cox), 236 (in Second Section) shows Pretymen's appointments (with year of appointment, patronage and annual values obtained from diocesan and parish entries): Chancellor of Lincoln Cathedral (1814, Bishop of Lincoln, £268); Rector of Chalfont St. Giles (1814, Bishop of Lincoln, £615); Rector of Wheathampstead with Harpenden (1814, Bishop of Lincoln, £1356); Perpetual Curate of Nettleham (1814, Chancellor of Lincoln Cathedral, no value given); and Canon/Prebendary of Winchester (1825, Bishop of Winchester, no value given). To give these incomes some context agricultural weekly wages in Hampshire were 10/4d in 1833 and 9/6d in 1837 – K.D.M. Snell, *Annals of the Labouring Poor: Social Change and Agrarian England 1660-1900* (Cambridge, 1985), 130.

⁶ Barrett, *Barchester...*, 6-7.

⁷ *Hampshire Chronicle* (hereafter *HC*), 28 September 1835.

⁸ *HC* 17 October 1836.

⁹ The Bishop of Winchester appointed to 67 livings (13 of them in other dioceses) ranging in value from over £1000 to less than £100 per annum – *The Clergy...*, 306 (in Second Section). These are listed (as 63 entries – some of the 'withs' counted separately in *Clergy List*) in the *Report of the Commissioners appointed by His Majesty to inquire into the ecclesiastical revenues of England and Wales*, PP 1835 (67), xxii, A List of Ecclesiastical Preferments in the Patronage of the Archbishops and Bishops; Deans and Chapters..., 18. (Report hereafter cited as PP 1835 (67)). An alternative assessment of the Bishop's patronage, based upon private returns to the Ecclesiastical Commission places it at 58 livings worth

diocese to be worth £11,151 net per annum to the Bishop making it the fifth richest see after Canterbury, Durham, London and York.¹⁰ The cathedral, in effect the Dean and Chapter, was even better endowed being worth £12,783 net per annum; third, behind only Durham and Canterbury.¹¹ It also possessed some patronage.¹²

The diocese covered the whole of Hampshire, Surrey (including Southwark, Lambeth and most of London south of the Thames¹³), the Isle of Wight and the Channel Islands.¹⁴ The bishop regularly used two official residences: Winchester House, Chelsea and Farnham Castle, in Surrey.¹⁵ The latter being his main residence, arguably justifiably given its position towards the centre of the diocese. Indeed Bishop Sumner (1827-69)¹⁶ conducted ordinations at Farnham Castle rather than in the cathedral.¹⁷

In Winchester the Restoration bishops' splendid Wolvesey Palace had been allowed to fall into ruin and been partly demolished.¹⁸ By 1860 it was being used as both a muniments'

£29,206 per annum together with power to appoint to vacancies amongst the 12 canons/prebendaries and the 2 archdeacons – G.F.A. Best, *Temporal Pillars: Queen Anne's Bounty, the Ecclesiastical Commissioners and the Church of England* (Cambridge, 1964), 545.

¹⁰ Derived from PP 1835 (67), Table of Revenues I, 1-7. In 1850, with Sumner exercising his historic rights, the income was £12,216 – Best, *Temporal...*, 404.

¹¹ Derived from PP 1835 (67), Table of Revenues II, 9-31.

¹² The Dean and Chapter appointed to 18 livings (12 of them in other dioceses) worth up to £750 per annum. Derived from *The Clergy...*, 311 (in Second Section). These are listed (without values) at PP 1835 (67), A List of Ecclesiastical Preferments in the Patronage of the Archbishops and Bishops; Deans and Chapters..., 29.

¹³ For the extent of the coverage in London see the proposal to remove it in *First Report from His Majesty's Commissioners appointed to consider the state of the Established Church, with reference to Ecclesiastical Duties and Revenues*, PP 1835 (54), xxii, 3-4. In combination with his Parliamentary duties this area of the diocese received considerable attention from Sumner – G.H. Sumner, *Life of Charles Richard Sumner, D.D., Bishop of Winchester and Prelate of the most noble Order of the Garter during a Forty Years' Episcopate* (London, 1876), 214-5.

¹⁴ The dioceses of Portsmouth, Guildford and Southwark are twentieth-century creations; David Pepin, *Discovering Cathedrals* (Tring, 1971), 58, 66 and 71.

¹⁵ Woodward, *A History...*, 140. The Chelsea property was acquired by Bishop Sumner in 1828 – Sumner, *Life...*, 138-9.

¹⁶ For an outline of Bishop Sumner's career see W.P. Courtney rev. W.R. Ward, 'Sumner, Charles Richard (1790-1874)', *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/>, accessed 10 July 2009. For a full biography see Sumner, *Life...* – this work by his son, later suffragan bishop of Guildford (1888-1909), veers between frankness and hagiography but is very useful in identifying C.R. Sumner's longstanding friends who were presented to livings and appointed to cathedral posts during his episcopate. Sumner, the son of a retired country vicar, owed his advancement to friends at court. Sumner's brother, John Bird Sumner, was Archbishop of Canterbury (1848-62).

¹⁷ See for example HC, 22 April and 15 July 1833 for such a request for papers and ordination respectively. Sumner claimed the quiet of his private chapel allowed the candidates to focus on the commitment they were making and gave each a thorough personal examination and specific words of encouragement, with particular emphasis on 'preaching Christ' – Sumner, *Life...*, 141-3.

¹⁸ James, *Winchester...*, 135-6.

store,¹⁹ and from 1847 to 1862 provided accommodation for the Diocesan Training School.²⁰ However in November 1831, when both boroughmongers and bishops were the subject of opprobrium for opposing Reform,²¹ it was guarded.²² A wise precaution in the light of the burning of the Duke of Newcastle's Nottingham Castle and the Bishop's Palace in Bristol.²³

Although criticised in 1860, by the *Hampshire Examiner*, for rarely visiting Winchester,²⁴ Sumner was the first Bishop of Winchester to be enthroned in person at the cathedral since the Reformation.²⁵ In fairness, Sumner also made the effort to visit Winchester on several occasions, such as the twenty-first anniversary meeting of the county's National Schools in July 1832.²⁶

Sumner's absence did not reflect a lack of commitment to the work of the church but the breadth of his activity across the diocese. Sumner was a 'Claphamite Evangelical',²⁷ shaped by the influence at Cambridge of Charles Simeon,²⁸ who sought to remedy the lack of provision by the Anglican Church for the 'religious instruction of a population which ebbs and flows'.²⁹ He sought to remedy this in the Winchester diocese.

Upon appointment he began reform with the restoration of the post of rural dean. He followed up with commissions and annual questionnaires for the new office holders.³⁰ He himself undertook quadrennial visitations through the diocese, starting in August 1829, unlike the one-off efforts of his predecessors.³¹ Moreover by his efforts to introduce a three-year cycle of confirmations, breaking the previous link with the visitation; and increasing the number of

¹⁹ Woodward, *A History...*, 93.

²⁰ M. Rose, *A History of King Alfred's College Winchester 1840-1980* (Chichester, 1981), 31-51.

²¹ They had voted 21:2 against the Bill in October – Evans, *The Forging...*, 296.

²² O. Chadwick, *The Victorian Church Part 1* (London, 1966), 28 – citing the *Journal of Mary Frampton*.

²³ R.A. Gaunt, 'The Fourth Duke of Newcastle, the "Mob" and Election Contests in Nottinghamshire, 1818-1832', *Midland History*, Vol.33, No.2, (Autumn 2008),197 and E.Pearce, *Reform: The Fight for the 1832 Reform Act* (London, 2003), 204-5.

²⁴ Cited by Barrett, *Barchester...*, 250.

²⁵ P. Gilliat, 'The Diocese of Winchester: reform and reorganisation 1827-1927', *Hampshire Studies*, Vol. 63 (2008), 77.

²⁶ *HC*, 16 July 1832.

²⁷ R.A. Burns, 'A Hanoverian Legacy? Diocesan Reform in the Church of England c.1800-1833' in Walsh, Haydon and Taylor (eds), *The Church of England c. 1689- c.1833: From Toleration to Tractarianism* (Cambridge, 1993), 279.

²⁸ J. Walsh and S. Taylor, 'Introduction: The Church of England and Anglicanism in the 'long' eighteenth century' in Walsh, Haydon and Taylor *The Church...*, 44-5. Christchurch, Winchester established in 1861 has links with Simeon's Trustees.

²⁹ From Sumner's 1827 *Charge to the Clergy of the Diocese of Llandaff* quoted in E.R. Norman, *Church and Society in England 1770-1970: A Historical Study* (Oxford, 1976), 46 and 54.

³⁰ Burns, 'A Hanoverian ...', 268-9 and Sumner, *Life...*, 153-4.

³¹ Burns 'A Hanoverian ...', 272 and Sumner, *Life...*,169.

confirmation centres, he created even more work for himself.³² Within this context Winchester was treated as almost any other group of parishes.

As well as a vigorous approach to his own work Sumner sought to breathe new life into the diocese and its chapter. As his biographer puts it, of the latter in the 1820s

...cathedral bodies were, in many cases, the centres rather of lethargy and repose, than of life and activity...Around the dean the canons clustered in goodly numbers; but capitular revenues, and it may be generous hospitality occupied more of their time and thoughts, than plans for the spiritual welfare of the diocese...The month's residence in the well-kept Cathedral close, was an agreeable relaxation after parochial duties.³³

This was not Sumner's style. In the first years of his episcopate he addressed the diocese's 'miserable support' for the missionary societies setting up local societies and presiding at that in Winchester, founded in 1829.³⁴ He moved on to the diocese's own needs, identified from a near Benthamite obsession with the collection of statistics, by in 1837 founding a Diocesan Church Building Society. Wellington was browbeaten into chairing the inaugural meeting in Winchester.³⁵ In late 1838 Sumner turned to education, more specifically a training college for masters, establishing it and a Diocesan Board of Education.³⁶ In the latter forum Sumner had his initial clashes, on both sacramental and purely administrative matters, with John Keble, Vicar of Hursley (four miles from Winchester), and a leading figure in the Oxford Movement.³⁷

Besides his strictly church duties Sumner also had a role to play in the House of Lords and at Court. For example in 1829, when the King approached him on the issue of Catholic Emancipation, Sumner described it as a measure 'of *political expediency*' which he could not support if Protestantism were injured or Roman Catholicism strengthened. Having abstained on the Second Reading lobbying, by Prime Minister Wellington persuaded Sumner to vote, to the King's dismay, for the Bill's Third Reading.³⁸

Therefore much more so than in other dioceses the bishop was an absentee. This left the Dean and Chapter with an even greater prominence and influence in the local community of

³² Burns, 'A Hanoverian ...', 272 and Sumner, *Life...*, 173 and 216. For Sumner's confirmation schedule across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight from 24 September to 22 October 1835 see *HC*, 17 August 1835.

³³ Sumner, *Life...*, 193.

³⁴ Sumner, *Life...*, 139-40 and *HC*, 26 September 1831.

³⁵ Sumner, *Life...*, 248-52 and *HC*, 3 April 1837.

³⁶ Sumner, *Life...*, 261-4.

³⁷ Sumner, *Life...*, 261-3.

³⁸ Sumner, *Life...*, 160-3.

the cathedral city. Prior to the 1840 Dean and Chapter Act,³⁹ arising from the work of the Ecclesiastical Commission, this was a formidable body – the Dean and twelve prebendaries (or canons) supported by twelve minor (or petty) canons, twelve lay vicars, ten choristers, their master, twelve ‘poor men’ and domestic staff.⁴⁰ Twenty years later natural wastage had still not fully achieved the reductions required by the Act.⁴¹ As will be seen the Dean, archdeacons and prebendaries constituted a significant force in Winchester’s politics; with powers of influence not least through employment and charity. Despite Sumner’s absence there can be little doubt that his patronage secured the loyalty of the Chapter. By 1841 not only, with few exceptions, were they his personal appointees but in many cases they held livings to which he, as patron, had presented them. Moreover many of them were longstanding, if not lifelong, friends of Sumner suggesting a common mindset and theology.⁴² They in turn secured the loyalty of minor canons and others by the use of the Chapter’s own patronage.

The Dean was a royal (i.e. prime ministerial) appointee, as was the bishop.⁴³ This explains why Thomas Garnier,⁴⁴ appointed Dean in 1840 by Melbourne, was the only member of the Dean and Chapter to vote consistently for Whig and Liberal candidates from 1835 to 1865.⁴⁵ He had been ‘One of the most active of canvassers on Palmerston’s behalf in his Hampshire elections...and a zealous whig’.⁴⁶ Garnier’s predecessor Thomas Rennell,⁴⁷ appointed in 1805 by Pitt, had been a Conservative voter in 1835 and 1837. He voted in defence of the Church, which

³⁹ This Act (3 & 4 Vict, c. 113) although bearing the title ‘Ecclesiastical Commissioners Act’ is more widely known by a number of other titles: the Dean and Chapter Act – Chadwick, *The Victorian...*, 136-7; the Ecclesiastical Duties and Revenues Act – G.I.T. Machin, *Politics and the Churches in Great Britain 1832 to 1868* (Oxford, 1977), 69-70; and, in a number of cathedral histories, the Cathedrals Act.

⁴⁰ Woodward, *A History...*, 141.

⁴¹ Woodward, *A History...*, 141.

⁴² Examples include Philip Jacob - Sumner, *Life...*, 119 and *The Clergy...*, 236 (in Second Section); Crosbie Morgell - Sumner, *Life...*, 207 and *The Clergy...*, 236 (in Second Section); and Andrew Dallas - Sumner, *Life...*, 80-2 and 224 and *The Clergy...*, 236 (in Second Section).

⁴³ See Chadwick, *The Victorian...*, 121-7 and 226-30 for Melbourne and Peel’s approaches to the exercise of such royal patronage.

⁴⁴ For an outline of Garnier’s career see E. Venables rev. M.C. Curthoys, ‘Garnier, Thomas (1776-1873)’, *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/>, accessed 10 July 2009. Garnier was educated with George Canning by ‘Flogging Richards’ at Hyde Abbey School just outside Winchester city walls. An earlier biography can be found at A.E. Garnier, *The Chronicles of the Garniers of Hampshire* (Norwich, 1900), 38-44 and 47-59.

⁴⁵ Garnier wavered only once, in 1857 when he cast one of his votes for the Conservative, East, rather than the second Liberal, Portal.

⁴⁶ Gash, *Politics...*, 176 citing the Earl of Albermarle.

⁴⁷ For an outline of Rennell’s career see R. Hole, ‘Rennell, Thomas (1754-1840)’, *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/>, accessed 10 July 2009.

he saw threatened by a raft of Whig and Radical measures and proposals, against which he inspired petitioning in line with Bishop Sumner's strong opposition to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners.⁴⁸ Garnier remained Dean until 1872.

Although the Dean and Chapter suffered little direct interference from Bishop Sumner, he and his associates were not inactive in Winchester. New churches were built for St Maurice (1841-2) and St Thomas (1846); those of St Bartholomew Hyde (from 1838) and St Martin's, Winnall (1858) were restored or rebuilt. Sumner himself was behind the reorganisation of Winchester parishes carving a new parish, Holy Trinity, out of St Maurice, St Mary Kalendar and St Peter Colebrook with a new church built on North Walls in 1859. Another of Sumner's appointees and fellow Simeonite, William Carus, made a canon in 1851, was the moving force behind the building of a new church, Christchurch, in the new villa development to the west of the main approach road from the south. In this he worked with a fellow reformer, L.M. Humbert, the Master of St Cross Hospital, from whose parish of St Faith its new parish was in large part carved. Carus's financial contribution was significant. He gave £2,000 for the building and £1,000 towards the endowment. Not surprisingly in 1860 upon completion of the building he and his curate, W.C. De Boynville transferred from St Maurice to Christchurch as the first ministry team.⁴⁹ The land for Christchurch had been donated by the Conservative Land Society,⁵⁰ whose initial involvement in the area had probably, in line with their usual policy of countering such Liberal activity,⁵¹ been intended to create borough freeholders to vote in the North Hampshire constituency. Perhaps on account of the clauses in Disraeli's 1859 Reform Bill, which would have removed such voters from the counties, the number of plots was decreased and their size increased – to that which would accommodate 'villas'.⁵²

The Anglican Church was not only active in meeting the direct spiritual needs of Winchester's residents. During Sumner's episcopate the school founded in St Mary Kalendar in 1812 was joined by an entire network of at least six more parish schools.⁵³ The network was so

⁴⁸ For example the memorial to the Archbishop of Canterbury, signed by 172 clergy, 'deprecating the innovations on our cathedral establishments' proposed by Ecclesiastical Commissioners – reported in *HC*, 20 March 1837.

⁴⁹ Carpenter Turner, *A History*, 147-50.

⁵⁰ C.S. Grover, 'The suburban development of Winchester from c. 1850 to 1912' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Winchester, 2008), 122.

⁵¹ M. Chase, 'Out of Radicalism: the Mid-Victorian Freehold Land Movement', *English Historical Review*, Vol. 106, No. 419 (April 1991), 336.

⁵² Grover, 'The suburban...', 122 note 61.

⁵³ Carpenter Turner, *A History...*, 151.

comprehensive that there were no 'gaps' to be filled under Forster's 1870 Education Act. Although Carpenter Turner claimed 'Social reform in Victorian Winchester owed most to the great 19th century deans' in the case of the Muckabite sewerage controversy the clergy (including the College headmaster) were hamstrung by their exclusion from municipal office⁵⁴ and had to work through an employee – a college housemaster.⁵⁵

Winchester was a city with a cathedral, an Anglican seat of education (the College) and many clergy. It was also situated within the Anglican heartland of Central-Southern England.⁵⁶ It was therefore hardly surprising that the cry of 'Church in Danger' was raised at elections such as that of 1852, when the recent 'Papal Aggression' was addressed, and in 1868, when Irish Church disestablishment was a key election issue.⁵⁷ Winchester had had, since the flight of Catholic priests and nuns during the French Revolution, a good reputation for tolerance of Roman Catholicism.⁵⁸ Historically its tolerance had perhaps been added to by the unusual position of its pre-1832 Tory patron, the Duke of Buckingham, upon this issue. Buckingham had insisted that Sir Edward Hyde East in 1822 pledge, it appears against his natural inclination, to support Catholic Emancipation before making him his candidate for Winchester.⁵⁹ However 'Papal Aggression' saw the emergence of the 'Winchester Protestant Institution'. At the first meeting of this body the speaker attacked 'Popery' as 'the most determined foe of liberty'.⁶⁰

Winchester College

Besides the cathedral the other symbol of a major interest supporting the Conservative cause in the period was Winchester College to the south of the cathedral close and separated from it by the city walls. The College was both proud and defensive of its extra-parochial status.⁶¹ There had been schoolboy 'rebellions' in 1799 and 1818.⁶² All was not right in the College.

⁵⁴ Both Anglican and Dissenting clergy were ineligible to hold municipal office under the 1835 Municipal Corporations Act (5 & 6 Will. IV, c. 76 s. 28).

⁵⁵ W.H. Boorman, 'Health and Sanitation in Victorian Winchester or: The Triumph of the Muckabites', *Proceedings of the Hampshire Field Club and Archaeological Society*, Vol. 46 (1991), 161-80 and Carpenter Turner, *A History...*, 144.

⁵⁶ K.D.M. Snell and P.S.Ell, *Rival Jerusalems: The Geography of Victorian Religion* (Cambridge, 2000), 55 and 73.

⁵⁷ See pp. 177 and 237-8 below respectively.

⁵⁸ Personal communication from Mr John Thornhill who is preparing a dissertation upon this subject.

⁵⁹ J.J. Sack, 'The House of Lords and Parliamentary Patronage in Great Britain, 1802-1832', *Historical Journal*, Vol. 23, No. 4 (Dec. 1980), 921.

⁶⁰ *HC* 14 February 1852.

⁶¹ Kirby, *Annals...*, 421.

The clerically run institution underwent a similar transformation to the diocese in the twenty years from 1832. This occurred under a new Warden, Robert Barter (1832-61); and two headmasters David Williams (1823-35) and George Moberly (1836-66).⁶³ Barter used the funds built up by his predecessor to subscribe to the city's police force and gas lighting; and above all to improve the College. In 1834 its library was founded and in 1835 gas lighting was brought into the College's courts. Those courts were no longer weeded by old women fed 'broken victuals and waste beer' but by twenty-four married women with young families provided with maintenance. This along with charitable giving to the poor, which helped to keep poor rates down; and College business, such as the contract for £5 per week in 1839 with La Croix to supply the boys with afternoon tea rather than 'bever beer', not only improved the College but established a network of influence, which with that of the Dean and Chapter underpinned the Conservative revival which culminated in the winning of both seats in 1841.⁶⁴ This influence is reflected in a partial pollbook with indications of 'Principles' and reasons for voting. Fifteen of those voting, all voting Conservative, have references to employment by, or trading links with, the College or clergy; these include 'College washing' and 'Wife washes for the Parsons'.⁶⁵

The City and Its Fortunes

It was not Winchester itself but the much wider diocesan estate which made it such an attractive see for senior clerics. The city and what, from an early date, were known as its suburbs – the parts outside the city walls⁶⁶ – had a far more chequered history. This history is well reflected in the fluctuations in its population. At about the time of the Conquest the population is estimated to have been 5,500 to 8,000. By the start of the fourteenth century this had increased to between 8,000 and 11,625; falling back to 7,000 to 8,000 at the start of the next century. Further decline was evident in the early sixteenth century with an estimate of 2,000 to 4,300. Just after the Restoration the population had risen back to 5,900.⁶⁷

⁶² Kirby, *Annals...*, 416-8 and 423.

⁶³ Holgate, *...1800-1835*, 36 and *Winchester Commoners 1836-1890* (Salisbury, 1891), xiii.

⁶⁴ Kirby, *Annals...*, 425-8.

⁶⁵ WCCM LH2482 1-4.

⁶⁶ Parts of this growth were known as the East and West Soke Liberty (historically connected to the bishop) and the Soke Liberty (connected to the corporation) – Woodward, *A History...*, 13.

⁶⁷ Figures are for c.1057, c.1300, 1417, 1524 and 1665 – T.B. James, 'The Population Size of Winchester over 2,000 Years: A Survey', *Proceedings of the Hampshire Field Club Section Newsletters* (New Series, 9, Spring 1988), 3.

Rosen sees the seventeenth century as a period of transition for Winchester concluding that: 'By 1700 Winchester's economic transition was almost complete, and the town was settled in the path it was to follow throughout the eighteenth century and well into the nineteenth...the city was on the way to recovering its economic health.'⁶⁸ In many respects this seems as falsely optimistic as the corporation's hopes, arising from the interest of Charles II in palace-building in the city, hopes dashed by James II's lack of interest and the Glorious Revolution of 1688. For in 1788 the population was estimated to be only 3,500 to 4,000.⁶⁹

Daniel Defoe writing in the 1720s did not see Winchester as vibrant, other than in its social scene:

Winchester is a place of no trade, other than is naturally occasioned by the inhabitants of the city and neighbouring villages, one with another. Here is no manufacturing, no navigation; here is a good deal of good company; and abundance of gentry being in the neighbourhood, it adds to the sociableness of the place. The clergy also here are, generally speaking, very rich, and very numerous.⁷⁰

Nevertheless in the last quarter of the eighteenth century Winchester experienced its own urban renaissance with the establishment of paving commissioners in 1771 and a revival in its commercial fortunes.⁷¹ It is noteworthy that the Commissioners of the Pavement in Winchester were established relatively late in the century despite its position as a county town and cathedral city in the South of England and the respectability of its inhabitants suggesting it should have been in the mainstream.⁷² Improvement and reform were concepts alien to the corporation for they would involve expenditure.

In one respect however Winchester had led the field in that its county hospital founded in 1736 was the first such. However the initiative had come from a prebendary of the cathedral

⁶⁸ A. Rosen, 'Winchester in Transition, 1580-1700' in P. Clark (ed.), *Country towns in pre-industrial England* (Leicester, 1981), 184.

⁶⁹ James, *Winchester...*, 183.

⁷⁰ D. Defoe, *A Tour Through the Whole Island of Great Britain* (London, 1724-6 – 1971 Edn, with Introduction by P. Rogers), 191-2.

⁷¹ James, *Winchester...*, 140.

⁷² 160 paving, improvement etc. commissions were set up in England and Wales between 1725 and 1799. Of the 125 Acts from 1736 to 1799 dealing with places outside London 110 related to market towns and other non-industrial centres overwhelmingly in the South. Given the aversion of Winchester to rates the delay was possibly made until borrowing powers had become a common feature after 1760. E.L Jones and M.E. Falkus, 'Urban Improvement and the English Economy in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries', in P. Borsay (ed.), *The Eighteenth Century Town: A Reader in English Urban History 1688-1820* (Harlow, 1990), 139 and 143-4.

and funding from the landed and middling sorts across the county.⁷³ Independent civic initiative was distinctly lacking.

Socio-Economic Position of Winchester

Stedman sees Winchester at the end of the eighteenth century as a ‘small county town’ and proceeds:

Its economy was not industrial in the modern sense, being based on providing services to the surrounding countryside and producing a variety of goods to meet local demand. The town was not typical of country towns as a whole. It was far larger than most, and its role as an administrative centre and a centre for the county community, two related functions, set it apart from most other Hampshire towns. Winchester was, however, almost certainly very similar in most aspects of its economic and social life to other county towns in southern England, for example Chichester, Dorchester or Salisbury.⁷⁴

Winchester was fortunate that Southampton, only twelve miles to the south, was ‘a county in itself’⁷⁵ (and therefore in many respects detached from county affairs), and that the focus of both Portsmouth and Gosport was to the sea and the Royal Navy. For, all three had far larger populations.⁷⁶ Economically Southampton dwarfed Winchester. The Itchen Navigation, between the two, established by an Act of 1665 showed, throughout its shambolic existence, a preponderance of traffic in the Winchester direction of heavy goods such as coal. The last coal barge reached Winchester in 1869.⁷⁷

Stedman assesses Southampton as being ‘more important commercially than Winchester, and therefore more sophisticated’ – citing the establishment of its first bank in 1778, a decade before Winchester’s.⁷⁸ By 1830 Winchester had three banks and the office of the actuary of the Winchester Bank for Savings, a position unchanged by 1844.⁷⁹ These banks

⁷³ P. Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People: England 1727-1783* (Oxford, 1989), 136-7.

⁷⁴ J. Stedman, ‘Aspects of the Economic History of Winchester, 1770-1810’ (unpublished MA dissertation, University of Leicester, 1979), 1.

⁷⁵ C.R.Dod, *Electoral Facts 1832-1853 Impartially Stated* (2nd Edn, London, 1853), 286 and R. Foster, *The Politics of County Power: Wellington and the Hampshire Gentlemen 1820-52* (Hemel Hempstead, 1990), 40.

⁷⁶ Stedman, ‘Aspects...’, 2.

⁷⁷ E. Course, *The Itchen Navigation* (Hampshire, 2011), 5 and 7.

⁷⁸ Stedman, ‘Aspects...’, 4.

⁷⁹ *Pigot & Co’s New Commercial Directory for 1830* (London, 1830), 479 lists: Deane, Littlehales & Deane in Great Minster Street; Knapp, Bulpett & Markham in High Street; Wickham, Mant, Bailey and Jessett at 66 High Street; and John Ventham, actuary to the Savings Bank at 70 Middle Brook Street. *Pigot & Co’s Directory of Hampshire* (London, 1844), 97 lists: Bulpett, Mulcock & Dunn in High Street; Deane, Littlehales & Deane in Great Minster Street; Wickham, Mant, Bailey and Jessett at 66 High Street; and John Ventham, actuary to the Savings Bank in Southgate Street.

together with a range of lawyers, architects, insurance agents, surveyors, surgeons and veterinary surgeons met the varied needs of both inhabitants and local estates, farms, their owners and animals.⁸⁰ Some services such as dentistry or ophthalmology were only available through peripatetic professionals travelling from London on regular tours.⁸¹ A range of needs were also supplied from building, through blacksmithing and shoemaking to food and drink (basic and fine) and on to millinery and books thence to watches and clocks.⁸²

Winchester was very much a commercial service and supply centre for the neighbourhood albeit little more than basic goods and provisions were produced in the city. Much of that supply was linked to agriculture. As F.M.L. Thompson has pointed out by 1841 there were twenty seven support workers in the supply chain for every hundred farmers and agricultural labourers in the South of England – many would be in the villages and lesser towns, such as Alresford, but Winchester was at the pinnacle of that supply chain for a considerable area.⁸³ Jonathan Brown has pointed to an increased dependence by places such as Winchester on the custom of the agricultural sector:

At the beginning of the nineteenth century the market towns of Hampshire downland were still closely linked to the surrounding agriculture and country life. In some respects these towns were more dependent on their rural hinterland than they had been for some time, as their textile industries were in decline.⁸⁴

This close link with the surrounding agricultural community might lead one to think that Winchester was wholly wedded to the 'agricultural interest' when it came to its politics. The Anti-Corn Law League however had some support in the city. Its leaders visited the city. In 1843 John Bright attended a meeting of 270. Richard Cobden came but failed to arrive in time.⁸⁵ In 1846 Escott, one of the Conservative MPs, presented a petition to the House of Commons supporting Peel's Corn Law Repeal proposals signed by 'nearly 1000 persons'.⁸⁶ The election result in 1847 suggests that the majority of signatories were not electors.⁸⁷ Among electors it

⁸⁰ *Pigot & Co's New...*, 478-481 and *Pigot & Co's Directory...*, 96-100.

⁸¹ See for example *HC*, 3 March 1834 when the regular visit of Mr Alex, the dentist, overlapped that of the newcomer, or interloper, Mr Eskel. For Mr Alexander, the optician, *HC*, 26 May 1834.

⁸² *Pigot & Co's New...*, 478-481 and *Pigot & Co's Directory...*, 96-100.

⁸³ Cited by J. Brown, 'Market Towns and Downland in Hampshire 1780-1914' *Southern History*, Vol. 28 (2006), 81-2.

⁸⁴ Brown, 'Market...', 88.

⁸⁵ *HC* 17 July 1843.

⁸⁶ *HC* 28 February 1846.

⁸⁷ See p. 203 below.

appears loyalty to the agricultural cause influenced the majority. Many, one imagines, signed the city's anti-Repeal petition presented by the other Conservative MP, East.⁸⁸

By 1830 Winchester had no industry on any great scale. The silk spinning factories set up by the Shentons in 1792, employing over 300 by 1810, including many children, in the Colebrook Street mill alone,⁸⁹ had faded away receiving no mention in Pigot's directory of that year. Indeed the only Shenton shown in the 1835, 1837 and 1841 poll books is William, identified in 1841 as a miller in Colebrook Street.⁹⁰ He is listed as such (miller and corn dealer) in both the 1830 and 1844 Pigot directories.⁹¹

Such industrial strife as there was in Winchester early in the period was of a limited scale and reflected the nature of business in the city. In 1828 eight men were severely reprimanded at the City Quarter Sessions for 'illegally absenting themselves from their work' with Mr Shenton, who having summoned them did not press charges.⁹² In 1834 journeymen tailors belonging to the Metropolitan Consolidated Trades Union struck to be faced down by their master tailor employers William Flight, William Humphrys, Henry Paul and others. After Flight and Paul advertised for thirty replacement journeymen Paul's workforce seceded from the Union and soon all was quiet.⁹³ Employer unity won the day and the 'natural order' was restored.

Despite this 'industrial decline' by the 1830s; Winchester was the centre of much of the county's cultural and social scene. Its cultural backdrop to the political turmoil of 1832 included, concerts in St John's House by Paganini, the virtuoso Italian violinist;⁹⁴ an extended exhibition of Madame Tussaud's touring waxworks at the same venue – topically the advertisement referred to the models of Earl Grey and Lord Brougham in larger type than 'Their Present Majesties' (whether, given Tussaud's work on death masks during the French Revolution, the use of

⁸⁸ HC 21 February 1846.

⁸⁹ Stedman, 'Aspects...', 52-3. In 1801 Shenton's 'new manufactory' near Abbey Mill was '...by good judges thought to be one of the most commercial of its size of any in England...'. There were 14 such mills in Winchester employing many women and children. *The Annual Hampshire Repository or Historical, Economical and Literary Miscellany Volume II*, (Winchester, 1801), 75-7 (of 'Supplement to Commerce').

⁹⁰ 1835 Pollbook, printed by Jacob & Johnson, HRO W/B9/2/82 p. 11; 1837 Pollbook, printed by Jacob Jacob, HRO W/B9/2/18 p. 17; and 1841 Pollbook, printed by Gilmour, HRO W/B9/2/82 p. 11.

⁹¹ *Pigot & Co's New...*, 480 and *Pigot & Co's Directory...*, 99.

⁹² HC 14 January 1828.

⁹³ HC 21 and 28 July and 4 August 1834.

⁹⁴ HC 5 March and 3 September 1832.

'Present' implied a political threat is unclear);⁹⁵ and the appearance of Edmund Kean, the renowned Shakespearean actor, at the theatre.⁹⁶

There was also an eclectic range of, mainly subscription, lectures. Over a three year period it would have been possible to have heard about the science of phrenology; the workings of the orrery; 'philosophy of the human mind'; natural philosophy and chemistry; sound and musical vibrations; and 'new discoveries in magnetic electricity'.⁹⁷ At the same time for those with estates there was an offering from the Farmer's Friend Society on the benefits of providing allotments to agricultural labourers.⁹⁸ Those with wider political and social concerns were catered for by a Birmingham clergyman on the issue of West Indian slavery.⁹⁹

In 1835 the needs of the lower middle and more respectable lower orders were satisfied by the formation of a Mechanics' Institution with its own lecture programme. This thrived attaining a membership of over 150 in 1836 but there was no danger of it being a threat to the established order. Religious and political subjects were banned. Prominent figures such as Mayor John Young and Rev. Charles Baring were involved in its management responding to the call for 'The patronage of some gentlemen of influence, to give a character to the proceedings, would, without doubt, lead to the establishment of a society which could not fail to be of great advantage to the city and neighbourhood'. Nevertheless the Congregational minister, Rev. William Thorn, was amongst those delivering lectures – in his case to the titles of 'On Sensation' and the 'Philosophy of Mental Cultivation'.¹⁰⁰

The cerebral and cultural was matched by an annual round of autumn and winter subscription balls for 'the nobility and gentry' organised by Frederick La Croix, the College Street confectioner.¹⁰¹ The highlight of the summer could be Winchester Races, usually held in August. Coverage of this sporting event in the Winchester-based *Hampshire Chronicle* suggests that, in the wrong hands, they were in a state of decay and decline; but were revived by the efforts of pro-Reform politicians in the role of Steward. The paper, no doubt to retain readership among the widest possible respectable, newspaper reading, element of the population, rarely took an overt and firm political stance. However its selection of articles from other publications may be

⁹⁵ HC 16 July 1832.

⁹⁶ HC 15 October 1832.

⁹⁷ HC 17 September 1832; 6 May and 30 September 1833.

⁹⁸ HC 21 November 1831.

⁹⁹ HC 12 September 1831.

¹⁰⁰ HC 19 and 26 October 1835, 7 and 14 March 1836 and 3 April 1837.

¹⁰¹ HC 15 October 1832 for example.

deemed to have a slight 'pro-Reform' bias. During the Reform battles at its most strident it merely described the initial Bill proposals as 'this bold and comprehensive plan' which 'appears to be more extensive than was anticipated by the most zealous advocates of Reform'.¹⁰²

Returning to the case of the Winchester Races; in 1831 having stood unsuccessfully for Reform in Winchester in that May's general election, William Bingham Baring was Steward of the races in August.¹⁰³ Amongst race attendees reported were the famed Talleyrand, then French ambassador to London,¹⁰⁴ and the doyenne of the Whig interest in the borough, Lady Mildmay.¹⁰⁵ Baring then sought to exploit his role at the races citing it before declaring, at a dinner to celebrate William IV's coronation, attended by the boundary commissioners for the county and its boroughs, that

he should always feel happy to promote those amusements in which the higher and lower orders could participate. He noticed with regret the schism between the rich and the poor, confidently trusting that they would be again united, as there was now a better chance of peace and unanimity being promoted by the great measure of Reform.¹⁰⁶

In 1832 the Race Steward was Douro,¹⁰⁷ Wellington's son and one of the unsuccessful Tory/Conservative candidates for the Northern Division of Hampshire in that year's December General Election. A low attendance at the Races was reported and at the Steward's Ball 'the company was by no means numerous'.¹⁰⁸

In 1833 one of the newly elected 'Reform' members for North Hampshire, Charles Shaw Lefevre, was Steward¹⁰⁹ leading the *Hampshire Chronicle* to anticipate Races both 'more attractive than of late years' and more successful.¹¹⁰ It saw the Races as similar to a rotten government, or borough, being purged of 'Old Corruption' and expected a return to the days when Princes and peers outnumbered 'peasants' and the city struggled to accommodate all attendees. Then it referred to Lefevre's role in the

¹⁰² HC 7 March 1831. Being Winchester based the *Hampshire Chronicle* provides the most extensive coverage of events in Winchester. The Southampton based *Hampshire Advertiser* focuses upon that city, the Isle of Wight and Portsmouth often making only fleeting reference to Winchester events.

¹⁰³ HC 15 August 1831

¹⁰⁴ HC, 22 August 1831.

¹⁰⁵ HC 29 August 1831.

¹⁰⁶ HC 12 September 1831.

¹⁰⁷ HC 25 June 1832.

¹⁰⁸ HC 27 August 1832.

¹⁰⁹ HC 11 March 1833.

¹¹⁰ HC 15 April 1833 and 27 May 1833.

revolution of one little year...we are well convinced that he will find his best reward in the reflection, that with him did our reform originate, and that from his stewardship must the date of better days commence...Let not our stand, with undesired consistency, be alone stationary in the march of our improvement...¹¹¹

Asa Briggs sees the 1830s as being in the midst of an eighty year 'Age of Improvement'.¹¹² The decade saw much 'improvement' in Winchester in areas other than the Races – particularly in infrastructure. Indeed a *Hampshire Chronicle* report used Briggs' term in referring to the proposal to build a Corn Exchange; whilst lamenting Winchester's tardiness in this regard and emphasising that the impetus had come from the landowners and farmers of the 'neighbourhood', rather than from within the city:

To those acquainted with the central position and local advantages of Winchester, it is evident that a more eligible place for the establishment of a Pitched Market is not to be found in this part of the county; it is therefore somewhat remarkable that, in this *age of improvement*, an opportunity of increasing the commercial prosperity of the city, and promoting the convenience of many of its visitors, has been so long neglected. It is, however, gratifying to find that the subject has at length attracted the attention of several gentlemen in the neighbourhood, as well as some of the principal agriculturists and tradesmen, and that a public meeting is convened for the purpose of making arrangements for giving effect to such a beneficial measure.¹¹³ [Author's italics.]

The Corn Exchange was completed in 1838,¹¹⁴ a year before the railway arrived from Southampton and two years before such a connection to Basingstoke was made, as part of the London and Southampton Railway.¹¹⁵

These improvements in infrastructure were exploited by the local political parties and their candidates. In 1865 we find William Barrow Simonds' agent sending a 'Railway Order' to convey a voter back to Winchester to vote.¹¹⁶ The improved postal service, arising from a combination of the introduction of the Penny Post in 1840 and the coming of the railways, also saw many communications with voters absent elsewhere in the country.¹¹⁷ The telegraph, piggy-backing upon the railway, also speeded communication in a way not acknowledged by many

¹¹¹ HC 8 July 1833.

¹¹² A. Briggs, *The Age of Improvement 1783-1867* (2nd Edition, Harlow, 2000).

¹¹³ HC 27 October 1834. The meeting to promote the project was chaired by the Tory/Conservative Sir William Heathcote of Hursley, county member 1826-32 and member for North Hampshire 1837-49. Both he and the Reformer Sir Thomas Baring offered to invest £500 in the project – HC 3 November 1834.

¹¹⁴ James, *Winchester...*, 150.

¹¹⁵ James, *Winchester...*, 144-5.

¹¹⁶ See p. 208 below.

¹¹⁷ See p. 208 below.

historians.¹¹⁸ In 1852, following the meeting which selected Bulpett as the first local parliamentary candidate,¹¹⁹ loyal Liberals summoned the incumbent MP, Carter, from Westminster by telegraph. Carter responded by telegraph and hastened down to Winchester, presumably using the railway.¹²⁰ At the subsequent contest Carter exploited further 'new technology'. He brandished a daguerreotype of the requisition asking him to stand in 1847.¹²¹

The coverage of gas lighting was progressively extended throughout both the calendar year and the city but only started in September 1832 as the result of the 'speculation, of a spirited gentleman' from Guildford and met with local wonderment.¹²² Improvements to the water supply to fight fires in the western 'upper part of town' were only considered by the 'Town Council' in December 1840 three weeks before a fire causing more than £500 damage near the Westgate.¹²³ The issue of improved sanitation for the city in general was not seriously addressed until 1844 and not resolved until 1875.¹²⁴ The needs of the dead were addressed by the Winchester Cemetery Company, which in 1840 opened the West Hill cemetery, unusual in that it was led by former Mayor Benny.¹²⁵ So although there were improvements the initiative tended to come from outside and there was an extreme reluctance to fund them from rates.

One initiative taken within the city was the setting up in 1832 of a police force funded by public subscription with an initial injection of funding from the Pavement Commissioners.¹²⁶ Financial support came from amongst others the Dean and Chapter and the Duchess of Buckingham.¹²⁷ It is difficult to judge how effective the police force was but it was commended for preventing pickpocketing at fairs¹²⁸ and the arrest of a band of almost twenty roving prostitutes.¹²⁹ However some objected to the cost. This led the *Hampshire Chronicle* to praise

¹¹⁸ See H. Cunningham, *The Challenge of Democracy: Britain 1832-1918* (Harlow, 2001), 83 for the telegraph:railway combination.

¹¹⁹ See p. 177 below.

¹²⁰ *HC* 8 May 1852.

¹²¹ *HC* 3 July 1852.

¹²² *HC* 10 October 1831, 30 July and 24 September 1832. For the extension of coverage from the High Street and the winter months see editions of 12 August 1833, 12 May and 7 July 1834 (the latter refers to a public subscription to achieve extended coverage which received much footage over the next few months), 9 February 1835 and 9 January and 26 June 1837. For complaints as to the supply of gas in the suburbs and inadequate lighting see editions of 4 January 1836 and 16 January 1837.

¹²³ *HC* 7 and 28 December 1840 and 4 January 1841.

¹²⁴ James, *Winchester...*, 148-9 and Boorman, 'Health...', 161-80.

¹²⁵ James, *Winchester...*, 160.

¹²⁶ *HC* 28 May and 4 June 1832.

¹²⁷ *HC* 11 February 1833 and 3 March 1834 respectively.

¹²⁸ For example *HC* 10 August 1835 and 8 August 1836 in relation to the Magdalen Hill Fair.

¹²⁹ *HC* 25 August 1834.

the force's positive impact and to bemoan the alternative – the employment of watchmen. The police force survived this attack to be adopted by the 'Town Council'¹³⁰ under the powers granted it by the Municipal Reform Act. Indeed, in its first eight months of operation, police salaries were the council's major item of expenditure.¹³¹

In 1837 'AN OBSERVER' resident in Winchester reflected the mixture of improvement and neglect characterising the city at this time:

You must have observed, as I have, and many others with whom I have conversed, that there is a gradual improvement in the aspect and management of the conveniences of our ancient city – the well conducted police, with the aid of some extra lamps and our illuminated town clock, protects our property and persons, and is an advantage to those whose avocations call them out at night....but there is rather a laxity of conduct in the commissioners of the pavement, in permitting persons illegally to crowd things on the pavement, to the obstruction and inconvenience of foot passengers; and in the carriage road, at the risk of frightening horses and overturning carriages. The watering of the road too, at this season of the year, is not sufficiently attended to, so that dust blows into the eyes of passengers and into our houses, which damages our furniture.¹³²

This view is a fair and balanced summary of the condition of Winchester in the 1830s.

Administrative Position of Winchester

Winchester was long established as the county's administrative centre.¹³³ As county town it not only held its own city Quarter and Petty Sessions¹³⁴ but was also the venue for the county's Quarter Sessions. These covered both mainland Hampshire and the Isle of Wight trying not only the more serious cases within the Justices' powers but also running county affairs.¹³⁵ The power of the City Sessions was however limited, before 1836, to the historic city so offences in the 'suburbs'¹³⁶ such as theft of wood from Edward Mant's wharf, theft of sheets and linen in St John's and theft from Mr Raymond's home in College Street were tried at the County Sessions.¹³⁷ In January 1836, as Lefevre (himself a Municipal Boundary Commissioner) had pointed out at the preceding October County Sessions, the City Sessions' jurisdiction was

¹³⁰ 'Town Council' is the term used in all reportage in the *Hampshire Chronicle* from 1836 onwards.

¹³¹ The accounts from 1 January to 1 September 1836 show a police salary cost of £229 – HC 8 May 1837.

¹³² HC 26 June 1837 – the letter was dated 23 June.

¹³³ See for example A.M. Coleby, *Central Government and the Localities: Hampshire 1649-1689* (Cambridge, 1987), *passim*.

¹³⁴ For example HC, 18 July 1831 and 2 June 1834 respectively.

¹³⁵ See Foster, *The Politics...*, 40-67 for an analysis of the functioning of the Hampshire Quarter Sessions from 1820-52.

¹³⁶ See p. 95 above.

¹³⁷ HC 22 October 1832, 7 July 1834 and 13 April 1835 respectively.

extended to the new borough boundary¹³⁸ – co-terminus with that of the parliamentary borough boundary.¹³⁹

This however was not without a hiccup. Mayor Young and the Council assumed the powers of the old City Sessions had continued from 1 January 1836 only to find in late April that the King had not granted the Council Sessions. This led to panic that the county's rates and liability for jury duty would apply in the city. A petition was rapidly sent to the King emphasising that it was now intended to use the county gaol to hold city prisoners and that there was 'a well regulated police, which had as effectually checked the commission of crime as any other community of equal extent of population'. Lefevre, recently elected as High Steward and a man with Home Secretary Russell's ear, proved an effective emissary and legitimacy was established.¹⁴⁰

Although, as demonstrated by the case of the Sessions, Winchester was highly defensive of its own independence many of its prominent citizens played important roles in the county. MPs Mildmay and Bingham Baring; City Recorder, Philip Williams; G.R.G. Ricketts, Captain William Nevill and William Budd all sat at County Sessions.¹⁴¹ Williams even chaired trials in the absence of the usual chairman.¹⁴² Others, particularly from the legal profession, filled important positions in the administration supporting the Commission of the Peace.

George Hollis, Winchester attorney and owner of the Itchen Navigation was secretary of the local Pitt Club and Tory election agent in the county at various points from 1806 to 1831 - at the latter General Election declaring 'the Madness of the People for Reform is beyond Belief'.¹⁴³ He was also a member of the *ancien régime* in Winchester.¹⁴⁴ From 1796 to 1823 he was county treasurer. Accusations as to his peculation of, or incompetence with, county funds rolled on well into the 1830s.¹⁴⁵

¹³⁸ HC 27 July and 26 October 1835.

¹³⁹ HC 27 February 1832 and 25 April 1836 – the two boundary descriptions almost match word for word.

¹⁴⁰ HC 2, 9, 16 and 30 May 1836.

¹⁴¹ HC, 9 January 1832, 22 October 1832, 7 January 1833 and 15 April 1833.

¹⁴² HC 12 April 1835.

¹⁴³ R.E. Foster, 'The Decline and Fall of George Hollis: "Old Corruption" and Reform at Hampshire Quarter Sessions c. 1815-40', *Southern History*, Vol. 29 (2007), 71.

¹⁴⁴ It is difficult to describe Hollis as a Tory in the Winchester context as he 'split' (i.e. voted for two candidates from different parties) East/Mildmay in both 1835 and 1837 before going for a 'straight' (i.e. voted for two candidates of the same party) East/Escott in 1841; in 1837 if a 'party loyalist' he could have voted as in 1841. He seems to be one of those still attached to the pre-1832 Mildmay-East pact in the city.

¹⁴⁵ For a full account and analysis of the Hollis case see Foster, 'The Decline...', 60-82. For the continuing attempts to recover funds from Hollis etc. see for example HC 9 January 1832.

Hollis's successor, Barnard Winter, was another Winchester attorney and Conservative.¹⁴⁶ In 1832 he resigned, apparently finding the position under-remunerated¹⁴⁷ – a problem it appears Hollis had solved by other means. Whilst Messrs Knapp, Winchester bankers, covered the interregnum; the Winchester attorneys Charles Bailey and Charles Bridger advertised their candidacies weekly.¹⁴⁸ Bailey, who was to be elected by the overwhelmingly Reform council of January 1836 as the first post-Municipal Reform town clerk of Winchester, laid claim to 'long residence in this city and extensive connections in the county'. He was proposed by the Reform grandee, Sir Thomas Baring, and was clearly the Reform candidate. Charles Bridger was proposed by the former Tory and future Conservative M. P. for Andover and clearly a party choice being a loyal Conservative voter in Winchester. Bridger triumphed by thirty one votes to sixteen.¹⁴⁹

Thomas Woodham, yet another Winchester attorney, appears to have been Hollis's greatest foe. Woodham had been Clerk of the Lieutenancy, a potentially powerful position given the Lord Lieutenant's influence on appointments to the magistracy, since at least 1815; and, although technically deputy, *de facto* Clerk of the Peace since 1807.¹⁵⁰ Thomas Lloyd, a confidential clerk dismissed from Woodham's service, publicly alleged that Woodham was profiting from the case as £1300 of legal costs related to it had passed variously to or through Woodham's practice.¹⁵¹ It is difficult to see the dispute between Hollis and Woodham arising other than through personal or professional rivalry or disagreement for Woodham was at the time active in the Conservative cause. In October 1832 he was first named as Secretary to Douro's Central Committee and then with his partner Charles Seagrim was responsible for the coordination of canvass returns from the Local Committees acting for Douro and Long throughout the Northern Division of Hampshire.¹⁵² Woodham and Seagrim's political conduct

¹⁴⁶ He voted for East in 1835 and East and Escott in 1837. Another Winchester attorney, John Woodham, held the post between Hollis and Winter – Foster, *The Politics...*, 49.

¹⁴⁷ *HC* 9 April 1832.

¹⁴⁸ Starting *HC* 9 April 1832.

¹⁴⁹ *HC* 9 July 1832. Bailey plumped for Mildmay in 1837 but could not vote in 1841 having moved since registration. Bridger plumped for East in 1832 and voted 'straight' for East and Escott in 1837 and 1841.

¹⁵⁰ Foster, 'The Decline...', 60 and 67; and Foster, *The Politics...*, 25-6 and 50.

¹⁵¹ *HC*, 4 April and 24 October 1831

¹⁵² *HC* 15 and 22 October 1832.

within Winchester was more equivocal neither voting plump or straight for the Conservatives until 1841.¹⁵³

The Quarter Sessions were not the only judicial body sitting in Winchester and thereby bringing the county's business into the city. Judges came on circuit to hold Assizes twice a year, usually in March and July accompanied by a string of barristers and other lawyers. The judges were met with pomp and circumstance being escorted into the city by the High Sheriff in the 'state carriage', attending a special cathedral service and often being dined by the Dean and Chapter.¹⁵⁴ Winchester was also the venue for a regular Court for Relief of Insolvent Debtors covering most, if not all, the county.¹⁵⁵ In December 1830 the Special Commission tried 285 Swing rioters; 101 received capital sentences, of whom only three were executed.¹⁵⁶

Supporting the justice system were the gaols of the city, four in all at the start of the period. The largest were the county gaol in Jewry Street (capacity 228, throughput 375 in 1829) and the county bridewell to the north in Hyde suburb (capacity 230, throughput 593).¹⁵⁷ The city's own bridewell was small and deemed unsuitable by the Home Secretary in 1836, and use had to be made thereafter of the county gaol on a contract basis as a condition of the restoration of the city's own Commission of the Peace.¹⁵⁸ Additionally there was the Cheyney Court Prison in St John's parish linked to the court of that name operated by the cathedral to exercise jurisdiction over the Soke.¹⁵⁹ Many of the poor doubtless saw the workhouse, erected

¹⁵³ Woodham, although a Freeman, did not vote in 1831 or 1835, in 1837 he plumped for Mildmay but in 1841 voted East and Escott. Seagrim, newly enfranchised in 1832, plumped for Mildmay in 1835 and 1837 before voting East and Escott in 1841. Lloyd voted straight for East and Escott in 1837 but did not vote in 1841, despite being registered.

¹⁵⁴ *HC*, 18 and 25 February 1833 gives an account of such a welcome.

¹⁵⁵ *HC* 10 April 1837 for example.

¹⁵⁶ E.J. Hobsbawm and G. Rudé, *Captain Swing* (London, 1969), 220-1 and Appendix II.

¹⁵⁷ *Gaols, Copies of all reports, and of schedules (B.) transmitted to the Secretary of State, pursuant to the 24th section of the 4th Geo. IV. c. 64 and 14th section of the 5th Geo. IV, c. 12. (Counties, ridings or divisions.) Presented to the Honourable the House of Commons, in conformity to the further provisions of the same.* PP 1830 (5), xxiv, 95-104.

¹⁵⁸ Carpenter Turner, *A History...*, 125-6 and 134-7; and for the events of 1836 see p. 105 above.

¹⁵⁹ Woodward, *A History...*, 92-3 and Carpenter Turner, *A History...*, 111. The role of Cheyney Court is explained in R. Mudie, *Hampshire: Its Past and Present Condition and Prospects: Vol. I, The Valleys of the Itchen and Test* (Winchester, 1838), 87. At the 1841 census three residents are enumerated at this prison – summary in *HC* 5 July 1841.

in 1836 to the West of the city, in a similar light.¹⁶⁰ It did however replace an earlier one found wanting by the Poor Law Commissioners.¹⁶¹

The forces of order were also represented by the barracks in the putative royal palace to the west of the city walls. However for much of the 1830s the barracks acted more as a transit camp than a garrison with six months the record stay and the barracks often empty.¹⁶² Even when troops were present they were obliged by law to remove from Winchester during assizes¹⁶³ and elections. After 1832 the latter proved quite a challenge as places such as Basingstoke and Alton were polling places in the county's Northern and Romsey in its Southern Divisions whilst Andover, Petersfield and Southampton had their own borough elections as well. So January 1835 saw the 23rd Welsh Fusiliers dispersed to Stockbridge, Alresford, Wickham and Botley.¹⁶⁴

Until just before the Crimean War Winchester's peacetime military role remained that of a transit camp. In the early 1850s it was however transformed into that of a garrison town with barracks and extensive housing for soldiers' families.¹⁶⁵ The censuses of 1841 to 1891 show between 800 and 2,500 in the barracks. Moreover many officers lived with their families in the city, some finding their way onto the electoral register at this stage or in later retirement. The Crimean War saw at least two emergency hospitals located in Florence Nightingale's county town.¹⁶⁶

Despite the boost this military presence made to the local economy Mark Allen's study of the impact of the railway upon Winchester concludes that at the close of the nineteenth century 'Winchester was still a small town with little industry that survived on its history, its ecclesiastical and administrative importance and the need to provide support for its own residents and those of its immediate hinterland.'¹⁶⁷ This sounds to be much as in 1831.

¹⁶⁰ Not 1834-5 as at James, *Winchester...*, 150-1. Tenders to build it were sought in April 1836 – *HC* 4 April 1836.

¹⁶¹ *HC* 25 May 1835.

¹⁶² The 23rd Welsh Fusiliers managed six months – *HC* 23 November 1834 (arrival) and 18 May 1835 (departure). A comprehensive listing of the deployment of regiments at 1 December 1835 did not show one in Winchester – *HC* 7 December 1835.

¹⁶³ For example *HC* 2 March 1835.

¹⁶⁴ *HC* 5 January 1835.

¹⁶⁵ G.S. Applin, 'Splendid Isolation? A social history of the Army in Winchester during the 1850s', (unpublished MA dissertation, University of Winchester, 2008), 2 and 17.

¹⁶⁶ M.A. Allen, 'A Railway Revolution? A Census-Based Analysis of the Economic, Social and Topographical Effects of the Coming of the Railway upon the City of Winchester c. 1830- c. 1890', (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Southampton/King Alfred's College, 1999), 322.

¹⁶⁷ Allen, 'A Railway...', 323.

Nevertheless whether due to the railway or not, Winchester did expand significantly; the borough population almost doubled from 9,212 in 1831 to 17,003 in 1871.¹⁶⁸ There were significant housing developments on almost all sides, particularly to the north, west and south in locations such as Alfred Place, West Hill and Harold (later Christchurch) Road.¹⁶⁹ The centre was not excluded from this – the Mildmay seat of Eastgate House, once the symbol of Whig influence in the borough, being replaced by considerably more properties in Eastgate Street, many of their occupants making it onto the electoral register;¹⁷⁰ and the old hospital site in Parchment Street was redeveloped, by the Gover family, with cheap, overcrowded and insanitary homes.¹⁷¹ Winchester's role and industrial base might not have changed much, other than for an increased and more permanent military presence, but what it was doing was sustaining almost twice as many people in 1871 as in 1831. Alongside this there had been major changes in the level of political involvement both national/parliamentary and local/municipal.

This is the environment in which 'Winchester Man' lived, worked, married, sought housing and voted. But what do we know of 'Winchester Man' himself, It is to this that we turn in the next chapter.

¹⁶⁸ *McCalmont...*, 321 (White pp.).

¹⁶⁹ Allen, 'A Railway...', 320-1 and Grover 'The suburban...', *passim*.

¹⁷⁰ There are 21 electors on the 1858 register qualifying for properties in Eastgate Street – HRO W/B9/2/83 printed list by Barclay.

¹⁷¹ Allen, 'A Railway...', 320.

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CHAPTER 5

THE NATURE OF 'WINCHESTER MAN' 1832-1867

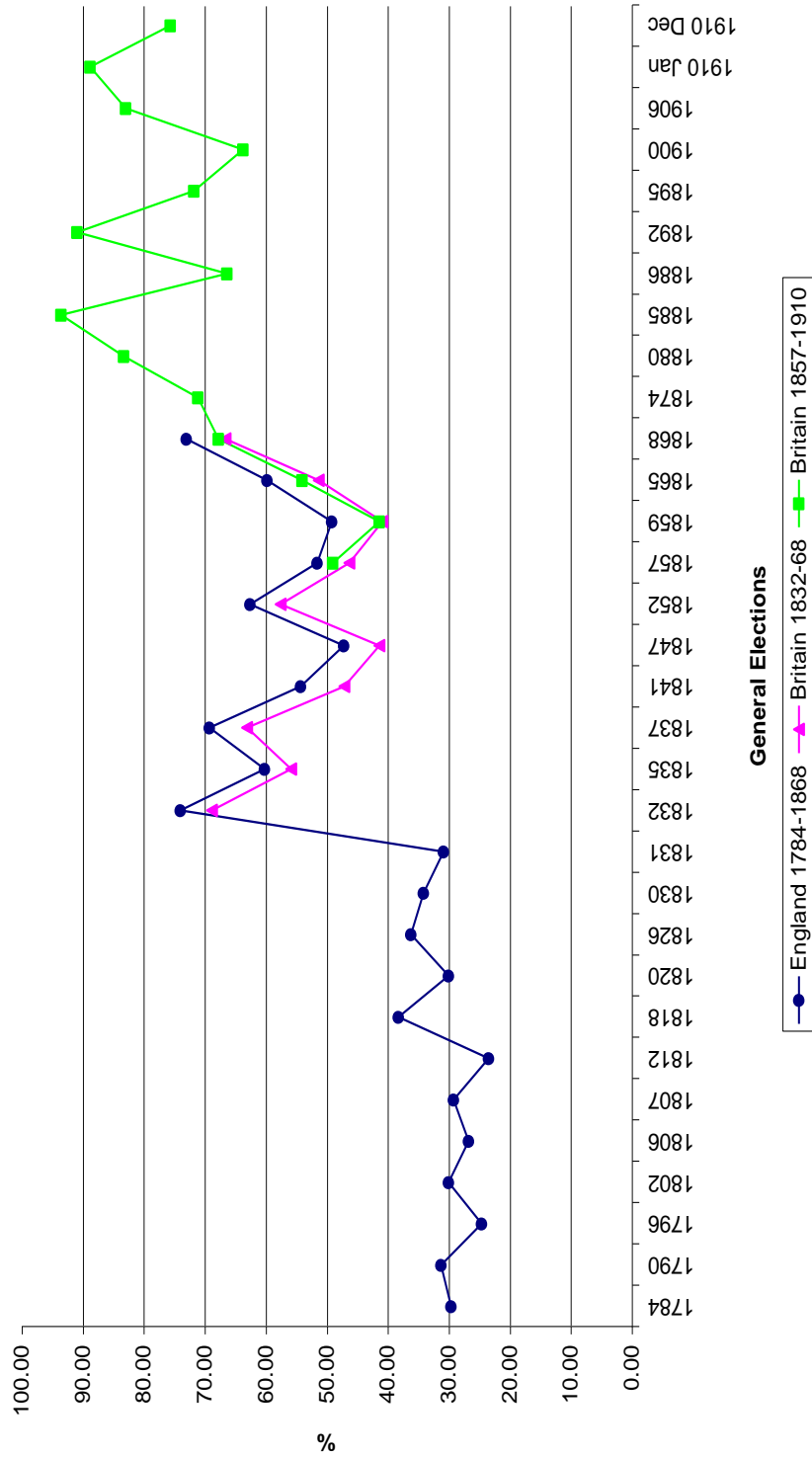
This chapter first challenges the assumption, in recent work,¹ that the results of many parliamentary elections at constituency level, in the period from 1832 until the introduction of the secret ballot in 1872, could have been known with considerable confidence in advance. This, it has been argued, was a result of the operation of the electoral registration system introduced in 1832 and knowledge of voters' 'social networks'. These previous assumptions are then tested in Winchester by an examination of aspects of the nature of 'Winchester Man', the archetype established in the previous chapter. His period on the electoral register (his 'Elector Life') is determined to be relatively short and to contribute to uncertainty as to the outcomes of elections. The impact on his 'elector life' of both his age on entry to the register and the reasons why he left the register are examined.

How Certain Were Election Results?

In the last two decades the work of Salmon, Radice and Mitchell has tended to suggest that between 1832 and 1867 it was the local political apparatus which either determined, or knew, the likely outcome of elections in advance. This is especially so in respect of the registration process. Such knowledge might have been expected to reduce the level of contested elections yet the evidence is to the contrary. What actually happened is illustrated by **Figure 1 (below)**. This shows that between 1784 and 1831 only about 30 per cent of seats in England were contested. From 1832 we can observe a step change in the numbers contested across the General Elections to 1865 – almost 60 per cent of English and over 50 per cent of all British seats being contested. A combination of the Reform Acts of 1867 and 1868 and the Ballot Act of 1872 then saw a rise in the level of contestation to almost 75 per cent of British seats in the General Elections up to and including 1880. The franchise reform of 1884 and the redistribution of 1885 saw a further rise in seats contested to almost 80 per cent in the General

¹ See pp. 111-4 below.

Figure 1: Contested Elections



Elections from 1885 to World War I.²

In 1992 Paula Radice quoted William Biggs of Leicester, a key player in the Reform/Liberal registration organisation in that borough in the 1830s, as stating: 'In this borough, give me the party who will attend to the Registration, and I will answer for the result at an election'.³ One wonders if this were so why between 1832 and 1880 all but the 1841 General Election was contested at Leicester, albeit that of 1857 was merely an internecine Whig/Liberal contest.⁴ If the work at the annual revising barristers' court of party officials such as William Biggs was so effective why did parties bother to contest elections?

This was not an era in which parties felt the need to prove that they were national parties by contesting every seat. Nor did they seek votes where they had no hope of winning a seat merely to add to their national tally of votes. Indeed the papers of what we might term 'national party organisers', such as Bonham and Rose, suggest careful targeting of winnable seats.⁵ It would appear that to a considerable degree Biggs was attempting to emphasise, probably to over-emphasise, the importance of his own activities to his party's cause. What is perhaps more important is that the existence of vigorous effort at the annual registration round, as is evident in Winchester in the decade or so from 1835 and less so thereafter,⁶ was indicative of a healthy and active local party organisation. This meant that organisation and resources were available to make a strong bid to win the borough's seats. However very often one party proving effective at one registration round led the other to take counter-measures and to improve its own organisation and efforts – an electoral 'arms race' might ensue making a contest more likely.

² Data for Figure 1 sourced from E.J.Evans, *The Forging of the Modern State: Early Industrial Britain 1783-1870* (3rd Edition, Harlow, 2001), 488-9, M.Pugh, *The Making of British Politics 1867-1939* (2nd Edition, Oxford, 1993), 15 and *McCalmont's Parliamentary Poll Book of All Elections 1832-1918* (8th ed., Brighton, 1971), 332B, 273 and 3.

³ P.K.V. Radice, 'Identification, Interests and Influence: Voting Behaviour in four English Constituencies in the Decade after the Great Reform Act' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Durham, 1992), 266.

⁴ *McCalmont...*, 168-9.

⁵ See p. 85 above.

⁶ See pp. 168-186 below.

The deterministic view of William Biggs was taken up by Philip Salmon in 2002. Salmon's examination of the detail of party registration activity focused on six county constituencies.⁷ Consequently Salmon declared, for instance, that the 1841 General Election was not contested by the Whig/Liberals/Reformers of North Devon as 'The real battle had already been fought and won [at the preceding revision in 1840]'⁸ In other words the election had been won, and lost, by other means – party registration activity. However the use of county examples to make such a point is potentially misleading in three respects. First the English county seats were of a minority type being 22 per cent of all seats in the Commons and only 30 per cent of the English seats therein.⁹ Secondly the English county seats were rarely contested – from 1832 to 1865 inclusive an average of 37 per cent were contested.¹⁰ Finally this category of seats regularly yielded a significant Conservative majority – from 1835 to 1865 (the 1832 performance was exceptionally poor) the Conservatives took 68 per cent of these seats¹¹ – even when the party had split over Corn Law Repeal prior to the 1847 General Election. By the 1841 General Election the Whig Government was in disarray and the Corn Laws had become an election issue¹² - a natural Conservative issue in county constituencies. So there were very good reasons for Whig/Liberals not to contest county seats especially in 1841 which reached far beyond the outcome of the 1840 registration round.

It is interesting that the figures relating to the annual registration rounds in both the press, which Salmon recognises as potentially politically biased, and the private papers of leading participants appear never to include any figures for those of uncertain political allegiance – all claims and objections, both successful and otherwise, are categorised as Tory or Liberal.¹³ What of those who successfully entered the register without an expressed allegiance to either party? Did they not contribute an element of uncertainty? Moreover there were those who left the register through death, change of address ('removal') or other reasons who,

⁷ North Devon, South Lincolnshire, Bedfordshire, West Somerset, North Wiltshire and the West Riding - P. Salmon, *Electoral Reform at Work: Local Politics and National Parties 1832-1841* (Woodbridge, 2002), 146-82.

⁸ Salmon, *Electoral...*, 155.

⁹ See Table 3.4 p. 73 above.

¹⁰ See Table 3.7 p. 79 above.

¹¹ See Table 3.6 p. 78 above.

¹² B. Hilton, *A Mad, Bad and Dangerous People? England 1783-1846* (Oxford, 2006), 504-5.

¹³ Salmon, *Electoral...*, 154 Table 10 data from the Acland MSS for example.

whether or not they were of known political allegiance, are not included in most of the published 'scorecards' from the revision courts.¹⁴

In October 1840 the *Hampshire Chronicle* reported the outcome of that autumn's revision court for Winchester borough:

Liberal	Claims	13	sustained	7	failed	6
	Objections	63	sustained	19	failed	44
Conservatives	Claims	24	sustained	9	failed	14
	Objections	27	sustained	12	failed	15

From this it might be inferred that the 'Liberal Party' had secured an advantage of five from the revision (claims sustained being a net two negative (seven minus nine) and objections a net seven positive (nineteen minus twelve)). However, in the same edition of the paper, 'A Correspondent' offered an alternative and more positive interpretation for the Liberals (or as he described them 'Reformers'). He brought into his account those claims and objections not contested in the revision court and cases of death and 'removal' relating to those on the previous year's register.

The Conservatives have, in the course of the proceedings, placed on the present register –

Claims and persons not objected to	..	..	..	41
Reformers – ditto	..	..	..	30
Gained by the Conservatives	..	..	..	--11
Deaths and removals (Conservatives)		..	..	57
Ditto (Reformers)	..	..	..	29
				--28
Deduct Conservative majority on claims, &c			..	11
Majority in favour of the Reformers			..	--- 17. ¹⁵

'A Correspondent' recognised the need to incorporate into his analysis those of known political allegiance whose electoral status was changed both by the revision court and otherwise. However his analysis did not accommodate any about whose party allegiance there might be any doubt.

In 2008 Jeremy Mitchell argued strongly that there was a very clear and strong basis for knowing a man's political allegiance even if he had never voted. His contention was that the individual voter's political allegiance, or preference, in this period was largely determined by his 'social network' and 'that in stressing the relative importance of a single social factor such as

¹⁴ For the operation of the Revising Barristers' Courts see pp. 174-6 and 180-98 below.

¹⁵ *Hampshire Chronicle* (hereafter *HC*) 19 October 1840.

religious affiliation, or social dependence, other accounts have been examining only one partial network.¹⁶ Mitchell contended that:

...electors existed within a web of inter-personal relations, a network of interactions with others, many of whom did not themselves possess the same formal political rights and were not full members of the electoral community. The behaviour of an elector was structured and influenced by this network of personal relationships.¹⁷

Mitchell is right to stress that there were more determinants of an individual's voting behaviour than one single factor – it was not necessarily solely down to the influence of a landlord, church or chapel, or of customers. It was a complex of influences – however there was also the additional factor of personal choice, or 'free will', which might well run counter to all known influences in the social network. Nevertheless, putting that to one side, the understanding and assessment of this 'social network' was exercised by local party officials such as William Jackson in Lancaster in the 1840s.¹⁸ This understanding was built up from local knowledge of family, relations, employment occupation etc.. However with an increasingly mobile population in this period such detailed and extended knowledge of an individual's historic and long-term network would in many cases have been difficult to possess or obtain.

The problem for party officials is illustrated by figures derived from the census enumerators' books for Winchester for 1871 (**Table 5.1 below**). By 1871 Winchester had a large military presence resident in the barracks which stood no chance of qualifying for a vote as they were not householders and were often in transit. Moreover very few of these soldiers were local men – many being from Ireland and Scotland – so would distort the percentage of adult males in the borough who were born locally. The figures show that in 1871, once the barracks is excluded, less than two-thirds (61.6 per cent) of adult males within the borough boundaries were born within the county of Hampshire. Hampshire was a large and populous county so knowledge of the social network of many of these would be scant. More important therefore is that just over a quarter (26.6 per cent) of men living in Winchester were born within the borough or parishes parts of which were within the borough boundaries. Although among those born elsewhere would be those who had moved to Winchester many years before. As a consequence of this

¹⁶ J.C. Mitchell, *The Organization of Opinion: Open Voting in England 1832-68* (Basingstoke, 2008), 139.

¹⁷ Mitchell, *Organization...*, 124.

¹⁸ Mitchell, *Organization...*, 65-70.

Table 5.1: Place of Birth of Winchester's Adult Males 1871

	Within Borough	Born Hampshire	Born Winchester
Adult Males	4355	2348	983
In Barracks	736	117	20
Nett of Barracks	3619	2231	963
%		61.6	26.6

Source: M. Allen and T.B. James (eds), *The 1871 Census for Winchester* (Winchester, 2006) - a CD from which the data used was sourced.

long association with Winchester, for these 'incomers', knowledge of an almost complete 'social network' would have been possible.

It is probable that there had been a reduction in the proportion of adult males born within the borough in the four decades from the 1832 Reform Acts to 1871. This was due to increased mobility which was in part facilitated by the coming of the railway from Southampton in 1839 and from London in 1841.¹⁹ The question as to place of birth was not asked until the 1851 census, so figures for the earlier part of this period are not available. The figures for 1871 have been derived from a published database of that census for Winchester.²⁰ Those for 1851 and 1861 would be excessively labour-intensive to derive from the census enumerators' books. However such an increase appeared to be referred to by Dr Crawford, a leading Reformer/Liberal for over twenty years. When chairing one of John Bonham Carter's election meetings in 1852, he referred to 'the failure of ardent men who are new to the place' to understand the strength of the Conservatives in Winchester.²¹ It is probable that party officials had a decreasing proportion of the electorate about whose individual historic and long-term

¹⁹ T.B. James, *Winchester: From Prehistory to the Present* (Extended and Revised Edition, Stroud, 2007), 144-5.

²⁰ M. Allen and T.B. James (eds), *The 1871 Census for Winchester* (Winchester, 2006).

²¹ HC 3 July 1852.

social networks they possessed a detailed and extended knowledge. This would suggest an increasing degree of uncertainty as to the likely behaviour of a significant section of the electorate.

With narrow margins of victory in most elections in Winchester (see **Table 5.2 below**) it did not take uncertainty as to the voting behaviour of a large proportion of voters to put the result in doubt. The margins were such that for the third-placed candidate to beat the nearest successful opponent of the opposite party that only in 1832 were more than 10 per cent of the electorate required to vote differently from the way they had. (A voter changing sides (shown here under the heading 'Swing to Win') reduces the margin by two as Candidate A loses a vote but Candidate B gains one.)

TABLE 5.2: MARGINS OF VICTORY WINCHESTER 1832-1867

Year	Third Place	Nearest Opponent	Margin	Swing To Win	Electorate	Swing %
1832	151	263	112	57	530	10.8
1835	123	176	53	27	521	5.2
1837	216	242	26	14	577	2.4
1841	191	292	101	51	597	8.5
1847	234	315	81	41	649	6.3
1852	288	369	81	41	741	5.5
1857	252	385	133	67	785	8.5
1859	342	348	6	4	782	0.5
1865	336	459	123	62	896	6.9

Source: *McCalmont...*, 321.

In such circumstances uncertainty as to the voting behaviour of a relatively small proportion of the electorate placed the result in doubt and arguably justified a contest. However in the era of open voting prior to 1872 once an elector had voted at either a parliamentary or a municipal election his political inclinations would appear to be clear. This would remove the need for knowledge of his social network and, in particular, its historic elements which may have occurred at some distance from where he now resided and acquired the franchise. This might therefore be expected to narrow the number of electors about whom party officials had doubts as to their political loyalties.

The 1841 General Election saw a handbill or poster in the style of a pollbook with individuals' 'Principles' and promised votes identified together with 'Remarks' as to their behaviour. Fragments of the poster survive.²² These fragments cover 345 individuals. As to their principles, 197 are stated to be 'Reformers' (i.e. Whigs or Liberals) and 128 Tories (of whom four are described as 'Rabid Tory'). But more interesting, in a document which from the nature of the comments in the 'Remarks' column was put out by the Whig/Liberal side, are the nineteen described as 'Doubtful' and the 'G. Branchflower' as 'Anything'. Here we have a document which, although clearly of partisan origin, recognises that there was a segment of the electorate about whose voting intentions party officials could not be certain. Using the 1841 pollbook it can be determined that Branchflower and all but one 'Doubtful' voted for the Conservative 'slate' of East and Escott. The other 'Doubtful' split his votes between the Conservative East and the Whig Pigott.

If these fragments were representative of the entire electorate of 597 on the 1840 electoral register applicable at this General Election²³ then there would have been thirty-five electors of 'Doubtful' principles in the electorate. This was almost 6 per cent of the electorate. Moreover these fragments provide evidence that the knowledge of a man's principles was on occasions faulty or that there were factors beyond his principles which had to be taken into account. For, of those of 'Reformer' principles Thomas Hendy plumped for East and thirteen split their votes between the Conservative East and the Whig Crowder. The vast majority being cast in accordance with their promises as recorded in the fragments albeit Thomas Henry Hayward was remarked to be 'under compulsion'. A further forty-three of 'Reformer' principles voted for the Conservative 'slate', twenty-nine in accordance with their promises. These promises, one assumes, were determined during canvassing and therefore the casting of those votes should not have been a surprise. Four men are claimed to have had 'golden' or 'sterling' reasons for the votes cast. Of these James Barnard's 'promise' is recorded as 'Shuffled' and John Brown's as 'Doubtful' – so there were good reasons to be uncertain as to their final voting behaviour. There are five references to intimidation, three of which are accompanied by clear promises to vote for the Conservative candidates. Eight receive no comment in the 'Remarks' column and Joseph Lacey's behaviour is described as 'Unaccountable'. Clearly in 1841 officials of

²² Winchester City Council Museums Service Political Poster Collection (hereafter WCCM) LH 2482 1-4.

²³ The figure calculated after the removal of duplicates – See pp. 39, 50, 51 and 53 above.

the Winchester 'Reformer'/Whig party did not fully understand the social networks of a significant number of those they believed held their principles. Other possibilities are that they misunderstood the principles of some of these individuals or that they could not grasp the concept of what in the late twentieth century became known as the 'floating voter'.

'Electoral Lives'

It is possible that one of the reasons for such misunderstandings was the 'electoral life' of the voter – the period over which he could exercise the franchise and thereby establish a 'track record' of voting. The widely quoted figures from historical demographers for life expectancy give the impression that electors would have a relatively short enfranchised life. For the widely quoted life expectancy of around forty years in about 1840²⁴ would indicate a maximum average life as a potential voter of nineteen years (the qualifying age was twenty-one). However, for the purposes of this study, this figure is misleading in a number of respects.

Most importantly the widely quoted figures relate to life expectancy at birth and are, therefore, deflated by the high level of infant and child mortality and of deaths of women, as a result of childbirth. For example for 1841 moving the point of calculation to the age of one year raised life expectancy for men from forty to forty-seven.²⁵ For the purpose of this study only those men who attained the age of twenty-one are of interest. Life expectancy at such an age has not been of great concern to historical demographers, but from their work some good indicative figures can be derived. The most respected work on English historical demography indicates that between 1830 and 1837 the mean age at marriage was 24.9.²⁶ We might reasonably take this as the age at which many men first set up their own household and thus potentially qualified for the borough franchise. The same work indicates that in 1850 a twenty-five year old had an expectation of living a further thirty-six years i.e. until age sixty-one.²⁷ Therefore a man who lived to the age of twenty-five on average had the possibility of being an elector for forty years (from age twenty-one to death at sixty one) or more realistically for thirty-

²⁴ See for example N. McCord, *British History 1815-1906* (Oxford, 1991), 212 and Hilton, *Mad...*, 574 note 6.

²⁵ M. Nissel, *People Count: A History of the General Register Office* (London, 1987), 139.

²⁶ E.A. Wrigley, R.S. Davies, J.E. Oeppen and R.S. Schofield, *English Population History from Family Reconstitution 1580-1837* (Cambridge, 1997), 134 Table 5.3.

²⁷ Wrigley *et al*, *English Population...*, 281-2 – figure derived from graph at Figure 6.14 therein.

six years (from marrying and setting up his own home at twenty-five to death at sixty-one). Moreover there were further, unquantifiable, factors which would suggest that 'Winchester Man' on reaching twenty-five could have an even higher life expectancy than sixty-one.

Firstly the bases of this calculation are national averages which were depressed by the particularly low life expectancy of those in some large industrial and commercial centres such as Liverpool and Manchester. So in the key boroughs inhabited by 'Winchester Man' this life expectancy would have been higher. Secondly those with the vote in such boroughs generally excluded, due to the £10 householder franchise and the residence and ratepaying conditions attached to the franchise, the lower levels of society. These latter with their poorer living conditions, diet etc. would be expected to have a lower life expectancy. Both of these are however difficult to quantify.

Another reason for examining 'elector life' is that much work conducted hitherto using pollbooks has been based on 'longitudinal analysis'. This involves taking the voting records of individuals who voted at two or more elections and testing the level of sustained partisan voting or splitting. Examples include the work of John A. Phillips and Charles Wetherell on Shrewsbury between 1818 and 1841²⁸ and Phillips' work on *inter alia* Lewes.²⁹ Those with such long voting records may well have been exceptional rather than representative of the electorate. Indeed Miles Taylor has pointed out that some 15 to 20 per cent of those recorded in pollbooks only voted at one election in a borough and that less than 30 per cent polled at four successive elections.³⁰ One possible reason for this might be a relatively short 'elector life'.

²⁸ J.A. Phillips and C. Wetherell, 'The Great Reform Bill of 1832 and the rise of partisanship', *Journal of Modern History* Vol. 63, No. 4 (December 1991), 641-5.

²⁹ J.A. Phillips, *The Great Reform Bill in the Boroughs: English Electoral Behaviour, 1818-1841* (Oxford, 1992), 190-6.

³⁰ M. Taylor, 'Interests, parties and the state: the urban electorate in England, c. 1820-72' in J. Lawrence and M. Taylor (eds), *Party, State and Society: Electoral Behaviour in Britain since 1820* (Aldershot, 1997), 60.

To date only Mitchell has endeavoured to calculate the electoral life expectancy of voters. His results, based on 2,017 Bedford voters, are reproduced in **Table 5.3 below**.

Table 5.3: Electoral Lives: Bedford Borough

	Half-Life		Expectation	
	Years	Months	Years	Months
1832	11	4	16	4
1835	10	4	14	11
1837	11	9	17	0
1841	13	5	19	5
1847	10	8	15	5
1852	10	2	14	7
1857	10	4	14	11

Source: J. C. Mitchell, *The Organisation of Opinion: Open Voting in England, 1832-68* (Basingstoke, 2008), 179.

Mitchell’s terminology requires some explanation. By ‘Half-Life’ he means the point at which half the electors in the cohort he has taken from a General Election pollbook have ceased to be electors. Broadly this is usually described as the median (or mid-point of the data) in most statistical analysis.³¹ By ‘Expectation’ he signifies what is usually called the arithmetic mean (or average) of the data. These figures fall well short of the putative figures for elector lives postulated in the preceding paragraph – however there are reasons to treat Mitchell’s findings with extreme care. Firstly the significant differences between the ‘Half-Life’ and ‘Expectation’ figures (on the basis of simple averages of the figures in his table - eleven years two months compared to sixteen years one month) suggest that the distribution of values is skewed in the direction of the longer-lived electors.

This skewing is, at least in part, explained by two aspects of the methodology followed by Mitchell. First the source he uses for his calculation is the set of General Election pollbooks for Bedford from 1832 to 1857.³² General Elections occurred at intervals of up to seven years –

³¹ For definitions of the statistical terms used see P. Hudson, *History by Numbers* (London, 2000) - for median 89-90, for arithmetic mean 87-9 and for skew and possible causes of skew 104-7.

³² Mitchell, *Organization...*, 86 and 179 – he does not include data from the 1854 by-election *McCalmont...*, 18.

in this case the greatest 'gap' between such elections was six years one month (1841 to 1847) and the shortest two years one month (1832 to 1835).³³ Therefore what are addressed in assessing elector lives are a set of elector cohorts who first appeared in a poll book at a specific General Election (for all cohorts the 1859, 1865 and 1868 pollbooks were used to assess cohort attrition). It is not clear whether the pollbooks included, or regularly included, those on the electoral register who did not vote. It is probable that they did not as Dod records a considerably larger electorate for 1832.³⁴ Mitchell then assumes a steady decline in numbers between the points represented by the pollbooks.³⁵ What this analysis omits are those electors who both joined and left the register between General Elections, who could have been on the register for up to five years,³⁶ and those who happened to be absent from the register in a General Election year, albeit their electoral life may have straddled a General Election. As those omitted would inevitably have shorter than average elector lives the methodology overstates such lives.

Secondly Mitchell assumes on the basis of the pattern for his 1832 cohort that cohort 'decay is continuous and exponential'.³⁷ His calculation based upon this assumption of exponential decline in numbers in practice assumes that there will always be a diminishing fragment of the cohort in existence. His pollbook analysis shows 104 out of the 961 electors in his 1832 cohort were still recorded in the 1868 pollbook. At this point they would have been aged at least fifty-seven having had to have been at least twenty-one in 1832 to qualify for registration. However a calculation using Mitchell's published 1832 cohort data, which produces a result for 'Expectation' a fraction of a month less than his, indicates that the 'Expectation' relies on some electors having unrealistically long lives. At the extreme one elector is still 'alive' in 1945, but more significantly fifteen are 'alive' at the end of 1900 when they would have spent sixty-eight years on the register and be at least eighty-nine years old. Interestingly if a limit is placed upon life on the register the potential level of distortion arising from this aspect of the methodology becomes clear.³⁸ **(See Table 5.4 below.)** It appears that this aspect of methodology

³³ Derived from dates in *McCalmont...*, 18.

³⁴ C.R.Dod, *Electoral Facts 1832-1853 Impartially Stated* (2nd Edn, London, 1853), 19 shows 1,572 in 1832 as opposed to Mitchell's 961.

³⁵ Mitchell, *Organization...*, 90.

³⁶ The 1840 register, effective 1 November 1840, applied at the 1841 General Election and that of 1846 at the 1847 General Election. Therefore a man could have been registered from 1841 to 1845 inclusive (i.e. on five registers) without appearing in a pollbook.

³⁷ Mitchell, *Organization...*, 91.

³⁸ Advice on this aspect was received from a professional actuary, Mr Philip Gwilliam.

may have overstated the average life of an elector by up to a year and five months. This would suggest greater scope for party officials to determine an elector's 'principles' and for him to vote over a longer sequence of elections.

Table 5.4: Bedford Expected Lives - Impact of Methodology
1832 Cohort

<u>Method</u>	<u>Expectation</u>	
	<u>Years</u>	<u>Months</u>
Mitchell - Exponential	16	4
Limit to 60 Year Electoral Life	15	11
Limit to 50 Year Electoral Life	15	7
Limit to 40 Year Electoral Life	14	11

Before leaving Mitchell's analysis it is surprising that his 1832 Bedford cohort has an above average 'Expectation' figure (sixteen years four months as against sixteen years one month). The starting point for Mitchell's analysis is 1832 which saw the introduction of the new £10 householder franchise. It would therefore be reasonable to expect that cohort to be a mixture of electors, who in the normal course of events, would have been at various stages in their electoral lives. With the result therefore reflecting only their remaining electoral lives one would expect it to be considerably below that for later cohorts which wholly comprised genuine new electors beginning their electoral lives.

Age on Entry to the Register

Mitchell could only explain the causes of the relatively low 'elector life' he found in the broadest of terms and only those which could explain departure from the register – outward migration and disqualification by the revising barristers.³⁹ One determinant of the length of electoral life might be the age of entry of borough electors to the electoral register. This is not addressed in Mitchell's analysis. For Winchester use of age at death from burial registers from

³⁹ Mitchell, *Organization...*, 91-2.

1832 to 1880 and *Hampshire Chronicle* notices for 1832 to 1842 together with age at the 1871 census was used to calculate ages of entry to the electoral register.⁴⁰ The age given in the census is in whole years so there is a minor element of approximation in arriving at any answer. If accurately stating his age a man of fifty-four might have had his birthday on the day of the census, or at the other extreme he might become fifty-five the next day. Assuming an even distribution of birth dates throughout the year, this lack of precision in the census data would generally reduce the results determined by about six months. Nevertheless using the data as found in the census enumerators' books, the entry age for 1,075 men who became electors between 1833 and 1866 was determined. This data yielded a median entry age of thirty-six and an arithmetic mean entry age of thirty-eight years seven months. The age at the first quartile (the value a quarter of a way through the data arranged in order of increasing age) is twenty-eight and at the third quartile (three-quarters of the way through the data) forty-seven.⁴¹ Half the cases therefore fell between these values.

It should be noted that the mean entry age of the 711 cases derived from the 1871 census was thirty-five years eleven months whereas for the 364 cases derived from burial registers etc. it was forty-three years nine months – suggesting that the census provides more data on younger men whose death has not been captured in the period covered by the burial register data. The potential distorting effect of including data for the 1832 cohort is demonstrated by the results for the 315 men who entered the register in that year for whom an entry age has been possible to calculate. These show a median entry age of forty-nine and an arithmetic mean of forty-nine years five months. This increase, of about a decade, doubtless reflects that for many 1832 was far later than their 'normal' year of entry to the register, had the £10 householder franchise applied throughout their adult years.

This indicates that under the terms of the 1832 £10 householder franchise in Winchester the average age at entry to the electoral register was between thirty-six and thirty-nine. A good decade or more after the average marriage age of about twenty-five.⁴² Perhaps this period of ten to fifteen years was that necessary to build up his income or business so as to

⁴⁰ Where ages from more than one source were available precedence was given first to that derived from the 1871 Census, then to that from a burial register with the *Hampshire Chronicle* data for the first decade only used where there was no burial register data.

⁴¹ For quartiles see Hudson, *History...*, 98-9.

⁴² See p. 120 above.

establish his economic position as that of a £10 householder. This restricted the potential electoral life of an elector.

The age of entry onto the electoral register varied little over time (**See Table 5.5 below**). Given the relatively low numbers joining the register in any one year a five year average has been calculated to avoid distortions arising from low populations. Other than for a dip to about thirty-six and a half in the decade from 1838 the average entry age was comparatively steady at between thirty-eight and forty-one.

Table 5.5: Winchester Electoral Entry Ages

<u>Period</u>	<u>Arithmetic Mean</u>	
	<u>Years</u>	<u>Months</u>
1833-37	40	10
1838-42	36	7
1843-47	36	5
1848-52	39	0
1853-57	38	1
1858-62	39	6
1861-66*	39	0

* As no 1865 register and franchise change in 1867 period overlapped to give 5 year data coverage

Electoral Lives Revisited

The relatively late average entry age to the electoral register inevitably restricted an individual's period on the register – his 'elector life'. Averages for this are difficult to determine as even for the potentially unrepresentative 1832 'intake' there were a reasonable proportion who were still 'live' on the 1866 register (52 out of 530) and even some still 'live' in 1878 (13 cases). There are also the problems of the missing Winchester registers for 1865 and 1870 to

1877 inclusive and the national problem of there being no register for 1867 – its preparation having been suspended due to Parliament’s discussion of the Reform Bills of that year. The missing years of 1865 and 1867 are relatively simple to address by what might be called ‘gap bridging assumptions’. It has been assumed that half those appearing to complete their electoral lives in those years continued for a further year and that half those appearing to enter the register for the first time in 1866 entered it in 1865.

Those who appear to conclude their electoral lives in 1869 present a greater challenge. The assumption has been made that their ‘demise’ occurred fairly evenly across the nine registers of 1869 to 1877. To reflect this assumption an adjustment was made which took eight-ninths of the number appearing to end in 1869 (this allows for a ninth terminating in 1869) and multiplied in by four (half of the eight years over which they are being spread). It might be argued that arithmetically the multiplier should be 4.5 but it is felt the assumption reflects the fact that, particularly so for those cohorts from earlier in the period, ‘political mortality’ was likely to be higher in the earlier years.

A further challenge was presented by those who were still ‘live’ in the 1878 electoral register and therefore required a projection of their continued life on the register. They should not be excluded from the calculation as to do so would, certainly deflate the average electoral lives calculated. The assumption made was that the number from that cohort on the register in 1878 would leave the register over the same number of years with an average time on the register of half that number of years. The enhancements calculated on this basis do not seem unreasonable except for the very last few years of entry to the register. The final year, 1866, has an extremely high enhancement of thirty-three years per elector. This being applied in 1878 implies the average individual leaving the register in 1911 forty-five years after his entry thereon and aged at least sixty-six. It is for this reason that the figures for both the unadjusted and adjusted average ‘elector life’ are shown in **Table 5.6 below**. Moreover, for the reasons already outlined, great caution should be exercised in using the figures for 1861 to 1866.

These figures, based on 2,971 cases, equate to Mitchell’s ‘Expectation’ figures.⁴³ They are however somewhat lower than either his figures or those recalculated from them with a

⁴³ See Table 5.3 – p. 122 above.

limit on electoral life.⁴⁴ The weighted average electoral life which can be derived from Mitchell's published data and findings for 1832 to 1857⁴⁵ is sixteen years exactly. If the potentially distorting 1832 data is excluded it becomes fifteen years nine months. Across the period 1832 to 1866 inclusive the Winchester data yields an adjusted average life of thirteen years four months and an unadjusted one of ten years ten months. If limited to the 2,152 cases from the period 1832 to 1857 inclusive, to achieve strict comparability with Mitchell, the Winchester figures are twelve years eleven months on an adjusted basis and exactly twelve years on an unadjusted basis. If 1832 is excluded the figures are twelve years three months on an adjusted basis and eleven years two months unadjusted.

Table 5.6: Winchester Electoral Lives

<u>Period</u>	<u>Unadjusted Arithmetic Mean</u>		<u>Adjusted Arithmetic Mean</u>	
	<u>Years</u>	<u>Months</u>	<u>Years</u>	<u>Months</u>
1832	14	6	14	10
1833-37	12	10	13	0
1838-42	12	4	12	9
1843-47	12	4	13	3
1848-52	9	11	11	0
1853-57	9	7	11	11
1858-62	8	3	12	0
1861-66*	7	7	14	10

* As no 1865 register and franchise change in 1867 overlapped to give 5 year data coverage

⁴⁴ See Table 5.4 – p. 124 above.

⁴⁵ Mitchell, *Organization...*, 89 and 179.

The adjusted Winchester results for those joining the register from 1832 to 1857 inclusive represent a 19 per cent shorter average electoral life than indicated by Mitchell's calculations and data. (22 per cent if those joining the register in 1832 are excluded.) This reduces to 17 per cent if the Winchester data for those joining in 1858 to 1866 inclusive are added into the calculation. This shorter average electoral life would have increased the problems of party officials in determining the 'principles' and therefore probable voting intentions of electors. It also indicates a relatively high turnover in the electorate.⁴⁶

It is noteworthy that for Winchester, as with Mitchell's Bedford data, the elector life of those entering the register in 1832 is not lower than usual, although this would be expected from a cohort many of whom in other circumstances would have been part way through their electoral lives. Instead it is higher. This is difficult to explain but perhaps reflects a less mobile population earlier in the period and increased mobility with the coming of the railway etc..⁴⁷ It might also reflect a laxer approach to admission to the register in 1832 with the parties not organized for that year's revision courts. This outcome would however have required those so admitted to prove resilient in staying on the register in later years. In the light of these findings from hereon no effort is made to separate out the 1832 cohort and adjust for it.

There is evidence from the Winchester data to support the earlier suggestion that Mitchell's estimates of elector life were inflated by failing to include those never recorded in a pollbook.⁴⁸ In this period it was possible to be on the register for up to five sequential years without being on the register in a General Election year. For example the 1841 General Election was fought on the 1840 register and that of 1847 on the 1846 register. So Thomas Piper, initially of Cathedral Yard and later of North Walls, joined the register in 1841 and was last included in 1845. He would therefore have had an 'elector life' of five years (from 1 November 1841 to 31 October 1846) but never had the opportunity to vote in a General Election.

The vast majority of such cases however were those who appeared on the register for a single year (400 out of 593 cases in Winchester from 1833 to 1866⁴⁹) with a considerable number (100) appearing for only two years. These cases represent 16 per cent of all cases from

⁴⁶ See p. 139 below.

⁴⁷ See p. 102 above.

⁴⁸ See pp. 122-3 above.

⁴⁹ 1832 is excluded as it was a General Election year.

1832 to 1857 and 20 per cent of cases from 1832 to 1866. This means that one in five of those who qualified under the £10 householder franchise in Winchester never had the opportunity to vote. This was despite all General Elections being contested.

These individuals have a considerable impact on average electoral life as shown in **Table 5.7 below**. They reduce the average life for intakes from 1832 to 1857 by 14.4 per cent and for 1832 to 1866 by 18.4 per cent. When these cases are removed from the data set the adjusted elector lives are fifteen years one month for 1832 to 1857 and sixteen years four months for 1832 to 1866. These are much closer to the sixteen years exactly 'Expectation' which can be derived from Mitchell's data.⁵⁰ This suggests that the results from Bedford and Winchester are very similar. However the inclusion of those who never had the opportunity to vote in the core Winchester calculation gives a more representative figure as it was that for all potential electors. Moreover the Winchester data, being derived from the electoral register, includes those whose Bedford peers may have been omitted, as they abstained, from the pollbooks used as Mitchell's source.

These relatively short elector lives presented a challenge to party officials. In some cases they faced a 'Winchester Man' who was an 'immigrant' so they had an incomplete understanding of his 'social network'. If he were not on the burgess list for municipal elections,⁵¹ or there had been no contests in his ward, which was increasingly the case in Winchester after the first decade of municipal elections, his political proclivities could be unknown to them. At times, even during a thirteen-year 'elector life', few opportunities to vote in a parliamentary election arose. An elector first registered in 1841 might have voted in 1847, but that was a very unusual contest between essentially three candidates from three different parties.⁵² Therefore his behaviour at that General Election could be very difficult to interpret when approaching that of 1852. Having voted in 1852 his 'average elector life' would have expired by the 1857 contest.

⁵⁰ See p. 124 above.

⁵¹ See p. 172 below.

⁵² See p. 203 below.

**Table 5.7: Impact on Elector Life of Those Never
Able to Vote**

<u>Period</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Adjusted Life</u>	
		<u>Years</u>	<u>Months</u>
<u>All Electors</u>			
1832-57	2152	12	11
1832-66	2971	13	4
<u>Never Able to Vote</u>			
1832-57	345		
1832-66	593		
<u>Those Able to Vote</u>			
1832-57	1807	15	1
1832-66	2378	16	4
<u>Impact of Including Those Never Able to Vote</u>			
1832-57		MINUS	2
1832-66		MINUS	3

This relatively short average electoral life expectancy of about thirteen years combined with an average age of entry to the register of about thirty-nine⁵³ still leaves unaccounted for a considerable portion of a man's life. If his life expectancy at twenty-five was sixty-one this would be about a decade.⁵⁴ This suggests that a considerable proportion of men left the register for reasons other than death. Reasons for leaving the electoral register are therefore worthy of further investigation.

⁵³ See pp. 125-6 above.

⁵⁴ See p. 120 above. Decade based on life expectancy of 61 less 39 (entry age) less 13 (elector life) leaving residual of 9. As already indicated it could for 'Winchester Man' be greater than 61.

Reasons for Leaving the Register 1832-1842

Using the database of linked electoral registers⁵⁵ the records of those individuals who left the register between 1832 and 1842 and never returned to it were extracted. There were 435 such records in the 1,089 records live in the registers for 1832 to 1841. It should be noted that, other than in the case of 1832, these registers were effective from 1 November of their 'title year' to 31 October of the next year.⁵⁶ So the 1841 register was valid for elections from 1 November 1841 to 31 October 1842. However the compilation of the register commenced three months (31 July) before it came into force and qualification for it was determined by the individual's status during the preceding year.⁵⁷

In view of this to determine reasons for ceasing to be on the register the Winchester-based *Hampshire Chronicle* newspaper was searched from July 1832 to December 1842 for data on deaths, bankruptcies, property disposals etc. This data was combined with the electoral register data to derive the figures in **Table 5.8 below**. This shows that between 5.6 and 9.3 per cent of those on any year's register in that period failed to ever appear again on another register. This gives an average of 7.7 per cent. This might be taken as pointing to a possible average life on the register of thirteen years, which accords with earlier analysis.⁵⁸

Of the 435 leaving the register permanently the reasons for 172 (almost 40 per cent) of the departures could be determined from evidence in the *Hampshire Chronicle*. These were grouped under 4 headings. Firstly death or illness followed shortly thereafter (a one year absence from the register before death was recorded was allowed) often the newspaper report refers to a lengthy illness, as in the case of William Prior in 1836.⁵⁹ The view has been taken that such illness led to either removal to a relative's home, or failure to pay poor rates or assessed taxes, or receipt of medical aid from the parish. Any of these would have led to disqualification.

⁵⁵ See pp. 50-3 above.

⁵⁶ Salmon, *Electoral...*, 256.

⁵⁷ See p. 14 above.

⁵⁸ See p. 127-8 above.

⁵⁹ HC 5 September 1836.

Secondly there were those whose departure from Winchester was reported directly, as in the case of John Snow Clarke of the White Hart Inn in 1841-42,⁶⁰ or indirectly. In the latter case this was determined through advertisements for the sale of household goods or disposal of a business for this reason as in the case in 1841 of John Rangecroft.⁶¹ Also included in this category are those, such as Charles Watson in 1838, whose qualifying property was advertised for sale or to let just before they left the register.⁶² In these latter cases there is no indication as to whether they were leaving Winchester or died. In other cases, such as Charles Popham who was on the register in 1835 only, it is a story of him as one 'formerly of this city' as a renowned astronomy lecturer in Bath which provides the evidence.⁶³

Thirdly there were those who were declared bankrupt and had their property disposed of for the benefit of their creditors or were recorded as being subject to the Court for the Relief of Insolvent Debtors. George Gale the draper in 1841 is such a case.⁶⁴ It should, however, be noted that bankruptcy did not necessarily lead to loss of the franchise. In 1837 Richard Wise was discharged by the court but was on the register continuously from 1835 to 1840.⁶⁵

Finally there were those who ceased to trade for other reasons such as selling their business voluntarily or taking retirement. Stephen Harman, broker and furniture dealer, is an example of a retiree in January 1839. It clearly was the sale of the business which led to his exclusion from the 1839 register compiled in the subsequent summer and autumn. Albeit in March 1840 he died in the almshouses of St John's Hospital.⁶⁶ In an era in which Nossiter has pointed to the importance of the 'shopocracy' in the electorate,⁶⁷ it should be no real surprise to see bankruptcy and disposal of a business as reasons for leaving the electorate. Many shopkeepers 'lived over the shop' so when relinquishing his business voluntarily, or otherwise, a shopkeeper often lost the property which qualified him for the vote. It was highly likely that a

⁶⁰ HC 15 November 1841 and 14 February 1842.

⁶¹ HC 5 July 1841.

⁶² HC 6 August 1838.

⁶³ HC 20 May 1839.

⁶⁴ HC 19 July and 16 August 1841.

⁶⁵ HC 10 April 1837.

⁶⁶ HC 21 January 1839 and 30 March 1840.

⁶⁷ T.J. Nossiter, *Influence, Opinion and Political Idioms in Reformed England: Case Studies from the North-East 1832-74* (Hassocks, 1975), 145-6 and 165-6.

TABLE 5.8A: MOVEMENT OFF THE REGISTER 1832-42 (NUMBERS)

	1832	1833	1834	1835	1836	1837	1838	1839	1840	1841	TOTAL
NET NUMBER ON REGISTER	530	525	521	540	577	573	579	584	595	592	5616
Never Reappearing thereafter	49	31	41	30	52	44	39	48	46	55	435
% Never Reappearing	9.2	5.9	7.9	5.6	9.0	7.7	6.7	8.2	7.7	9.3	7.7
REASONS FOR NOT REAPPEARING ON THE REGISTER											
Death/illness shortly followed by death	14	10	15	9	17	13	14	20	13	11	136
Departure from Winchester or sale of property occupied	1	1	0	1	0	0	3	0	4	2	12
Bankruptcy	0	1	1	3	0	2	0	0	1	1	9
Cessation/Sale of/Retirement from Business	0	1	0	1	1	2	3	2	4	1	15
TOTAL EXPLAINED	15	13	16	14	18	17	20	22	22	15	172

TABLE 5.8B: MOVEMENT OFF THE REGISTER 1832-42 (PERCENTAGES)

	1832	1833	1834	1835	1836	1837	1838	1839	1840	1841	TOTAL
Death/illness shortly followed by death	28.6	32.3	36.6	30.0	32.7	29.5	35.9	41.7	28.3	20.0	31.3
Departure from Winchester	2.0	3.2	0.0	3.3	0.0	0.0	7.7	0.0	8.7	3.6	2.8
Bankruptcy	0.0	3.2	2.4	10.0	0.0	4.5	0.0	0.0	2.2	1.8	2.1
Cessation/Sale of/Retirement from Business	0.0	3.2	0.0	3.3	1.9	4.5	7.7	4.2	8.7	1.8	3.4
TOTAL EXPLAINED	30.6	41.9	39.0	46.7	34.6	38.6	51.3	45.8	47.8	27.3	39.5

Sources:

Electoral Registers - see Bibliography for listing and *Hampshire Chronicle* July 1832 to December 1842

small shopkeeper without the need for a retail element in his home would then move to a smaller property, perhaps of less than £10 annual value.

What is clear from these figures is that the information derived from the *Hampshire Chronicle* explains about 40 per cent of those leaving the register permanently. As the 1841 register was valid until 31 October 1842 it is possible that extending the search into 1843 might have explained more of the losses from the 1841 register. This possibly explains the particularly low proportion explained for that year. If the 1841 figures are ignored the proportion of cases explained rises by almost two percentage points.

The primary explanation for these permanent movements off the register is death with almost one-third of cases explained by it. A further 8 per cent of cases are explained by the other, largely business-related, reasons. This leaves about 60 per cent of cases to be explained by other reasons. It is very likely that the use of the *Hampshire Chronicle* for the information on deaths has understated them. However the newspaper was chosen as it tended to address the upper and middle strata of society from whom most of the electorate were drawn before 1868. Moreover it provides more background, such as occupation, street and sometimes former local offices held, to aid identification than do burial registers.

A parallel exercise was conducted using the parish, cathedral and cemetery burial registers. This identified 190 deaths among the 435 men leaving the register in this decade. This is 44 per cent of cases. Combined with the other data gathered from the *Hampshire Chronicle* this explains 52 per cent of the departures from the register. This figure can be increased a little as a few cases, for which evidence was found in the *Hampshire Chronicle*, were not detected in the burial registers. These however add only 3.4 percentage points to the proportion explained. Some of these were possibly buried in nearby parishes beyond the borough boundaries.

Migration from Winchester might explain some of the departures from the register. For the inward migration identified as a cause of uncertainty as to 'social networks',⁶⁸ had a counterpart, indeed to some degree a counterweight, of outward migration. These would be extremely difficult and labour-intensive to trace. Each departure from the register would have to be matched to a 'departure' from the census. It would then have to be tracked through

⁶⁸ See pp. 31 and 115-7 above.

subsequent censuses across the country in the style of genealogical research. The migration might be emigration from Britain, in which case the challenges would be even greater. A loss of economic and social status due to age or ill-health could be another reason for departure from the register. Aspects of this, latter, are investigated further below.⁶⁹

Reasons for Leaving the Register 1832-1866

An example, which illustrates a number of the challenges in determining reasons for leaving the electoral register, is that of Henry Vincent Earle. Earle, a freeman, was last on the Winchester borough register for 1836/7. The Hampshire Genealogical Society database reveals that he was buried in the nearby parish of Kingsworthy in December 1840.⁷⁰ Moreover it reveals that he was aged fifty-seven and, at death, from Stockbridge. It would appear that in 1837 Earle left the immediate vicinity of Winchester and moved to Stockbridge. Stockbridge being beyond the seven mile limit within which residence was required⁷¹ he was not retained on the register for 1837/8.

The example of Earle has the advantage of a distinctive name and the existence of a CD database covering the whole of Hampshire. The vast majority of men leaving the register in the period from 1832 to 1866 lack the former and the coverage of the latter ceases in 1841. Therefore in these instances one has to rely upon the congruency of the individual's last 'home parish' on the electoral register and the parish from which he was stated to come in the burial register. There are added complications arising from the creation of Holy Trinity ecclesiastical parish in 1859 and Christchurch in 1860.⁷² Throughout the church of St Maurice also served St Mary Kalendar and St Peter Colebrook parishes, which lacked such a building. It appears that increasingly the elements of those parishes not now part of Holy Trinity were seen as something akin to 'Greater St Maurice'. For in the cemetery registers, which were examined to 31 December 1880, last use St Mary Kalendar on 21 October 1869 and St Peter Colebrook on 13 January 1871.

⁶⁹ See pp. 139-45 below.

⁷⁰ Hampshire Genealogical Society: Hampshire Burial Index 1400-1841 HCD011 (Portsmouth, 2011).

⁷¹ 2 Will. IV, c. 45, s. 33.

⁷² B. Carpenter Turner, *A History of Winchester* (Chichester, 1992), 147-50.

For the remainder of the period covered burial registers only were used to determine the proportion of departures from the electoral register explained by deaths. Of the 2,971 men who joined the register between 1832 and 1866 inclusive 2,123 left the register in that period and did not reappear in 1868 or later.⁷³ Of the 2,123 some 26 per cent (556) were found to have died within a year of leaving the register. Those who died included twelve who appeared on the register prepared in the July⁷⁴ following their deaths. The worst case was that of Henry Grant of Colebrook Street whose burial was recorded in the St Maurice register on 7 June 1842 but was included in the register applicable to the year commencing 1 November 1843. These 'oversights' were particularly prevalent amongst freemen, whose register was prepared by the Town Clerk. Despite the relatively small proportion of freemen on the register (66 out of 530 in 1832 and only 30 out of 617 in 1845) four of the twelve errors relate to freeman. One, John Nicholas Silver, was recorded in the *Hampshire Chronicle* of 23 January 1837 as having died and in St Maurice's registers as having been buried on 26 January 1837. He however appeared in the electoral register effective for a year from 1 November 1837. Moreover the newspaper report clearly identified him as a freeman in stating that he was for many years an alderman and several times mayor in pre-1835 corporation comprising solely of freemen. The existence of these 'oversights' appears to indicate that the parish overseers and Town Clerk did not start with a 'clean sheet' in preparing their draft registers each year. Instead it seems that they started with the existing list and amended it missing the occasional correction. Furthermore as these voters were dead, and therefore no political threat, the party registration organisations and officials had no interest in objecting to their inclusion and thus creating an accurate register.

Even if the difficulties in establishing a death outlined above are deemed to have reduced the number of deaths detected by a third, slightly less than 40 per cent of departures from the register are explained by death. This is lower than the figure computed for 1832 to 1842. The other explanations determined from the *Hampshire Chronicle*, for the period from 1832 to 1842,⁷⁵ are such as would have led to exclusion from the register regardless of additional conditions to ensure respectability. However a considerable proportion of those whose departure from the register has not been explained may well have been excluded as a

⁷³ As only the 1868, 1869 and 1878 registers for Winchester exist it is possible a few reappearances after a gap in registration may have been missed.

⁷⁴ 2 Will. IV, c. 45, s. 44 and 46.

⁷⁵ See pp. 132-7 above.

consequence of the application of the additional safeguards imposed to ensure the 'respectability' and 'independence' of the electorate.⁷⁶ The consequence of the application of the rules relating to payment of assessed taxes, rating for and payment of poor rates and receipt of parochial relief⁷⁷ was the shortening of many individuals' potential electoral life and the increase in turnover in the electorate. This increased turnover led to a less stable, and therefore, less predictable electorate.

There is some evidence for this shortening of potential electoral life being due to the combination of the £10 franchise and the associated requirements to pay assessed taxes and poor rates and not to have 'received Parochial Relief or other Alms which by the Law of Parliament now disqualify from voting...'.⁷⁸ This is found in the minutes of two of the major charitable institutions of Winchester – St John's Hospital and Christ's Hospital.⁷⁹ Both institutions provided almshouse type accommodation for men and St John's administered a number of charities which made long-term weekly payments to individuals. The minutes are however less than comprehensive often having blanks still left for the insertion of the names of those nominated or accepted. In some cases the only record for the individual is of his death and the subsequent vacancy on the charity or in the almshouse.

Of the 2,123 who left the register between 1832 and 1866 seventy-three (3.4 per cent) can be found in these minutes. Of these thirty-five were admitted to St John's Hospital, eight to Christ's Hospital and twenty-eight received weekly sums once admitted to Budd's and Pemerton's charities administered by St John's Hospital Trustees. A further two individuals in the other male almshouse in Winchester, St Cross Hospital, were identified from a one-off newspaper listing of its occupants.⁸⁰

The charities seem to have operated a class-based system. St John's tended to admit those who appeared to be at the lower end of the professions – such as John Hall, a solicitor, and Thomas Forder, 'the pyrotechnist' – and in the shopocracy and artisan classes. One of the latter was William Miller, a baker, elected to an almshouse on 27 July 1848 who died in St John's

⁷⁶ See pp. 13-4 above.

⁷⁷ 2 Will. IV, c. 45, s. 27 and 36.

⁷⁸ 2 Will. IV, c. 45, s. 36.

⁷⁹ HRO 34M91W/2-3 and W/H2/100 respectively. These were investigated for the period from late 1832 to 11 July 1871 (St John's) and to late 1880 (Christ's).

⁸⁰ HC 21 December 1840.

Hospital in spring 1864. Some clearly had health problems such as the fifty-nine year old nurseryman, James Sheppard, who was described upon his acceptance for an almshouse as 'grievously afflicted by paralysis'. Others such as David Harrison, formerly of the Fleur de Lis, had obviously suffered financial adversity. Five years prior to his admission to an almshouse in December 1840 he had been a debtor discharged from the city gaol following agreement of his creditors.⁸¹ It appears that the trustees – senior clergymen, bankers, solicitors and the like – sought to aid those from the social strata immediately below themselves. It also appears that payments from Budd's and Pemerton's charities went to those further down the social scale. Christ's Hospital was constrained to accepting only single men with an emphasis on their poverty. Moreover it was a smaller institution.

Although the numbers found in the records of these charities are few, they are indicative of an aspect of the life-cycle of those who left the electoral register for reasons other than death. It appears that for many men there was a socio-economic life cycle which involved rise and fall. For many the rise began with marriage and setting up home then, or soon thereafter. At some point an artisan or shopkeeper's income reached a level where he could move to a £10 house and qualify for the franchise. Given the average entry age to the register, determined earlier as between thirty-six and thirty-nine, this might be a decade after marriage.⁸² Then having spent about thirteen years on the electoral register the elector left it.⁸³ However he did not usually die at once. It would appear that his income and economic status declined and he moved to a less valuable home, or moved into the home of one of his children. Either way he lost the parliamentary franchise.

For some this economic decline ended in an almshouse or receiving weekly payments from charity. For some it doubtless ended in the workhouse. For, despite the safeguards in the 1832 Act to ensure the respectability of those granted the franchise, some did. From the burial register data eight cases can be identified of those who died in the workhouse. However without a very labour-intensive exercise using workhouse admission records and parish overseers' records it is very difficult to match men from the cemetery burial register as the vast majority are described as being 'of Union House' with no reference to a parish of origin.

⁸¹ HC 7 December 1835.

⁸² See p. 120 above.

⁸³ See p. 128 above.

However what might be regarded as more typical is exemplified in the detailed examination of the cases of the two Edward Collisses.

The Case of The Two Edward Collisses

The methodology used is recognized as leading to possible false breaks in electors' records. This is particularly so in the treatment of a gap of greater than four years on the register as the end of an elector's registration and the subsequent beginning of a new elector's registration. This may be especially so where the elector's life straddled the 1867 Reform Act. Here it was possible that a decline in economic and social status could have led an elector to depart from the register well before 1867. The same elector, however (following the reduction in 1867 of the household qualification from being that of a £10 householder, who met conditions of period of residence, rate payment and non-receipt of poor relief; to that of a mere householder meeting those requirements) might reappear in the 1868 and subsequent registers.

In the case of the Edward Collisses the initial linking of the data from the electoral registers as their data was entered into the database led to three records:

Sort 623 Edward Collis of High Street, St Maurice parish appearing on the registers created in 1832 to 1841, 1844, and 1846 to 1847, and 1851 to 1853 (all inclusive).

Sort 625 Edward John Collis of Front Street, St Faith parish appearing in the registers created in 1855 to 1859 inclusive.

Sort 624 Edward John Collis of Tower Street, St Thomas parish appearing in the registers created in 1860 to 1863 and 1868 to 1869 (both inclusive); albeit the word 'John' was omitted from the entries for 1868 and 1869.

The exercise to link records which crossed parish boundaries reduced this to two records:

Edward Collis, being Sort 623.

Edward John Collis, comprising Sorts 624 and 625 and thus covering registers created in 1855 to 1863 and 1868 to 1869 (both inclusive).

However when the burial of Edward John Collis aged thirty-two of St Thomas was discovered in the Anglican cemetery register dated 13 January 1864 two things became clear. First the absence of Edward John Collis from the registers for 1864 and 1866 was explained, as he was dead. Secondly the absence of the 'John' from the name in the 1868 and 1869 registers indicated that this was someone else.

Subsequent examination of census enumerators' books revealed elements of two life histories:

Edward Collis appears:

1841 Harness maker, aged forty, of High Street, St Maurice parish

1851 Harness maker, aged fifty, of 5 High Street, St Maurice parish

1861 Harness maker, aged sixty, of 17 Tower Street, St Thomas parish (having acquired a second initial of 'M' to distinguish him from his son – Edward John who also resided there)

1871 Harness maker, aged seventy, of 18 [sic] Tower Street, St Thomas parish

1881 Inmate, aged eighty, John's Hospital, element in St Peter Colebrook parish.

Edward John Collis appears:

1841 As 'Edward' only, aged nine, in the High Street, St Maurice parish home of Edward Collis harness maker

1851 As 'Edward' only, aged nineteen, attorney's clerk, son of Edward, harness maker in his 5 High Street, St Maurice parish home

1861 As 'Edward J.' aged twenty-nine, accountant, son in the home of Edward, harness maker at 17 Tower Street, St Thomas parish

Interestingly the last entry suggests a difference of treatment between electoral registration and census enumeration. Presumably to be on the electoral register drawn up in July/August 1861, at 17 Tower Street, Edward John would have to have been the householder and paid the poor rates for that property. Yet the census still shows Edward, the sixty year-old harness maker, as the head of the household and Edward John's relationship to him as 'son'. It would appear that for the purposes of the census, either for the family filling in the schedule or for the enumerator in that district of St Thomas parish, in 1861 seniority in years counted for more than the economic facts.

From this it is possible to trace, or at least reasonably postulate, the economic and electoral life-cycle of Edward Collis, harness maker. It appears that in his thirties, which correspond closely with the 1830s, he was of sufficiently high economic standing to be on the electoral register as a £10 householder from the implementation of the Reform Acts in 1832. This standing is reflected in his name being included in the 11 September 1833 list of 168 freemen created in the Corporation's effort to pre-empt Municipal Reform.⁸⁴

In the 1840s it is possible that Edward Collis may have hit economically challenging times as his name is absent from the registers drawn up in 1842, 1843, 1845, 1848, 1849 and 1850. The absence is possibly the consequence of the impact of the economic downturns in the 'Hungry Forties';⁸⁵ circumstances in which he may have failed to pay his poor rates on time, or even received poor relief. Alternatively it is possible that his presence on the register may have been successfully challenged in these years. Although this latter cannot be certain, as generally the *Hampshire Chronicle* reports of the revising barristers' courts named few individuals, it is possible. Edward Collis when he voted was inclined to being a Whig/Liberal partisan. His voting record from the poll books (with commentary) being:

1835 Did not vote.

1837 Plumped for Mildmay – the sole Whig/Liberal candidate; so a partisan act.

1841 Did not vote.

⁸⁴ HC 16 September 1833.

⁸⁵ See for example J.F.C. Harrison, *Early Victorian Britain, 1832-51* (Revised Edition, London, 1988) and Hilton, *Mad...*, 22-3.

- 1847 Voted for Carter and Escott – the sole Whig/ Liberal and the lone Peelite who were fighting a Protectionist Conservative – so distinctly anti-Protectionist voting behaviour.
- 1852 Voted for Carter and Bulpett – the two Whig/Liberal candidates – a straight partisan vote.

It is therefore possible that Edward Collis was ‘targetted’ by the Conservatives at revisions in the 1840s.

What is clear though is that at some stage in the 1850s after the registration round of July/August 1853 Edward Collis moved away from the High Street. It is probable that this was triggered by his son Edward John’s progress in his career as an attorney’s clerk on his way to becoming an ‘accountant’. For Edward John entered the electoral register in his own right in the register drawn up in 1855. He was then a £10 householder in Front Street in St Faith parish and remained so until the 1860 register was drawn up. At that point he appears in Tower Street, St Thomas parish. The 1851 census shows Edward John resident with his father in High Street aged nineteen; so when entering the electoral register he would have been about twenty-three. However, in order to satisfy the twelve month occupation rule,⁸⁶ Edward John would have had to have been in occupation of his Front Street home by 31 July 1854. The likelihood therefore is that he left his father’s home and took on the Front Street property sometime in late 1853 or early 1854. This interestingly corresponds with his father Edward’s disappearance from the register in High Street. So did the son’s departure so reduce the household income that the father had to move to a lower value property or follow his son?

Edward senior was now in his fifties so if actually making harnesses, rather than selling them or/and directing others to make them, he might have been struggling with the work. What is clear is that he does not appear on the electoral register in the mid and late 1850s or early and mid 1860s. This suggests that his economic status had declined below that of a £10 householder. It is possible that as a consequence of these changes he moved with his son into the Front Street property in 1854/5. The son, Edward John, now, one assumes, took on responsibility for paying the rent and poor rates and therefore acquired the vote. The family

⁸⁶ 2 Will. IV, c. 45, s. 27.

then relocated to 17 Tower Street in St Thomas parish in 1859/60 with Edward John's registration transferring accordingly. With Edward John's death in January 1864 it appears that his father moved to 18 Tower Street where he appears in the 1871 census. Presumably this was a less valuable property as Edward does not reappear in the registers drawn up in 1864 or 1866. Instead he reappears in the 1868 and 1869 registers where the qualification was that of a mere householder of any value, not one of £10. This is after a break in his presence on the electoral register of a mere thirteen years.

Nevertheless Edward Collis's case does illustrate one effect of the 1832 Act's franchise arrangements. A man's 'natural' economic life cycle could be such as to ensure his presence on the electoral register for the period when his socio-economic position was at its peak. However the decline in such standing in his later years could lead to a prolonged presence in the ranks of the unenfranchised. This group included both those who had never been enfranchised before, some of whom would never qualify, and those who had once had the vote but no longer met the franchise requirements.

It is also perhaps worthy of note that Edward John seemed to share his father's party inclinations. For the poll books show:

1857 A plump for one of the two Whig/Liberals fighting a single Conservative

1859 A straight vote for the two Whig/Liberals fighting two Conservatives

This case therefore accords with Butler and Stokes twentieth-century findings of parental influence on voting behaviour.⁸⁷

In this chapter some aspects of the nature of 'Winchester Man' have been established and placed in the context of and in comparison with the existing historiography. Firstly a degree of uncertainty as to his 'social network' and therefore his probable voting behaviour was posited as the reason for the high incidence of contests in small boroughs. This uncertainty arose in large part from the high level of inward migration to the borough which has been established. Then it was determined that, between 1832 and 1867, his average age of entry onto the

⁸⁷ D. Butler and D. Stokes, *Political Change in Britain: Forces Shaping Electoral Choice* (London, 1969), 66-78.

electoral register was between thirty-six and thirty-nine. This was one factor which restricted his period on the electoral register – his ‘electoral life’. This ‘life’ was then found to be, on average, about thirteen years – about 20 per cent less than the only previous known calculation of this type. The potential flaws in the methodology used in the earlier calculation were shown to largely explain this difference. This relatively short ‘elector life’ posed challenges to party officials in determining the political allegiance of many ‘Winchester Men’.

The combination of an average entry age to the register of about thirty-nine and an average ‘elector life’ of thirteen years presented the issue of why ‘Winchester Man’ left the electoral register so early. What was the reason for his absence from the register for a decade at the end of his life? Reasons for his departure from the register were investigated. Death within a year or so of leaving the register was found to explain about 40 per cent of the departures from the register. The records of admissions to two almshouses, and of payments from their associated charities, indicate that a number of electors suffered a decline in health and economic fortunes which led to their admission or assistance. This indicated that in many cases ‘Winchester Man’ was subject to a socio-economic life cycle of rise and fall. He found himself on the electoral register during the peak of this cycle. This has been illustrated by a case study of Edward Collis, harness maker.

So, having established some aspects of the nature of Edward Collis and his fellow ‘Winchester Men’, we should now explore their experience of the electoral system prevailing between 1832 and 1867-68.

CHAPTER 6

'WINCHESTER MAN' – HIS EXPERIENCE OF THE ELECTORAL SYSTEM 1832-1867

This chapter explores the experience of 'Winchester Man' within the electoral system that existed from 1832 until 1867-68. First the incidence of gaps in 'elector lives' is addressed. Then some possible reasons for this are explored – primarily the rate payment conditions of the 1832 enfranchisement legislation and the activity of the political parties in the annual revising barristers' courts. The nature and importance of these courts is then explored. The consequences of our understanding of the nature of 'Winchester Man' and his experience of the system are then explored. This particularly focuses upon his experience and behaviour as an elector. Attention is then turned to other aspects of 'Winchester Man' such as the impact of his 'political maturity' and age upon his voting behaviour. The challenges this posed to political parties are then considered.

Gaps in Electoral Lives

So far the analysis undertaken has dealt with a simple definition of electoral life – the number of 'register years' between and individual's first and last appearance on the register, counting both first and last years. So a man first appearing on the 1832 register whose last appearance was on the 1842 register has been deemed to have an eleven year electoral life. This is because each register started its period of validity on 1 November and completed it on 31 October following. The case of Edward Collis senior¹ reveals that not all electoral lives were continuous but that some had gaps therein. Albeit that, in order to avoid false links, the approach adopted has been to assume that a gap cannot be of more than four years.² In the case of such an apparent gap it has been treated as a case of two individuals.

Gaps were found in the records of 476 individuals who entered the register between 1832 and 1866. Of the 2,971 men whose electoral lives began in that period 543 were on the register for a single year and 228 for just two years. The former therefore offered no prospect of

¹ See pp. 141-5 above.

² See p. 49 above.

a gap in their record and for the latter, as under the initial simple definition used the two years were the first and last year on the register, they were inevitably sequential. Therefore the 476 cases with gaps in their electoral lives represent 21.6 per cent of the 2,200³ with the possibility of a gap in their electoral lives. The incidence of such gaps grew with electoral life. Only 9.8 per cent of those with 'simple' electoral lives of three to seven years had gaps in their presence on the register. Of those on for forty-three to forty-seven years 45.8 per cent had gaps in their electoral lives.

This gapping complicated the task of party officials in understanding the balance of power on the register as on average 4.1 per cent of the proceeding year's register were gapped the next year. This figure arises from the average sum of gaps over an individual's electoral life being a little over two. One of the causes of gapping was changes of address – or as they were known 'removals'. Of the 476 men with gaps, 311 are cases where original data from two or more initial records, more often than not from different parishes, have been joined together to form a single case.

The 1832 legislation stated that the qualifying property, to satisfy the twelve month residence requirement, 'shall not be required to be the same Premises but may be different Premises occupied in immediate Succession'.⁴ However in practice it appears that often the overseers limited their view of such occupation as being within the boundaries of their own parish. It would appear that this was the reason why George Crupper of Kingsgate Street, in St Michael parish, who was on the 1832 register next appeared in the 1834 register in St Thomas Street, in St Thomas parish, after a one year gap. Although, it should be borne in mind that there are other possible explanations, such as a failure to pay poor rates or assessed taxes.

After the 1843 Registration Act⁵ narratives as to movements between properties appeared in the, from that year, printed and published register. Some, such as that in the 1844 register for Henry Gilmour of Cathedral Yard, in St Lawrence parish, reflected a move between parishes with no gap. For it read 'Cathedral Yard from house in Parchment street'. In the 1843 register Gilmour had been entered as qualified by a property in Parchment Street, in St Mary

³ That is 2,971-543-228 = 2,200.

⁴ 2 Will. IV, c. 45, s. 28.

⁵ 6 Vict. c. 18.

Kalendar parish. His case also demonstrates another complication arising from the parish basis of the register, that of duplicate entries, for in 1844 he also appears in Parchment Street, St Mary Kalendar for the last time. This being perhaps a case of an overseer failing to strike Gilmour off the previous year's list or assuming that residence and rate payment in the previous year within that parish amounted to qualification. Other narratives reflect a move, but not one from a previous qualifying property. Richard Gilbert of Canon Street, in St Michael parish, first appears in the electoral register in 1844 with the narrative 'Canon street, from Southgate street'. It would appear that he briefly occupied a qualifying property in Southgate Street before moving to his longer term residence.

Many of the other causes of gapping would take considerable time and effort, beyond that available for this project, to determine. It would be possible to determine ground for disqualification for receipt of 'Parochial Relief or other Alms' in the previous year⁶ by extended examination of the overseers' or guardians' records. The issue of failure to pay assessed taxes, such as land tax and the house tax, in a timely manner requires the existence of comprehensive records and significant time to examine them. Although, in the case of William Cocks a note in the margin of a copy of the 'Winchester Conservative Registration Society Instructions to the Parochial Committees' reveals that the gap in his elector life in 1836 was due to his default on assessed tax payment.⁷

Another ground for disqualification was failure to pay poor rates in a timely manner. The requirement in the 1832 legislation was for payment of all sums due by 6 April prior to the drafting of the register to be paid by 20 July.⁸ For a decade and a half, the Radicals sought to remove the rate payment conditions attached to the franchise in the boroughs, as a means of expanding the electorate without changing the more politically charged £10 householder requirement.⁹ Doubtless they saw potential gains for their wing of the Whig to Radical spectrum arising from the removal of one of the conditions introduced in order to ensure the 'respectability' of the electorate. The Radicals for many years enjoyed no success. Indeed the 1832 requirement was reiterated in Sir James Graham's 1843 Registration Act.¹⁰ In 1846 Sir De Lacy Evans took up the issue seeking an extension to the period of grace rather than the

⁶ 2 Will. IV, c. 45 s. 36.

⁷ See p. 171 below for a fuller account.

⁸ 2 Will. IV. c. 45 s. 27 – this clause and its timetable also applied to assessed taxes.

⁹ C. Seymour, *Electoral Reform in England and Wales: The Development and Operation of the Parliamentary Franchise 1832-1885* (New Haven, 1915), 145-8.

¹⁰ 6 Vict. c. 18 s. 75.

abolition of the rate paying requirement. After a long parliamentary battle,¹¹ an extension to six months from three was passed in August 1848.¹²

There is some evidence to suggest that this might have had a significant impact on the gapping in electors' records. In Winchester prior to the implementation of the act in preparing the 1849 register gapping from 1833 to 1848 ran at an average of 5.2 per cent of the entries on the previous register. From 1849 to 1869 it ran at 3.4 per cent for those who entered the register prior to the 1867 Reform Act. This could be taken to indicate that over a third of all gaps were caused by the rate payment requirements of the 1832 legislation. Of course still hidden from view are those, both before and after the 1848 Act, who were excluded from a register for failure to pay their poor rates within six months of the due date.

The relaxation of the rate payment conditions enacted in Evans's Act also appears to have caused a major increase in the electorate. For, whereas there were 629 men on the 1848 register that compiled in 1849 contained 687 names, an increase of 9.2 per cent.¹³ Moreover from 1850 onwards the number on the register never sank below 700. It would appear that Evans's Act not only reduced the occasional exclusion of long-term electors from the register ('gapping') but also led to the admission of more individuals to the register.

Application of the rate payment conditions, both before and after Evans's Act, should have led to automatic exclusion, by the parish overseers, of defaulters from the initial draft register. In Winchester the instructions of the Conservative Registration Society to its parochial committees¹⁴ reflect the importance of timely payment of the rates to enfranchisement. Not that the issue of rate payment, or not, was not an issue for the revising barristers' courts.¹⁵ It is to these courts and to the wider electoral registration system that we now turn in search of explanation, beyond movement between properties and late payment of rates, for the gaps we find in so many elector lives.

¹¹ Seymour, *Electoral...*, 145-6.

¹² 11 & 12 Vict. c. 90.

¹³ See Table 2.1 pp. 40-1 above.. It would appear that the figures therein for 1846 and 1847 are unusually high and out of step with the long term trend. This might be ascribed to confusion in Conservative ranks following the schism over Corn Law Repeal. In Winchester they were certainly unrepresented at the 1847 revision (*Hampshire Chronicle* (hereafter *HC*) 2 October 1847). This would have provided the Whig/Liberals with the opportunity to 'pack the register' with individuals to whom the Conservatives would otherwise have objected.

¹⁴ See pp. 169-70 below.

¹⁵ See the account of the Newport court in 1832 – pp. 186-198 below.

The Electoral Registration System and The Barristers' Revision Courts

Hitherto in this thesis the analysis undertaken has made much use of the electoral registers. As to the electoral registration system and its intended purpose there have been only passing references. It is possible that the system, beyond its rate paying conditions dealt with above, caused gapping in electors' lives. This would be particularly so for those we may regard as the 'marginal cases' – those who might just, or might just not, satisfy the requirements of registration. They would frequently be the subject of challenge in the revising barristers' courts by the representatives of the party which saw their allegiance as being to its opponent. So what do we know of the operation and impact of the electoral registration system introduced in 1832?

The Historiography of Electoral Registration

In 1977, in the opening paragraph of his *Politics in the Age of Cobden*, John Prest set out very clearly the problems which the electoral registration system put in place in 1832 sought to address, and the challenges it faced given the complexity of the wider electoral framework:

In any electoral system it is necessary to have some means of identifying the voters, of enabling those who are qualified to vote to proceed without hindrance to the poll, and of preventing those who are not qualified from doing so. As Macaulay put it in 1841, there had to be some way of letting 'good' voters in and of keeping 'bad' voters out, and the problem was to devise a method that would do both, for every attempt to smooth the path of the genuine elector would make the way easy for the fraudulent voter too, while every check and test intended to eliminate the fraudulent voter would vex and deter the genuine one. And in England, where there were two electoral systems, representing the boroughs and the counties, side by side, and where until 1918 there were many different franchises, the problem was unusually complicated and intractable.¹⁶

Prest's was not the first work to see the registration process as central to the development of party politics in the mid nineteenth century and in particular crucial in the development of local and central party organisation. As early as 1950 J. Alun Thomas wrote an article under the title 'The System of Registration and the Development of Party Organisation, 1832-1870'.¹⁷

¹⁶ J. Prest, *Politics in the Age of Cobden* (London, 1977), 1. Macaulay was speaking in the House of Commons on 23 February 1841 – Prest, 140 note 1.

¹⁷ J.A. Thomas, 'The System of Registration and the Development of Party Organisation, 1832-1870', *History* xxxv (1950), 81-98. D.C. Moore, *The Politics of Deference: A Study of the Mid-Nineteenth Century English Political System* (Hassocks, 1976), 515 erroneously dates this article as 1940.

Three years later Norman Gash (in his seminal, but somewhat sketchily indexed and bibliographised, *Politics in the Age of Peel*) addressed the registration process, registration expenses, registration societies and the impact of registration on central party organisation and tactics.¹⁸ Citing Maitland, who we must assume to be the jurist and historian,¹⁹ he made the point that: 'since 1832 electoral qualifications are really qualifications for being put on the electoral roll; the qualification for voting is having one's name on the roll. Failure to be registered entails disfranchisement.'²⁰

However Gash's simple list of those excluded from the register on legal grounds²¹ is flawed in that it comprises a number of categories. Firstly those who were never going to be admitted to the register at a later date due to a pre-existing and permanent fact – women and non-Irish peers.²² Secondly those who were excluded due to conditions which could or would change – minors; those, in boroughs only, who had received poor relief in the twelve months prior to 31 July of the year in the November of which the register became effective; and lunatics, who could register in 'lucid intervals'.

Finally there were those whom Gash describes as excluded from the register on the grounds of the office they held – revenue, excise, customs and post office officials and police officers. The electoral registers and pollbooks for Winchester²³ indicate that, at least in this borough, holding such office at the time of registration did not prevent one's inclusion; but, rather, in those cases continuing to hold that office at the time of the election was held to prevent one from voting legally. For example Charles Stratton, junior, of Sussex Street was on the electoral register from 1839 to 1842²⁴ but at the 1841 General Election appears in the pollbook as not voting with a symbol indicating that this was because of a government appointment he held. He was one of four such men at this election.²⁵ Not all Winchester

¹⁸ N. Gash, *Politics in the Age of Peel: A study in the Technique of Parliamentary Representation 1830-1850* (London, 1953), 87-8; 117-9; xiii, 394 and 403-4; and 412 and 415-6 respectively. Gash's emphasis in relation to the registration is the central organisations in the context of his theme of 'Club Government'.

¹⁹ Frederic William Maitland (1850-1906).

²⁰ Gash, *Politics..*, 87.

²¹ Gash, *Politics..*, 87..

²² Interestingly in the 1835 revision the Archbishop of Canterbury's name was allowed to remain on the Lambeth register as 'although he was a lord of Parliament, he was not a peer of the realm' – Prest, *Politics...*, 38.

²³ The author's photocopies of Ipswich pollbooks for 1832-47 do not contain any description indicating individuals barred from voting on grounds of holding Government office.

²⁴ Serials 547, 570, 565 and 555 for those years in Borough Registries 1838-42 HRO/WB9/1/3-4.

²⁵ HRO W/B9/2/82 Gilmour's 1841 Pollbook, 14-6.

pollbooks convey this information but those for 1841, 1852 and 1859 do; the last showing twelve men engaged in the post office and postal service, excise, 'Taxes', police and militia.²⁶

The same area of the 1859 pollbook also reveals the exclusion from voting of two men already on the register on grounds that appear at variance with Gash's list. Being an alien would according to Gash's list have been a state precluding one's inclusion on the register; and allocation to either the first or second category above depending upon whether naturalisation was possible. However Herr Heller, of East View, is listed as not voting on the grounds of being an alien. This is despite him having been on the electoral registers of 1857 and 1858, under the parish of St. Thomas and St. Clement, and therefore apparently qualified to vote in the 1859 General Election.²⁷ Heller continues to appear on the registers of 1859 to 1864 inclusive²⁸ yet the 1865 pollbook again has him down as not voting on the grounds of being an 'alien'.²⁹ Heller continued on the register in 1866 and 'survived' the '1867 Reform' to appear again in 1868³⁰ and to vote for Carter and Scott, the Liberal 'slate', in that year's election.³¹ As the accounts of Smith, Cowling and Saunders³² of the debates over Reform in 1866/7 make no mention of the obviously contentious idea of enfranchising foreigners we can only assume that by 1868 Heller was naturalised or the returning officer and Conservative party agents made a mistake in not challenging him at the poll.

F.N. Heale of West Hill is listed in 1859 as not voting on the grounds of 'no qualification' despite apparently being on the register.³³ One must assume this is a misprint for J.N. (or James Newton) Heale; unless a relative was trying to vote on his behalf. For James, occasionally with

²⁶ HRO W/B9/2/82 Tanner's 1859 Pollbook, 19-20.

²⁷ He appears as Serial 94 in the 1857 register qualifying for a house in Newburgh Place (HRO W/B9/1/22) and as Serial 100 in the 1858 register qualifying for a house in East View (HRO W/B9/2/83). His forename is given as 'Herr'.

²⁸ In all cases for a house in East View – 1859, Serial 113; 1860, Serial 115; 1861, Serial 113; 1862, Serial 115; 1863, Serial 128 (Printed List with illegible Printer's name on British Library Microfilm SPR.Mic.P.17/BL.H.21); 1864, Serial 133 (HRO W/B9/1/23, 24, 25, 26 and W/B9/2/83 respectively). From 1863 his forename is given as 'Edward'.

²⁹ HRO W/B9/2/31a Tanner's 1865 Pollbook, 23.

³⁰ Still for a house in East View – 1866, Serial 128; 1868, Serial 556 (HRO W9/1/27 and 28 respectively). Due to the ongoing Reform debates no register was produced in 1867 – R.H.A. Cheffins, *Parliamentary Constituencies and Their Registers since 1832* (London, 1998), 14-5.

³¹ HRO W/B9/2/34a Pamplin's 1868 Pollbook, 14.

³² F.B. Smith, *The Making of the Second Reform Bill* (Cambridge, 1966); M. Cowling, *1867 Disraeli, Gladstone and Revolution: The Passing of the second Reform Bill* (Cambridge, 1967); and R. Saunders, *Democracy and the Vote in British Politics, 1848-1867* (Farnham, 2011).

³³ HRO W/B9/2/82 Tanner's 1859 Pollbook, 19.

M.D. after his name, appears on the registers of 1854, 1856 to 1864, 1866 and 1868.³⁴ Dr Heale's voting narrative is somewhat different from Herr Heller's; having apparently been ruled out in 1859 for lack of qualification despite appearing on the register. He had not voted in 1857, sadly neither pollbook for that year records a reason.³⁵ In 1865 the good doctor did not vote as he was 'abroad'.³⁶ However in 1868 he displayed Conservative tendencies by voting for that party's sole candidate, Simonds, and arguably the more 'palatable' of the Liberals. Carter.³⁷

The examples of Heller and Heale are at variance with Gash's claim that the law, apparently sensibly, left the register intact once the revising barristers had approved it unless a parliamentary election committee was dealing with an election petition regarding a disputed result.³⁸ That is that once on the register unless one's circumstances changed, such as by moving, one could vote during the validity of the register. Gash's view, as to the sanctity of the register, was not shared by the revising barristers, Bere and Follett, at Winchester in 1835. They ruled that Colonel Gauntlett's claim to a vote for a house in Kingsgate Street should be disallowed as his place of abode was not properly specified but one of them, in accord with the many quirky judgements recorded throughout Prest's book, suggested that in the light of conflicting rulings from Commons' Committees he should, in the event of an election, vote regardless and await a decision.³⁹ With no election in 1836 his efforts to follow this advice and persuade the returning officer to accept him as a voter were not put to the test.

The only common exception to the sanctity of the register was the exclusion from polling of those men on the register who had moved from the property which qualified them for the vote in the July that the register was being drawn up. These 'removals', as such changes of residence were known, could be quite numerous – Seymour indicates ten to twenty per cent citing Weymouth and Manchester, two boroughs very different in nature.⁴⁰ In the Winchester

³⁴ In 1854 under St. Thomas parish for a house in High Street (HRO WB9/1/19, Serial 106); from 1856 to 1860 under St. Faith parish for a house on West Hill (Serials 788, 780, 777, 827 and 829 in HRO W/B9/1/21 and 22, W/B9/2/83 and W/B9/1/23 and 24 respectively); from 1861 to 1864 under St. Faith parish for a house in Clifton Road (Serials 811, 802, 826 and 846 in HRO W/B9/1/25 and 26, British Library SPR.Mic.P.17/BL.H.21, and HRO W/B9/2/83 respectively); and then in 1866 and 1868 in St. Thomas parish for a house in Southgate Street (Serials 127 and 555 in HRO W/B9/1/27 and 28 respectively).

³⁵ HRO W/B9/2/84 Tanner's 1857 Pollbook, 21 and HRO W/B9/2/83 Warren's 1857 Pollbook, 10.

³⁶ HRO W/B9/2/31a Tanner's 1865 Pollbook, 23.

³⁷ HRO W/B9/2/34a Pamplin's 1868 Pollbook, 14.

³⁸ Gash, *Politics...*, 87.

³⁹ *HC* 10 August and 12 October 1835.

⁴⁰ Seymour, *Electoral...*, 117.

pollbook for the June 1841 election forty-one men (7 per cent of entries) are listed as not voting for this reason.⁴¹ The pollbook provides *prima facie* evidence of an 83 per cent turnout (486 out of 586 voting) but the level of ‘removals’ added to those excluded on grounds of government service leads to a revised turnout of at least 90 per cent (486 out of 541) for those who could still vote. Unfortunately the 1841 pollbook, unlike some others, fails to indicate those voters who had died since the register was approved, a further adjustment which would increase the ‘real turnout’.

The mid-1970s saw a revival of interest by historians in the registration process. In 1976 D.C. Moore, in the work that brought together two decades of research and sometimes controversial thought, gave appropriate weight to the importance of registration in county constituencies. These, given his concern with ‘landed society’, were his focus. However, in his one mention of the boroughs and registration, he grossly underestimated the complexity of the system. For, he declared that the 1832 legislation made the rules so simple and straightforward ‘that who qualified was often a matter of public knowledge’.⁴² As we have seen in the cases from Winchester mentioned in the preceding pages, and shall see in succeeding pages, this was by no means so. If it were the revision courts would have had a very simple role to perform.

In the next year Prest did not make the same mistake. His *Politics in the Age of Cobden* had registration running through its arteries and veins, from start to finish. Albeit his ultimate thrust was the exploitation of registration by the Anti-Corn Law League. Prest’s work provided useful material on the antecedents and origins of the registration system⁴³ and its workings over the quarter of a century following the 1832 Reform.⁴⁴

Prest’s book however appears to have had a limited impact; although it was cited by Derek Beales in his 1992 critique of Frank O’Gorman’s *Voters, Patrons and Parties*. O’Gorman had claimed that ‘registration was little more than a streamlined means of locating voters’.⁴⁵

However Beales saw registration as far more important, indeed as an agent in establishing the individual voter’s sense of identity and the electorate’s collective identity:

⁴¹ HRO W/B9/2/82 Gilmour’s 1841 Pollbook, 14-6.

⁴² Moore, *Politics...*, 248.

⁴³ Prest, *Politics...*, 1-22.

⁴⁴ Prest, *Politics...*, *passim*.

⁴⁵ F. O’Gorman, *Voters, Patrons and Parties: The Unreformed Electoral System of Hanoverian England 1734-1832* (Oxford, 1989), 392.

Registration positively encouraged qualified persons, even in constituencies unaccustomed to contests, to think of themselves as voters. It thus gave substance to the hitherto shadowy notion of an electorate, both locally and nationally.⁴⁶

O' Gorman's riposte admitted that the electorate grew significantly as a result of the 1832

Reform. He then continued:

...but it is equally important to understand the processes by which these increases were achieved in practice. Here, of course, registration procedures help us to understand the political competition which underpinned those increases. The party political mobilization of voters was the key impulse to registration and objecting to the votes of opponents was the brake which could be applied...It was not so much the Reform Act itself, but the party competition to which it gave rise, which regulated the manner by which voters were recruited into the new electoral system.⁴⁷

The Beales:O'Gorman exchange thus gives us three features of the post-1832 Reform scene, arising from its registration provisions, which might well be seen as in a state of tension or conflict. These are individual voter consciousness; collective electorate identity; and the political party as a means of, by previous standards, mass political mobilisation. It should however be noted that O'Gorman, having used registration as part of the vitriol poured on Beales' critique, omits it in addressing John Phillips' *The Great Reform Bill in the Boroughs*. One of his criticisms of Phillips is his lack of interest 'in what, to me at least, is the very stuff of electoral politics, the campaigns, canvassing and polls'.⁴⁸ Noteworthy for its absence from this brief list is the registration activity; only two pages before so important to O'Gorman in the process of political mobilisation. This cannot be because Phillips had that 'base covered' for his book makes little reference to registration merely giving it a 'bit part' in increasing turnout.⁴⁹ Moreover in the case of Maidstone instead of demonstrating that the registration process had a role in increasing partisanship, one of the themes of his work either side of 1832,⁵⁰ he cites an example of twenty-four working men aided to register by Liberal support who at the 1835 election 'defected' to the Conservatives.⁵¹

⁴⁶ D. Beales, 'The Electorate before and after 1832: the Right to Vote, and the Opportunity', *Parliamentary History*, Vol. 11 (1) (1992), 149.

⁴⁷ F. O'Gorman, 'The Electorate Before and after 1832: A Reply', *Parliamentary History*, Vol. 12 (2) (1993), 179.

⁴⁸ O'Gorman, 'The Electorate...', 181.

⁴⁹ Phillips, *The Great...*, 34.

⁵⁰ For a brief explanation of 'partisan behaviour' and the taxonomy of voting patterns see J.A. Phillips, *Electoral Behavior in Unreformed England: Plumpers, Splitters and Straights* (Princeton, 1982), 20-1

⁵¹ Phillips, *The Great...*, 58.

Although it would be an obvious point of departure and source of material, Philip Salmon only makes a couple of passing references to Prest's book.⁵² Jeremy Mitchell even fails, by adding '*and Bright*', to get the title of the work correct.⁵³ For the 1830s, Philip Salmon's *Electoral Reform at Work* has been described as 'an authoritative summation of how the electoral system worked'.⁵⁴ For many it retrieved the registration process from undeserved obscurity. O'Gorman's review although still inclined to see greater continuities through 1832, admitted: 'The registration clauses are indeed of the greatest importance and the politicization of local structures a development of great significance.'⁵⁵

Salmon himself claimed of the book that:

Its overarching argument is simply that the manner in which people acquired their vote had a powerful impact on how they perceived and used it....It simply brings to prominence those neglected aspects of the electoral system which helped to generate party attachments in the first place, by bringing individual voters face to face with political realities on a regular basis. These practical and technical mechanisms have been overshadowed by ideology, the cant of party and the rhetoric of Westminster in previous accounts of British political life. This book redresses the balance by showing how the operation of the reformed electoral system itself had a major impact upon individual political awareness and national party performance after 1832.⁵⁶

Registration was brought to the fore in his first two chapters⁵⁷ and a later chapter giving six case studies from county constituencies.⁵⁸ The subsequent chapters on borough constituencies focused on rating, taxation and aspects of local government structure⁵⁹ all relevant to registration but not at its very core.

Jeremy Mitchell's *The Organization of Opinion* appeared in 2008 but in many respects belongs to an earlier era where the focus was upon pollbooks. This is understandable given much of the work behind the book was undertaken many years before.⁶⁰ It is quite reasonable

⁵² Salmon, *Electoral...*, 33-4 and 246-7.

⁵³ Mitchell, *Organization...*, 211.

⁵⁴ Hilton, *Mad...*, 700.

⁵⁵ F. O'Gorman, Review of Salmon, *Electoral Reform...*, *English Historical Review*, Vol. cxviii, No. 478 (September 2003), 1016-8.

⁵⁶ Salmon, *Electoral...*, 2.

⁵⁷ Salmon, *Electoral...*, 19-86.

⁵⁸ Salmon, *Electoral...*, 146-82.

⁵⁹ Salmon, *Electoral...*, 185-237.

⁶⁰ Mitchell, *Organization...*, xii and personal knowledge.

to assume that the passing references to Salmon’s work⁶¹ are a late ‘gloss’ added to much earlier research.

Weaknesses of the Historiography

In the existing historiography of electoral registration there is a heavy focus on processes, systems and organisation. This is reflected in the titles of work already cited. J. Alun Thomas’s 1950 article bore the title ‘The *system* of registration and the development of *party organisation*, 1832-1870’. The sub-title of Norman Gash’s *Politics in the Age of Peel* is ‘A Study in the *Technique* of Parliamentary Representation 1830-1850’. Philip Salmon’s sub-title includes the phrase ‘*National Parties*’ and although he touches little on registration Jeremy Mitchell’s main title is ‘The *Organization* of Opinion’.⁶² John Prest’s book has a more neutral title. But it is concerned with processes, especially the revising barristers’ courts, and organisations, in particular the Anti-Corn Law League.

Although examples of individuals are quoted the individual is, almost always, seen as subject to a system run by legal professionals. Indeed a system which can only be successfully navigated with the support of a party organisation at the revision court. Only the Beales:O’Gorman exchange offered us a fleeting glimpse of individual voter consciousness.⁶³ In general the individual appears to have little or any ‘agency’ in the process. This impression is enhanced by the manner in which newspapers reported the outcome of revision courts. For example the *Hampshire Chronicle* reported the 1835 Winchester borough revision court outcome⁶⁴:

<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 30%;">Reform objections</td> <td style="width: 10%;">..</td> <td style="width: 10%;">..98</td> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: center;"> </td> <td style="width: 30%;">Reform claims</td> <td style="width: 10%;">..</td> <td style="width: 10%;">..</td> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: right;">8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Conservative ditto</td> <td>..</td> <td>..55</td> <td style="text-align: center;"> </td> <td>Conservative ditto</td> <td>..</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">17</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Reform objections</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;"> </td> <td>Conservative objections</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td> Sustained</td> <td>..</td> <td>..</td> <td style="text-align: center;"> </td> <td> Sustained..</td> <td>..</td> <td>....</td> <td style="text-align: right;">50</td> </tr> <tr> <td> Failed</td> <td>..</td> <td>..</td> <td style="text-align: center;"> </td> <td> Failed</td> <td>..</td> <td>..</td> <td style="text-align: right;">5</td> </tr> <tr> <td> Failed</td> <td>..</td> <td>..</td> <td style="text-align: center;"> </td> <td> Failed</td> <td>..</td> <td>..</td> <td style="text-align: right;">5</td> </tr> </table>	Reform objections98		Reform claims	8	Conservative ditto55		Conservative ditto	..		17	Reform objections				Conservative objections				Sustained		Sustained..	50	Failed		Failed	5	Failed		Failed	5	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 30%;">Reform claims</td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: center;"> </td> <td style="width: 30%;">Conservative claims</td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td> Allowed</td> <td>..</td> <td>..</td> <td style="text-align: center;"> </td> <td> Allowed</td> <td>..</td> <td>..</td> <td style="text-align: right;">.. 7</td> </tr> <tr> <td> Failed</td> <td>..</td> <td>..</td> <td style="text-align: center;"> </td> <td> Failed</td> <td>..</td> <td>..</td> <td style="text-align: right;">..10</td> </tr> </table>	Reform claims				Conservative claims				Allowed		Allowed 7	Failed		Failed10
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⁶¹ Mitchell, *Organization...*, 30 (direct mentions in notes 17 and 18 on p. 183) and 52 (direct mentions in notes 1 and 2 on p. 187).

⁶² My italics.

⁶³ See pp. 155-6 above.

⁶⁴ *HC* 12 October 1835 – an interim ‘score’ was given in the edition of 28 September 1835.

Reports such as this give the impression that there could be no claim, nor objection, which was not raised by, or through, one of the two 'party' organisations. In other words the party 'machines' were all powerful. However the law made it quite clear that, in boroughs, it was the individual who should inspect the draft list posted on the parish church doors, or in its absence a suitable alternative, on the first two Sundays following 31 July.⁶⁵ If he were omitted from the draft list, but believed that he satisfied all the criteria as to value of property, period of residence and payment of rates and assessed taxes, he could seek inclusion by submitting a 'claim'. The claim had to be submitted by 25 August in the statutory format.⁶⁶ If there were the slightest error in his entry in the draft list he could only seek correction by submitting a 'claim', as if he had been excluded from the list altogether.⁶⁷ The importance of doing so became clear as the party organisations began to succeed with nit-picking objections. An individual either on the initial list or having submitted a claim, could challenge the right of any number of men on the initial list to be included (an 'objection'). Again this had to be submitted by 25 August in a statutory format.⁶⁸

The forms and procedures used were amended and clarified by Sir James Graham's Registration Act of 1843. One important change was the requirement that the objector not only submit a notice to the parish overseers, but also to the person against whom the objection was made.⁶⁹ Sir James Graham, as a member of the 'Committee of Four' had been the architect of the registration clauses in the 1832 legislation.⁷⁰ As Peel's Home Secretary he directed the drafting and steered the passage of the act, which remained in force until 1918.⁷¹ In a case of 'the biter bit' Graham's experience in the 1843 registration round illustrates the operation of his act.

The evidence begins with a letter from Graham to Francis Bonham, one of Peel's key electoral aides if not the *de facto* Conservative national agent:⁷²

⁶⁵ 2 Will. IV. c. 45 s. 44.

⁶⁶ 2 Will. IV. c. 45 s. 47 and Schedule I, No. 4.

⁶⁷ Prest, *Politics...*, 19 uses the term 're-claim' to describe this circumstance. The term appears nowhere in the 1832 Act or the Registration Act of 1843. Neither addressed the possibility of an error in an entry in the draft list.

⁶⁸ 2 Will. IV. c. 45 s. 47 and Schedule I, No. 5.

⁶⁹ 6 Vict. c. 18 s. 16 and Schedule B, No. 11.

⁷⁰ Prest, *Politics...*, 11.

⁷¹ Prest, *Politics...*, 72-3.

⁷² Graham to Bonham 25 August 1843 – Peel MSS BL Add. MSS 40616 fol. 275.

Private

Hill St
25 August 1843

My dear Bonham

I found on my Table last night the enclosed objection to my vote for Westminster.

It is too absurd. I am an old Scot & Lot Voter; and I have occupied my present House for nearly Two Years.

The objection is frivolous; and as Costs are now to be awarded, I should wish to punish the Objector.

Into whose Hands must I put the defence of my Vote?

F.R. Bonham Esq

Ever Yrs. Sincerely
JRG Graham

Graham's wish to punish the objector reflected a clause he had included in the 1843 legislation. The revising barrister was permitted to award costs, of up to one pound, against frivolous claimants and objectors.⁷³ Enclosed with the letter was a preprinted form completed (insertions made by hand shown in **bold** below) to advise Graham of an objection to his right to be on the register:⁷⁴

FORM OF NOTICE OF OBJECTION TO BE GIVEN TO PARTIES OBJECTED TO.

To Mr [struck through] **Sir James Graham Hill Street**

I hereby give you Notice, that I object to your Name being retained on the List of Persons entitled to vote in the Election of Members, for the City of Westminster.

Dated this **16th** Day of August 1843

Signed **William Biles**
of **104 Regent Street, Saint John's Westminster**
on the List of Voters, for the Parish of' **Saint John Westminster**

The form complied with the format of the Registration Act but the fact that it is printed, and more importantly that the words 'City of Westminster' are printed not hand-written, indicates that it was part of a well organised local 'party' operation. It also illustrates a lacuna in the legislation. In neither the 1832 nor the 1843 legislation was there a requirement to state the

⁷³ 6 Vict. c.18 s. 46.

⁷⁴ Peel MSS BL Add. MSS 40616 fol. 276.

grounds for objection to the overseers, or from 1843 to the man against whom the objection was directed.

Graham's defence of his case is then outlined in a further letter to Bonham on 17 September 1843:⁷⁵

I continue to pay the Rates for my House in Grosvenor Place; I am resident within the Borough; I have never ceased to pay Scot & Lot, and I know not what is the objection to my Vote. I am not aware that change of residence is a forfeiture of the Scot and Lot Right acquired under the Reform Act, provided, as in my Case, there be a continuous Payment of Rates. I will be guided by your prudence after consulting the legal Advisers of the Westminster Conservatives with regard to the defence of my 'Scot and Lot' Title.

The outcome of the objection to Sir James Graham is not clear from the papers, but it illustrates the immense role of party organisations in the process.

It is clear that once the 'party' organisations were in place it would have been possible for the press to categorise all claims and objections by the reaction to them in the revision court of the respective 'parties' agents, usually solicitors. For those who had voted at a previous election both the press and 'party' officials also had the benefit of past voting records, often recorded in locally published pollbooks, to aid categorisation by 'party'. What is not clear is how they would categorise a man who had never voted before, or had split his previous vote by voting for two candidates from opposing parties. Similar problems would have arisen in the case of a newspaper making an assessment, of a man who was neither supported nor opposed by the representatives of either party.

The impression that every claimant, or man objected to, could immediately be categorised as belonging to one of two 'parties', is reinforced by Salmon's six case studies being from county constituencies. There was an important distinction between the registration methodology in county and borough constituencies arising from the difference in the franchises applying and the consequent practical problems of determining eligibility. The historic forty shilling freehold franchise had long been tied to payment of the land tax and land tax records used to verify the right to a vote. However Pitt's Act of 1798 and subsequent similar Acts permitted 'redemption' of land tax liability for payment of a fixed sum. The passage of time rendered the collation of land tax payment and redemption records, by the returning officer and

⁷⁵ Peel MSS BL Add. MSS 40616 fols 278-9 – 'Scot and Lot' were poor rates.

his assessor, impossible as land was split and consolidated as well as sold on.⁷⁶ This together with the provisions of the 1832 Reform introducing new franchises in the counties for £10 copyholders, £10 long leaseholders, £50 short leaseholders and £50 tenants-at-will made it impossible to draw up an electoral register from any set of central (albeit locally held in the case of land tax) or local government records. Moreover; even if payment of poor rates on the property had been a requirement to qualify for the register, which it was not in county constituencies⁷⁷, there was the added complication that the same property could yield votes to two different men under different qualifications. This was particularly true of farms where the owner could claim a freehold vote and the occupier, often his son, a vote as a tenant-at-will.

Because the county franchise rested on land tenure and the parish overseers had no right to inspect every lease document; the procedure in county constituencies was that the parish overseers, although not forbidden to add names themselves, were to seek the submission of claims between 20 June and 20 July and to add them to the previous year's list. This new list was the new draft register on which the overseers could mark up any names they felt were ineligible (presumably including those who had died or moved out) thus producing a first set of 'objections'. Thereafter the process was that followed in boroughs with one exception. From the very start in 1832, an objector in a county constituency was required to give notice of his objection, but not its grounds, to the man to whom he objected.⁷⁸

Therefore in county constituencies to enter the register one had to submit a claim and to be removed from it one had to be the subject of an objection. The revision courts were then held in the full view of party representatives who if aware of one's politics would offer support or opposition. As Mitchell has pointed out 'knowing one's politics' did not mean that one ever had to have voted in a politically polarised election. The canvassing and other notebooks, from Lancaster, which he cites show employment, family ties, past favours received from candidates and wife's known politics all being used to assess the likely voting behaviour of those who have never voted before.⁷⁹ With increased mobility knowledge of this 'social network' in the boroughs may well have been much reduced.⁸⁰ In most county constituencies, those who did

⁷⁶ Prest, *Politics...*, 3-6.

⁷⁷ Prest, *Politics...*, 20.

⁷⁸ Prest, *Politics...*, 21. This became the case in the boroughs in 1843 – see p. 159 above.

⁷⁹ Mitchell, *Organization...*, 65-78.

⁸⁰ See pp. 115-6 above.

not move out to boroughs would probably have been longer rooted in their communities. This would have facilitated a greater knowledge of their 'social network'.

So in the counties with every change to the register open to possible challenge at the revision court it was arguably much clearer to the 'parties' what the overall balance of political power was after a revision. Consequently Salmon can declare, for instance, that the 1841 General Election was not contested by the Whig/Liberals/Reformers of North Devon as the result had been determined by the revision in 1840.⁸¹ In other words the election had been won, and lost, by other means – party registration activity. It is interesting that the figures in both the press, which Salmon recognises as potentially politically biased, and the private papers of leading participants appear never to include any figures for those of uncertain political allegiance – all claims and objections, both successful and otherwise, are categorised as Tory or Liberal.⁸²

The position in the boroughs was different. To use Prest's term the borough registration system was 'self-acting'.⁸³ In boroughs a voter's name could be placed on the register without him making a claim. Indeed if he did not examine the draft register he might not even know it was there. For each year, in theory, the overseers and town clerk started with 'a blank sheet of paper' and produced respectively a new list of those occupying qualifying property and one of those in possession of borough freedom and living within the qualifying seven mile radius.

In boroughs where freedom could be obtained by birth or servitude and there were large numbers of freemen in 1832, the latter was a challenging task as admissions to the freedom continued.⁸⁴ In Winchester where freedom had only been conferred by vote of the corporation this was a far easier task as the initial pool was limited and diminishing as the years passed. At the 1831 General Election the manuscript pollbook indicates there were one hundred and thirty-two freemen at that point; seventy-five of whom voted.⁸⁵ At that election John Young implied that only sixty-four were resident.⁸⁶ The clerk's only challenge was to keep track of the movement in and out of the seven mile qualifying radius of a small pool of individuals whose numbers were ever diminishing through deaths and movement away from Winchester. **Table 6.1 below** shows the number entered under the 'Freeman' heading in Winchester parliamentary

⁸¹ Salmon, *Electoral...*, 155.

⁸² Salmon, *Electoral...*, 154 Table 10 data from the Acland MSS for example.

⁸³ Prest, *Politics...*, 21.

⁸⁴ Salmon, *Electoral...*, 4.

⁸⁵ Sixteenth Book of Ordinances W/B1/16.

⁸⁶ HC 9 May 1831.

electoral registers from 1832 to 1878.

Table 6.1 Number of Freemen on the Winchester Electoral Register

<u>Year</u>	<u>Freemen</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Freemen</u>
1832	66	1851	17
1833	65	1852	16
1834	62	1853	14
1835	59	1854	14
1836	59	1855	14
1837	57	1856	14
1838	49	1857	13
1839	46	1858	12
1840	44	1859	10
1841	41	1860	5
1842	38	1861	4
1843	35	1862	4
1844	35	1863	4
1845	30	1864	4
1846	28	1866	2
1847	25	1868	1
1848	23	1869	1
1849	19	1878	0
1850	19		

Sources: Winchester Electoral Registers 1832-68 – see Bibliography.

In the case of Winchester, it is somewhat doubtful that when undertaking this exercise, the parish overseers started with a 'blank sheet of paper'. The entries which are not in strict alphabetical order tend to recur year after year. This deviation from normal alphabetical order can however be helpful in determining the contents of those registers the only available copy of which is one that was used for other purposes – canvassing, addressing the next registration or recording the poll – in which some entries have been struck through and rendered semi-legible.⁸⁷ Nevertheless in so far as can be established the Winchester overseers did not indulge in many of the kinds of chicanery during registration described by Derek Fraser in larger more northern boroughs.⁸⁸

That is not to say that there were not suspicions about the behaviour of overseers in southern boroughs. For in 1843 Sir Charles M. Burrell, M.P., wrote to the Prime Minister, Sir Robert Peel,⁸⁹ bemoaning the position in his New Shoreham 'borough' constituency.⁹⁰ He expressed dissatisfaction with the failure to introduce his proposed amendments during the passage of the 1843 Registration Bill, which was approaching Royal Assent. He then continued:

As it is we are at the mercy of political overseers. They may insert in the Register whosoever they please to think occupy to the value of £10 and so inconsistent are they (to say nothing worse of them) that we find numerous instances of parties being rated at £5 and under and put upon the register whilst by the Parochial Assessment Act those Officers are bound to assess every person at the full annual value.

In Warmingham parish he asserted that the overseer rated self at £4 8s 8d [or 0s 0d] and his father at £2 2s 9d and then:

...had the hardihood to swear that both the properties were worth £10 per year and the revising Barrister believed him and both houses were retained upon the register in 1841 and I believe are there still but I did not attend the revising Barristers Court last year.

⁸⁷ As is the case with the Winchester register for 1858 in the Hampshire Record Office – HRO W/B9/2/83.

⁸⁸ D. Fraser, *Urban Politics in Victorian England: The Structure of Politics in Victorian Cities* (Leicester, 1976), 87-8 for example describes partisan pre and post-dating of rate payments in the overseers' records in Salford.

⁸⁹ Peel MSS BL Add. MSS 40529 fols 182-3 27 May 1843.

⁹⁰ New Shoreham was a 'borough' almost in name only. Due to corruption it had, in 1771, been 'thrown into the Rape of Bramber' and forty-shilling freeholders given the borough franchise so as to increase the electorate – Gash, *Politics...*, 68. As such, other than the fact it returned two MPs, it was a 'prototype' for the constituencies into which counties were divided in 1885.

Burrell proceeded to claim that the draft register had contained seventy-five names with property worth less than £10 annual value, most of them in fact worth less than £5, in Steyning and four or five other parishes. Only two or three of these were removed by the revising barristers. Valuers supported by the overseers argued the others were worth more than £10. This was of great concern to the Bramber Conservatives as 'no great trouble & expense of watching the register is in getting these valuers.' Pointing to the implications elsewhere Burrell claimed '...at Brighton, we should be inundated with pauper votes...' – the Conservatives had won one of Brighton's seats in a by-election in May 1842.⁹¹

It is possible that Burrell may have fallen into the trap of taking the value at which a property was rated as being its annual value for all purposes. Inconsistency in values used for rating, yet alone their relationship to annual value, was something which Sir Philip Rose had to explain to Disraeli in 1859.⁹² The threshold for the house tax had been set at £10 in 1825.⁹³ So it is possible that some householders might have secured a 'tax efficient' valuation for such purposes, yet they chose to use a different one when it suited them to secure a vote.

In Winchester it appears that efforts were made to use 'creative' valuations to ensure disfranchisement. In 1837 the Conservative agent and Winchester attorney, Charles Bridger, was attacked at the registration by his Whig opposite number for the approach in St Thomas parish. There rating assessments had been reduced to reflect the cost of repairs and insurance to the landlord. Twynam, acting for the Whigs, suggested that this approach would disfranchise one third of the electorate.⁹⁴ Aldous has argued that in 1841 census data, as to numbers of 'live in' servants in their households, indicates Conservative partisans were wealthier or had higher incomes than their Whig rivals.⁹⁵ So this move was far more likely to disfranchise Whig rather than Conservative supporters.

Beyond this it appears that the parish overseers in Winchester generally did an honest job in preparing the draft register at the start of the process. This meant that the avenue the borough registration rules made for a new voter to enter the register without making a claim was open. Thus if no individual, either in his own right or on behalf of a 'party', then objected to that new voter his name went onto the register almost 'under the radar'. This point was picked

⁹¹ *McCalmont...*, 33.

⁹² See pp. 34-5 above.

⁹³ McCord, *British History 1815-1906* (Oxford, 1991), 135.

⁹⁴ *HC* 30 October 1837.

⁹⁵ R.J. Aldous, 'Conservative Voters in Winchester 1832-41 – An Initial Assessment', (unpublished MA dissertation, University of Winchester, 2009), 85-7.

up after the 1835 registration when 'A REFORMER' wrote to the *Hampshire Chronicle* claiming that the 'scorecard' of the revision court outcome⁹⁶ was misleading as it did not present the full picture. Firstly of the fifty objections 'established' by the Conservatives only nine had been on the previous year's list whereas thirty of the forty-nine (his figure) Reformer successes on this score met this criterion. The 'base figure' had therefore swung in the Reformers' favour by twenty-one. Moreover what was missing, he claimed, were the many Reformers who had been added to the register but were not objected to.⁹⁷

These observations are important in two regards: they show the importance of the continuity of individuals on the register, on the one hand, as they were likely to be partisans; and how those who came onto the register 'under the radar' introduced an element of uncertainty as to the outcome of the registration. This latter is quite possibly a reason, besides the lesser cost, for the higher level of contested elections in borough, as opposed to county, constituencies. In the latter the registration might clearly have decided the outcome of any election during the year for which that register applied. This is a conclusion which Prest, having established the differences in registration mechanisms in the two types of constituency, failed to reach. His focus instead turned to the Anti-Corn Law League's manipulation of the county claims process to 'manufacture' votes for 'urban freeholders' in those constituencies.

This analysis suggests that at any one time the electorate of a borough comprised three elements:

- A. Those long established on the register, men who although probably partisan, possessed impeccable qualifications. This might be called 'The Core Element'.
- B. Those on the register who had been the subject of a contested claim or objection on that occasion (or in some cases, such as the Winchester Cathedral prebendaries and College masters, frequent objection⁹⁸). 'The Contested Element'.
- C. Those who had recently joined the register without challenge through the natural results of the operation of the overseers' annual preparation of the draft register for the parish. What might be called 'The Organic Growth Element'.

⁹⁶ See p. 158 above.

⁹⁷ *HC* 12 October 1835.

⁹⁸ Aldous, 'Conservative...', 89-92.

Salmon's analysis of the county constituencies addresses the first two elements: the core of the register which remained from year to year and the contested element, which economists and accountants would call 'The Margin'. That model matches the registration rules applying in such constituencies. However the borough constituencies, with their different registration process, require a more sophisticated three-part model as described above. The model however must be viewed as dynamic, not static, in that those forming the 'Organic Growth Element' in time, probably after a general election, could join the 'Core' or 'Contested Elements'. Sadly the press reports of the revision court proceedings mention only the names of some, but by no means all, those making successful claims and surviving objections. There are no surviving 'judicial records' of the revising barristers' courts.⁹⁹ Therefore it is impossible to be certain whether a 'new entrant' to the register was part of the 'Organic Growth' or the 'Contested Element' of the electorate.

What we can be certain of however is that the average 'Winchester Man' during his 'elector life' of about thirteen years entered the register as either part of the 'Organic Growth' or 'Contested' elements of the then electorate. If in possession of impeccable qualifications, he then quickly advanced to become a member of the 'Core' element. The relative security obtained by joining that element might have been secured by a show of partisanship in his voting behaviour.¹⁰⁰ This would have ensured the support and protection of a 'party organisation'.¹⁰¹ It would also potentially attract the hostile attention of the opposing 'party' organisation, making that need for protection from the other 'party' greater. Moreover it would probably reinforce his partisanship. However others entering as part of the 'Contested' element 'Winchester Man' might have remained so, as in the case of the prebendaries,¹⁰² throughout most of their 'elector lives'.

Role of the Registration Societies

For those with established partisan credentials the Registration Societies could facilitate, or hinder, their entry to the register. Taking note of the supposed reasons for limited Conservative successes elsewhere at the 1835 General Election, a Conservative Association to

⁹⁹ But see pp. 186-98 below for a contemporary account of the 1832 revision in Newport, Isle of Wight.

¹⁰⁰ See p. 199 below.

¹⁰¹ See p. 198 below.

¹⁰² See for example pp. 175-6 below.

register 'voters who concur in opinion' was formed in Winchester.¹⁰³ The immediate Whig response, a Reform Association, covered both county divisions and all the boroughs of the county, including Winchester. Although Mayor John Young was elected Treasurer and tasked with forming the Winchester district committee it was clearly far less Winchester-focused and subject to county level control, bureaucracy and interference.¹⁰⁴ The autonomy of the Conservative organisation and the centralism of that of the Whigs accords with Salmon's findings elsewhere.¹⁰⁵

The contestation of registration is at the core of Salmon's work. It is also present in some depth in Prest's albeit, given his Anti-Corn Law League focus, his attention is centred very much upon the creative activities of 'faggotting' (the creation of forty shilling freeholds) and getting supporters onto the register. Although he also addresses the 'destructive' activity of objecting to opponents and getting them removed from the register. The evidence of the handwritten parochial instructions of the Winchester Conservative Registration Society for the 1836 registration shows, at least at the parish level, activity by the Conservatives was directed at getting supporters onto the register and ensuring they did not drop off it through late payment of poor rates and assessed taxes. These instructions, found in the parish records of St. Peter Cheesehill,¹⁰⁶ are reproduced in full below:

Winchester Conservative Registration
Society
Instructions to the Parochial Committees

1st. On or before the 19th of July inst obtain of the Collectors of taxes & Overseers of the Poor lists of all Persons who shall then be in arrears for the Window Tax & poor's rate due before 6th April last and should any Conservatives be found in such Lists to point out to them the necessity of their arrears being paid on or before the next day (viz the 20th inst) in order to entitle them to be placed on the Lists of Voters.

2nd. The first thing in the morning on the 21st July inst obtain of the Collector of Taxes & of the Overseers Lists of all persons who shall be then in arrear for the Window Tax & poor's rate respectively which became due before 6th April last.

3rd. On the 31st July inst obtain of the Overseers Lists of the Voters and at the same time copies of the first & last rates made between the 31st July 1835 & 31st July 1836 and should there be any Conservative occupiers to a sufficient amount to constitute them

¹⁰³ HC 8 June 1835.

¹⁰⁴ HC 15 June 1835.

¹⁰⁵ Salmon, *Electoral...*, 58-63.

¹⁰⁶ HRO 3M82W/PZ9 Winchester Conservative Registration Society: Instructions to the Parochial Committees.

electors whose names do not appear on the Rate Books to request them to apply immediately to the Overseers to be rated.

4th. On or before 2nd August to deliver to Mr Bridger the Secretary All Lists & Copies obtained by them in conformity with the foregoing Instructions.

5 [*sic*] Between the 10th & 13th Sept. next to obtain of the Overseers Lists of all Persons objected to And also of all such persons whose names having been omitted from the List of Voters shall have claimed to have them inserted therein. And deliver such lists to the Secretary as soon as they shall have been obtained.

N.B. Extraparochial Places to be annexed to the adjoining Parish which is least populous according to the last Census.

This shows a highly detailed level of organisation and the employment of significant manpower on the task as these activities had to be carried out swiftly in each of the then sixteen parishes and part parishes within the borough boundary. It also demonstrates that one's identity as a Conservative was expected to be well known to the parish organisation. In this regard we might add to Mitchell's indicators for those who had never voted;¹⁰⁷ assuming a consistency of voting in national and municipal elections, the way men had voted at the first election under the Municipal Reform Act on 26 December 1835.¹⁰⁸ The municipal franchise was looser in terms of value, requiring one merely to be a householder. Nevertheless it was more restrictive in terms of residency (three years not one). It would inevitably embrace many of those but, surprisingly as Salmon pointed out, not all who qualified as £10 householders for the parliamentary register.¹⁰⁹

As is so often the case with documents, the marginalia of these instructions reveal much. To the left of the second instruction in ink is written: 'It will be better to inspect the rate [*sic*] yourselves and take a minute of such as appear to be in arrear.' This suggests a level of distrust of potentially partisan overseers which aligns with the descriptions of overseer chicanery, such as delaying recording of rate payment, given by Salmon and Fraser.¹¹⁰ Or,

¹⁰⁷ See pp. 115-6 above.

¹⁰⁸ HC 28 December 1835 and 4 January 1836.

¹⁰⁹ Salmon, *Electoral...*, 218-9 – he cites the work of Keith-Lucas and Simon together with a couple of original cases.

¹¹⁰ Salmon, *Electoral...*, 193-5 and Fraser, *Urban...*, 57-8.

perhaps, a distrust of overseer efficiency as evidenced at the Newport, Isle of Wight, revision court in 1832.¹¹¹

At the top of the page in pencil is the note '1836 20th July Wm Cocks Assd Taxes Not Paid'. It appears that William Cocks had failed to pay his Window or House Tax. In the 1835 pollbook Cocks is listed as a victualler in St. Peter Cheesehill and shown as 'plumping'. He did this by voting for the sole Conservative candidate, East, and choosing not to express a preference with his second vote for one of the Whig candidates, Mildmay and Baring.¹¹² All the indications are that Cocks could be viewed as a Conservative 'partisan'. However, in this case, the efforts of the St Peter Cheesehill 'branch' of the Winchester Conservative Registration Society came to nothing. Having been on the register for St. Peter Cheesehill from 1833 to 1835 inclusive¹¹³ William Cocks appears again on the Winchester registers, fleetingly, in the 1837 register in Jewry Street, St. Thomas Parish.¹¹⁴ It does appear that Cocks had greater concerns than whether his name was on the register after 1837, and possibly even in 1836. In March 1838 he was listed to appear before the Court for the Relief of Insolvent Debtors. So possibly a small amount of assessed taxes was the least of his financial problems. The listing confirmed that the two register entries in different parishes indeed related to the same man. However the court discharged him in April.¹¹⁵

It is worthy of note that it was not only the parliamentary register which attracted the attention of such societies. There is evidence, in 1848, of the existence of the Winchester Municipal Registration Association.¹¹⁶ The one reference to it is anodyne in its brief description of a meeting. So it is impossible to determine which 'party' it favoured. However it is extremely difficult to believe it was a non-partisan body. For, from the passage of the Municipal Reform Act in 1835 to 1840, the registration court for the municipal list appears to have had many cases to consider. The report for the 1839 revision indicates that claims and objections were supported and opposed by the political 'parties'.¹¹⁷ The Conservatives were reported to have lodged eighty-five objections of which forty-three were sustained and thirty-eight withdrawn.

¹¹¹ See pp. 186-98 below.

¹¹² HRO W/B9/2/82 Jacob's 1835 Pollbook, 11.

¹¹³ HRO W/B9/1/1 and 2 Borough Registry - Parliamentary Voters 1833-4 and 1835-7. These registers do not include serial numbers.

¹¹⁴ Serial 467 HRO W/B9/1/2.

¹¹⁵ HC 19 March and 16 April 1838.

¹¹⁶ HC 12 February 1848.

¹¹⁷ HC 14 October 1839.

They also had fifty-two claims for inclusion, of which thirty-four were sustained and two adjourned at the reported session. The 'Whigs' lodged ninety-six objections. Of these twenty-eight were sustained and twenty-three withdrawn. Moreover they had fifty-seven claims of which only ten were sustained and two adjourned. Many of the withdrawn objections related to non-payment of borough rates in St Bartholomew Hyde and Milland parishes. However the rates 'on the production of the documents of the overseers, appeared never to have been legally made'. They probably lacked the signatures of approving magistrates. The adjournment was, at least in part, due to Twynam 'for the Liberals' seeking counsel's opinion.

The 1839 municipal revision was held before the Mayor and two elected assessors from the ward in question.¹¹⁸ This was the case for all such revisions from 1836 onwards. The initial implementation of municipal reform in 1835 was placed in the hands of the revising barristers for the parliamentary register. In late October they defined the wards for future elections and for which 'burgess lists' were to be drawn up.¹¹⁹ In early December they then held a municipal revision court.¹²⁰ This addressed sixty-six claims of which twenty-eight were admitted to the list. Of the ninety-eight objections one was examined in detail and rejected. As to the other ninety-seven, the two barristers, Cabell and Bere, could not agree whether or not they were correctly completed and therefore valid. So they decided those names should remain on the list. Many of these objections were made by Charles Bridger, who appeared in the Conservative interest at a number of parliamentary revision courts.¹²¹

The Barristers' Revision Courts

For the annual revision of the parliamentary register, claims and objections had to be lodged with the parish overseers, or in the case of freemen the 'Town Clerk', by 25 August. These officials were then required to compile lists of each. They were next required to post them on the doors of parish churches and the 'Town Hall' respectively on the two Sundays immediately preceding 15 September. Moreover they were required to allow free consultation of those lists during the ten days prior to 15 September and to provide copies for a one shilling fee.¹²² It was necessary to serve notice of objection to the individual, in the counties from 1832

¹¹⁸ HC 29 February 1836 announced the first election of ward assessors and auditors.

¹¹⁹ HC 2 November 1835.

¹²⁰ HC 7 December 1835.

¹²¹ See pp. 166 above and 184 below.

¹²² 2 Will. IV. c. 45 s. 47.

and in the boroughs from 1843.¹²³ Therefore after 1843 those challenged in Winchester did not need to examine that list – although, if an identified supporter, the relevant registration society would be interested.

It is unlikely such lists survive. The revising barrister in the Isle of Wight in 1832 described the lists of claims as becoming ‘mere waste paper’ after the court had finished its business.¹²⁴ They were a means to an end, a mere tool, what mattered was the final register which had a life of a year. The revising barristers were appointed annually by the senior Assize Judge for the county.¹²⁵ They operated, in open court, singly - as in the Isle of Wight, which for parliamentary election purposes effectively became a county in 1832¹²⁶ - or in pairs, as in Winchester until 1838 and sometimes thereafter. Although appointed annually there was some continuity ‘M. Bere’ served as one of the revising barristers for Winchester from 1834 until 1837 inclusive. He, however, had a variety of partners.¹²⁷

Bere brought some continuity and perhaps consistency of judgement to the revision court in Winchester. But it is perhaps the frequent changes of revising barrister which led to the repetition of challenges on the same grounds with differing results – particularly true of the cases of the cathedral prebendaries at Winchester.¹²⁸ A new revising barrister offered a new opportunity as he might make a different decision. One of the reasons for these repeated objections was that the decisions of the revising barristers were, until the 1843, not subject to appeal. This absence of scope to appeal was possibly a result of the need to generate the register quickly to facilitate an early General Election following the passage of the Reform legislation. The lack of appeals removed the scope for the ‘norming’ of barristers’ judgements by reference to appeal judgements. Instead quirky judgements, such as the inclusion of the Archbishop of Canterbury on the Lambeth register in 1835,¹²⁹ continued.

¹²³ See p. 159 above.

¹²⁴ W.M. Manning, *Proceedings in Courts of Revision, in the Isle of Wight, before James Manning, Esq. Revising Barrister: To Which are added Cases Decided in South Hants in 1835, An Abstract of Decisions Upon the Registration Clauses to the Present Time, and The Reform Act, With Explanatory Remarks by Wm. M. Manning Revising Barrister in North Wilts in 1834* (London 1836), 98.

¹²⁵ 2 Will. IV. c. 45 s. 49.

¹²⁶ 2 Will. IV. c. 45 s. 16.

¹²⁷ HC 1 September 1834, 10 August 1835, 29 August 1836 and 14 August 1837.

¹²⁸ See pp. 175-6 and 181-2 below.

¹²⁹ The revising barrister allowed his name to remain on the register as ‘although he was a lord of Parliament, he was not a peer of the realm’ – Prest, *Politics...*, 38.

The 1843 Registration Act introduced scope to appeal, on points of law, against revising barristers' decisions to the Court of Common Pleas.¹³⁰ Not that this necessarily led to consistency of judgement. John Davis points us to decisions by the same judge in 1862 and 1863 in *Cook v Humber* and *Henrette v Booth*. In the former the judge ruled that severance from the rest of the building was necessary not to be classified as a lodger, and therefore ineligible to the franchise prior to 1867. In the latter he ruled the occupant of the top floor of a lodging house to be eligible for inclusion on the register.¹³¹

These problems continued beyond the 1867 legislation. Lord Justice Brett made a judgement which rendered all the other occupants of a building lodgers should one of them leave his tenement room vacant.¹³² Indeed, even in the period from 1885 to World War One, Neal Blewett found that revising barristers' decisions could be 'diverse'.¹³³ Before 1843 revising barristers had to rely on publications by their fellow barristers for guidance and would find them cited by party officials in court.¹³⁴ But they were merely the personal views of those with some knowledge or experience. The existence of a court of appeal did provide the basis for judge-made case law. This triggered the publication of works of greater authority recording the judgements given on an annual basis.¹³⁵

The Winchester Revision Courts 1832-1835

But what actually happened in the barristers' revision court? We have no judicial records to aid us and the press reports are patchy, only picking out the 'highlights'. Often, after the early years, they also provided some form of 'scorecard' of the outcome, although on occasions this provoked alternative interpretations.¹³⁶ In 1832 the *Hampshire Chronicle* reported decisions in other constituencies, such as that to reject the objection against a Bishopsgate voter on the grounds of his Jewish faith.¹³⁷ In the case of Winchester, its home, it failed to report on the court's proceedings. Although its report on the forthcoming 1833 revision suggested there

¹³⁰ 6 Vict. c. 18 s.42-5 and 60..

¹³¹ J. Davis, 'Slums and the Vote, 1867-90', *Historical Research*, Vol. 64, No. 155 (October 1991), 379.

¹³² J. Davis and D. Tanner, 'The Borough Franchise after 1867', *Historical Research*, Vol. 69 (1996), 317.

¹³³ N. Blewett, 'The Franchise in the United Kingdom 1885-1918', *Past & Present* No. 32 (Dec 1965), 39.

¹³⁴ An example is W.F.A. Delane, *A Collection of decisions in the courts for reviewing the lists of electors. 2nd Edn 1832-5* (London 1836); as are Parts of Manning, *Proceedings....* Moreover at p. 156 of the latter the citing of the works of Rogers and Rowe by a party official are recorded in the proceedings.

¹³⁵ Probably starting with E.W. Cox and H. T. Atkinson, *Registration Appeal Cases Volume I. - Part I. (Containing All the appeals for the Years 1843 and 1844)* (London 1845).

¹³⁶ See pp. 115 and 167 above.

¹³⁷ *HC* 29 October 1832.

might have been a reasonable number of claims and objections the previous year. For in the latter year it anticipated only a third of the previous year's cases as: 'Parties, it would seem, calculating the chances of there being no dissolution during the next year, appear to be resting on their arms.'¹³⁸ This was a sound judgement as when the court sat it received no objections. No reference was made to the number of claims, if any.¹³⁹ In 1834 'Only few objections were made, and those wholly unimportant.' Moreover from the earlier published itinerary of the revising barristers it is possible that these may have related to the county division of North Hampshire.¹⁴⁰

Although the *Hampshire Chronicle* had used the term 'Parties' in its reporting of the 1833 revision court¹⁴¹ it appears that in Winchester, as in many other places, their influence only really asserted itself in 1835. For following the formation of the respective registration societies¹⁴² the court faced 154 objections on a draft register of 633. An objection was lodged against almost one in four men on that draft register. The 'Reformers' were 'credited' with 98 of the objections. That they lodged almost two-thirds of the objections may well reflect the activity of the Conservative Registration Society in getting its perceived supporters onto the draft register.¹⁴³ In addition twenty-four claims were lodged. The newspaper noted that this level of business for the barristers 'shew the strenuous efforts making [sic] in this city by both parties to gain the ascendancy, in the event of an early dissolution'. There then followed one of its fuller accounts of the business of the proceedings of a revision court:

The only matter of interest was the question raised respecting the validity of claims made by some of the Prebendaries of Winchester to vote for the city on account of their residences in the Close. It was decided, after a lengthy examination and discussion, that the Rev. Messrs. Pretymann, Noel, and Archdeacon Hoare, were entitled to be retained on the list, although their houses were unoccupied except during their official and occasional residences. A similar decision was made in favour of the Rev. Messrs. Vaux, Harrison and Wilson, who let their respective residences with a reservation of certain apartments, of the annual value of £10. As to the rights of the Rev. Messrs. James, Jacob, and Chancellor Dealtry, to be retained on the list of burgesses, the Learned Commissioner entertained considerable doubts, as to the whole of their houses, as far as could be ascertained, were let – the owners merely reserving a right of occasional occupancy. The Barrister therefore deferred giving his decision till Monday the 5th of Oct. to which day the completion of revision of the list was adjourned. The majority of

¹³⁸ *HC* 26 August 1833.

¹³⁹ *HC* 7 October 1833.

¹⁴⁰ *HC* 6 October and 22 September 1834.

¹⁴¹ *HC* 7 October 1833.

¹⁴² See pp. 168-9 above.

¹⁴³ See pp. 169-70 above.

objections were founded on an assumed deficiency of rental, in supporting and rebutting which allegations much conflicting testimony was adduced.¹⁴⁴

A fortnight later it was reported that the adjourned sitting ruled that James, Jacob and Dealtry be expunged from the register. This was on the grounds that they had not reserved £10 of their prebendal houses when sub-letting. The barristers also gave the quirky ruling that Colonel Gauntlett's name be expunged from the register, as his place of abode was not properly specified, but that if the opportunity arose he attempt to vote.¹⁴⁵

What of Those Identified as Targetted for Objection in 1835?

Clearly the newspaper was focused on the prominent members of Winchester society. However the same report did report the case of Joseph Hunt, a bedmaker at Winchester College.¹⁴⁶ The objection was three-pronged. First Hunt was not a true occupier – the house belonged to the College Warden and Fellows. Second he boarded and lodged choristers and paid no rent, instead his services were deemed equivalent. Third he was not rated as the property abutted the Cathedral Close and was extra-parochial. The barristers ruled that his family's rooms met the £10 value criterion and that he would have been rated were his home not located in an extra-parochial area. Consequently they retained his name on the register.¹⁴⁷ The real objection to Hunt was that he was a Conservative voter, having plumped for the sole Conservative, East, at the 1835 General Election. Moreover he was likely to remain so, as he was housed and employed by one of the bastions of the Winchester Conservatives, the College.

An examination, in the 1835 pollbook, of the voting records of those named in the reporting of the 1835 revision court reveals that of the eleven individuals named five others, all prebendaries,¹⁴⁸ had shown the same Conservative partisanship at the preceding General Election. Moreover when on the register none of them ever voted solely for a 'Reformer'/Whig/Liberal candidate. In 1837 of the eleven only Gauntlett was on the register. He seemed to favour the *ancien régime* by splitting his vote between the Whig, Mildmay, and East, whilst eschewing the second Conservative, Escott. In 1841 of the seven on the applicable 1840

¹⁴⁴ HC 28 September 1835.

¹⁴⁵ See p. 154 above.

¹⁴⁶ HRO W/B9/2/82 1835 Pollbook printed by Jacob Jacob, 13.

¹⁴⁷ HC 12 October 1835.

¹⁴⁸ Harrison, James, Pretymen, Vaux and Wilson. Two others on the register for that election, Dealtry and Hoare, did not vote. The other three – Jacob, Noel and Gauntlett were not on the applicable register – that of 1834.

register six, all prebendaries,¹⁴⁹ voted for the Conservative 'slate' of East and Escott. Colonel Gauntlett did not vote.

The post-Corn Law Repeal election of 1847 presented greater challenges. It was effectively a three party contest. However the Peelite, Escott, and Whig/Liberal, Carter, were shunned by all eleven. Of the eight on the 1846 register five plumped for the sole Protectionist Conservative, East, and three did not vote.¹⁵⁰

Further challenges were faced by the electorate at the 1852 General Election when a local man, William Whitear Bulpett, ran on a radical platform. He declared for an extension of the franchise and the abolition of church rates. On account of this he was described as 'decidedly a man of progress determined to move with the times'.¹⁵¹ At the best of times these would have been highly radical policies in strongly Anglican Winchester; but this was an election stalked by the spectre of 'Papal Aggression'. For the Pope had recently decided to reinstate the post of bishop in the English Roman Catholic hierarchy.¹⁵² To be seen, in Winchester, to be attacking the established church on its other, Non-Conformist, flank was probably very unwise.

Moreover Bulpett was seen as a Conservative renegade. He had served on the borough council for that party and voted for its parliamentary candidates at all elections from 1835 to 1847 inclusive. He had eschewed voting for the Peelite, Escott, in 1847. Hitherto his only possible deviation from 'the true path' was, in the absence of a second Conservative candidate, giving his second vote in 1835 to William Bingham Baring. Baring was one of the Whig candidates but controversially 'crossed the floor' to join Peel's Conservatives shortly thereafter.¹⁵³ Bulpett claimed to be independent of party but four weeks later declared he would withdraw if he felt his intervention would unseat the 'Liberal', Carter. Moreover he claimed that 'the Liberals' could return them both.¹⁵⁴ At the same time Bulpett was being

¹⁴⁹ Dealtry, Hoare, Jacob, James, Noel and Pretymen.

¹⁵⁰ Dealtry, Gauntlett, Hoare, James and Pretymen voted. Jacob, Noel and Wilson did not vote.

¹⁵¹ *HC* 12 June 1852.

¹⁵² For a brief account of this see K.T. Hoppen, *The Mid-Victorian Generation: England 1846-1886* (Oxford, 1998), 145-6. For a more extended account, of how it related to the development of the English Roman Catholic church and to Anglo-Catholicism in the Church of England following the Oxford Movement, see O. Chadwick, *The Victorian Church Part 1* (London, 1966), 271-309. For how Papal Aggression and the grant to Maynooth College in Ireland, where Catholic priests were educated, influenced the 1852 General Election see G.I.T. Machin, *Politics and the Churches in Great Britain 1832 to 1868* (Oxford, 1977), 240-5.

¹⁵³ Aldous, 'Conservative...', 67-8. Baring defended his actions in a pamphlet - 'Letter to the Electors of Winchester by Bingham Baring, M.P.' Second Edition (London, 9 May 1835) HRO TOP343/1/255.

¹⁵⁴ *HC* 15 May and 12 June 1852.

actively backed by the 'Liberal' Mayor of Southampton, Richard Andrews, who had a residence in Winchester and had recently hosted the Hungarian independence leader, Kossuth, there.¹⁵⁵ Of the eleven named in reports of the 1835 revision, seven were on the register for the 1852 contest. Four cast a single vote each for the Conservative, East; two split their votes between East and the incumbent Whig/Liberal, Carter; and one did not vote.¹⁵⁶ All turned their backs on Bulpett. Bulpett eventually returned to the Conservative fold. He voted for both Conservatives in 1859 and for one of them only in 1865. In 1868 he did not vote.

In 1857 there was once more a single Conservative candidate. The six survivors of the eleven challenged at the 1835 revision again displayed distinct Conservative loyalty. Two voted only for East, the sole Conservative candidate; three voted for East and Carter, the incumbent Whig/Liberal; and one did not vote.¹⁵⁷ The 1859 contest offered electors two candidates from each 'party'.¹⁵⁸ The, now, five survivors were not totally persuaded by the 'party slate' as two voted for both Conservatives, two only for East the incumbent Conservative and one did not vote due to illness.¹⁵⁹ Interestingly Gauntlett who in 1852 and 1857 had cast his 'spare vote' for the incumbent Whig/Liberal, Carter, chose neither to cast it for him nor for the second Conservative, Fleming. We cannot tell whether Carter's record in the previous parliament had offended Gauntlett, or whether although he did not favour Fleming he regarded it as 'bad political manners' to cast a vote against a fellow Conservative.

The next election in 1865 offered the two survivors two Conservative candidates. They were Thomas Willis Fleming, who had fought the borough in 1859 and replaced East at an unopposed by-election in February 1864, and a local man, William Barrow Simonds. Jacob voted for both Conservatives and Wilson cast only one of his votes, for Fleming. In 1868 they both voted only for Simonds, who had secured one of the seats in 1865, and was now the sole Conservative candidate.

This extended examination of the voting behaviour of these eleven men objected to by the 'Reformers' in 1835 has shown that the latter had good cause to object to them on partisan grounds. For only Gauntlett, in 1837, ever cast a vote for a Whig/Liberal when there was a Conservative option to which to give it. Their lives on the electoral register, when first examined,

¹⁵⁵ HC 25 October 1851.

¹⁵⁶ Respectively Hunt, James, Pretymen and Wilson; Gauntlett and Jacob; and Hoare.

¹⁵⁷ Respectively Hunt and Pretymen; Gauntlett, Jacob and Wilson; and Hoare.

¹⁵⁸ *McCalmont...*, 321 is in error George S. Lefevre fought the 1859 not the 1865 election at Winchester as evidenced by the respective pollbooks.

¹⁵⁹ Respectively Pretymen and Wilson; Gauntlett and Jacob; and Hoare.

reveal that all but Vaux had gaps in their presence thereon. Closer examination reveals possible gaps longer than the four years adopted in the methodology, as indicating that succeeding entries in the same name were not the same individual.¹⁶⁰ For it appears that Joseph Hunt who last appeared in the 1838 may well be the same man who rejoined the register in 1850 in the same area of the city and last appeared in the 1856 register prior to his death, aged 70, in July 1857. A William Vaux, of the Cathedral Close, last appeared in the register in 1835 but seems to reappear there in 1843. He last appeared in the 1844 register before dying, aged 60, in April 1845. A William Wilson last appeared in the register for 1835 but seems to reappear there in 1841, remaining in place until the continuous string of registers ceases in 1869.

It is difficult to ascribe these long gaps to the actions of their political opponents in the revision courts as the men concerned may have been away from Winchester and returned. What might be more fairly be ascribed to these activities are the shorter gaps in their records. These gaps amount to twenty-seven years in the period from 1832 to 1845 inclusive. That is almost 7 per cent of the 393 gaps in this period accounted for by objections to these individuals, who are named in the newspaper reports of a single year's revision. Moreover it has already been established that possibly over a third of gaps are explained by failure to pay poor rates in a timely fashion.¹⁶¹ If this were taken to be correct the gaps in the records of these eleven individuals account for over 10 per cent of the remaining gaps.

However action in the revision court achieved not only gapping in individuals' records. In the case of one of the prebendaries, Philip Jacob, his entry onto the register was delayed until that for 1837. Moreover approaching the issue from the direction of the registers will never reveal those who were forever prevented from appearing upon it. But what is clear is that for the 1837 General Election action against these eleven individuals had a significant effect. Ten of them were excluded from the 1836 and therefore prevented from voting at the General Election. The second Conservative, Bickham Escott, failed to be elected by twenty-six votes. The objections sustained against these identified individuals and others, unidentified, very probably sealed his electoral fate. This indicates the potential that success in the revision courts had for securing a victory at the immediately subsequent General Election.

The targeting of prominent Conservative supporters and leaders appears to be an early and local form of 'decapitation strategy' akin to that of the Liberal Democrats in the late

¹⁶⁰ See p. 49 above.

¹⁶¹ See p. 150 above.

twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.¹⁶² For the prebendaries were close associates and political allies of Rev. Robert Speckott Barter, the Warden of Winchester College. It was Barter who was responsible for bringing his relative, Bickham Escott, to Winchester as a Conservative candidate in 1837.¹⁶³ At the 1841 General Election Barter was described as 'Escott's banker' and accused of using his influence upon electors through their wives who did 'College washing'. The Conservative voting of James Starks was explained as arising from his wife 'washing for the Parsons' and Thomas Prouten's as he 'Shaves the Parsons'.¹⁶⁴ The 'Parsons', we must assume, included the prebendaries if they were not exclusively so. Following Escott's 'apostasy' on Corn Law appeal it appears that Barter disowned him. At the 1847 General Election he cast only one vote. It was for the Protectionist, East.

Winchester Revision Courts 1836-1866

An examination of the reports of the revision courts over the next few years reveals continued and fierce competition between 'the parties'. On the other hand the diminishing detail of newspaper reports reflects a declining interest in these matters and ennui at the continued raising of the same issues. Moreover there emerged an increasing tenor of frustration and anger at the activities of 'the parties' and their agents. In 1836 the revision was reported as facing fewer, but still large numbers of objections, fifty-four from the 'Liberals' and twenty-one from the Conservatives. There is no mention of any claims in the report.¹⁶⁵ The key issue was which parish list should include those from the extra-parochial Cathedral Close and College – they should have been entered in that of the adjoining parish with fewest inhabitants. The decision was such as to exclude all the prebendaries. The barristers recognised the injustice of excluding otherwise *bona fide* electors in this way. They helpfully suggested that in future claims might be lodged by such individuals in both St Lawrence and St Swithin parishes. Then, unhelpfully, they muddied the waters by suggesting that the Close might also abut Milland parish.

The revision of 1837 was extensively reported and its outcome subject to alternative interpretations.¹⁶⁶ There were eighty-five objections and fifty-four claims. The focus was, once more, upon those connected to the Close and College. However the reference to decisions

¹⁶² *Daily Telegraph* 4 May 2005.

¹⁶³ *HC* 26 June 1837.

¹⁶⁴ WCCM LH2482 1-4.

¹⁶⁵ *HC* 7 November 1836.

¹⁶⁶ *HC* 30 October and 6 November 1837.

which could 'materially affect the humbler voters of this borough' might relate to the issue of changes to rateable values in St Thomas parish.¹⁶⁷ The report deemed a number of statements on oath to be 'unfounded'. These included a young man who claimed to be a cutler in partnership with father. He was in fact a shoemaker employed elsewhere. It was also established that 'a young gentleman' had signed claim forms for others.

In 1838 fifty-one claims and eighty-seven objections were addressed by the sole revising barrister.¹⁶⁸ The Conservative claims included fourteen which sought, it appears unsuccessfully, to enter upon the register fourteen brethren from St Cross Hospital (almshouse). Its agents probably hoped to add those living in another Conservative bastion to the register. The *Hampshire Chronicle* began to express exasperation at the activities of the parties' agents:

It is to be much regretted that the business of the court has been rendered more tedious and painful than otherwise necessary from the conflicting evidence adduced, sometimes, it is to be feared, wilfully, and frequently from parties speaking as to circumstances on which they are very imperfectly informed.

Revising barrister Halcombe also appeared to be tiring of the annual revisiting of the cases of Cathedral Prebendaries and College Fellows. For he observed that 'These cases appeared to have received the greatest attention from the professional gentlemen engaged on either side.' Furthermore he stated that, unlike some of his predecessors, in cases of doubt he always favoured the voter 'being of the opinion that they ought to extend the franchise instead of narrowing it'. These differences of opinion between revising barristers demonstrate why the issue of the prebendaries and fellows was raised so often. A different barrister might give a different decision. So depending upon whether or not one were in the draft register it was worthwhile raising an objection, if one were a Whig/Liberal, or a claim, if one were a Conservative. Moreover it was always possible that the same revising barrister might have changed his mind. This might arise from him having read of decisions elsewhere in the country, or having discussions on circuit with other revising barristers whilst undertaking his more conventional role during the remainder of the year.

The same issues faced the 1839 court amongst its sixty-seven objections and thirty-seven claims.¹⁶⁹ The newspaper commented that '...it was painful to observe the little regard to veracity shown by the extreme political partisans in giving their testimony to the court'. It was

¹⁶⁷ See p. 34 above.

¹⁶⁸ *HC* 3, 17 and 24 September and 1 October 1838.

¹⁶⁹ *HC* 23 and 30 September and 14 October 1839.

becoming increasingly frustrated with the uncompromising approach of the parties in the revision court. However in 1840,¹⁷⁰ in an interim report, it recognised the reasons for this: 'In consequence of the balanced state of the parties every claim and objection has been strenuously opposed, and consequently little progress has been made in business.' The balance referred to was clearly that within the borough, not the nation. The same edition reported that 'in consequence of the absence of political acrimony', the revision court for the North Hampshire county division speedily addressed 1,522 claims and 34 objections. Winchester borough's thirty-six claims and seventy-three objections detained the barristers for many days. The 'Liberals' had brought in a 'Mr. Phillips of Weymouth' to act for them. Besides individual objections to prebendaries and fellows, he launched a new collective attack. He claimed that the list for St Swithin's parish upon which they appeared had not been correctly displayed. The overseer, J. Betts, admitted he had failed to display it on a Sunday but put it up on a Monday with a notice implying that it had been torn down. This possibly was a ploy to protect the Conservative prebendaries and fellows from objections. The, now again two, revising barristers refused to accept this on the grounds it was a minor infraction and, perhaps, that it would also exclude 'innocent' third parties.

The General Election of 1841 did not abate the court's activity. In the autumn of that year it faced sixty claims and seventy-one objections.¹⁷¹ The *Hampshire Chronicle* reported a mixture of the well-established and the novel:

The validity of the franchise of the Canons of the Cathedral was again argued, but nothing novel was adduced, and the result corresponded with that of the preceding year. Several persons, otherwise properly qualified, were expunged in consequence of the overseers having omitted their Christian names in the poor rate assessment. The question of the propriety of their names being retained occasioned considerable discussion, and the decision caused some surprise.

The 1842 revision¹⁷² brought reference to the usual cases. The newspaper found that 'the decisions were devoid of any particular interest' and that 'The court was each day very thinly attended.' However the tally of the results by 'party' showed twenty-four claims and eighty-one objections. The court took four days to make its rulings. However there is a possibility that the 'party scorecard' disguised a number of uncontested claims of unknown allegiance for an earlier report had indicated that the court had before it over forty claims. Alternatively it is possible

¹⁷⁰ HC 21 and 28 September and 19 October 1840.

¹⁷¹ HC 20 and 27 September, and 11 October 1841.

¹⁷² HC 5 September and 3 and 10 October 1842.

that some claims were, as with some objections in at the 1835 municipal revision,¹⁷³ ruled invalid on grounds of errors in their completion. If the latter were so they may have escaped the final 'scorecard' as their substance had not been addressed by the revising barristers.

The 1843 Registration Act, with its threat of costs being awarded for vexatious objections,¹⁷⁴ brought a 'lighter' load to that year's revision court.¹⁷⁵ It faced thirty claims and fifty-five objections. It was reported that the proceedings 'were devoid of any particular interest'. However 1844¹⁷⁶ saw a return of the earlier intense competition with sixty-six claims and sixty-two objections. Despite this return to normality 'This number does not include the question of the franchise of the Canons of our Cathedral, who on all previous years, since the passing of the Reform Bill, have been objected to.' The prebendaries' respite was brief for they were challenged again in 1845.¹⁷⁷ There were forty-eight objections and forty-five claims. But the *Hampshire Chronicle* saw this as a positive movement arising from the 1843 legislation. It stated: 'The great decrease in the number of objections is perhaps to be attributed to the operation of the Act, imposing on parties making frivolous objections, the costs incurred.' Once again the number of claims reported in the party 'scorecard' (thirty-four) was less than the total reported prior to the revision court. The court concluded its business in a day and a half – almost unheard of speed by local standards.

With the Corn Laws repealed in May and Peel's resignation in June the autumn 1846 revision received closer coverage than the preceding few years. Among the twenty-nine objections were those lodged by the 'Liberals' against Monsieur Angoville and Dr Behr. The objections had two prongs: they were aliens and their Christian names were not included in the draft register entries. They failed to appear, which was generally fatal,¹⁷⁸ but the revising barrister retained their names. His grounds were that he lacked proof that their fathers and grandfathers were aliens. It is not clear what basis the decision had in law. Among the sixty-one claims, that of Stubington brought some light relief to the court. The 'Liberals' contended that an error in his claim for successive occupation showing him leaving his earlier property in '184' indicated a gap in occupation of over 1,000 years. The revising barrister allowed his entry onto the register on the basis this information was 'superfluous'.

¹⁷³ HC 7 December 1835.

¹⁷⁴ See p. 160 above.

¹⁷⁵ HC 2 and 23 October 1843.

¹⁷⁶ HC 28 September and 5 October 1844.

¹⁷⁷ HC 27 September and 4 October 1845.

¹⁷⁸ Salmon, *Electoral...*, 21.

The split in Conservative ranks at the 1847 General Election between Protectionists and Peelites saw the 'Conservative interest' unrepresented at the 1847 revision court.¹⁷⁹ Thereafter the number of cases revived somewhat but in general the *Hampshire Chronicle* reports of proceedings become sketchier. Although volumes of cases and 'party scorecards' continued to appear.¹⁸⁰ In 1851 the 'Liberals' were reported to have been unrepresented before the barrister.¹⁸¹ Following the 1852 General Election the newspaper report commented on an aspect of the register not obvious from the 'scorecard' of claims and objections.¹⁸² For, having presented the figures in that manner, it stated unrelated numbers: 'Of those who voted at the recent election, and who are omitted from the new register, Sir James East has lost 14, Mr. Carter 23 and Mr. Bulpett 35.' For the first, and possibly the only time the reporter recognised that there were a number of factors affecting the electoral arithmetic. Not only the gains and losses at the revision court but also the issue of those on the previous register but not upon the new one who had left through death or other reasons. It appears no one speculated upon the political loyalty of those new to that draft register but objected to by neither 'party'.

In 1853 the court was faced with only one objection and twenty-five claims from the 'political parties'.¹⁸³ It however received, what appears to be reported as a novelty, when, '...two claims of parties who had sent their own notices were disallowed, the qualifications not being proved.' For 1854¹⁸⁴ the *Hampshire Chronicle* carried a simple statement that the court had eighteen claims and no objections to consider. No report of its proceedings followed. In 1855 the most anodyne and brief of reports appeared:

Last Tuesday the Parliamentary Voters List for the city and borough was revised before Mr. Oxenham, the barrister. Mr. E.W. Faithfull appeared for the Liberals and Mr. Bridger for the Conservatives. The claims on each side were allowed, and the business terminated at noon.¹⁸⁵

The report for 1856 was equally uninformative:

On Tuesday the learned gentleman held a Court at the Guildhall, in this city, to revise the List of Voters in the election of members to serve in Parliament for Winchester.¹⁸⁶

¹⁷⁹ HC 18 September and 2 October 1847.

¹⁸⁰ HC 23 and 30 September 1848, 22 and 29 September 1849, and 21 and 28 September 1850.

¹⁸¹ HC 27 September 1851.

¹⁸² HC 9 October 1852.

¹⁸³ HC 1 October 1853.

¹⁸⁴ HC 23 September 1854.

¹⁸⁵ HC 29 September 1855.

¹⁸⁶ HC 4 October 1856.

The revising barrister's court had in the 1830s and early 1840s attracted many column inches of coverage. In 1856 it was described in thirty-one words which told readers nothing more than that it had occurred. The number of cases had declined significantly despite the growth in the registered electorate. In the final 1854 register the net electorate was 758 compared to 589 in 1842.¹⁸⁷ Yet the total numbers of claims and objections were 18 in 1854, and between 105 and in excess of 120 in 1842. The experience of Winchester would appear to bear out Philip Salmon's claim that:

By the late 1840s, and certainly by the early 1850s, the highly organised party struggles and nationally oriented forms of voter partisanship that had increasingly dominated constituency politics in the post-Reform decade were far less evident.¹⁸⁸

Perhaps by 1856 not only the *Hampshire Chronicle* but also its readers had lost interest in the proceedings of the revision court. Possibly this was due to the fracturing, at national level, of what locally appears to have been a clear divide between two 'political parties' the Reformers/Whigs/Liberals on one side and the Conservatives on the other. For in the revision court the niceties observed by candidates of not recommending to whom voters should grant a second vote, even when another candidate shared one's 'principles', were not observed. There were no nuances or gradations, or at least that is what the 'scorecards' seem to tell us.

Despite the apparent certainty exhibited in the post-revision court 'scorecards' there were some 'grey areas'. These have been glimpsed occasionally in the preceding review. There were those who got onto the register unchallenged by either party and whose political allegiance was uncertain. The level of uncertainty these created may have been a major factor in justifying contests. Moreover there were others, known supporters and opponents, who had left the register 'naturally' through death etc.. These latter did not feature in the 'scorecard' mathematics. Also as we have seen, on occasions, the 'parties' came up with differing interpretations of the results of the revision courts. This suggests that some men were being counted upon by both sides.

Even at the peak of its reporting the *Hampshire Chronicle* only gives us a glimpse at a few of the individual cases before the revising barristers' court. In 1835 in Winchester 154 objections were lodged and 24 claims made. However the names and some details of the cases of only eleven of those subject to objections are given in its coverage of the court. This in no way

¹⁸⁷ See Table 2.1 p. 40 above.

¹⁸⁸ Salmon, *Electoral...*, 245.

gives a full impression of the operation of such a court, the circumstances of potential electors subject to its proceedings and decisions, the machinations of the 'party' representatives and the pressure on the revising barristers.

A Fuller Account of A Borough Revision Court

No judicial records of the revision courts were kept.¹⁸⁹ Indeed, from 1843, appeals to the Court of Common Pleas had to be lodged before the end of the day's sitting of the revision court. This was to enable the barrister to record both his decision and 'the Facts which according to his Judgement shall have been established by the Evidence in the Case...'¹⁹⁰ However there is an account which gives a much fuller account and flavour of the proceedings of a revision court. It relates to that for the Isle of Wight in 1832.¹⁹¹ It comes in the form of a detailed account, by W.M. Manning, who was at the time a legal pupil, of the court held by what appears to be his father or uncle. Manning and a fellow pupil took notes in court and in the evenings assisted the revising barrister in drafting written decisions where these had been requested.¹⁹² Manning wrote up the account from his notes after he himself had acted as a revising barrister in North Wiltshire in 1834. The court described was that for the Isle of Wight's county register and for Newport borough. It is from the latter that the following account and analysis is drawn.

Newport had long been the pocket borough of the Worsley Holmes family. It had, at various points, provided contest-free passage into the House of Commons for Palmerston, Canning and Melbourne (in his days as the Honourable William Lamb). In many respects it was similar to Winchester – it had been controlled by powerful families and its approved register in 1832 bore only 20 per cent less names.¹⁹³ The self-perpetuating, and largely non-resident, pre-Reform electorate had comprised twelve aldermen and twelve burgesses or freemen. Municipal offices, including the town clerkship, were monopolised by the local solicitors, Thomas Sewell and William Hearn. The latter and the former's brother, and business partner of them both,

¹⁸⁹ See p. 173 above.

¹⁹⁰ 6 Vict. c. 18 s.42.

¹⁹¹ Manning, *Proceedings...*

¹⁹² There is no evidence of any written decisions being given at Winchester revision courts. It does not appear that the practice was widespread. It perhaps arose from 'The limited extent of the lists of voters, as well for the county as for the borough, [which] afforded an opportunity of giving to the new questions of election law which arose, a fuller consideration than the period prescribed for the revision would allow of in more extensive districts.' Manning, *Proceedings...*, i.

¹⁹³ *McCalmont...*, 212 and 321 shows 420 for Newport and 537 for Winchester.

played prominent roles at the revision – presumably in the Tory/Conservative interest.

Operating in the interest of the Reformers/Whigs was Samuel Pring, a Newport tradesman, who had been described as ‘a second Attwood’.¹⁹⁴

James Manning opened the proceedings by reading out his letter of appointment and the notice he had issued calling the revision court. He then stated his intended order of business. He would first correct any apparent errors in lists for parishes where no objections had been lodged and then call forward any claimants for those parishes to hear their cases. If all claimants were present, having dealt with their cases he would sign that parish’s list. He intended to defer the cases of those not present until the end of the claims for that list. Where there were objections he intended to address the parishes in alphabetical order and undertake, on each in turn, a three phase process: first the correction of apparent errors, then the examination of objections and finally the consideration of claims.¹⁹⁵

In advance this must have seemed so straightforward to the novice revising barrister. However immediately he received what might be termed two ‘class actions’ rather than objections to individuals. R.G. Kirkpatrick objected that neither Whippingham nor Northwood parish fell within the borough boundary. He contended therefore that their draft lists should not be accepted into the court for consideration. Manning decided to provisionally accept the lists into court and to examine the boundary issues in due course.¹⁹⁶

The first list examined in detail was that of the freemen. This strangely contained all twenty-four names despite the *History of Parliament’s* reference to their non-residence. One must assume that they resided within a seven mile radius as no issue was raised in this regard. Several electors objected that those listed were ‘burgesses’ not ‘freemen’. Manning ruled, in anticipation of the 1835 Municipal Reform Act, that for the purpose of the parliamentary register, the ‘substance’ was that they were ‘freemen’. They should be so described or else they were not entitled to be on the register under the 1832 legislation, which only used the term ‘freemen’. Kirkpatrick objected that on 31 July the Mayor, Roe, would have been the Returning Officer so ineligible to vote. Manning, probably bearing in mind that the officeholder changed annually, ruled for his continued inclusion under the qualification description of ‘freeman’ not ‘Mayor’.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁴ D.R. Fisher, (ed.), *The House of Commons 1820-32* (Cambridge, 2009), Vol. II, 432-6.

¹⁹⁵ Manning, *Proceedings...*, 1-4.

¹⁹⁶ Manning, *Proceedings...*, 4-5.

¹⁹⁷ Manning, *Proceedings...*, 6-7.

The 'parties' then persuaded Manning to abandon his alphabetical consideration of parishes as they were prepared to address Newport parish, not Carisbrooke. Manning then amended eleven descriptions of qualifying property to, in his view, to render them more accurate and overtly compliant with the requirements of the Act. A move on to individual objections was interrupted by Kirkpatrick. He attempted to get a ruling that in cases such as those just addressed by the barrister, at his own behest, other objections might be lodged. Manning played an extremely straight bat to this one. If no objection paper had been served he could only address errors 'upon the face of the register'.¹⁹⁸

At last the first objection was heard. It was that of Samuel Pring and Edward Wilkins against Robert Bryant's inclusion in the draft register. First Pring argued that the attorney representing Bryant was contrary to the Act which forbade the use of 'counsel'. Manning ruled that the Act merely barred the use of Serjeants, Barristers at law and Scottish advocates. Bryant's attorney then argued that the objection notice was not valid having been delivered to an assistant overseer rather than an overseer. Evidence was furnished that the delivery was in the presence of a churchwarden. Manning accepted that churchwardens were *ex officio* overseers and ruled it a valid objection. Attention then turned to the substance of Bryant's case. Bryant had been rated for and occupied a house for three years prior to 31 July 1832. His rent of £10 per annum was paid in the form of occasional services in his landlord's counting house. The landlord retained a room and repaid a share of the rates and taxes. Overall the value of the house was proved at £16, with Bryant's element worth £11. Bryant had a key as did landlord's servants, but they had no access after ten at night. Manning ruled that Bryant was not a servant of the landlord. If the arrangement had been set up in the last year it would have been suspicious. But as it was of three years standing he ruled that Bryant's name be retained upon the register. The court then closed after seven hours having addressed one objection only.¹⁹⁹

Possibly Manning had anticipated a mere day's work on the borough for the court next met a week later. The second day saw ten objections addressed. Of these seven had been lodged by William Hearn and three by Abraham Clarke. The first was deferred as the respondent (the man against whom the objection was being made) was absent. In such cases William Manning, the author, indicates in a footnote that the practice was to call the respondent on three occasions. If both he and the objector were then still absent his name was retained on the

¹⁹⁸ Manning, *Proceedings...*, 8-9.

¹⁹⁹ Manning, *Proceedings...*, 9-12.

list. If only the objector were present the case was heard in the respondent's absence. The second case, ruled James Manning, was merely one of a misdescribed qualification, which he corrected. In the third case Kirkpatrick and Pring tried to argue that Hearn must state the nature of his objection. Manning ruled that, as in a Poor Law removal case between parishes, the onus was upon the respondent to prove his qualification. This was done and the name retained on the list. The fourth objection was withdrawn by Hearn, for unstated reasons. The fifth case revolved around different valuers' views as to the worth of the individual's house. Manning ruled that he had to accept the overseers' local knowledge of property values and so retained the name on the register.

The importance of the overseers' ratebooks was also clear in the sixth and seventh cases of the day. In the former there were two issues. Firstly the overseers had corrected the entries in the ratebook after the approval of the rate by the magistrates and without their authorisation. Manning ruled these corrections should be ignored. As to the second claim, that there was a gap in the respondent's rate payment record, he ruled this was down to the overseers attributing the sum paid by the respondent for his new property to his former home. The name was retained on the register. The seventh respondent had joined his father and brother in a business partnership. The overseer knew this but only changed the ratebook entry after its approval by the magistrates. Manning ruled that as the respondent had not been legally rated and his name was expunged from the register. The eighth case related to an agreement whereby the landlord paid the rates although the occupant was named in the ratebook. Manning's ruling was that either the landlord was the one rated or the occupant had failed to pay the rates. Either way his name should be expunged. The ninth respondent successfully argued that his house held on a £8 rental was worth £10. We will never know whether his landlord subsequently took the same view and made him pay £2 more per annum for the right to vote. The final case involved a man who married one of two sisters operating a business. The name of his sister-in-law remained in the ratebook against the qualifying property. This was despite his having asked, during the early Reform debates, the assistant overseer to add his own name to the ratebook entry. He claimed to have said 'if a vote was to be got by it, he might as well have it'. The assistant overseer failed to make the amendment. That the receipts continued to be issued in the woman's name until the most recent one was deemed to be notice to the

potential elector that he should have pursued the assistant overseer again. Manning 'with great regret' expunged the name from the register.²⁰⁰

Next day, the third for the borough revision, addressed twelve objections. Of these nine had been lodged by William Hearn, and three by Samuel Pring and Edward Wilkins. Some new forms of objection were addressed. An acting overseer was expunged from the register as he was also a collector of assessed taxes and so disqualified under 22 Geo. s.3 c.41. However a sub-distributor of stamps was retained on the register as he was the appointee of the Distributor not of the Crown. Hearn tried to challenge Pring's right to lodge objections on the grounds that as a churchwarden he was *ex officio* overseer and one could not lodge an objection with oneself. Manning felt that as overseers drew up the draft register for a parish the Act had not foreseen them lodging objections. However one might disagree with the others, so in the absence of an explicit legal bar to such action, he would proceed with the objection. Hearn then tried to get the list of objections invalidated as it had been drawn up by the assistant overseer. Manning ruled that he acted as the overseers' servant and as they signed the list it was valid. They then turned to the substantive case. The respondent lived rent free in his mother's house but it was he who was named in the ratebook. This together with his payment of the house tax and service as overseer on the basis of being the occupier of the house persuaded Manning to retain his name on the register.

Another man was retained on the register as he had vacated his property after the datum date for the register of 31 July 1832. Manning advised that in such a case the place for objection, on grounds of 'removal', was at the poll. There was another case of a new business partner not entered into the ratebook – his name was expunged. Many cases revolved around who was named in the ratebook and who paid the rates. Paying them and receiving a receipt in his name was not enough for one man – he was not named in the ratebook and his name expunged. Another was named in the ratebook but paid his mother rent from which she paid the rates – he was expunged as failing to pay his rates. A third was challenged on the grounds that he received rent from a sub-tenant – as he paid all the rates his name was retained. Movement between properties at, or about, the time rates were fixed, a number of variable points in the year at this time, attracted accusations of gaps in rate payment. Manning ruled that what was in the ratebook as approved by the magistrates counted, whether right or wrong. A man did not have a gap in his payment record if he had not been rated at a particular rate

²⁰⁰ Manning, *Proceedings...*, 12-22.

point. The simpler cases of the day addressed length of occupation (the overseers' view was taken as correct rather than the objector's) and whether an individual's share of a business rating met the £10 threshold.²⁰¹

Following a day spent upon the county division's revision the court reconvened for its fourth day's work on the borough revision. It addressed five objections by William Hearn and one from Abraham Clarke. After legal argument as to what amounted to proof of delivery the substantive issue was addressed. The respondent's home had been rated in the name of his landlady. On 18 July 1832 he had sought to be rated and offered payment of all outstanding rates for the previous year. Manning ruled that an application to be rated could only apply to '*the rate for the time being*' [original italics]. The respondent therefore had not been rated for the qualifying year as there had been other rates therein. A further effort to argue that the house had two parts and the respondent's part was not subject to rates was found to have no basis in fact. The respondent's name was expunged. The name of a new business partner not recorded in the ratebook was then expunged. The third case was that of a respondent who had been committed to Winchester gaol as a debtor on 18 July 1832. It was argued this infringed the requirement to be resident within seven miles for the six months to 31 July. Manning ruled this interpretation of residence to be too severe as it would prevent absence of as little as a day so retained the name on the register. In the fourth case the respondent was found not to have paid a full year's rates and was expunged from the register. The final two cases were of a father and son. Hearn explained that he had objected to both in order to prove which had the right to be on the register. The ratebook had original entries for 'William Kingswell' followed by 'ditto ditto'. The assistant overseer had, after magistrates' authorisation of the rate, altered the latter to 'William Kingswell, the younger' to clarify what he had long known to be the facts. In evidence he argued they were clearly different individuals, or else it would have appeared as a single entry. Hearn argued that 'The poor-rate is a powerful legal document not to be cut down by verbal evidence' and that 'ditto' meant exactly the same person. Manning took a different view 'ditto' meant the same word, in a tradesman's bill it meant a charge for a second item not the same item. The 'latent ambiguity' of similar names had to be removed by external evidence. As to possible falsification of ratebooks he believed he had no authority to investigate. Clearly

²⁰¹ Manning, *Proceedings...*, 22-35.

he too regarded 'The poor-rate is a powerful legal document'; one with near scriptural authority in its form as approved by the magistracy.²⁰²

The next, and fifth, day of sitting was a Saturday and was interrupted by both the county magistrates need to use the Guildhall in the middle of the day and the hearing of some county revision cases. Four borough objections were heard – three lodged by Hearn and one by Wilkins. Another man admitted to a business partnership, in 1829, but not named in the ratebook, but whom the overseer 'conceived' he was rating, had his name expunged. A man named in both ratebook and receipts had his name expunged. His landlord handed the money to the overseer and his agent claimed it was the landlord's money. The issue of receipt of parochial relief in the pre-Poor Law Amendment Act world then arose. A man's son was in the House of Industry for much of the year. The man claimed that his son 'substantially earning his own living' by shaving a hundred men per week. Cases cited, such as one from Colchester, involved partial payment to the authorities by the elector. It was deemed the full costs to the parish were therefore not being met and the name expunged. The final case involved the issue of the impact of sub-letting on the valuation of the putative elector's property value. The lack of a separate entrance was ruled to make the tenant a lodger and the name retained on the register.

In what may indicate the existence of general hubbub in the revision court during its sessions, it was now reported that:

Saturday being market day at Newport, when persons of all classes are collected from different parts of the Island, much disturbance was created in the hall in the afternoon. The proceedings of the court were more than once suspended. At last the Revising Barrister, at the request of some of the leading electors, addressed the crowd, reminding them that he sat there for the purpose of adjudicating upon the most valuable privilege belonging to freemen, that of concurring (by their representatives) in the making of those laws by which they and their children were to be governed. This appeal had the effect of restoring order for some hours, and the proceedings went on regularly till about half-past nine, when a progressive increase in the number and turbulence of the non-registered portion of the audience made it necessary to terminate the sitting.

Following the late night adjournment it was reported that 'one of the professional agents was followed and hooted by the rabble, and received a severe blow from a stone'. This led to a case at Winchester Assizes and more immediately to a request from the Mayor and Deputy Recorder for a cessation of evening sittings.²⁰³

²⁰² Manning, *Proceedings...*, 48-65.

²⁰³ Manning, *Proceedings...*, 66-72.

Following four days of revision courts for the county around the island Manning reconvened the borough revision for its sixth day. The business now turned to fourteen claims to be inserted on the register. In the first, after extended legal argument, Manning admitted the name of a man rated for two houses only connected by a common roof and possibly a courtyard. The second was rejected as not rated although his name appeared in the ratebook with no value attached to it, as the property was the Borough Gaol. Four claims were rejected on the basis that rate payments covered only part of the year to 31 July. Another was rejected on the basis that it was his father who was rated. The lengthiest legal argument attended the case of 'T. LEARY'. First the objection that the claim was submitted by Leary's agent was rebuffed. Then attention turned to the contents of the claim and its translation into the entry upon the overseers' list of claims. Manning ruled that the overseers should not use extraneous knowledge to make good omissions or errors in a claim. Moreover, unlike the face of the draft register, he deemed the claims list (being 'mere wastepaper' after the revision) to not be within his powers to correct. Here the street within which the property was located was omitted and no Christian name had been provided only 'T'. The claim was therefore rejected.

Now, taking his earlier decisions as precedents, later in the day Manning dismissed four more claims on the same grounds as the Leary case. Albeit in one case he felt that in due course he could remedy an error in the draft register to ensure his retention on the register. The other cases were novel. John Atkins Taylor had appeared in the ratebook until the 1831 census. Thereafter the name of his servant appeared – perhaps Taylor was absent on census night. The 'collecting overseer' accepted payment from and issued receipts to Taylor as both were oblivious to the error. Manning, once more, ruled that the ratebook entry was sacrosanct and therefore rejected the claim. The other case, of Peter Christensen, was one of nationality – he had been born in Denmark. Hearn tried unsuccessfully to argue that there might be somewhere on the island called 'Denmark'. Christensen's case revolved his service in the Royal Artillery and that his sole oath of allegiance had been to the 'King of England [*sic*]'. In the absence of naturalisation by an Act of Parliament or 'denization' letters, Manning gave him a second 'honourable discharge' in rejecting his claim.²⁰⁴

The seventh day of sitting for the Newport borough revision saw progress from the Newport parish lists into those of Carisbrooke, which Manning had sought to address on the first day. It addressed six claims and seven objections. Of the latter five were lodged by William

²⁰⁴ Manning, *Proceedings...*, 89-104.

Hearn, who was emerging as the 'chief objector'. He was possibly seeking, unsuccessfully as it proved, to prevent the flood-tide of 'Reformers' entering the register and sweeping away the Conservative hold upon Newport's seats.²⁰⁵ Of the claims one was rejected on the grounds of an inadequate description of the property on the claim notice. Another met the same fate on the basis that no retrospective rating could be applied to achieve a year's payment. A third claimant asserted he occupied a £10 house but admitted he refused to pay that much rent when his landlord sought it. Manning in rejecting the claim applied the valuation implied by the tenant's action. The other two rejected claims related to parochial relief. The married son of one had received parochial relief in the previous year with the claimant's knowledge. The grandchild of another had been in the House of Industry during the previous year. It is not clear whether this broad interpretation of an elector's receipt of parochial relief is that contained in the original legislation of 1621²⁰⁶ or Manning's interpretation of the wording of the 1832 Act.²⁰⁷ The other claim, that two jointly occupied properties sharing only a common roof were one, was accepted subject to confirmation of the claimant's share of the rate liability.

As to the objections, Hearn's absence led to one man challenged on the grounds of property valuation being retained on the register. The bridge builder, who left Newport three years earlier but sent his family back more than a year before, was found never to have been resident and his name expunged. A similar fate befell the man given the wrong Christian name in the draft register. As it did the man who deducted his rates from his rent – his landlord was deemed to have paid. Hearn, as Clerk of the Peace of Newport was under the 1832 Act 'deemed' to be the Clerk of the Peace for the island's county seat.²⁰⁸ As such he had clearly examined the county claims list as well as the borough's draft register in objecting to John Essex. Essex had made a county claim on the basis that 'Abraham' occupied the property and he was the freeholder. Essex claimed the occupation of the site was split between himself and 'Abraham'. Manning ruled he be retained on the borough register and the validity of his county claim be examined elsewhere. In a case of alleged non-payment of rates, the putative elector claimed his liability had been offset against his son's work for the parish for which he had not been reimbursed. Consideration was postponed and the outcome is not clear. Another adjourned

²⁰⁵ *McCalmont...*, 212 shows Reformers/Liberals winning both seats in 1832, 1835 and 1837 before the nationwide pro-Conservative tide returned them to Conservative control.

²⁰⁶ J. Cannon, *Parliamentary Reform 1640-1832* (Cambridge, 1972), 4.

²⁰⁷ 2 Will. IV, c. 45, s. 36.

²⁰⁸ 2 Will. IV, c. 45 s. 79 and Manning, *Proceedings...*, 168.

case involved a man whose mother, living 100 yards away, had received parish alms. Pring, defending the man, sought evidence that he had been informed this had occurred. Manning opined that it appeared the man had express or implicit knowledge of the payment. However he agreed an adjournment to await the mother's evidence. The case was not resolved directly as it became entangled in a 'deal' between the 'party officials'.²⁰⁹

The court's eighth day saw three objections, two lodged by Hearn, addressed. The first had required Manning to undertake a site visit with the opposing sides 'shewers'. The issue was whether a set of linked buildings could be viewed as one or two properties. Manning viewed it as one with sufficient value to retain the name on the register. In the second case it was ruled that the landlord paid the rates although the occupier, whose name was expunged, withheld them from his rent. The third man claimed not to know that his father, again living within 100 yards, had received parochial relief for eighteen months. Manning ruled this was merely '...a case of suspicion..' and retained his name on the list.²¹⁰

The rest of that day, the whole of the next and part of a further day were spent addressing the issue of whether parts of Whippingham and Northwood parishes were part of the borough. Although Manning read out the description contained in the Boundary Act²¹¹ the subsequent evidence presented to him bore little relationship to that legislation. Hearn carried on at length about ancient borough charters and called upon the 'folk memory' of events such as court-leet boundary walks. Manning appears to have regarded this all as irrelevant and accepted the lists into the court.²¹²

The remainder of that tenth day addressed a miscellany of cases from Whippingham, Northwood and Carisbrooke parishes. There was much argument as to how much of property, such as wharfs, was landward of the low water mark and its value. An attempt to oppose a claim, on the grounds that the claimant resided in Gosport which was alleged to be ten miles away, was scuppered by the harbour master's evidence that the distance was a mere three and three quarter miles and therefore well within the required seven miles. For Whippingham, where there were no original names and four successful claimants. Manning overcame opposition to their addition to a non-existent list, by claiming he had the authority to produce

²⁰⁹ Manning, *Proceedings...*, 105-12. For the 'deal' see p. 196 below.

²¹⁰ Manning, *Proceedings...*, 113-8.

²¹¹ 2 Will. IV, c. 64 s.36-11 (use of Low Water Mark) and Schedule O (detailed boundary).

²¹² Manning, *Proceedings...*, 118-41.

his own list in such circumstances. He also decided he had the power to correct the wording on the cover sheet of the Northwood list.

James Pike successfully rebuffed one attack for receipt of relief. This was for his 'lunatic son' being in the House of Industry – he had originally paid a weekly sum and subsequently in kind by repairing clocks there. However the funding of his wife, the subject of a removal order, by assignment of initially all and later part of his naval pension, proved his downfall. It was paid in arrears so he was deemed to receive a loan from the parish. Moreover his wife and daughter had received long-term medical assistance from the parish. His name was expunged.

Having changed, after some days reflection, his ruling on an earlier case Manning was faced by an attempted 'deal', akin to parliamentary 'pairing', between the two 'parties'. They sought to have a specific objection by each side sustained. Manning refused to be a party to such an agreement. Instead he advised that if both objections were withdrawn both names would remain on the list. The 'parties' complied with this suggestion. In correcting the misdescription of a qualifying property Manning pointed out that he had to do it or the Act, as, as he saw it, the Act precluded a claim from someone already on the draft register. Otherwise, he pointed out, an 'unscrupulous overseer' had the power to secure removal of the franchise by, for example, entering the wrong street name against a man's name in the draft register.²¹³

The eleventh, and as it turned out final, day of the Newport revision turned to the list for St Nicholas parish. Kirkpatrick, in a final effort to secure a successful 'class action', claimed the list was invalid. The parish had two overseers, one for those within the borough, one for those without. The list was signed by an acting overseer, who worked for the former, who himself had added the latter's name as authorised orally. Manning ruled that legally overseers had authority across the parish, regardless of local convention. Moreover he was not going to disfranchise the innocent on such a technicality.

He then proceeded to expunge the names of two men who claimed that their inheritance entitled them to a suspension of the one year occupation and six month residence rules. He ruled that this was the case in counties for inheritance and marriage but not in boroughs where 'where the qualification is founded less upon property than upon possession'. This appears to be a case of a more rigorous set of tests to ensure the 'respectability' of borough electors – possibly part of the 'package' Grey introduced in an effort to sway the 'Waverer'

²¹³ Manning, *Proceedings...*, 141-59.

peers during the battle to get the Reform legislation through the Lords.²¹⁴ An attempt to thwart an objection on the grounds that when completing the notice of objection Kirkpatrick had only included his initials, not his Christian name, was rejected. Manning ruled that this was not like the information in a claim notice which had to comply with the requirements of a register entry. An objection notice only required sufficient to prove that the objector was on the draft register and so had the power to lodge an admissible objection. At midday, on this his eleventh day of sitting, Manning signed off the borough register.²¹⁵

The preceding extended account has demonstrated a number of features of the borough revision courts. From a very early point almost all objections were lodged by ‘party’ representatives and most claims were supported, or opposed, by them. The poor ratebook was either central to, or involved in providing valuations, in the majority of cases. However the ‘party’ officials would try any approach to secure the outcome they sought – including launching successive attacks on different bases as the same case was addressed. This was permitted by the absence on the statutory objection form of a requirement to state the reason for objection. This is why, in 1843, Sir James Graham, architect of the electoral registration clauses and their subsequent revision, when challenged, wrote ‘I know not what is the objection to my Vote’.²¹⁶

The centrality of the poor ratebook to so many cases demonstrates the potential power of overseers, as brought out by Salmon’s work.²¹⁷ However it also exposes the poor quality of its contents, at least in Newport. Clearly the overseers, or more often it appears their ‘assistants’, operated in very informal manner. Very often they claimed to know of changes to who was rated, and paid the rates, but did not change the names in the ratebook before a new rate was approved by the magistrates. On occasions their receipts reflected changes not incorporated in the ratebook, but this was of no help to potential electors.

It is possible that James Manning was over-indulgent in allowing the ‘party’ representatives to carry on at great length. However as the proceedings progressed there are signs of him becoming more confident and willing to cut through the legal argument before him. Indeed on occasions, as the days progressed, he seemed quite willing to reach an independent decision based upon a few ‘facts’ that had emerged during such argument. This indicates the need for the revising barristers to have built up their experience to become really efficient.

²¹⁴ See pp. 13-4 above.

²¹⁵ Manning, *Proceedings...*, 159-68.

²¹⁶ For the full context of this see pp. 159-61 above.

²¹⁷ Salmon, *Electoral...*, 193-201.

For an individual to get onto the register, without 'party' support, he probably had to be initially included by the parish overseers. Then he had to appear to be so non-partisan as to raise the hopes of both sides that he might support them in the future. Or he had to navigate a claim through the revision court himself with no help, and potentially much hindrance. To do the latter successfully, appears from the cases of Winchester and Newport, to have been very unlikely in the first decade or so of the operation of the registration system. Although thereafter, in Winchester, there appear to be some who successfully lodged claims for inclusion. That is once the 'rage of party' had quietened somewhat.

Given the partisanship of the revision courts, where it appears almost everyone was viewed as either a Tory/Conservative or a Reformer/Whig/Liberal, one might expect to see high levels of partisanship in the voting at General Elections. What do the pollbooks, or perhaps more interestingly, the pollbooks combined with the electoral registers, tell us?

'Winchester Man' as Elector

'Winchester Man', the archetype voter in the key set of constituencies identified earlier,²¹⁸ had frequent opportunities to display his partisanship, or otherwise. Of the twenty cathedral boroughs identified earlier²¹⁹ on average only 2.6 General Elections went uncontested. Of these Winchester and Lincoln were contested at every one of the nine General Elections between the passing of the 1832 and the 1867/8 legislation. Of the twenty-four county town boroughs²²⁰ without cathedrals eight²²¹ were contested on all occasions. Across these latter boroughs an average of 2.1 General Elections were uncontested. In addition however Winchester had only one 'contested' by-election, in 1866 – the contest was however desultory.²²² By comparison, Ipswich with a history of election petitions, had a further four contests between various General Elections.²²³

Before proceeding, it should be noted that, despite the clear partisanship exhibited in the revision court, the parliamentary candidates in Winchester continued to comply with an older set of conventions. They did not operate in combination with each other when facing a

²¹⁸ See pp. 84-6 above.

²¹⁹ See p. 80 above.

²²⁰ See pp. 80-1 above.

²²¹ Bodmin, Newport (Isle of Wight), Stafford, Ipswich, Derby, Cambridge, Bedford and Northampton.

²²² Carter, who had received a Ministerial appointment, received 361 votes and his opponent only 46 – *McCalmont...*, 321 – there is a typographic error as to the date – it is correctly located between the 1865 and 1868 General Elections but incorrectly described as happening in 1864.

²²³ *McCalmont...*, 147-8.

single opponent. In 1837 East and Escott did not operate together, but when faced by two opponents in 1841 they conducted joint canvasses. At the same contest their opponents Crowder and Pigott held a joint meeting.²²⁴ In 1852 faced by the lone Conservative, East, Carter was accused of ‘coalescing’ with Bulpett. Carter vehemently denied this and stated that he ‘stood alone’.²²⁵ Whether the observance of such niceties was merely a surface ‘form’ hiding a harder-edged partisan ‘substance beneath is difficult to tell.

As others, particularly Phillips, have pointed out²²⁶ when faced with only three candidates for two seats the ‘partisan’ faces a number of choices. If his ‘party’ has two candidates it is easy, he casts his votes for both (a ‘straight’). If it has only one candidate does he cast only one vote (a ‘plump’) and ‘waste’ the other; or does he express a preference between the opposing ‘party’s’ candidates. In the latter case his vote was known as a ‘split’. In Winchester partisans of both sides only had an ‘easy’ decision to make in 1841 and 1859 when there were two candidates identified with each ‘party’. In all other General Elections from 1832 to 1880 inclusive there were only three candidates. The General Election of 1847 was further complicated by the Conservative party split over Corn Law Repeal. It was effectively a three-party fight between a Protectionist, a Peelite and a Whig/Liberal. Ignoring 1847, the Conservatives only had two ‘identified’ candidates at two of the three-candidate elections – in 1837 and 1865. The Reformers/Whigs/Liberals fielded two such candidates at the other four – 1832, 1835, 1852 and 1865.²²⁷

There is a complete run of pollbooks for Winchester from 1835 to 1868.²²⁸ Some element of the 1832 lacuna is provided by Stooks Smith who had access to some analysis from that poll, which returned the Whig/Reformers Mildmay and Baring. This shows that of the 417 votes cast, 284 (68 per cent) were cast in an overtly partisan manner – 236 for the Whig/Reformers and 48 only for the sole Conservative, East (i.e. plumps). Of the others 98 (24 per cent) split between Mildmay and East – the representatives of the *ancien régime* of the ‘borough mongers’, Lady Mildmay and the Duke of Buckingham, ‘power-sharing agreement’.²²⁹ Without the details of individuals within that year’s pollbook it is only possible to speculate as to the subsequent route followed by these largely first time voters.

²²⁴ HC 14 and 21 June 1841.

²²⁵ HC 3 July 1852.

²²⁶ For example J.A. Phillips, *The Great...*, 95-9 and *Electoral Behavior...*, 19-23 and 212-4.

²²⁷ *McCalmont...*, 321 is in error – G.S. Lefevre fought the 1859 not the 1865 contest.

²²⁸ See p. 41 above.

²²⁹ See pp. 66-7 above.

From the electoral registers we know that of the 530 on the 1832 register only 406 are recorded in the 1835 pollbook, which included those not voting. By that stage 136 of those registered in 1832 plumped for East. The increase of eighty-eight might reflect some of the 113 who did not vote in 1832, perhaps out of fear in the wake of the Reform battles, now emerging from the shadows to now vote. They might perhaps have been spurred on by their view of the Grey Government's further reforms such as the Poor Law Amendment Act. Although its implications had not started to work through, it might well have been perceived as an attack upon parish and local autonomy.

The issue of 'Church Reform', to follow the yet to be received report of the Ecclesiastical Revenues Commission,²³⁰ was raised by Baring.²³¹ East took a clear 'Church in Danger' stance, declaring that he would never support a 'measure tending to subvert one of the greatest bulwarks of our constitutional liberty – the Church of England, in connection with the State.'²³² (Mildmay, as was his wont, avoided addressing specific issues of policy.) It is possible that that in strongly Anglican Winchester the issue swayed a number of lukewarm Reformers or East/Mildmay splitters from 1832 to plump for East this time. The declarations in Peel's 'Tamworth Manifesto', reproduced verbatim in the *Hampshire Chronicle* of 29 December 1834, might also have swayed moderate Reformers in the direction of East.

A plump for East was the leading option amongst all three cohorts of voters (those first registered in 1832, 1833 and 1834 respectively). Although those first registered in 1833 showed an overall majority of East plumps – thirty-three out of sixty-one taking that option. It is possible that many Tory/Conservative supporters had failed to register in 1832. Reformer/Whig partisanship was low. Only 66 (17.3 per cent) of the 495 electors recorded in the pollbooks²³³ made such a partisan vote for Mildmay and Baring. Yet 87 (17.6 per cent) plumped for Baring alone. Accusations were made during the contest that Lady Mildmay, the candidate's mother, had been attempting to 'persuade' her tenants to vote for East.²³⁴ This combined with his 'ratting' in 1831,²³⁵ probably cost Mildmay much support. Although of the eighty-nine (18.0 per

²³⁰ Machin, *Politics...*, 30.

²³¹ HC 22 December 1834.

²³² HC 12 January 1835.

²³³ Analysis suggests that there were a net 521 on the relevant, 1834, register so either 26 had died and are not recorded in the pollbooks (there are two versions), or they are incomplete, or the level of duplicate entries is higher than that detected.

²³⁴ HC 12 January 1835.

²³⁵ See p. 70 above.

cent) recorded as not voting at all in 1835, twenty-one plumped for Mildmay in 1837. This was the era of open voting and hourly, and sometime half-hourly, declarations of the state of the poll.²³⁶ So it is possible that some Reformer/Whig partisans recognised the futility of casting a vote and abstained. The *ancien régime* of East and Mildmay was supported by fifty-one split voters (10.3 per cent), of whom forty-eight had been on the register from 1832. The lack of support for Mildmay led to the loss of his seat.

The behaviour of the different cohorts of electors is informative. Those first registered in 1832 showed the highest levels of both Baring plumps and East/Mildmay splits. The 1833 cohort had the highest level of East plumps. The 1834 cohort had the highest proportions of both Mildmay/Baring straights and of those who did not vote. Many of these tendencies continued into the 1837 General Election, where Mildmay faced two Conservatives, East and Escott. Of the 524 names in the pollbook²³⁷ 78 (14.9 per cent) are recorded as not voting. Once again the 1834 cohort was especially disinclined to poll at almost three times the average. The 1833 cohort remained the most partisan Conservative cohort of all. However the 1832 cohort showed gains in both percentage and absolute terms for the Conservatives. For 139 of its members cast Conservative straights three more than in 1835. Some were probably latent Conservative partisans who had previously used their second vote to express a preference between the other candidates. Of those first registered in 1832, nine splitting East/Baring and fifteen East/Mildmay in 1835, now voted straight Conservative, as did three Baring plumps from 1835. The first and third of these groups might well have contained some who, following the 'ratting', vowed never again to vote for Mildmay.

On the Conservative side 199 straights (38.0 per cent of all the names in the pollbook) were cast. Mildmay secured 181 (34.5 per cent) in plumps. He regained popularity with the 1832 cohort from which 130 of his votes came. This was only four fewer than the combined total of Reformer/Whig straights and Baring and Mildmay plumps cast by that cohort in 1835. Given the attrition of this cohort from 406 down to 362 between these elections it is almost certain that he had gained some support for his 'party'. His strongest supporters were the 1836 cohort of electors, 41.8 per cent (23) of whom plumped for him.

The decisive factor at the election were however the forty-seven (9.0 per cent) who split their votes between East and Mildmay. Thirty-seven of these voters for the *ancien régime*

²³⁶ See for example *HC* 10 July 1852.

²³⁷ Electoral register analysis yields a net 577 on the relevant register – See Table 2.1 p. 40 above.

entered the register in 1832. Some may have been Reformers/Whigs expressing a preference for the better known Conservative. Indeed eight, all first registered in 1832, voted straight Whig/Liberal in 1841. The partisan straight votes showed a Conservative advantage of only eighteen. With Escott garnering only twelve votes via splits with Mildmay and plumps for himself, it was Escott who was not returned.

The 1841 General Election in Winchester, following the retirement of the 'policy adverse' Mildmay was fought by two candidates for each 'party'. There were clear issues. The Whig/Liberal candidates adopted the emblems of the Anti-Corn Law League for their nomination. For 'Two loaves, a large one and a little one, hoisted on long poles, formed a conspicuous feature in the procession of Messrs. Crowder and Pigott.' On the Conservative side, East and Escott attacked the Melbourne Government for fiscal mismanagement.²³⁸

The ensuing election saw markedly partisan voting. Of the 479 recorded as casting a vote, only 35 plumped for a single candidate or split their votes between parties. There were 100 recorded as not voting, including one not on the electoral register. The number might seem high, but reflects the early closure of the poll once Crowder and Pigott acknowledged defeat. Escott, the second placed Conservative, had a lead of 101 over Crowder, the leading Whig/Liberal. Twenty-seven of them had cast at least one of their votes for the sole Whig candidate, Mildmay in 1837; whereas another thirteen had voted straight Conservative then. This was the last election at which those joining the register in 1832 formed the majority of the electorate. For the first time the Conservatives secured an outright majority in this cohort, their straights representing 50.3 per cent of all such voters, including those who did not cast a vote. Possibly the Reformer/Whig partisans were dying out, or at least leaving the register, at a faster rate than the Conservatives. This would align with Aldous's finding that in the first decade after the passage of the 1832 legislation Conservative partisans were on average about twenty years younger than their Whig/Liberal counterparts.²³⁹

East and Escott secured straight votes from twenty-five who had failed to vote in 1837. Of these seven had plumped for East in 1835 so were probably Conservative partisans who failed to vote in 1837. Five had split between East and a Reformer/Whig in 1835, so might have been Conservative partisans expressing a preference between East's opponents. Three had only voted for one or both Reformers/Whigs in 1835. Nineteen who had split their votes between

²³⁸ HC 5 July 1841.

²³⁹ Aldous, 'Conservative...', 85.

Mildmay and one of the Conservatives in 1837 now voted straight Conservative. Of these seven had been East plumpers in 1835, so perhaps they had been unpersuaded by Escott at the next election. In 1841's display of partisanship the 1833 cohort remained the most determinedly Conservative and that of 1836 the most Whig/Liberal.

So what became of these partisans in 1847 when faced by choices between, and among, a Whig/Liberal (John Bonham Carter), a Conservative (East) and a Peelite (Escott)? Whig/Liberal partisans in 1841 now voted heavily for a Whig/Liberal-Peelite combination. Eighty-six did this with only eleven plumping for Carter and eight splitting Carter/East. Of 1841's Conservative partisans 102 remained whole-hearted partisans and plumped for East, whereas forty-three now split East/Carter. The latter probably preferring what they regarded as an 'honest' free trader to the renegade Escott. This was despite a string of meetings Escott had held, in an unprecedented attempt to justify his vote on Corn Law Repeal.²⁴⁰ Only twenty-eight of his supporters from 1841 cast one of their votes for him in 1847. Escott was dependent upon Whig support and that of new voters, 100 of whom backed him in some way. Most of these new voters would appear to be Whig/Liberals casting a second vote as a preference or Peelites on their way into Whig/Liberal ranks. Only nineteen of them cast a vote for East in 1852 despite his renunciation of reimplementing of the Corn Laws.²⁴¹ Escott was soundly defeated.

An examination of the electoral register cohorts at this election once more shows the most strongly Conservative cohort to be that of 1833. The 1834 cohort reasserted its role as that least inclined to vote. Although now marginally outshone by the 1838 intake those of 1836 remained very strongly Whig/Liberal, albeit in both cases by backing Escott in splits with Carter. This continuance of behaviour by cohorts suggests a degree of homogeneity in a cohort. This was perhaps shaped by activity in the revision court in the year of entry onto the register. Both the 1836 and 1838 revision courts had been rigorously contested by the Reformer/Whig party officials. Perhaps this helped to shape the 'intake' by both reducing the number of Conservatives and ensuring only the more 'reliable' Reformer/Whig supporters were on the register.²⁴² The 1833 revision court, which admitted a strongly Conservative cohort, by comparison was relatively uncontested.²⁴³

²⁴⁰ *HC* 11 April and 14 November 1846 and 24 July 1847.

²⁴¹ *HC* 17 April 1852.

²⁴² See pp. 180-1 above.

²⁴³ See pp. 174-5 above.

The 1852 Winchester contest saw the novel feature of its first genuinely local candidate, William Whitear Bulpett. He was local but also controversial, being seen by many as a renegade Conservative running on a Liberal platform.²⁴⁴ That Bulpett endorsed Carter but not vice versa further complicates matters. The contest consequently falls somewhere between a two and a three-party fight. This is reflected in the voting pattern. What might be taken as the Liberal partisan vote of Carter and Bulpett was only cast by 16.1 per cent of electors in the pollbook. Another 15.3 per cent cast a partisan Conservative plump for East. Not voting was the 'choice' of 12.1 per cent. So almost six in ten cast votes in ways which might be regarded as non-partisan. The 12.1 per cent plumping for Bulpett might be seen as partisans of 'local' representation. They came from all kinds of voting history and none. The 9.5 per cent plumping for Carter perhaps saw themselves as partisans of the true 'Liberal' cause.

What was probably decisive in the re-election of the sitting members were the 24.4 per cent who split their votes between Carter and East. Of the 179 voting this way, 46 had plumped for East in 1847. One can fairly surmise that the goal of most of them was to keep out the renegade Bulpett. A further 42 had voted this way in 1847, so it is difficult to determine whether they had any hint of partisanship within them. First time voters accounted for a further 64. Of these latter none displayed Liberal partisanship in 1857 when offered the opportunity by a second Liberal candidate. However twenty-four of them 'came out', when the next opportunity arose, with a partisan Conservative straight vote for East and Fleming in 1859. Many were clearly new Conservative voters striving to keep Bulpett out. This might have been on grounds of 'betrayal' or of policy. For in the latter respect he had been described as 'decidedly a man of progress determined to move with the times'. Included within his 'movement with the times' were extension of the franchise, the secret ballot and abolition of church rates.²⁴⁵ These radical ideas clearly could not be stomached by the Winchester electorate despite his appeal to his municipal record. In particular at the nomination he stressed a 'pocket book' issue. He claimed to have saved Winchester from 'being saddled with the Health of Towns Bill, which would have burthened them with a heavy local rate'.²⁴⁶ This was probably an indication that he had been on the side of the 'Muckabites' in their fight against proposals for a sewerage system in the city.²⁴⁷

²⁴⁴ See pp. 177-8 above.

²⁴⁵ *HC* 8 and 15 May 1852.

²⁴⁶ *HC* 10 July 1852.

²⁴⁷ W.H. Boorman, 'Health and Sanitation in Victorian Winchester or: The Triumph of the Muckabites', *Proceedings of the Hampshire Field Club and Archaeological Society*, Vol. 46 (1991), 161-80.

Despite these appeals the sitting members, East and Carter were returned with very healthy majorities.

The 1857 General Election followed the defeat of Palmerston's Government on Cobden's motion of censure of the Governor of Hong Kong's actions over the seizure of the boat *Arrow* by the Chinese authorities. Palmerston sought to exploit patriotic and xenophobic feelings to consolidate his otherwise divided party.²⁴⁸ The Conservatives were in an awkward position as, with so many of his colleagues, East had voted against Palmerston on Cobden's motion.²⁴⁹ Palmerston sought to portray himself as the patriot in this matter and the Conservatives and Radicals as lacking in such qualities. Carter sought to exploit this pointing to Conservative opposition to Palmerston, on this issue, as 'opportunist'. He argued that the election was a vote of confidence for Palmerston.²⁵⁰ East, to counter this, stressed that he had supported a Peelite and then a Liberal government during the Crimean War. If there were a war with China he would, of course, back the British Government.²⁵¹

In Winchester Carter faced different problems. A meeting of Liberal supporters declared itself unhappy with the city's split representation. It claimed that this was 'mainly attributable to the coalition between the two present members'. It pledged, if a second Conservative candidate came forward, to withhold votes from Carter unless he agreed to 'coalesce' with another Liberal. Carter issued an address denying any coalition with East existed. He came forward, he claimed, unconnected with any other candidate.²⁵²

The arrival of a second Liberal candidate, Wyndham Portal of Malshanger House, near Basingstoke in the county, put this somewhat to the test. Portal however seemed unable to attack either Carter or, more surprisingly East. He described the former as 'a friend' and the latter as 'impossible to oust'. He hoped that he would not see, as at previous elections, votes 'thrown about...to keep one man in and another out' between two and three o'clock on polling day. Carter fought largely on his, and the Government's record. He stressed his principles were those of 'Liberal Progress'. However the Crimean War had diverted attention from important, but unspecified, questions. Nevertheless he claimed that the basis for 'future social improvements' had been laid. At the nomination Carter, referring to Portal, asked the electors

²⁴⁸ C.F. Jackson, 'The British General Elections of 1857 and 1859', (Unpublished D. Phil. Thesis, Oxford, 1980), 106.

²⁴⁹ *HC* 7 March 1857.

²⁵⁰ *HC* 21 March 1857.

²⁵¹ *HC* 14 March 1857.

²⁵² *HC* 14 March 1857.

to give due consideration to long service. This may have been a reference to his own long service, in the context of a belief that East would inevitably be returned. Alternatively it could be viewed as subtle, possibly subconscious, support for East, who had held his seat twelve years longer than Carter.²⁵³

Portal perceived 'a division existed in the Liberal party'. Presumably this was a reference to the position in Winchester, as it was associated with a denial of any connection to either Carter or East. Portal appears to have been more radical than Carter. He expressed a 'general support' for Palmerston and saw universal suffrage as 'most dangerous'. Clearly he was afraid of being branded an out-and-out Radical, for on church rates he stressed he only sought their abolition for non-Anglicans. But it appears that the veil slipped when he declared himself to be for the equalisation of constituencies. He cited the nearby borough of Andover with its 250 electors and two MPs in comparison with great cities such as Manchester.²⁵⁴

The pollbook reveals that Liberal supporters were divided as Portal suggested. Carter received plumps from 16.6 per cent of electors and Portal from 12.8 per cent. What might be thought of as the Liberal 'ticket' or 'slate', a straight vote for Carter and Portal, attracted only 8.6 per cent. Plumps for East amounted to 11.9 per cent. The most popular option was a split between the sitting members, Carter and East, the option chosen by 26.1 per cent. Oddly, as they appear to have been at opposite ends of the spectrum, a split vote of East and Portal attracted 11.6 per cent. Of the eighty-nine voting in this manner thirty-three had cast a vote for Bulpett in 1852 and twenty-eight were new voters. Of the latter eleven appear to have been new Conservatives 'stirring the Liberal pot', for in 1859 they voted for the Conservative pairing of East and Fleming. Portal drew much of his support from those entering the register in the years commencing in 1849. Of those able to vote in their first parliamentary election 38 per cent cast a vote for Portal. This compared to 31 per cent of those registered earlier than 1852. Support for East and Carter showed an earlier bias.

At the 1859 General Election the main issue between the candidates was that of Lord Derby's failed Reform Bill for which East had voted and Carter opposed.²⁵⁵ The debates upon this issue are explored in greater depth in the next chapter.²⁵⁶ There were two candidates from each party for the first time since 1841. East and Thomas Willis Fleming were on the

²⁵³ HC 14, 21 and 28 March 1857.

²⁵⁴ HC 28 March 1857.

²⁵⁵ HC 2 April 1859.

²⁵⁶ See pp. 228-9 below.

Conservative side and Carter and George S. Lefevre bore the Liberal standard. In a straight fight between pairs of candidates from both parties, who on this occasion showed considerably unity on policy issues on each side, Carter felt under pressure. It appears that he felt that there was a latent Conservative majority in Winchester, which might seize its first opportunity since 1841 to show its true strength. At a Liberal meeting he acknowledged that he had needed non-Liberal support, in previous contests, to be elected.²⁵⁷ It appears that he was seeking to retain some of that support in order to retain his seat. He probably perceived the contest as being in the same position as that postulated by the *Hampshire Chronicle* a week or so before the poll. It believed that East would head the poll and Lefevre come fourth. The real contest was, it felt, between Carter and Fleming. It assessed this to be a close run thing.²⁵⁸

The newspaper was absolutely correct. East came first by fifty-five votes and Carter second by a margin of only six votes, in an electorate of 764. Partisan support for the Conservative 'ticket' was 40.2 per cent of the electorate. The equivalent Liberal figure was only 29.7 per cent. Carter was rescued by the 9.8 per cent splitting between him and East and the 3.4 per cent who plumped for him alone. Of those splitting East and Carter 60 per cent had also done so in 1857

The Conservative ticket garnered votes from forty-four first time voters. Of these twenty-nine progressed to the next general election. Although twenty-eight cast at least one vote for a Conservative only twelve voted for the Conservative 'ticket' of Simonds and Fleming and two split their vote with Carter. It appears that partisan voting behaviour was heavily dependent upon there being a straight contest between two linked candidates on each side. Of the thirty-one new voters garnered by the Liberal 'slate' in 1859 only seventeen were registered for the 1865 General Election. Of these fifteen cast a vote for the sole Liberal, Carter.

At the 1865 General Election Carter was opposed by two Conservatives, Fleming and a local man, William Barrow Simonds. The papers of Simonds' agent in 1865, his brother Robert Withington Simonds, are revealing.²⁵⁹ They include an undated note from Charles Wooldridge to Withington Simonds. From its contents it is probable that Wooldridge was Fleming's agent. The key element reads:

²⁵⁷ HC 16 April 1859.

²⁵⁸ HC 23 April 1859.

²⁵⁹ HRO W/B9/2/28.

I have seen Mr. F he tells me it is a mistake & that he has not asked for a single plumper. Some have told him they will vote F & S when they see F is safe & you have some of the same, of course, perhaps those might be exchanged.

There is no response to the request. However the other papers include letters from both the Simonds to voters away from Winchester. These advise of Simonds' position on particular issues and elicit support for him with no mention of Fleming.

Charles Crutch of Sussex Street wrote to Withington Simonds from Hailsham in Sussex on 4 July 1865, where he was working. He stated that he would vote for Simonds, with no mention of Fleming, but needed his rail fare and compensation to pay his replacement. On 8 July Withington Simonds forwarded Crutch a 'Railway Order' with a statement regretting that the compensation requested was illegal. Crutch voted for Simonds and Fleming – whether he obtained anything from Fleming's agent or Committee we cannot tell.

Fleming clearly had his own Committee. These papers reveal that it had made proposals to the two other Committees to ensure the peace was kept at the nomination and the poll. It would appear that both Fleming and Simonds had discrete and extensive organisations. Simonds had an agent, a 'check clerk' and a messenger at each of the four polling 'compartments'. There were two further messengers in reserve, five further agents for the hustings, eight 'assistants and nine assorted carriages, 'flys' and 'chairs' organised in what might be regarded as an 'order of battle'.

In 1859 Philip Rose, as the Conservative party's 'central election agent' had targeted Winchester for a Conservative gain. Indeed it appears that he had made funds available for the local 'party' or candidates.²⁶⁰ On that occasion the Conservative candidates, perhaps at Rose's behest had fought as a united team. In 1865 the splitting of Conservative effort and resources, for no obvious reasons of policy but perhaps out of self-interest, proved fatal for Fleming. This was despite Fleming having 'inherited' East's seat unopposed in 1864 upon the latter's retirement. If there were any benefits to be gained from incumbency, they were his. Whereas Carter secured plumps from 24.1 per cent of voters the two Conservatives only received straight party votes from 15.5 per cent. However 12.8 per cent plumped for Fleming and 8.1 per cent for Simonds. Fleming's fate was determined by the 18.2 per cent who split between Carter and Simonds as opposed to the 9.9 per cent splitting between Carter and Fleming.

²⁶⁰ See p. 85 above.

Of those voting for the Conservative 'ticket' in 1859 202 voted again in 1865. The impact of the independent operation of the two Conservative candidates is reflected in the votes they cast in 1865. Only seventy-nine voted for Simonds and Fleming, the direct counterpart of their 1859 votes. Sixty-five plumped for Fleming and twenty-one for Simonds. Seventeen did not vote and the other twenty cast a vote for Carter. Of the latter sixteen split their vote for Carter with one of the Conservatives. New voters showed similar behaviour. Forty-five voted for the Conservative 'slate', thirty-six plumped for Simonds and thirty-three for Fleming.

It appears likely, as had been alluded to by both Carter and the *Hampshire Chronicle*, that there was a natural Conservative majority in the Winchester electorate in this period.²⁶¹ This natural majority however appears to have been ill-served by the local Conservative 'party' and its candidates. Whereas at the barristers' revision court there were only ever two parties represented, even in the wake of Escott's perceived Corn Law apostasy,²⁶² the position at General Election contests was quite different. Excluding the exceptional 1847 General Election, the Conservatives only had one candidate in the field at four of the other General Elections from 1832 to 1865.²⁶³ They fielded two candidates at only four contests.²⁶⁴ This did not offer electors to develop a habit of partisan Conservative voting.

This issue of a habit of voting being developed is well illustrated by the forty-three electors who voted for the Conservative pairing of East and Escott in 1841 and then, following Corn Law repeal, voted for Carter and East in 1847. Their 1841 votes, in a contest where two Conservatives fought two Whig/Liberals, marked them out as Conservative partisans. Their 1847 votes probably reflect a Protectionist punishment of the Peelite Escott. However their subsequent votes suggest that splitting between Conservatives and Liberals became a habit. Of the twenty-six still registered for the 1852 contest twenty split between the sole Conservative, East, and a Liberal. The Conservatives had not offered them an opportunity to return to fully Conservative partisanship. In 1857 facing a similar situation fourteen of the remaining seventeen split with a Liberal. The 1859 contest presented the opportunity to vote for two Conservatives, fighting as a team, but of the fourteen still registered half continued to split with a Liberal. Finally 1865 saw seven still registered, three continued to split with Carter and two did not vote.

²⁶¹ See p. 207 above.

²⁶² See pp. 183-4 above.

²⁶³ 1832, 1835, 1852 and 1857.

²⁶⁴ 1837, 1841, 1859 and 1865.

It appears that a lack of regular opportunities to be truly partisan and a disunited set of candidates failed to spark renewed partisanship.

It appears that the voting behaviour of 'Winchester Man' was shaped as much by the number of candidates he was offered and their unity, or disunity, as much as it was by his personal political convictions. It seems that once having made a choice from the options before him at an election early in his electoral life he showed a degree of loyalty to that choice. This appears to have continued for many despite the later appearance of more politically palatable options.

As the period from 1832 progressed the electoral registers reveal other aspects of the nature of 'Winchester Man'. The first of these is what we might term his 'political maturity' his experience of and exposure to, or otherwise, the processes of a parliamentary election.

The Political Maturity of The Electorate

Much of the work of the 'poll book school' has focused on those voters who remained in the electorate for relatively long periods and so could be traced from poll book to poll book. General Elections however were held at variable intervals. So someone who voted for the first time in 1857 and again in 1859 had normally been on the electoral register for a far shorter period than someone who had voted first in 1841 and then in 1847. Electoral registers, when they survive in extended runs as in Winchester, provide a much greater granularity of data. They therefore allow us to identify which of the first time voters of 1857 first appeared on the 1856 register, which applied at that election, as opposed to those who first appeared on the 1852 register which came into effect after that year's General Election. These latter voters had, generally, been on the register for five years (1852 to 1856 inclusive) unless there had been a 'break' in their presence thereon.

It is not unreasonable to assume that at least some of the new voters at an election presented a puzzle to the respective party organizations. Despite the knowledge of their family and commercial networks could their voting intentions be accurately estimated? Clearly some, brought onto the register with party backing, could be viewed as relatively reliable. Others might be viewed as very uncertain. It is probable that this uncertainty led to contests which the

deterministic views of the registration, held by the likes of William Biggs,²⁶⁵ would suggest should not happen. If a voter's having never voted at a previous General Election was grounds for uncertainty there was a considerable proportion of the electorate about which there might be cause for concern. For at each General Election from 1835 to 1865 15 to 41 per cent of the Winchester electorate had never had the opportunity to vote at a previous General Election **(See Table 6.2 Below)**. The larger figures occurred when there had been a greater period since the previous contest (1847 and 1865) and the lesser ones when the period was shorter (such as 1859). For these purposes the extremely high figure for the 1832 General Election is discounted. It arises from only sixty-six of the previously restricted freeman electorate being registered in 1832.

**Table 6.2: Those Who Had Never Voted
At A Previous Parliamentary Election**

<u>Year</u>	<u>%</u>
1832	87.7
1835	18.0
1837	18.3
1841	27.5
1847	37.0
1852	37.3
1857	32.1
1859	14.9
1865	41.3

²⁶⁵ Radice, 'Identification...', 266.

Clearly the proportion of new voters varied significantly but were they a significant factor in determining the outcome of elections? Indeed were they typical 'Winchester Men' or did they manifest different traits? At some elections they certainly showed a different bias to that of their established counterparts. In 1835 48.3 per cent plumped for the Conservative East as opposed to 33.5 per cent of those on the register in 1832. Their votes played a significant part in his displacement of the Whig Mildmay. In 1837 the bias was for plumps for Mildmay (38.5 per cent as opposed to 33.6 per cent). The thirty-seven votes involved exceeding his majority of twenty-six over the third-placed Conservative, Escott.

The 1841 contest showed a different picture with both Whig/Liberal and Conservative straight voting being more marked among established voters. In 1847 new voters showed a greater inclination to vote for Carter or/and Escott and more established ones to plump for East. Bulpett, the first local man to stand in the constituency, in 1852 benefited from greater support amongst first-time voters. Established voters were perhaps too committed to their past voting patterns. Amongst them the proportion of plumps for East and splits between East and Carter was higher. Both these candidates had also stood in 1847 and were the incumbent MPs.

In 1857 Carter and Portal, the Liberals, as individuals benefited from a greater proportion of plumps from new voters. However as a party pairing they fared better amongst those with previous electoral experience. The straight two versus two party fight of 1859 drew Conservative straights in almost identical proportions from both new and established voters. However newcomers to the electoral fray showed a clear disinclination to cast a Liberal straight (24.6 per cent as opposed to 30.6 per cent). The final contest of this era, in 1865, saw a marked tendency amongst new voters to split their votes between the Liberal, Carter, and one of the Conservatives. Their more experienced counterparts were more inclined to plump for Carter or cast a straight Conservative vote for Simonds and Fleming.

One feature common to all the elections from 1835 to 1865 was a greater disinclination among new voters to vote at all. In all cases a greater proportion did not vote when compared to those who had had other opportunities. Over the eight elections covered 15.5 per cent of potential first time voters failed to vote as against 12.0 per cent of established electors. The issue not only of which way new electors were going to vote, but also whether they even would, must have added to the uncertainty faced by party officials.

Of the 245 new voters who did not vote at their first opportunity 116 (47.3 per cent) never had the opportunity again. These 116, together with the 712 who appeared on electoral

registers but never in one applicable at an election, comprise a 'hidden electorate'. A 'hidden electorate' about whose political inclinations we can tell nothing. Together they comprise 29.7 per cent of the names found on electoral registers between 1832 and that of 1864 which applied to the 1865 General Election. This was probably another factor creating uncertainty amongst local party officials as to the potential outcome of future elections. This would be particularly so in relation to those who had never voted in a municipal election. This would have been particularly so when the incidence of these diminished after the mid-1840s.

The preceding survey has shown that, those 'Winchester Men' who were relatively newly registered as voters, often demonstrated voting behaviour significantly different from that of their more experienced fellow electors. However the nature of this difference in behaviour varied over time sometimes favouring one party, sometimes another. This might have been partly determined by the relative success of the two parties at the electoral register revision, especially in the barristers' revision court, but the lack of names linked to that process precludes any certainty. It is equally possible that the political issues of the day shaped the decisions of new voters more so than of those with established 'track records'. This could, for example, explain the strong support amongst new voters for Carter and Escott in the post-Corn Law Repeal election of 1847.

Years of experience of the electoral fray are one thing but did experience of life, age, have an impact upon voting behaviour? In his study of Winchester politics up to the 1841 General Election, Aldous determined that Conservative partisans of the 1830s through to 1841 were generally considerably younger than their Whig counterparts.²⁶⁶ This situation does not appear to have continued to the end of the period. Of the 880 voters at the 1865 General Election, the ages of 577 were determined from the 1871 Census. Using the crude approach of deducting six from the age stated in the Census Enumerator's Book, a set of average ages were calculated. The average age for all 577 was 45.9. The 140 who plumped for Carter had an average age of 47.4; the 90 voting straight Conservative for Simonds and Fleming 45.4; and the 54 who did not vote 46.4. These differences can in no way be viewed as statistically significant.

Even the 335 new voters for whom ages could be determined showed an average age (44.8) which was not markedly below the average age of the entire electorate. This relatively late age of entry into the electorate reflects two factors. The first is that six years had elapsed since the previous election in 1859. The second is the relatively short average 'elector life'

²⁶⁶ Aldous, 'Conservative...', 83-5.

determined earlier.²⁶⁷ With a short average 'elector life', the differences between other averages based on the same age data, would only in exceptional circumstances vary markedly from each other.

For the previous election in 1859 354 electors can be aged from the 1871 Census. They show an average age of 43.8. The 45 newcomers among them have an average of 36.7. This is much lower than in 1865 and a considerable element of the difference might be ascribed to the gap of only two years from the previous, 1857, contest. However intensive work, for which time was not available, on the 1861 census might be expected to recover data on older electors who died before 1871. In the light of this these figures cannot be relied upon to any great extent.

The Challenge of 'Winchester Man' for the Political Parties 1832-1868

The analysis in this chapter, and that before it, has pointed to a range of challenges 'Winchester Man' posed for the political parties under the terms of the legislation of 1832. Greater mobility led to uncertainty as to the social networks of many individuals. Indeed it appears that numbers of electors entered the register unchallenged by either party because of uncertainty as to their political allegiance. Relatively short average 'elector lives' meant that many electors did not establish voting 'track records' of any great length.

These track records were further complicated by the failure of the political parties to regularly run two candidates in contests. Even when they did, as with the Conservatives in 1865, they often failed to operate together but rather split party resources. This is despite the apparent unity of party demonstrated in the annual barristers' revision courts. This dichotomy appears to be the responsibility of the candidates. They appear to have cared more for their personal success than for the optimisation of the position of their party. There is good reason to suspect that for much of the period from 1847 until 1868 there was a latent Conservative majority in the borough. The Conservative division over Corn Law Repeal followed by a failure to field a second candidate at the 1852 and 1857 contests meant that this was not exploited. Instead splitting with the incumbent Liberal, Carter, became the habit of many 'natural Conservatives'.

²⁶⁷ See pp. 127-8 above.

The Reform legislation of 1867 and 1868, followed by the introduction of the secret ballot in 1872, however changed the scene. There were far more 'Winchester Men' and greater uncertainty as to their voting intentions. This is explored in the next chapter.

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CHAPTER 7

THE NATIONAL SCENE 1868-1880 AND 'WINCHESTER MAN'S' PLACE THEREIN

This chapter addresses the position of Winchester and 'Winchester Man' in the electoral system which prevailed between the Reform Acts of 1867 and 1868 and those of 1884 and 1885. At the latter date the franchise was equalised between county and borough constituencies and between all the 'nation elements' of the British Isles. Moreover the vast majority of constituencies, including Winchester, became single member divisions. It is therefore, for the purposes of this study, regarded as a major change and an appropriate point at which to conclude it.

First the changes in the national scene applying at the General Elections of 1868, 1874 and 1880 are addressed and analysed. The importance of England, and particularly its boroughs, in determining the hue of the Government is determined. The importance for Conservative success of smaller boroughs particularly in the South of England is then established. This establishes Winchester and 'Winchester Man' as valid archetypes for the key kind of constituency and elector in the period.

The place of Winchester in the development of the reforms implemented in 1867 and 1868 is then examined. Inputs from Winchester to Conservative thinking on electoral reform in the period prior to 1867 are addressed. This draws out some of the flaws and misunderstandings of the data used for national decision making. The actual impact upon the electorate of the 1867 franchise provisions is then examined. It is found to have expanded much further than anticipated, but it fell far short of manhood suffrage levels. It is found that the electoral behaviour of pre- and post-1867 Reform electors at the 1868 General Election was not markedly different. The role of the first national organisation to attempt to intervene actively at a General Election in Winchester, the Reform League, is then explored. The impact of this and other

changes, such as the secret ballot, on Winchester elections is then investigated. It is found that a more 'modern' form of politics based upon national issues and utilising new organisational techniques, including the use of volunteers and non-electors was emerging during this period.

The National Scene 1868-1880

The Reform legislation of 1867 and 1868 involved both a significant widening of the franchise in England, Scotland and Wales and a redistribution of seats. Ireland was virtually untouched by the changes of 1867 and 1868 – it had had franchise reform in 1850, largely in order to enhance electorates much reduced by the Famine and consequent emigration.¹ The legislation effectively comprised two 'waves'. The first was the 1867 Representation of the People Act for England and Wales.² There were two key elements in the second wave. First there was a Boundary Act implementing the findings of the Boundary Commissioners appointed under the earlier act.³ Second there was the Scottish Reform Act, which 'raided' the previous year's settlement for England to obtain seven seats to increase Scotland's representation.⁴

England, as we shall shortly see, remained the electoral key to a parliamentary majority.⁵ The English borough franchise was extended to all adult male householders not in joint occupation of the house. The occupation and rate paying requirements remained as in the 1832 and 1848 legislation respectively. He was therefore required to have occupied such a property, within the borough, for a year prior to registration and to have paid, by 20 July, his rates due up to 5 January.⁶ The practice of compounding, whereby the landlord was liable for the occupier's rates and received a discount thereon for easing the work of collection, was abolished.⁷ This was intended to make all occupiers ratepayers and therefore eligible to be electors.⁸ Problems of collection, and therefore municipal cashflow, rendered the application

¹ 13 & 14 Vict. c. 69. In 1868 there was a very minor act for Ireland – 31 & 32 Vict. c. 49.

² 30 & 31 Vict. c. 102.

³ 31 & 32 Vict. c. 46.

⁴ 31 & 32 Vict. c. 48 – section 43 disfranchised Arundel, Ashburton, Dartmouth, Honiton, Lyme Regis, Thetford and Wells.

⁵ See pp. 220-1 below.

⁶ 30 & 31 Vict. c. 102 s. 3.

⁷ 30 & 31 Vict. c. 102 s. 7.

⁸ It had been possible for compounders to seek to be rated (2 Will. IV, c. 45, s. 30) however they had to seek this each time during the year a rate was made. An Act of 1851 (14 & 15 Vict. c. 14) reduced the requirement to a single request each year.

difficult and in 1869 the legislation was amended.⁹ Overseers were then able to return to a scheme of collection from landlords. However they were required to note occupiers' names in the ratebook. All occupiers were then deemed to be ratepayers thereby securing, as the rubric in the margin of the act puts it, the 'Saving of franchises'.¹⁰

Furthermore in English boroughs a lodger franchise was introduced for those occupying rooms worth £10 per annum unfurnished. To secure this franchise a claim had to be lodged each year.¹¹ The English counties saw a more restricted widening of the franchise. It was extended to £5 copyholders and £12 occupiers.¹²

The redistribution of seats by the act was the aspect Derby, Disraeli and the Conservatives sought hardest to control throughout the complicated passage of the legislation. There was a minority administration, so continually had to compromise or seek to exploit divisions amongst its opponents. The bastion of Conservative strength under the 1832 legislation had been the English counties.¹³ Here not only had the widening of the franchise been restricted, but a further twenty-five seats were allocated to this type of constituency.¹⁴ Moreover one of the unofficial goals of the Boundary Commissioners was to protect or purify the county constituencies by excising from them significant 'urban overspill' from existing and the few new boroughs.

To achieve redistribution within a fixed number of MPs there had to be an element of disfranchisement. For this purpose four boroughs were disfranchised on grounds of having shown sustained patterns of corruption.¹⁵ The remaining seats for redistribution were then taken from thirty-six two member boroughs with populations of less than 10,000 at the 1861 Census. These boroughs, such as Andover, Lymington, Chichester and Windsor, were reduced from returning two MPs to one.¹⁶ The goal was to retain the representation of smaller more

⁹ 32 & 33 Vict. c. 41.

¹⁰ 32 & 33 Vict. c. 41 s. 19.

¹¹ 30 & 31 Vict. c. 102 s. 4 and Schedule G.

¹² 30 & 31 Vict. c. 102 s. 5 and 6.

¹³ See pp. 77-8 above.

¹⁴ In the intervening period three had been redistributed from those taken from Sudbury and St Albans for corrupt practices – they went to Yorkshire's West Riding and Lancashire South.

¹⁵ Great Yarmouth, Lancaster, Reigate and Totnes - 30 & 31 Vict. c. 102 s. 12. These yielded seven seats as Reigate only had one.

¹⁶ 30 & 31 Vict. c. 102 s. 17 and Schedule A.

rurally orientated boroughs. However three of these boroughs lost what would have been their remaining member to increase Scottish representation in 1868. Four boroughs having a sole MP since 1832 were also disfranchised for this purpose.¹⁷

After the 1867 and 1868 redistributions England with 70 per cent of all seats, and in particular English borough constituencies with over 40 per cent, remained the predominant factor in the House of Commons.¹⁸ This is reflected in **Table 7.1 below**. This favoured the

Table 7.1: Distribution of Seats by 'Electoral System' 1868

	<u>Counties</u>		<u>Boroughs</u>		<u>Universities</u>		<u>Total</u>	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
England	170	25.8	285	43.3	5	0.8	460	69.9
Ireland	64	9.7	39	5.9	2	0.3	105	16.0
Scotland	32	4.9	26	4.0	2	0.3	60	9.1
Wales	17	2.6	16	2.4	0	0.0	33	5.0
Total	283	43.0	366	55.6	9	1.4	658	100.0

Source: Analysis of detailed entries in *McCalmont...*, 1-344. Monmouthshire and Monmouth Borough District included in Wales.

Conservative cause as that party's performance in the Celtic nations in the three general elections conducted under the terms of the settlement of 1867 and 1868 was extremely poor. At its most successful the party secured just 34 per cent of such seats and at its worst only 19 per cent. (**See Table 7.2 below.**) Therefore for the Conservatives to secure a Commons majority, success relied upon an excellent electoral performance in England.

¹⁷ Honiton, Thetford and Wells; and Arundel, Ashburton, Dartmouth and Lyme Regis respectively.

¹⁸ The analysis which follows is based upon data extracted from *McCalmont's Parliamentary Pollbook of All Elections 1832-1918* (edited by J. Vincent and M. Stenton, Brighton, 1971).

**Table 7.2: Conservative Performance in
the Celtic Nations 1868-1880**

	<u>Seats</u>	<u>1868</u>	<u>1874</u>	<u>1880</u>
Ireland	105	40	33	26
Scotland	60	8	20	7
Wales	33	10	14	4
Total	198	58	67	37
%		29.3	34.2	18.9

Source: Analysis based upon constituency entries in *McCalmont...*, 1-344. Irish seats reduced to 103 from 1874 General Election - Sligo and Cashel disfranchised.

The redistribution within England was based primarily upon population, for both boroughs and counties.¹⁹ However it did not lead to anything approximating to equal borough constituencies. Of the now ninety single member boroughs Calne had the smallest electorate in 1868, only 258, and newly enfranchised Wednesbury the largest, at 15,612. Multi-member boroughs at ninety-five, with 196 seats, continued to outnumber them, but a trend towards single member constituencies was underway. The smallest multi-member constituency electorate was that of Penryn and Falmouth, with 882 electors. The largest that of, the now three member, Manchester was 48,256.

As in the period from 1832 to 1868 the Conservatives great strength lay in the English counties. Here they took between 67 and 82 per cent of the 170 seats in the three General Elections from 1868 to 1889 inclusive. Their performance in the 285 English borough seats,²⁰ although superior to that in the Celtic Nations, was less impressive at 28 to 48 per cent. In both instances the best performance was in 1874, when Disraeli secured a majority. **(See Table 7.3 below.)**

¹⁹ See for example Disraeli MSS 45/1 fols 109-14. A printed document 'COUNTY AND BOROUGH REPRESENTATION' marked in print '*Confidential*' from the period 1866/7.

²⁰ Reduced to 281 for the 1874 and 1880 General Elections, following the disfranchisement of Beverley and Bridgwater for corrupt practices.

Table 7.3: Conservative Performance in Types of English Seats

	<u>Seats</u>	<u>1868</u>	<u>1874</u>	<u>1880</u>
Counties	170	121	140	114
Boroughs	285	93	138	79
Of which:				
'Large'	186	50	85	43
'Small'	99	43	53	36
Cathedrals	36	9	15	7
County Towns	37	12	19	11
North	136	47	54	22
South	149	45	86	58
Universities	5	4	4	4
TOTAL	460	218	282	197
%		47.4	61.8	43.2

Note: The number of borough seats reduced to 281 by 1874 following the disfranchisement of Beverley (Large and North) and Bridgwater (Small and South) - *McCalmont...*, 334-5.

Bold = Majority in Category.

Although population was a factor in the redistribution of 1832 and more central to that of 1867, more important to the character of a borough was the actual size of its electorate. Hanham however took a different view and created three categories defined by their population. He set his dividing line between 'small towns' and 'provincial backwaters' at a population, in 1871, of 16,000 and that between the latter and 'big towns' at 50,000. He also chose to include eight boroughs from the second group in the first – six being 'large agricultural

boroughs'.²¹ Hanham's grounds for the 16,000 dividing line include direct reference to Winchester borough, which had a population of 17,003 in 1871.²² He claimed that he decided upon that particular figure as 'it avoids classing as small towns places like Bedford, Hereford, and Winchester, which had a well-developed way of life of their own and a well-defined local "upper class" to control their politics.'²³

In 1868 118 seats in 1868 are embraced by Hanham's 'small town' category. These probably include most of the 39 English borough seats he reckoned to be controlled by patrons after 1868.²⁴ Clearly Hanham's 'small town' category includes a majority of seats for boroughs which, as was the case for Winchester, had broken away from patronage arrangements or had never been subject to them. However it might be argued that a new, slightly more diffuse group of patrons had emerged in places such as Winchester.

In 1837 it was Barter, the Warden of Winchester College, who brought forward Bickham Escott as a Conservative candidate. His disowning of his, now Peelite, protégé in 1847 had a major impact at that election.²⁵ The Fellows of the College and the Dean and Chapter continued thereafter to play a leading role in Conservative circles. It is less clear who brought forward the Liberal candidates in Winchester, but once again it is probable that it was a relatively narrow circle. The one instance of a candidate in Winchester being called forward by a wider, more popular gathering, was that of Bulpett in 1852. His candidacy proved disastrous.²⁶ William Barrow Simonds, Winchester's first truly local MP, emerged through the much more restricted Conservative network.

Whilst any categorisation must have elements of the 'rough and ready' to it, it is felt that the size of electorate was a major factor in defining the character of a borough. Moreover such an approach is consistent with that adopted in this study for the period between 1832 and 1868.²⁷ A dividing line, of an electorate of 2,000 in 1868, has therefore been drawn between

²¹ H.J. Hanham, *Elections and Party Management: Politics in the time of Disraeli and Gladstone* (Hassocks, 1959, with new Introduction 1978), 39 n. 1 and 68 n. 1.

²² *McCalmont...*, 321

²³ Hanham, *Elections...*, 39 n. 1.

²⁴ Hanham, *Elections...*, 39 n. 2 and 409-12. Of the 39, 18 are classed as Liberal and 21 as Conservative.

²⁵ See p. 180 above.

²⁶ See pp. 204-5 above.

²⁷ See pp. 77-8 above.

'small' and 'large' boroughs in analysing the data for English boroughs. The 'small' boroughs defined on this basis almost entirely date from before 1832. Only two, Frome and Kendal, with one seat each were enfranchised in 1832. As in the period from 1832 until 1868 the Conservatives performed better in boroughs with fewer electors rather than in their larger counterparts.²⁸ They took between 37 and 55 per cent of the 99 seats in the smaller boroughs.²⁹ This compared to between 23 and 46 per cent of those in their larger counterparts, with their 186 seats.³⁰ In both cases the best performance was in 1874. **(See Table 7.3 above.)** Once again a Conservative majority in the House of Commons required a majority of the smaller English borough seats. One of which was Winchester with 1,557 electors.

Moreover, as in the earlier period, Conservative strength was concentrated in the South of England.³¹ In southern boroughs the Conservatives took between 30 and 59 per cent of the 149 available seats.³² In their northern equivalents they won only between 16 and 40 per cent of the 136 seats.³³ In both cases the peak was in 1874. But in 1880 their performance held up far better in the South, falling to only 39 per cent of the seats, as opposed to 16 per cent in the North. **(See Table 7.3 above.)** (Winchester was one of those southern boroughs.) The issue of Irish Church disestablishment, at the 1868 General Election, 'played well' for the Conservatives in the North, and particularly the North West, where there were strong anti-Irish and anti-Catholic sentiments.³⁴ This led to a much better performance in the northern boroughs in 1868 than in 1880.

Many of the English cathedral cities and county towns identified for the analysis of the system from 1832 to 1868³⁵ were, after the latter date, found in the 'large' borough category. Of the nineteen cathedral cities, returning thirty-six MPs in the period from 1868 to 1885, only five including Winchester were 'small boroughs. Of the twenty-three remaining county towns which

²⁸ See pp. 77-80 above.

²⁹ Reducing to 98 seats for the 1874 and 1880 General Elections following the disfranchisement of Bridgwater for corrupt practices.

³⁰ Reducing to 184 seats for the 1874 and 1880 General Elections following the disfranchisement of Beverley for corrupt practices.

³¹ See p. 85 above and n. 56 p. 75 for definition.

³² Reducing to 148 seats for the 1874 and 1880 General Elections, following the disfranchisement of Bridgwater for corrupt practices.

³³ Reducing to 134 seats for the 1874 and 1880 General Elections, following the disfranchisement of Beverley for corrupt practices.

³⁴ N. Collins, *Politics and Elections in Nineteenth-Century Liverpool* (Aldershot, 1994), 108-12.

³⁵ See pp. 80-1 above.

were not cathedral cities, now returning thirty-seven MPs, twelve had few enough electors to be categorised as 'small boroughs'. Despite the prominence of the issue of Gladstone's proposal for Irish Church disestablishment at the 1868 General Election,³⁶ the Conservatives never secured a majority of the seats for cathedral cities in this period. At their peak in 1874 they secured only 41 per cent of such seats. In the county towns the Conservatives did slightly better securing 51 per cent of the seats in the same year. **(See Table 7.3 above.)** In both cases the Conservative performance was generally better in the South than the North.

Another aspect of the legislation for England was the activity of the Boundary Commissioners. From Disraeli's perspective they had a two fold role. On the one hand their responsibility was to ensure that the growth of large urban centres beyond their borough boundaries was excised from the county constituencies. This was achieved by the extension of borough boundaries. This generally was expected to make the county constituencies more safely Conservative. On the other hand the Commissioners had to ensure the survival of some of the smallest boroughs. This was inevitably achieved by bringing more rural areas within borough boundaries.³⁷

In the case of Winchester the Boundary Commissioners took a novel line. They noted that most of the expansion of Winchester's urban footprint since 1832 had been to the South. The expansion, with one exception, had been contained within the borough boundary defined in 1832.³⁸ That exception was to the West along Romsey Road. The Commissioners reported:

In this direction the houses have been built up to the Boundary, which runs through the gaol, and there is a row of five or six houses outside inhabited by warders. These houses would not confer votes for the Borough, while they are the property of the County, all are inhabited by County officers.

On the opposite side of the road, beyond the Boundary, are the new County Hospital, and a block of thirty-seven houses.

A large proportion of these houses are unfinished, though many have been a long time in process of erection; and several of those that have been completed are still unoccupied.

³⁶ G.I.T. Machin, *Politics and the Churches in Great Britain 1832 to 1868* (Oxford, 1977), 368-79.

³⁷ M. Cowling, *1867 Disraeli, Gladstone and Revolution: The Passing of the second Reform Bill* (Cambridge, 1967), 76 and 385-6.

³⁸ See pp. 83-4 above.

There is no probability of any further building on this road.

The Commissioners do not recommend an extension of the present Boundaries.³⁹

It is not clear on what grounds the Commissioners believed that the 'County officers' would not receive borough votes if the boundary were moved. They were not in a debarred 'Crown appointment', as with excise and postal officials. What appears to have been more important to them was that the County Gaol was a Hampshire county institution, and therefore a county 'interest' (or influence), rather than a borough one. The County Hospital, as an independent charitable institution, was independent of state, county and borough.

Returning to the national impact of the Commissioners' activities it is not easy to discern the degree to which they had a positive impact for the Conservatives. Where urban voters were excised from a county the positive impact would be in the county not the borough. Even there it might not be obviously positive as it might have merely been preventive of future woes. However an examination of the fifty-eight pre-existing English boroughs given new boundaries in 1868⁴⁰ reveals some positive factors for the Conservatives, especially in the South. Generally, at the 1868, 1874 and 1880 General Elections, the Conservatives performed better in those enlarged boroughs in the South or which had smaller electorates. This is not surprising. Many of the enlargements in the North were intended to remove the urban sprawl of industrial towns, such as Bolton and Huddersfield, from their surrounding counties. In the South many of the boroughs, such as Salisbury, Windsor and Worcester, were enlarged to give them sufficient population (and consequently electors) to avoid disfranchisement.

The Position of Winchester and 'Winchester Man' within the Electoral System 1868-1880

The preceding review of the changes implemented in the electoral system in 1867 and 1868 and the operation of it through the General Elections to which it applied has revealed the position of Winchester therein. Winchester as an English constituency formed part of the key 'national element' of the system. Without an overall majority of English seats the Conservative party could not form a majority government in this period. The Liberals might have been able to

³⁹ 'Winchester: Report on the Borough of Winchester with plan showing proposed parliamentary boundary [Extract from Boundary Commissioners' Report] – HRO 15M84/P3/900.

⁴⁰ 31 & 32 Vict. c.46 First Schedule – Old Boroughs (England) – less Monmouth District.

do so without the benefit of a majority of English seats. This was due to their dominance in Wales and Scotland. Ireland also provided succour to the Liberals, but often of a conditional and problematic kind with the rise of Parnell.

Within England the key element was the borough segment, for the Conservatives dominated in the county constituencies.⁴¹ Here boroughs, such as Winchester, which had been represented since before 1832 remained in the majority. They returned 203 of the 285 English borough MPs. Of these almost two-thirds came from two member boroughs such as Winchester. Moreover over half these seats were for boroughs in the South of England.⁴² 'Small' boroughs, such as Winchester, were in this new dispensation slightly less representative than their larger cousins. Nevertheless they remained a key segment in which the Conservatives only secured a majority when they attained an overall majority in the Commons.⁴³

As in the period from 1832 until 1868, Winchester's representation mirrored the national achievements of the Conservative party. In 1868 and 1880 it returned an MP from each party. However in 1874 when the Conservatives secured an overall majority in the House of Commons it returned two Conservative members. Once again the Liberal party did not need both Winchester seats to form a majority government. But if they failed to retain one of them, as was the case in 1874 and had been so in 1841, the Conservatives could form a majority administration.

In this period Winchester was somewhat less typical of the system than it had been between 1832 and 1868. Nevertheless it clearly remained one of a key set of constituencies for the two parties, but particularly so for the Conservatives. Once again a good case can therefore be made for 'Winchester Man' being representative of the 'archetype' of the key voter for the parties in the post-1867-68 dispensation. But how was Winchester and 'Winchester Man' perceived in the process that led to these reforms and thereafter?

⁴¹ See pp. 221-2 above.

⁴² See pp. 222 and 224 above.

⁴³ See pp. 222 and 224 above.

Reform and both Winchester and 'Winchester Man' in the 1850s and 1860s

The Reform Acts of 1867 and 1868 did not emerge like a bolt out of the blue after thirty-five years of quietude. They had, as Robert Saunders has recently reminded us, a long gestation.⁴⁴ There were many proposals. These came forward particularly following the absence of a British revolution in 1848, the 'Year of Revolutions'.⁴⁵ The specific measures appear to have excited little interest within Winchester when before Parliament. However electoral reform was an issue at General Elections in the 1850s and 1860s but usually in a more general sense. In 1852 Bulpett supported a wider franchise and the secret ballot.⁴⁶ In 1857 Carter pointed to his support for the equalisation of the county franchise with that of the boroughs.⁴⁷ He also expressed his desire for 'a fuller and freer enjoyment of the franchise'.⁴⁸ At the same election his fellow Liberal, Portal, espoused an extension of the franchise to take account of 'intellectual capacity, as well as property'. He also advocated a measure 'affording protection to the voter' (presumably the secret ballot).⁴⁹

The 1859 General Election followed the defeat of the Derby-Disraeli administration's Reform Bill. It therefore concentrated more specifically upon the issue. East, as a Conservative, was compelled to comment upon the issue. He admitted that the bill was not perfect but believed that the Committee Stage could have remedied those defects. He felt that then a 'fair compromise' would have emerged. Beyond that he claimed that, following seven Winchester elections, his 'political sentiments' were well known. East's fellow Conservative, Fleming, opposed 'rash measures of reform'. But he saw it as the Conservatives' duty 'to repair, lest decay should undermine the fabric of our Constitution'.

On the other side, Carter claimed that a Reform Bill had become 'an acknowledged necessity'. But Derby's Bill had been 'irremediably defective and objectionable'. It had 'reluctantly conceded' the county franchise reduction advocated by the 'Liberal party'. It then

⁴⁴ R. Saunders, *Democracy and the Vote in British Politics, 1848-1867: The Making of the Second Reform Act* (Farnham, 2011).

⁴⁵ That is with the exception of a small rising inspired by 'Young Ireland'. This seems to escape many recent 'textbooks'. But see L. Woodward, *The Age of Reform 1815-1870* (2nd Edn, Oxford, 1962), 357.

⁴⁶ See p. 177 above.

⁴⁷ Presumably for Locke King's bill – Saunders, *Democracy...*, 101.

⁴⁸ *Hampshire Chronicle* (hereafter *HC*) 14 March 1857.

⁴⁹ *HC* 21 March 1857.

sought to neutralise it by disfranchising the urban freeholders in the counties and sought to introduce non-residents into the boroughs. This was combined with a refusal to change borough franchise. The Government had thrown away an opportunity for 'calm and temperate solution of this great national question'. He would support a 'well-devised measure, which would embrace a considerable extension of the franchise to those industrious classes whose increased education and intelligence during the last quarter of a century have been generally acknowledged'. He sought authority to take part in future deliberations on this issue to secure the Empire and the 'true welfare of the people'.⁵⁰

Carter's fellow Liberal, Lefevre, pointed to a Reform Bill having been included twice in the Queen's Speech and thrice rejected by Parliament.⁵¹ He raised the question as to which party could be trusted with it. The Derby measure had been 'a dangerous delusion'. It was fine if one sought to withdraw the most independent voters from the counties; to swamp small boroughs with the 'fictitious creation of votes'; to offer no protection from intimidation; and to preserve all small constituencies subject to individual influence. He however stood for the extension of the franchise in both counties and boroughs; the disfranchisement of 'pocket boroughs'; the redistribution of seats to 'independent towns more worthy of the privilege'; and the free exercise of the vote.⁵² However, Lefevre pointed to a visit he had made to the United States. This had shown him the evils of universal suffrage. He stood for the franchise for those of the working classes who embraced 'prudence'. This, however, was not so as to swamp 'middling classes'. The £60 savings clause, in the Derby Bill,⁵³ would, he claimed, enfranchise fewer than sixty in Winchester. To achieve his goal he instead supported a £5 rating or £6 rental franchise. He had previously opposed the secret ballot but after observing several elections he now supported it. He would disfranchise those boroughs under landlord influence and sixteen small Irish ones of fewer than 300 electors.⁵⁴

The issue of electoral reform in both general and specific terms was put to the electors on a number of occasions and in varying levels of detail. It is noteworthy that those who advocated the more specific and extensive measures of reform were generally unsuccessful –

⁵⁰ HC 9 April 1859.

⁵¹ In 1852, 1854 and 1859.

⁵² HC 16 April 1859.

⁵³ Saunders, *Democracy...*, 112.

⁵⁴ HC 16 April 1859.

Bulpett in 1852, Portal in 1857 and Lefevre in 1859. All three were on the Liberal side of the party divide.

Despite its rejection of more extensive and specific measures of electoral reform, Winchester was subject to the attentions of many of the proposals. It was also included in the trawls for data in shaping them and opposing them. In this regard the Disraeli Papers are a particularly useful source.⁵⁵ Disraeli was, through his 'chief political agent' Philip Rose, an avid collector of data on such matters.

The thoughts of the Conservative agent in Winchester, W. Rawlins,⁵⁶ upon a proposal to reduce the county franchise to £10 for occupiers and the borough franchise to £6 householders are recorded. The document,⁵⁷ which comprises the views of a number of agents, is undated and is found among papers from the 1858-59 Derby-Disraeli administration. Saunders attributes it to this period.⁵⁸ The comments sought were upon franchises proposed by Lord John Russell in his bills of 1854 and 1860.⁵⁹ Indeed Rawlins refers to 'Lord John' in his negative comments upon the idea of a £10 county franchise. More important here are Rawlins' views upon the idea of a £6 borough franchise. These were summarised, probably by Rose or his associates:

Imagine no shadow of a chance for even one Conservative if Bill adopted. Refers every thinking man to the Municipal Elections and the result by the Councils elected at them. His conviction that universal suffrage would be far more Conservative than this new[?] measure.

Gentlemen of large fortune and having large Establishment being exempt from Franchise as non-householders are unable to have a voice in the Elections.⁶⁰

Rawlins' views reflected the Winchester Conservatives' lukewarmness, or antipathy, to electoral reform. However they were almost prescient. They foreshadowed both the household suffrage and lodger provisions passed by Derby and Disraeli in 1867.

⁵⁵ The Disraeli MSS are held in the Bodleian Library Special Collections and also known as 'Dep. Hughenden'.

⁵⁶ Rawlins was still working, although as an agent under a principal agent, for William Barrow Simonds' candidacy in 1865 – HRO W/B9/2/28 (o) and (ab).

⁵⁷ 'Proposed Reduction of Franchise: Epitome of Information Collected', Disraeli MSS 43/3 fols 24-56.

⁵⁸ Saunders, *Democracy...*, 110 and its note 47.

⁵⁹ Saunders, *Democracy...*, 80 and 119.

⁶⁰ Disraeli MSS 43/3 fol. 54.

John Bright's radical proposals of early 1859, to redistribute seats on a strict population basis, would have deprived Winchester of one of its seats.⁶¹ This however elicited no comment at the 1859 General Election in Winchester. The focus was upon the Derby-Disraeli Bill and the specific, and less specific, proposals of the candidates. The redistribution clauses of the 1867 Act⁶² did not affect Winchester's level of parliamentary representation, it remained a two seat borough. The franchise provisions had a greater impact.

The enfranchisement of compound ratepayers⁶³ was of some significance for Winchester. In eleven of the, by now, twenty-one parishes⁶⁴ wholly or partly within the borough boundaries the Small Tenements Acts, which permitted this, were applied. It was estimated that of the 1,233 men on the Burgess (Municipal) election register 290 were compounders. The calculation assumed that the net 963 on the parliamentary register were all on the municipal register.⁶⁵ This implies that twenty compounders were on the parliamentary register.⁶⁶

However this was a simplistic calculation which ignored key features of the two electoral systems. The Burgess register included all householders, regardless of property value, who had been resident for three years. The parliamentary register included £10 householders who had been resident for one year. Both were subject to ratepaying conditions.⁶⁷ So a £10 householder relatively newly arrived in Winchester could, after a year or so of residence, qualify for the parliamentary register. But he would have to wait until three years or so of residence to enter the Municipal register. Moreover the ten parishes not subject to rate compounding would have contributed ratepayers of homes of a range of values below £10 to the Municipal register.

⁶¹ Disraeli MSS 43/2 fol. 1 'Mr Bright's "Scheme of Disfranchisement and Enfranchisement" as set forth in the *Times* January 18 1859 – by Dr Guy' and 44/2 fols 36-69 'William Newmarch's Statistical Society paper read 15th February 1859; printed copy from the Journal of the Statistical Society of London 1 March 1859 [According to annotation] "*On the Electoral Statistics of England and Wales, 1856-8. - Part II. - RESULTS OF FURTHER EVIDENCE.*" See especially fol. 65.

⁶² See pp. 219-20 above.

⁶³ See pp. 218-9 above.

⁶⁴ Since 1832 various extra-parochial areas had attained parish status, or something approximating to it. In 1858 new entities emerge in the register, in place of these extra-parochial elements, under the titles of 'The Parish of the Close', the 'Parishes of St Mary's College and College Wharf' and the 'Parish of Wolvesey'. These are completed with the emergence in 1859 of 'The Parish of St Cross Precincts' and in 1861 of 'The Parish of College Mill'.

⁶⁵ Disraeli MSS 46/1 "'Electoral Returns: Boroughs and Counties: 1865-66" presented to both Houses of Parliament HMSO London 1866.' p. 253. The net 963 is derived from 991 entries on the 1865/6 register less 25 double entries for more than one £10 house and 3 for ancient rights freemen also qualifying for a £10 house. The number of duplicate entries is lower than that determined for this study for the years either side of this register, a copy of which sadly appears not to exist.

⁶⁶ That is 1,233 – 963 = 270 and 290 – 270 = 20.

⁶⁷ See pp. 169-70 above.

These, of course, were not in the figure for compounders on that register and did not qualify for the parliamentary register. This creates uncertainty as to how many, if any compounders were on the 1865 parliamentary register. It is clear that those using these figures to support their arguments in Cabinet and the House of Commons were building on sand.

This lack of complete inclusion of the parliamentary register within the municipal register is reflected in Winchester's 1868 register, the first after the passage of the 1867 Act. It contained 1,638 entries. After removal of what appear to be duplicates⁶⁸ this reduces to 1,557. That is a 27 per cent increase on the municipal register of 1865. In the intervening three years Winchester was growing, but at a much more sedate rate than this would suggest. This suggests that there were many in Winchester who either were on the parliamentary register but not the municipal register, or were not on the municipal register but qualified under the lesser residence requirement for the parliamentary register once its value threshold was removed.

There were two other minor contributors to the increase in the register in 1868. The new lodger franchise⁶⁹ contributed nine new entries. It was, as Blewett has pointed out, a difficult and fraught franchise. It only contributed major numbers to the electorate in London, Glasgow and Edinburgh and a few other constituencies where the parties were particularly well-organised.⁷⁰ Additionally an error included the names of at least two women, Maria Diver of Fulflood and Mary Reeves of Lower Brook Street,⁷¹ in that year's register. This might have arisen from a misunderstanding as to the outcome of John Stuart Mill's proposed amendment to introduce women's suffrage into the 1867 Act.⁷² It appears to have escaped the attention of the party representatives and the revising barrister at that year's revision court. Nevertheless this error was not repeated in 1869.

The same source as the data on compounders⁷³ provides some insight into one of the great concerns of those proposing and opposing electoral reform. That is the existing level of 'working class' enfranchisement. As Saunders has pointed out, the definition used in official statistical enquiries was broad. It included 'self-employed labourers, shopkeepers and even

⁶⁸ A relatively reliable exercise as there is an 1868 pollbook including those who did not vote.

⁶⁹ See p. 219 above.

⁷⁰ N. Blewett, 'The Franchise in the United Kingdom 1885-1918', *Past & Present* No. 32 (Dec 1965), 40-2.

⁷¹ Serials 1/785 and 2/506

⁷² Saunders, *Democracy...*, 258.

⁷³ Disraeli MSS 46/1 "'Electoral Returns: Boroughs and Counties: 1865-66" presented to both Houses of Parliament HMSO London 1866.' p. 253.

some small employers'.⁷⁴ On this basis the 1865 register was deemed to include 228 working class £10 householders. That is almost 24 per cent of the net electorate, a figure very close to the average across England.⁷⁵ More such potential electors might have been included among the ninety-five male occupiers of properties of Gross Estimated Rental of £10 or more, who were not on the parliamentary register.⁷⁶ Again the claims of Winchester and 'Winchester Man' to be the archetype of the pre-1868 system are reinforced. But what was the impact of the 1867 Act on them?

Winchester and 'Winchester Man': The Impact of the 1867 Reform Act

The calculations of Bright, Rose, Disraeli and the party and Government officials who gathered or produced data for them were put to the test by the 1868 registration round and those of subsequent years. Unfortunately in the case of Winchester only the registers for 1868, 1869 and 1878 survive from the period through to the Redistribution Act of 1885, which reduced Winchester to a single seat borough.⁷⁷

As we have seen⁷⁸ the calculations which Disraeli and others had to hand were flawed. In the case of Winchester the 1868 register contained a net 1,557 names, an increase of 596, or of 62 per cent, on the previous register, that of 1866.⁷⁹ The trend growth in the early 1860s, under the 1832 franchise, had been between twenty and thirty electors per annum. About 8 percentage points might be attributed to that cause. The data does not however permit the identification of those individuals, or indeed those who had replaced those who had departed in the normal course of events. Those on the register represented over 85 per cent of the 1,845 male occupiers identified through returns to Government officials in 1866.⁸⁰ The number of properties had probably increased in the interim so an enfranchisement of about 80 per cent of male householders would probably be a reasonable estimate.

⁷⁴ Saunders, *Democracy...*, 200.

⁷⁵ The 'national average' was 26 per cent – Saunders, *Democracy...*, 200.

⁷⁶ 1,058 properties less 963 net names on register - Disraeli MSS 46/1 "'Electoral Returns: Boroughs and Counties: 1865-66"' presented to both Houses of Parliament HMSO London 1866.' p. 253.

⁷⁷ 48 & 49 Vict. c. 23 s. 4 and Schedule 2.

⁷⁸ See pp. 231-2 above.

⁷⁹ Because of the ongoing Reform debates no registers were produced anywhere in 1867 - R.H.A. Cheffins, *Parliamentary Constituencies and Their Registers since 1832* (London, 1998), 14-5.

⁸⁰ The figure of 1,845 is derived from data at Disraeli MSS 46/1 "'Electoral Returns: Boroughs and Counties: 1865-66"' presented to both Houses of Parliament HMSO London 1866.' p. 253.

This apparently generous level of enfranchisement is however potentially misleading. If we take the adult male population of the borough, excluding the barracks, in 1871 of 3,619⁸¹ as our basis; the 1869 register's net total of 1,542 represents a little less than 43 per cent of Winchester's adult males with the vote. Those men still living at home or with their in-laws following marriage could not even qualify for the difficult to obtain lodger franchise. Others had failed to meet the unchanged residence or rate paying requirements.⁸²

But what of the behaviour of those newcomers to the electoral register? Was it markedly different from those who qualified under the 1832 franchise? The 1868 pollbook provides an opportunity to examine the voting behaviour of the two groups. The electorate was faced with three candidates for the two seats. For the Conservatives there was William Barrow Simonds, who had effectively succeeded East in 1865. For the Liberals there were John Bonham Carter, a Winchester MP since 1847, and A. J. Scott. The partisan options were a plump for Simonds or a straight for Carter and Scott. However a Conservative might wish to use his second vote to express a preference between the two Liberals. The voting behaviours of the two groups are summarised in **Table 7.4 below**.

Table 7.4; Pre- and Post-1867 Voter Behaviour in 1868

Vote	Simonds	Carter/ Scott	Simonds/ Carter	Carter	Simonds/ Scott	Scott	Did Not Vote
Voter Groups							
Pre- 1867	43.0	28.3	13.0	2.7	1.3	0.1	11.6
1868	38.7	36.2	8.0	0.5	2.2	0.3	14.2

Notes: All figures are percentages of votes cast by that group of voters.

Derived from 1868 Pollbook printed by Warren - HRO W/B9/2/83.

There were 817 electors who qualified prior to 1867 and 741 in 1868.

The two groups show broadly similar patterns of behaviour although there is a bias towards the Conservative Simonds amongst those enfranchised prior to 1867. Of these voters 57.3 per cent cast a vote for him as opposed to 48.9 per cent of those first enfranchised in 1868. Carter, as the leading Liberal, received almost equal support from both groups. He received a

⁸¹ See p. 117 above.

⁸² Reiterated in 30 & 31 Vict. c. 102 s.3.

vote from 44.0 per cent of the pre-1867 cohort and from 44.7 per cent of those enfranchised in 1868. It appears that those enfranchised under the 1832 franchise were, by 1868, more Conservative than their newly enfranchised fellow electors. For the Liberals the newly enfranchised voters were, if we examine support for Scott, more inclined to support them. Of this group 38.7 per cent cast a vote for Scott as opposed to 29.7 per cent of those enfranchised under the 1832 franchise. It would appear that Carter's success owed much to Conservative supporters, especially those enfranchised prior to 1867, who split their votes between him and Simonds. It might well be that, as he had declared during the 1859 General Election, Carter depended for success upon what he described as 'non-Liberal support'.⁸³

Nevertheless care must be taken not to read too much into the different behaviours of the two groups. The correlation coefficient of the two sets of data is +0.96 which indicates they are very closely related populations. Indeed it almost matches the value of +1.0 which reflects a perfect relationship.⁸⁴ However it is possible that if those who would have qualified under the 1832 franchise in 1867 and 1868 were removed from the later group the results might be more markedly different.

Some things were different however, as the *Hampshire Chronicle* expressed it, 'considering the darkness into which political parties are supposed to have plunged'.⁸⁵ The growth in the electorate led to a need for changed approaches, which the candidates did not necessarily immediately grasp. In 1868 Carter issued an apology for his inability to personally canvass every elector, something he implied he had done in the past.⁸⁶ In this regard Winchester was in many respects somewhere in between. It was not so large as to embrace the 'machine politics' of places such as Birmingham and Liverpool.⁸⁷ Yet it now had too many electors to permit the personal approach to each and everyone of them.

This is not to say that Winchester, and its ilk, were not the target of what we might regard as 'political machines'. The papers of the Reform League, an organisation founded in 1865 and committed to manhood suffrage and the secret ballot,⁸⁸ include a printed leaflet.

⁸³ HC 16 April 1859.

⁸⁴ P. Hudson, *History by Numbers* (London, 2000), 147-8 and 262.

⁸⁵ HC 19 October 1867. It echoes Derby's phrase about the 1867 Act being 'a leap in the dark'.

⁸⁶ HC 14 November 1868.

⁸⁷ For Birmingham see Hanham, *Elections...*, 140-2 and for Liverpool see the 1883 report of James McComb in H.J. Hanham, *The Nineteenth Century Constitution: Documents and Commentary* (Cambridge, 1969), 284.

⁸⁸ Saunders, *Democracy...*, 226.

Under the title 'THE POLITICAL CRISIS' it lists sixty-seven boroughs returning seventy-five Conservative MPs with majorities of less than 100 votes.⁸⁹ These include William Barrow Simonds representing Winchester. Other targeted seats are in the group of county towns and cathedral cities identified in the earlier analysis of the 1832 system.⁹⁰ The leaflet bears the name 'James Acland, Parliamentary & Electoral Agent (IN THE LIBERAL INTEREST)' and is dated 21 July 1868.

Acland must have been as much 'in the dark' as anyone else for his estimate of Winchester's electorate for the forthcoming General Election is 1,384. That is only 89 per cent of the 1,557 that materialised. It appears his 'discount' of 25 per cent upon the number of householders of properties worth less than £10 was, at least in the case of Winchester, excessive. That is to the extent of ten percentage points. Moreover, in Winchester his claim that 'The "operative Conservatives" being a mere myth, this enormous addition of new electors should give great electoral strength to the Liberal cause' proved false. Simonds topped the poll in 1868 with a majority of 296 over Scott, the Liberal in the unsuccessful third place.

The list of Reform League branches reveals that there was not one in Winchester. However the League felt Winchester was worthy of attention and produced two undated reports upon the constituency.⁹¹ The first came up with a much more accurate estimate of the increase in the electorate, about 600. It did however grossly over-estimate the impact of the lodger franchise, at fifty to sixty of the increase.

The authors of the first report, John Bedford Lane and W C Worley, began by identifying those with influence with the 'Working Men'. These were Dr May, a retired surgeon; Moses Brock, Secretary of the Shoemakers Trade Society; and Harry Facey, a painter. May had entered the register in 1850 and, the pollbooks indicate, only ever voted for Liberal candidates. Brock and Facey were newly enfranchised. Brock advised that the new electors would be 'thoroughly Liberal' and that the 'great bulk' had Liberal employers. The report's authors took great comfort from the Liberal majority on the 'Town Council', a Liberal Mayor and the Dean of the Cathedral, who was identified as a supporter of Gladstone.⁹² They also declared that 'All parties are agreed that the constituency is free from corruption'. They felt that Simonds' cause had been weakened

⁸⁹ George Howell Collection 11/2A/11 – Election Reports 1867-8.

⁹⁰ See pp. 80-1 above. This list includes Buckingham, Ludlow, Huntingdon, Truro, Canterbury and Carlisle.

⁹¹ George Howell Collection 11/2A/11 – Election Reports 1867-8.

⁹² Dean Garnier was seen processing to the 1868 poll in the Liberal ranks – *HC* 21 November 1868.

by his vote on Army flogging and by 'the failure of the Tory Solicitor'. The latter was presumably at the revision court. They felt that with preparation and organisation of the new electors two Liberals could be returned.

There were, however, some negative factors they mentioned, but to which they did not appear to attach much weight. The 'Trade Societies' were very weak. Amongst them the strongest was that of the tailors, but its unnamed Liberal secretary was 'a timid politician...somehow connected with the Cathedral'. The Non-Conformists were not very numerous. However they were generally 'advanced Liberals'. This was due to the labours of the Independent minister, Rev. William Thorn, 'an active Political Liberal'. Thorn had been enfranchised in 1832 and had only voted for a non-Liberal in 1847 when he cast his second vote for the Peelite, Escott. For some reason in 1857 he had eschewed giving the second Liberal, Portal, a vote. There were few temperancers, but they were mainly Liberal.

The second report, by John Hales and S. Brighty, described a visit in which they sought to organise the new electors in the selection of candidates. This appears to have been well in advance of the contest. Carter was instantly endorsed but the new voters knew little of the other two, unreported, names mentioned at the meeting. The 'working men' resolved upon a set of issues on which they would seek pledges from these two men. In order of priority they were:

The secret ballot

Protection of Trade Union funds and a National Arbitration Board

A good compulsory education system

An equalisation [presumably between parishes] of Poor Rates

General support of Gladstone and his Irish Church policy.

Other than Carter only a 'Mr Norton' appeared as a potential candidate, so he was adopted. After the meeting they noted there was no objection to Norton's Catholicism. It appears that this was premature, presumably in Winchester at an election centring upon Irish Church disestablishment, it was a major obstacle to success. Thereafter the only Liberal candidates mentioned are Carter and Scott.

The efforts of the Reform League appear to be the first time that a national organisation sent representatives to Winchester to undertake organisation 'on the ground' for a parliamentary election. Moreover that organisation sought to introduce into the debate issues

of national interest to working-class electors. In 1868 Scott declared that he had been 'requisitioned' to stand, suggesting influence from 'below'. All three candidates addressed the issue of education. Simonds wanted more education without infringing parental authority or freedom of labour. Carter sought to increase 'knowledge' and further education. Scott declared that it was the 'duty of the State to provide for the education of its citizens'. He sought a 'well-considered measure' to embrace instruction in reading and writing to a certain age. But it must be such as not to interfere with labour demand.

But in the cathedral city of Winchester the Irish Church remained a major issue. Simonds followed a mention of Fenianism with his views on the subject. He admitted there was a need for reform but disestablishment and disendowment would add to the problems. It was both unconstitutional and 'the first step either to sacerdotal tyranny or wild fanaticism'. Freedom of conscience was best maintained by the connection between Church and State. Carter, for a Liberal, was not very positive. He merely saw Irish disestablishment as 'inevitable'. For Scott Ireland was the most important issue. Over 300 years the Irish Church had failed to convert, conciliate or civilise. It was very different from England where the majority supported the Established church. He stood for immediate disestablishment with respect for private and vested interests.

Whilst church related issues remained a constant it appears that there was much change in the electorate. From the limited data available it appears that electoral turnover increased in many respects. Of the 740 new electors joining the register in 1868 140, 19 per cent, did not reappear in 1869 or 1878. Only 341, 46 per cent, were still on the 1878 register a mere decade later. Nevertheless, perhaps because moving to a less valuable home after the children left home or economic status declined due to health or retirement, no longer led to loss of the franchise⁹³ those remaining on the register beyond the first year appear to have remained on the register for longer. The cohorts joining the register in 1857 and 1858 only retained 37 and 40 per cent respectively of their numbers in 1868 after a comparable period.

A combination of the increased size of the electorate and the large numbers 'turning over' doubtless increased the level of uncertainty for party officials and candidates. The certainties Salmon and others saw in the 1830s,⁹⁴ if they ever truly existed, were now fast disappearing. It is quite possible that this contributed to the climate which saw the secret ballot

⁹³ See pp. 141-6 above.

⁹⁴ See pp. 111-4 above.

introduced in 1872.⁹⁵ There was now so much uncertainty that this added uncertainty did not really matter. Kinzer, however, sees the secret ballot being introduced as a result of an agreement between Gladstone and Bright to bring the latter into the Government.⁹⁶

The secret ballot drew a veil over the voting behaviour of individuals at the 1874 and 1880 General Elections. For Winchester this is a veil further enhanced by the absence of surviving electoral registers after that for 1869 other than that for 1878. The secret ballot did not have the expected consequences of eroding Conservative support. Powerful influences such as the College fellows and Cathedral prebendaries could no longer see the voting behaviour of employees and suppliers. However the Conservative vote held up to the extent that the two Conservatives, Simonds and Naghten, won at the 1874 General Election. Simonds vote rose by 109 and Naghten polled 215 more than the defeated Scott had in 1868. On the other hand Carter polled 78 fewer votes than at the previous contest.⁹⁷

There were two factors working in favour of the Conservatives at this election. First the Gladstone Government was in a state of disunion having alienated its own supporters on a number of issues. Its Licensing Act had been too severe for the 'trade', but too feeble for the temperancers. The Education Act only filled the 'gaps' and therefore left many Non-Conformists with only an Anglican school for their children to attend. Simonds pointed to Cabinet divisions and Radical desertions as the cause of the failure to pass four out of five Government Bills in 1873. Carter however fought on the Government's record. He claimed that the Education Act would have influence for centuries and that the Government had passed 'many measures calculated for the welfare of the country'. Naghten, in an echo of earlier years, claimed to be 'a strong adherent to Conservative cause'. As to issues electors should ask him during his canvass.⁹⁸

Secondly the Conservatives had two candidates in the field acting together. Indeed, for the first time, they were selected, or endorsed, by the Annual General Meeting of the 'Conservative Association'. A meeting hastily called upon the surprise dissolution of Parliament by Gladstone.⁹⁹ On both issues and organisation Winchester now paid close regard to happenings in Westminster and on the national political stage. Yet at the same time the two

⁹⁵ 35 & 36 Vict. c. 33 s.2.

⁹⁶ B.L. Kinzer, *The Ballot Question in Nineteenth-Century English Politics* (New York, 1982), 98-103.

⁹⁷ *McCalmont...*, 321.

⁹⁸ *HC* 31 January 1874.

⁹⁹ *HC* 24 and 31 January 1874.

Conservatives were local men. Simonds was a local landowner who played a major role in the development of mid- and late-Victorian Winchester.¹⁰⁰ Naghten was a major in the Hampshire Militia Artillery.¹⁰¹ The great advantage for the Conservatives of two candidates, who ran as a team, was that this 'flushed out' those who voted for Carter as their 'preferred Liberal' when there was no second Conservative candidate. Moreover if they had previously felt pressure from employers etc. to vote for Carter they now had the veil of the secret ballot.

In 1880 the Conservative Government's record, combined with economic depression and Gladstone's moral rallying cry in his Midlothian campaigns,¹⁰² served the Winchester Conservatives less well. Although they had two candidates, Simonds and Moss, who acted together to such an extent that only thirty-five votes separated them, the sole Liberal, Viscount Baring, headed the poll.¹⁰³

Winchester's politics, indeed the politics and options offered to 'Winchester Man' had changed much since the mid 1830s and early 1840s. National issues dominated the discourse at elections, albeit now views thereon were more often than not expressed by candidates with local roots. These candidates were now willing to run together on joint platforms. Organisation had adapted to changes in the law. For example the 1867 legislation forbade in boroughs the payment by candidates for the conveyance of voters to the poll.¹⁰⁴ Yet at the 1874 General Election in Winchester it was reported that carriages in party colours began to run to the poll from eight o'clock in the morning.¹⁰⁵ An era in which party supporters provided freely of their time and resources had arrived.

At the same election the challenge of the secret ballot was met by what the *Hampshire Chronicle* called the 'card trick'. Party officials sought the names of voters as they left poll. This was described as futile in determining state of poll but useful in determining who had not voted. This allowed party officials to encourage suspected supporters to turn out. However for the first time the result was not known at the close of polling, or as was often the case a good while

¹⁰⁰ C. Grover, *Hyde from Dissolution to Victorian Suburb* (Winchester, 2012), 158-86.

¹⁰¹ *HC* 31 January 1874.

¹⁰² Hanham, *Elections...*, 228-31.

¹⁰³ *McCalmont...*, 321.

¹⁰⁴ 30 & 31 Vict. c.102 s. 36 – an exception was made for five 'agricultural' or 'rural' boroughs such as Aylesbury.

¹⁰⁵ *HC* 7 February 1874.

before it.¹⁰⁶ There was a five-hour delay between the close of polling and the declaration of the result.¹⁰⁷

Aspects of carnival and disorder however continued to attend Winchester elections. In the case of that of 1874 the carnival aspects included not only the carriages in party colours but a goat with Conservative colours on its horns and a handbill seeking votes for Simonds and Naghten. It was paraded by an escort of boys. These boys were not the only non-electors involved. A predominance of Conservative colours was reported as including those worn by women and children. By contrast with this decorum part of a Conservative election meeting was shouted down. On polling day it was reported that proceedings became more rumbustious after one o'clock. Fighting among the 'half-drunk' ensued at this point. Flour was thrown but generally it was felt that there had not been much trouble. It was said to be much better than the prolonged elections of yore.¹⁰⁸

A new form of politics was emerging which saw candidates, often local men, addressing national issues and the records of Governments. They and their supporters had to organise themselves in new ways to deal with increasing number of voters. They also had to adapt to accommodate changes in the law such as the secret ballot and early measures to combat corruption. This called for the use of volunteers and the involvement of those not previously engaged in the political process, women and children. In the 1830s adult males without the vote might have been paid to carry a banner or play in a candidate's procession band. Now the sons of supporters among 'Winchester Men' might be shepherding a goat, in party colours, along the High Street.

For the time being Winchester and 'Winchester Man' remained archetypes of the keys to electoral success, particularly for the Conservative party. However the Redistribution Act of 1885 would change the British electoral system profoundly. It is possible that the reduction of Winchester to a single seat unleashed the latent Conservative strength in Winchester and among 'Winchester Men'. For Winchester returned, as its sole representative, a Conservative or Unionist MP at all elections from 1885 until World War One.¹⁰⁹ Conservative dominance of the

¹⁰⁶ See for example the schedule, by time, of the state of the poll in 1857. This shows Portal as a clear loser by the middle of the day – *HC* 28 March 1857.

¹⁰⁷ *HC* 7 February 1874.

¹⁰⁸ *HC* 31 January and 7 February 1874.

¹⁰⁹ *McCalmont...*, 257 and 68 (Blue pp. – two sections).

period until 1906 might indicate a continued importance to the result of General Elections of 'Winchester Man'. However this is beyond the scope of this study.

CONCLUSION

This Thesis set out to explore the mid-nineteenth-century British electoral system through the contents of the electoral registers and their associated legislation. The data obtained from the electoral registers when combined with that from pollbooks, the census etc. was found to be extensive. The time available limited the degree to which this could be exploited.¹ But it appears to be a most useful source for Winchester and probably other constituencies.

The parliamentary representation system of Britain from 1832 and then 1868 was examined in depth.² It was shown in both cases that boroughs in the South of England with small electorates were crucial to parties, especially the Conservative party, in securing a Commons majority. Winchester was shown to be representative of these boroughs. As a consequence of this, 'Winchester Man' was advanced as the archetype 'target voter' of the period, especially that from 1832 to 1868. Evidence was found in the correspondence of Disraeli and the diary of Sir Philip Rose, his 'national election agent', that Winchester was targetted in this manner.³

This situation was also found to apply from 1868 to 1880. However Winchester was found to be slightly less representative of the group of 'small' boroughs in this period.⁴

The environment within which 'Winchester Man' lived, worked, married, set up home, voted and died was then examined. This was essentially an examination of the condition and position of Winchester in the period. It was established that Winchester and 'Winchester Man' had strong, but not exclusive links, with the local agricultural community and the county's administrative and social scene. At the same time there was a differentiation from the county and a fiercely defended independence.⁵ This independence differentiated these small southern boroughs, which were often cathedral cities or county towns, from the county constituencies. This made them a valid and separate segment of the parliamentary representation framework.

¹ For example census data on live in servants as an indicator of wealth was not explored – See p. 57 above.

² See Chapters 3 and 7 above.

³ See pp. 80 and 85 above.

⁴ See Chapter 7 above.

⁵ See Chapter 4 above.

The nature of 'Winchester Man' was then addressed.⁶ He was found to have a relatively short average life as an elector – thirteen years. This 'elector life' was found to very often correspond with the peak of his socio-economic standing lifecycle, usually in his forties. Thus before 1868 many electors, who on average lived to sixty-one, ceased to be such well before death as ill-health and declining economic status with advancing years reduced their socio-economic status. Lesser, but large, numbers did however die whilst on the register or shortly after leaving it. The evidence from Winchester after 1868 is sparse but it is probable that with the franchise threshold lowered elector lives were extended.

These short 'elector lives', thirteen is the average so as many as half were even shorter, were a cause of uncertainty for party officials as to political allegiance. This was particularly important in boroughs, such as Winchester, where seats were often won by narrow majorities. Adding to the uncertainty of the political parties' officials was the increased mobility of the population. These uncertainties lead to the challenging of the somewhat deterministic views of earlier writers such as Radice, Salmon and Mitchell. It appears that the understanding of social networks was more difficult with a more mobile population. The revision courts were the scene of considerable partisan activity, but some electors crept through the registration process 'under the radar' or with their presumed loyalty untested. Therefore they did not absolutely decide the outcome of future contests. The increasing incidence of contested elections is claimed to arise from this increasing level of uncertainty.

This level of uncertainty increased with the expansion of the electorate in 1868. An increase in uncertainty to such a degree that it appears that the secret ballot became less of a threat.⁷ Things were so uncertain already.

'Winchester Man's' electoral behaviour was explored.⁸ This was, certainly before 1868 but especially in the 1830s and 1840s, much influenced by the registration process and revision courts. His voting behaviour was intrinsically of a politically partisan nature but tempered by an initial diffidence to vote at all. Much partisanship, perhaps stirred by the clear political divide in the revision court, remained latent due to the failure of the political parties regularly to field two candidates in a two-seat borough. Even when two candidates from the same party stood they often did not unite on a common 'ticket'. This failed to encourage partisan voting behaviour

⁶ See Chapter 5 above.

⁷ See pp. 238-9 above.

⁸ See Chapters 6 and 7 above.

particularly for those already in the habit of 'splitting' their votes. This was a consequence of their only finding one candidate of their preferred party at an earlier election. They then expressed a preference for one of the candidates of the other party. This then had a tendency to develop into a 'loyalty' to that second candidate or a habit.

By the 1880s a new form of politics was emerging which saw candidates, often local men, addressing national issues and the records of Governments. They and their supporters had to organise themselves in new ways to deal with increasing voter numbers of voters. This required the use of volunteers, including women. It is possible, but beyond the scope of this study, that with the 1885 Redistribution Act 'Winchester Man' remained the archetypes key to electoral success, particularly for the Conservative party.

This Thesis has attempted to cast light upon nineteenth-century elections and electoral process together with the nature of one of its archetype voters. It is hoped that it has demonstrated, to some degree, the potential usefulness of the contents of electoral registers and a study of the detailed local workings of the registration process to other similar studies.

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APPENDIX 1: WINCHESTER ELECTION RESULTS 1832-1880

1832	Mildmay, P. St. J.	L	351	1859	East, Sir J.B.	C	403
	Baring, W.B.	L	263		Carter, J.B.	L	348Cart
	East, J.B.	C	151		Fleming, T.W.	C	342
					Lefevre, G.S.	L	230
1835	East, J.B.	C	254		(East retires)		
	Baring, W.B.	L	176	1864	Fleming, T.W.	C	Unopposed
	Mildmay, P. St. J.	L	123				
1837	East, J.B.	C	258	1865	Carter, J.B.	L	459
	Mildmay, P. St. J.	L	242		Simonds, W.B.	C	367
	Escott, B.	C	216		Fleming, T.W.	C	336
1841	East, J.B.	C	320		(Carter appointed Lord of Treasury)		
	Escott, B.	C	292	1866	Carter, J.B.	L	361
	Crowder, R.B.	L	191		Lempriere, C.	C	46
	Pigott, F.	L	166				
1847	Carter, J.B.	L	338	1868	Simonds, W.B.	C	840
	East, Sir J.B.	C	315		Carter, J.B.	L	727
	Escott, B	Peelite	234		Scott, J.	L	548
1852	Carter, J.B.	L	376	1874	Simonds, W.B.	C	949
	East, Sir J.B.	C	369		Naghten, Maj. A.R.	C	763
	Bulpett, W.W.	L	288		Carter, J.B.	L	649
1857	Carter J.B.	L	397	1880	Baring, Viscount	L	979
	East, Sir J.B.	C	385		Moss, R.	C	808
	Portal, W.S	L	252		Simonds, W.B.	C	773

PTO For Sources and Key.

Source: *McCalmont's Parliamentary Pollbook of All Elections 1832-1918* (edited by J.Vincent and M. Stenton, Brighton, 1971), 321 (White Pages).

KEY: L = Reformer or Whig or Liberal depending upon time and individual's politics
C = Tory or Conservative or Protectionist depending upon time and individual's politics

APPENDIX 2: BRIEF BIOGRAPHIES OF SOME MPs AND OTHERS

Baring, Viscount Francis George

Francis George Baring (1850-1929) was the eldest son of the Earl of Northbrook. After an Army career he became a Hampshire magistrate. In 1880 he fought Winchester as a Liberal and won a seat. He was defeated at the 1885 contest but sat for North Bedfordshire from 1886 until 1892. In the later period he was a Liberal Unionist.

Baring, William Bingham

The Rt. Hon. William Bingham Baring (1799-1864) was the son of Alexander Baring, First Baron Ashburton. His father, Alexander, formerly a very active partner in Barings Bank, was a leading opponent of the various parliamentary Reform Bills – a position which propelled him from the family's traditional Whig roots into the forefront of Peel's Conservative opposition. Alexander Baring owned The Grange and its growing estate (more than 15,000 acres by 1848) at Northington, seven miles from Winchester. His elder brother (Bingham Baring's uncle), Sir Thomas Baring, was a leading figure on the county bench and in county affairs, especially on the Reform side. He owned the 9,000 acre Stratton Park estate, a similar distance from Winchester.

Bingham Baring fought Winchester unsuccessfully in 1831 on behalf of Reform. In 1832 he won the seat formerly under the nomination of the Duke of Buckingham and held it in 1835. Then however he joined his father in support of Peel's minority administration and followed the Conservatives into opposition. He then held seats for North Staffordshire (1837-41) and Thetford (1841-48) after which he succeeded as Lord Ashburton.

Buckingham, Duke of

Richard Temple-Nugent-Brydges-Chandos Grenville, first duke of Buckingham and Chandos (1776-1839). The Duke was infamously fat, profligate and licentious. His major achievements were to marry a wife who brought with her a considerable acreage and to secure the dukedom from Liverpool in 1822 in return for the Grenvillite faction's parliamentary votes. Having a Roman Catholic mother and sister he supported Catholic Emancipation.

Buckingham was an eccentric, though perhaps in parts subtle, opponent of Reform; rather than being merely obstructive, at the height of the Lords debates on the Second Reform Bill of 1831 he had attempted to launch his own spoiling bill.

The Duke's local base was at Avington Park, three miles from Winchester, used by the Duchess during her estrangement from him. The Duchess's presence there is probably behind a number of lurid squibs about Buller East, seen as the Duke's continuing nominee for a Winchester seat.

Carter, John Bonham

John Bonham Carter (1817-1884) was the son of a long-serving Portsmouth MP. He was himself a Hampshire magistrate and one of its Deputy-Lieutenants from 1848. He was a Liberal first contesting Winchester, successfully, in 1847. He sat for the borough until defeated in 1874. Briefly a Lord of the Treasury in 1866. Became Chairman of Committees for the Whole House in 1872.

Chandos, Marquis of

Richard Plantagenet Temple-Nugent-Brydges-Chandos-Grenville, second duke of Buckingham and Chandos (1797-1861). Chandos was elected High Steward of Winchester for life, by the 'old' corporation, on 26th November 1823. Following the Municipal Reform Act he was almost immediately removed and replaced in 1836 by the Reform MP for the county's Northern Division, C.S. Lefevre. He was M.P. for Buckinghamshire 1818-39, when he succeeded his father as Duke of Buckingham.

Unlike his father, he opposed Catholic Emancipation – making him, despite his dissolute behaviour, something of a hero for the Winchester clergy. Politically best known as the mover of the 'Chandos Clause' adding 'tenants-at-will' in counties to those enfranchised by the 1832 Reform; and as the 'Farmer's Friend' in his defence of the Corn Laws and campaign for Malt Tax repeal.

Crowder, Sir Richard Budden

Sir Richard Budden Crowder (1796-1859) as a barrister fought Winchester for the Whig/Liberals in 1841. Held a seat at Liskeard from 1849 until 1854. Gave up the seat when appointed a judge.

East, Edward Hyde

Sir Edward Hyde East, first baronet, (1764-1847) returned to Parliament for Winchester in 1823 after a decade in a legal post in India. He was now linked by marriage to Buckingham through his son, James Buller, having become Buckingham's son-in-law. Sir Edward also shared with Buckingham an interest in the West Indies. Previously, as M.P. for Great Bedwyn (1792-6) and the great grandson of a Jamaica pioneer, he had sought to combat agitation for slave trade abolition. He retired from Parliament in 1831 – being replaced by his son.

East, James Buller

Sir James Buller East, second baronet (1789-1878). James Buller East in 1831 succeeded his father, Sir Edward Hyde East, as the Duke of Buckingham's nominee for one of the Winchester seats. M.P. for Winchester 1831-32 and 1835-64. Aligned himself as an early adherent to Peel's Conservatism as expressed in the Tamworth Manifesto. Led an undistinguished but party loyalist political career – his one innovation was to introduce a bill to prevent the use of dogs as beasts of burden.

Escott, Bickham

Bickham Escott (1800-?) unsuccessfully fought West Somerset in December 1832 and January 1835 and Westminster in May 1833. He was equally unsuccessful in Winchester in 1837 but won one of its seats in 1841. Whilst representing Winchester he voted with Peel on Corn Law Repeal and was defeated at the 1847 General Election. Subsequent attempts at Cheltenham and Plymouth were equally unsuccessful. He was educated at Winchester College and 'nearly related' to the Warden of Winchester College, R.S. Barter.

Fleming, Thomas Willis

Thomas Willis Fleming (1810-?) a Hampshire magistrate and one of its Deputy-Lieutenants. He unsuccessfully contested the Isle of Wight as a Protectionist and Derbyite Conservative in 1847 and 1857. He first contested Winchester in 1859. He briefly, in 1864, inherited Edward Buller East's seat in an unopposed by-election. He was then defeated at the 1865 General Election.

Garnier, Thomas

Thomas Garnier (1776-1873) was educated with George Canning by 'Flogging Richards' at Hyde Abbey School just outside Winchester's city walls. The garden at his Bishopstoke rectory (between Winchester and Southampton) was famed. His early ecclesiastical advancement owed much to his family and Bishop Brownlow North (1781-1820) half brother of Prime Minister North.

Garnier was an active supporter of the former Canningite Palmerston in his 1832 and 1835 campaigns in the Southern Division of Hampshire. Lord Melbourne nominated him as Dean of Winchester in 1840 in succession to Thomas Rennell and he served as such until 1872.

Jacob, Philip

Philip Jacob - a prebendary in the 1830s had been ordained by Bishop Sumner in Llandaff in 1827. He followed Sumner to Farnham Castle as his private chaplain; in 1845 he was presented by Sumner (as patron) to the Rectory of Crawley with Hunton (near Winchester) worth £690 per annum in 1831. In 1834 Sumner made him a canon/prebendary. He became Archdeacon in 1860.

Lefevre, George Shaw

George Shaw Lefevre (1831-1928) fought Winchester unsuccessfully early in his career, at the 1859 General Election. He sat for Reading from 1863 until 1885 and for Bradford, Central from 1886 until 1895. He held a number of ministerial posts under Russell and Gladstone. In 1906 he was created Baron Eversley.

Mildmay, Paulet St John

Paulet St John Mildmay, (1791-1845) was the younger son of Sir Henry Paulet St John Mildmay (1764-1808), who purchased the nomination to one of the Winchester seats in the late 1790s. In 1818 Paulet succeeded his elder brother in the family's parliamentary seat, serving as a Winchester M.P. until 1835 and again 1837-41.

Mildmay lived in the shadow of his formidable mother, the Dowager Lady Mildmay. She had an estate of over 3,000 acres at Dogmersfield in North East Hampshire, a home in Eaton Square and Eastgate (or Mildmay) House at the eastern end of Winchester High Street. Lady Mildmay, although a generous benefactor of the Winchester poor, spent so little time in

Winchester that the *Hampshire Chronicle* announced her arrival and departure. She also exercised manorial rights at a number of locations in the area. The family's more valuable estates were in Essex and Somerset, the latter county taking Mildmay's attention immediately after his re-election in May 1831. He declared in his notice of 2 May, thanking the freemen for that honour, that he was off to support the Reform candidates there.

Moss, Richard

Richard Moss (1823-1905) was a Winchester brewer and Secretary of the Winchester Brewers' Association. In 1880 he fought the borough as a Conservative and won a seat. In 1885 he stood down but upon the death of the new Conservative MP (Colonel Tottenham) he successfully fought a by-election in 1888. He retired at the 1892 General Election.

Naghten, Arthur Robert

Arthur Robert Naghten (1829-1881) was a county magistrate and officer in the Hampshire Militia Artillery. He successfully fought Winchester, as a Conservative, at the 1874 General Election but chose to retire at the 1880 General Election.

Pigott, Francis

Francis Pigott (1809-1863) fought Winchester for the Whig/Liberals in 1841. He was a Hampshire magistrate and an officer in the North Hants Yeomanry. Sat for Reading from 1847 until 1860. Resigned his seat when appointed Governor of the Isle of Man.

Rennell, Thomas

Rennell, Thomas (1754-1840) - following his sermons attacking the French Revolution Pitt, an important patron for Rennell, called him 'the Demosthenes of the pulpit'. Rennell's library of over 3600 books majored on the 'Catholic question' – he was consistently hostile to Roman Catholic claims in Britain although sympathetic to French émigré priests living in the King's House, Winchester in his role as inspector. Pitt appointed him Master of the Temple (1798-1826), giving him influential legal connections, and Dean of Winchester (1805-40). In the latter role he supervised the cathedral restoration of 1815-20.

Simonds, William Barrow

William Barrow Simonds (1820-1911) was a local landowner. His holdings were particularly concentrated on the northern fringes of Winchester. He played a significant role in the development of housing in that area. He was both a County and a City Magistrate. He was also Captain-Commandant of the 1st Hampshire Volunteers. He first fought Winchester at the 1865 General Election and won a seat. He held his seat until defeated at the 1880 General Election. In 1888 he became a Hampshire County Council Alderman.

Sumner, Bishop Charles

Sumner, Charles Richard (1790-1874). The son of a retired country vicar, Sumner owed his advancement to friends at court. (Friends won it was rumoured by himself marrying the girl one of his noble charges wished, inappropriately, to wed whilst in his charge on the Grand Tour.) Although they won him George IV's favour, the King's proposal in 1820 to make him a canon of Windsor whilst a mere curate was too much for Liverpool's sense of propriety. Liverpool stuck to his position exasperating the King as he had a peer who, in another case, declared of his views 'Merit, indeed. We are come to a pretty pass if they talk of merit for a bishopric'

Sumner however became Bishop of Llandaff in 1826 before being translated to Winchester in 1827. During his brief Llandaff episcopate Sumner demonstrated a keen awareness of the Church's failing to serve the people of industrial South Wales. In the Winchester diocese the 'Claphamite Evangelical' Sumner, shaped by the influence at Cambridge of Charles Simeon, set about a campaign of reform and reinvigoration. Initially he addressed the diocese's 'miserable support' for the missionary societies establishing local societies and presiding at that in Winchester founded in 1829. In 1837 he moved on to the diocese's own needs, founding a Diocesan Church Building Society. Wellington was brow beaten into chairing the inaugural meeting in Winchester. In late 1838 Sumner turned to education, establishing a training college for masters and a Diocesan Board of Education.

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