

LONDON ELECTORAL HISTORY – STEPS TOWARDS DEMOCRACY

2.1 POLL BOOKS

Prior to 1832, the qualifications for being a metropolitan elector varied between the different constituencies. Hence historians need to examine with care the nature of the franchise (see section 3) but, even before that, the nature of the sources. Indeed, it can be said that source-criticism is the essence of scholarship.¹ This section accordingly analyses the sources used for creating the LED. It not only explains how poll books came to exist (and to be preserved), but it also assesses their reliability and how they can be used by historians.

Historians working on the period prior to the rise of public opinion polling at the end of World War II must infer the political behaviour of individuals from aggregated data.² Whilst this is far less costly than the collection of individual-level data, there are a number of problems inherent in it. Ballot papers in British parliamentary elections are aggregated within each constituency prior to counting, making the constituency the smallest possible area for spatial or ‘ecological’ analysis.³ No social data are included on the ballot papers, and constituencies are rarely coterminous with those census registration districts for which social data are available.⁴

Meanwhile, the overall ‘ecological’ analysis of political data (as exemplifying a local or regional community) suffers from the considerable problem that relationships at the aggregate level often do not hold true at the individual level.⁵ For example, national-supremacist candidates may thrive in constituencies with many immigrant electors, not because the immigrant voters support them, but because their arrival stimulates the old-established population to express resentments arising from competition for housing and employment.⁶

2.1.1 Poll book sources generated by open voting

By contrast, historians working on the period of open voting have in poll books a rich source of individual-level behavioural data. In the English

context, poll books are the records of voting in parliamentary elections prior to the introduction of the ballot in 1872.⁷ Although printed poll books are a peculiarly English phenomenon,⁸ open voting was not confined to the British Isles. It was customary in parts of the United States until 1896.⁹ And it persisted in Denmark until 1900; in Prussia until 1918; and in Hungary, strikingly, until 1938.¹⁰

Poll books contain the names of the voters and details of the candidates for whom each polled. The simplest poll book is thus a list of the names of those who voted for a particular candidate.¹¹ Many also contain supplementary data, most commonly lists of those who voted for other candidates.¹² Further information recorded in county poll books may include where the voter lived, the location of his freehold, and the name of his tenant. Meanwhile borough poll books commonly record the voter's address and occupation. This was the standard format before 1832. All voters in this period can be accurately described by male pronouns (as already noted in website section 1.9.1). That state of affairs was sustained by strongly entrenched custom rather than by legal proscription, so that women were *de facto* excluded from the suffrage, even if they wielded influence behind the scenes.

Occasionally, the poll books recorded also the voter's religious affiliation;¹³ his family relationships;¹⁴ his tax assessment;¹⁵ the name of his livery company;¹⁶ or how he had voted at a previous election.¹⁷ Sometimes, too, the books included informal lists of qualified electors who did not poll.¹⁸ Moreover, after 1832, there are frequent examples of borough poll books that indicated the voter's qualification for voting, noting whether he was an 'old' or a 'new' elector, as well as providing information about the property that qualified him to vote.

Poll books have survived in both manuscript and printed form. Manuscript poll books may be either the poll clerks' copy,¹⁹ or contemporary check books maintained by the candidates' agents and inspectors.²⁰ The role of the poll clerk was a responsible one, usually taken very seriously.²¹ Meanwhile printed poll books were published for a variety of reasons. In preparation for a scrutiny, they provided an opportunity for neighbours or fellow liverymen to check for fraudulent voting,²² and they acted as *pro-forma* canvassing books for a subsequent election.²³ Furthermore, some were distributed after the election by candidates to their supporters;²⁴ and some may have been purchased by voters wishing to see their own names in print.

The use of the poll books for electioneering purposes indicates that

there was often a degree of organisation attached to the campaign process, and that groups or parties had a life-span beyond the moment of just one election. However, their waxing and waning roles should not be taken to imply that there were two long-term and permanently opposed national political parties, with rival ideologies. This had been assumed, for example, by G.M. Trevelyan, who wrote of ‘the two perennial groups labelled Whig and Tory ... [which] continued as the strongest and most lasting element in our public life from the days of Clarendon and Shaftesbury to the days of Salisbury and Gladstone.’²⁵ Rather the rhetoric of partisanship was seen as divisive, and was avoided by most candidates throughout the period. Many candidates consciously tried to remain neutral. An example was Admiral Hood who wrote in 1783, when considering his prospective political career, that: ‘I shall ever most carefully and studiously stand clear, as far as I am able, of all suspicion of being a *party man*’.²⁶ Indeed, as already noted, no party labels were ever used at the polls throughout this period. In response to the complexities of allegiances and those who tried to stand above the partisan fray, the LED does not pre-allocate party labels to candidates (as already noted in section 1.7 Descriptive terminology), thus allowing users to interpret the evidence for themselves.

Historians have generally worked with the printed poll books.²⁷ There are a number of reasons for this. First, the destruction in 1907 of the manuscript poll books formerly preserved among the public records at the Crown Office has left many elections recorded only in printed editions.²⁸ Secondly, printed poll books are legible, complete, and accessible. Yet not all contested parliamentary elections led to printed editions of poll books. Often poll books for elections in counties and large cities were not printed,²⁹ presumably because of the costs involved.³⁰ The introduction of electoral registration after the Reform Act of 1832 led to the first arrival of a hybrid document, the marked electoral register. In such examples, the printed electoral registers were annotated by hand with indications of the candidates for whom each voter polled.

For the creation of the LED, both printed and manuscript poll books have been used, together with marked registers where these have survived.³¹ All three of these kinds of document record electoral behaviour, and must be distinguished from canvassing books, which show the declared voting intentions of the electors. Although a few canvassing books survive, these have not been incorporated into the LED.³² Simple lists of voters survive for two elections: these are rare but

have similarities with poll books, except that they only record who voted and contain no information on their political choices.³³ Nonetheless all information about turnout (whether an elector voted or not) is of great importance, so these lists together with lists of unpolled London liverymen have been incorporated into the LED.

2.1.2 The advent and survival of poll books

The origins of the practice of recording votes are obscure. Early elections were decided by a show of hands; indeed, the show of hands long continued to determine the outcome of many elections. Then, in the early seventeenth century, some poll lists were compiled, either as an official record of voting or as evidence to support a petition to the House of Commons in controverted elections.³⁴

By the 1660s manuscript poll books were becoming commonplace.³⁵ In 1696, fresh legislation³⁶ required that in county elections some formal record be kept, in all cases of contests that could not be determined by a simple show of hands:

In case the said election be not determined upon the view ... but that a poll shall be required for the determination thereof, then the said sheriff ... shall forthwith there proceed to take the said poll ... and ... shall appoint such number of clerks as shall to him seem meet and convenient for taking thereof; which clerks shall all take the said poll ... and to set down the names of each freeholder, and the place of his freehold, and for whom he shall poll. And be it further enacted, that every sheriff, under-sheriff, mayor, bailiff, and other officer, to whom the execution of any writ or precept shall belong for the electing members to serve in parliament, shall forthwith deliver to such person or persons, as shall desire the same, a copy of the poll taken at such election, paying only a reasonable charge for writing the same.

Initially, it was only at county elections that there was direct authority for returning officers to appoint poll clerks. But in 1725 London gained the statutory right to have poll clerks appointed, when it was declared that ‘The presiding officer ... shall, in case a poll be demanded, appoint a convenient number of clerks to take the same’.³⁷

By another statute of 1746,³⁸ which applied to cities that constituted counties of themselves (and were thus outside the jurisdiction of the

surrounding county), the sheriff was to allow ‘a check book for every poll book of each candidate’, implying that the sheriff had power to appoint clerks to keep poll books. But no provision was made for the permanent preservation of poll books, although these records continued to provide crucial evidence in the event of a disputed election.³⁹ Indeed, not until the statute of 1843 was the preservation of borough poll books officially required.⁴⁰

By the time that borough poll books were required to be deposited, the run of printed poll books for London had already ended, whilst Westminster had already acquired a fine series of electoral records among the muniments of the Westminster Sessions of the Peace. Manuscript poll books from London’s parliamentary elections are rare: that of the by-election of 1781 is the only one so far encountered. Westminster’s early eighteenth-century poll books had already disappeared by 1789.⁴¹ But, with the exception of the election of 1807, the series for Westminster is complete for the period between 1774 and 1820, although a number of poll books have subsequently decayed.⁴² Quite possibly the poll books were handed down from one high bailiff to his successor before finding their last resting-place.

England’s earliest printed poll book (from the Essex by-election of 1694) pre-dates the statutory requirement for the taking of polls, and many pre-date the requirement for the preservation of poll books. But the taking of polls rapidly stimulated the appearance of printed editions: of which about 2,200 survive.⁴³ Historians have largely relied upon these printed editions, and a number of printed editions survive for the metropolitan region. Manuscript poll books survive for many Middlesex and Westminster elections for which no printed edition was published, as well as for London’s parliamentary by-election of 1781. Hence, in compiling the LED, these have been used, together with surviving polls from non-parliamentary elections, to provide additional material when appropriate. Yet the completeness of printed poll books gives them advantages over the fragmentary survivals of manuscript poll books, despite potential errors in transcription and typesetting, so the core of the LED rests upon political choices that were made publicly and later published.

It may further be noted that the study of voting behaviour from all poll books has the great advantage of studying evidence that was recorded for the purpose for which it can be analysed: for votes were cast in order to be counted.

2.1.3 Poll books and the study of electoral behaviour

Early attempts at the social analysis of poll books pre-date the application of computers to the discipline. In a trail-blazing article of 1960, Rudé examined the electoral behaviour of individual voters over successive elections to reveal ‘a close concordance between those voting Proctor-Cooke and Luttrell on the one hand, and among those voting Wilkes and Glynn [the radicals] on the other’.⁴⁴ It was Rudé’s great good fortune to discover in the Middlesex poll books of 1768-9 not only a source that allowed him to explore the social context of the Wilkites but also one in which the electoral data were already linked by the hand of an unknown contemporary scribe.⁴⁵ Rudé’s spatial analysis of voting showed that rural Middlesex was less radical than the urban parishes. Hence Wilkite support was concentrated in ‘the populous urban parishes lying to the east and north of the City’.⁴⁶ Furthermore, Rudé’s equally pioneering use of rate books for social analysis demonstrated that a majority of the more substantial voters polled for Proctor or Luttrell, while the vote for Wilkes, the anti-establishment hero, was drawn from the lesser freeholders.⁴⁷

Meanwhile, Victorian county poll books from the period after the Reform Act were adopted as a key source by D.C. Moore, to demonstrate the continuance of what he termed as ‘deference communities’ that followed aristocratic leadership.⁴⁸ Analysis of nineteenth-century poll book data was continued by J.R. Vincent, whose prodigious efforts to make sense of dozens of electoral contests led him to reject a dichotomous class conflict between Liberals and Tories but to identify instead a myriad of social and occupational interests in play, depending upon the local circumstances.⁴⁹ Other studies have also explored local and regional variants, noting the two-way interactions between political leadership and voter concerns.⁵⁰

Before the first application of the computer to the discipline, historians had shown great ingenuity in using poll books for a variety of purposes, such as J.H. Plumb’s calculations of the size of the electorate under the Stuart kings.⁵¹ However, the range of questions that could be examined systematically was immeasurably augmented once the power of the computer was applied. Here the pioneering work came from W.A. Speck who first formulated, in relation to the county electorates of the early eighteenth century, the questions of behaviour, loyalty, and turnover that continue to dominate the subject.⁵²

So was advanced the methodological sophistication of a field that has come to be known as historical ‘psephology’, appropriating a new term launched into circulation by D.E. Butler in 1952.⁵³ Thus, at much the same time as Speck, Michael Drake first used a computer to perform record linkage on poll book data. This technique enabled him to construct ‘psephological trees’ for the electors of Ashford, Kent, in the mid-nineteenth century.⁵⁴ Similar work of considerable methodological sophistication by Mitchell and Cornford led to a rudimentary ‘flow of the vote’ model for the nineteenth-century borough of Cambridge.⁵⁵ This form of analysis was characterised by a shift from a single poll book towards the linkage of two or more poll books,⁵⁶ using increasingly sophisticated algorithms. Other have also linked poll book data to other sources. Thus R.J. Morris combined polling data with information from directories and voluntary associations to explore the dynamics of middle class formation in newly enfranchised Leeds.⁵⁷

Meanwhile, J.A. Phillips made significant methodological and substantive contributions. His *Electoral behaviour in unreformed England* showed a rise in partisanship in the later years of the eighteenth century.⁵⁸ Later studies by Phillips revealed an increasingly participatory electorate, especially in relation to partisan alignments at the time of the Reform Act of 1832.⁵⁹ His approach was matched by O’Gorman’s finely nuanced synthesis of much recent work on the local context of electoral politics, together with an analysis of a wide variety of borough constituencies throughout the Hanoverian period.⁶⁰ O’Gorman argued that the unreformed electoral system continued to function satisfactorily until the eve of the first Reform Act, and that in many constituencies it satisfied the aspirations and needs of the parties to electoral relationships.

Contested elections could assume particular significance in local communities, when the chosen candidates of rival elite groups solicited electoral support from electors who were their social ‘inferiors’.⁶¹ There was a potential moment of social inversion, when power was potentially taken from the rulers and wielded by the ruled. At the same time, it was also argued that elections ultimately shored up social harmony, by making the electors feel themselves to be courted and part of the system. It was a point made in 1785 by Archdeacon Paley – who officiated in Carlisle, a classic pocket borough in the hands of a local patron:

Popular elections procure to the common people courtesy from their superiors. That contemptuous and overbearing insolence, with which

the lower orders of the community are wont to be treated by the higher, is greatly mitigated where the people have something to give. The assiduity with which their favour is sought on these occasions, serves to generate settled habits of condescension and respect; and ... whatever contributes to procure mildness and civility of manners, towards those who are most liable to suffer from a contrary behaviour, corrects the pride ... the evil of inequality, and deserves to be accounted amongst the most generous institutions of social life.⁶²

Yet rituals of rebellion and inversion may do more than simply reinforcing existing social structures. By offering an alternative model of society, they may themselves be part of a process of change.⁶³ The pioneer in studying the social meanings of eighteenth-century campaign rituals is undoubtedly O’Gorman;⁶⁴ and there is scope for similar work in application to nineteenth-century elections. On the theme of ‘inversion’, it may be noted that to this day the occasional humbling of a Cabinet minister on election night can remind otherwise sceptical electors that their votes do count for something. Divisions are thereby revealed; and also settled by the result of a vote. In the eighteenth century, there were traditional rituals after the votes were declared, whereby the winning candidates were publicly acclaimed (for example, by being chaired around the streets). Such measures marked the attempt at communal reaggregation after a liminal period of electoral conflict.⁶⁵

Despite its growing analytical yield, the study of historical psephology has not been without its critics. For example, it has been argued that the smaller contested boroughs for which polls were printed were not necessarily representative of the large constituencies in which the majority of the pre-reform electorate lived.⁶⁶ Hence historians may risk studying atypical electors. And the motivations of those who voted remain unknown. Thus, while historians who analyse poll books tend to see most voters as acting purposively and exercising political or social choice, other historians have retained the older view that depicts an essentially venal electorate, trying to sell its votes to the highest bidder.

Furthermore, it is justly noted that in this period MPs formed relatively loose and flexible party groupings in the Commons, and that they did not contest parliamentary elections under national party labels.⁶⁷ Governments rose and fell from power in the years from 1700 to 1850 without direct reference to the outcome of a general election. Moreover, it cannot be assumed that the results of local electoral contests, with their selective local

franchises, can be projected onto public opinion as a whole. Poll books were not opinion polls; nor were they intended to be.

Nonetheless, the constitutional framework, with all its oddities and historical complexity, was the guiding template for the political system, both before and after 1832. The results of elections were taken seriously, as a manifestation of the links between the centre and the localities, and as a declaration, especially via the votes cast in the large 'open' constituencies, of the public 'mood'. It therefore remains appropriate to study how politicians and electors acted, within that framework. Even the most ardent reformers wished to improve, rather than to abolish, the representative system, by which MPs represented a local constituency in the 'high parliament' of the kingdom. For historians, then, poll books contain behavioural data which stem from many people's conscious decisions, and can be studied as such.

That individual voters' decisions were made within complex local and personal circumstances remains true – as it does of voting behaviour today. The act of open voting in the years 1700 to 1850 indicated that each voter at least gave a publicly witnessed declaration of support for one or more candidates. But people's secret motivations were, of course, never stated. The case of John Moody, the proprietor of a shoe warehouse in Westminster's Carnaby Street, offers a pertinent reminder that things were not always as they seemed. Moody was a member of the London Corresponding Society and secretary of his friend Horne Tooke's Westminster campaign in 1796. And Moody voted consistently against the government candidates. In Westminster in 1802, he plumped for Fox, and as a Middlesex freeholder in the county contest in the same year, he plumped for the radical Burdett. These votes marked him as a determined reformer, who declined to cast his second vote for a moderate candidate. Yet it is now known that Moody was a government spy who had infiltrated the metropolitan radical movement. As 'Notary' he reported to the government, his true identity known only to his 'handler' Richard Ford and a few other people.⁶⁸ Moody's radical voting profile was thus consistent with concealing his role as a spy but was misleading about his secret allegiance. Yet even then the historian has no way of knowing why Moody agreed to inform upon his colleagues. He may have acted out of sincere belief, or for money, or under pressure of some sort.⁶⁹

Records of voting behaviour thus do not open 'windows into men's souls'. In the era of open voting, however, the poll books did record what people did publicly; and also what was the outcome of many such public

actions. This evidence can be used, therefore, to survey individual behaviour in its public aspect as well as in its aggregate outcome, which constituted the sum of all individual choices. Voting required electors to crystallise their opinions, no matter how complex those might be in private.

Nothing can be done to alter the overall pattern of data survival, although historians can still hunt for hitherto undiscovered sources. The LED includes a mixture of previously known and previously unknown election results for the metropolis in the years 1700-1850, now collected together for the first time. It is presented for historians to explore the challenge and problems of party classification, as has been already undertaken for the Westminster election campaigns of Charles James Fox.⁷⁰ And it further invites historians to consider the formidable but interesting difficulties of translating occupational labels into social classes and economic groupings.⁷¹ And, above all, it is open for any or all other forms of geographical, social, political, and psephological analysis.

By tipping the balance back towards the large urban constituencies, the LED thus recognises that a live constitutional tradition was being enacted, from a variety of voter motives, at the geographical heart of the country's political system. The unreformed electoral system was far from perfect. But what was sought by the reformers in unrepresented Manchester before 1832, as well as by all campaigners in other unenfranchised boroughs, was the opportunity to participate in a manner similar to the electors of the metropolis.

2.1.4 Poll books used in the LED

Much of the LED is derived from printed poll books, while some comes from contemporary transcripts. But the LED is not a simple transcription of the extant documents. Rather, it is an edited text, a representation of historical events that were transmitted orally at the hustings and then recorded by two textual processes: the typesetting of the printed poll books and the later entry of data into the database. That stage has been accompanied by a process of textual emendation to supply a best reading, especially in the *Street* and *Occupation* fields, of this refractory material. Few of the poll books from which the LED was created are the poll clerks' Ur-texts that preserved the sequence in which electors polled, while even those created from the original poll clerks' books have additional problems of missing data.

Many extant poll books used to create the LED have survived in a

single source only. In these cases there is no question of determining a preferred source. Nonetheless, even a list derived from a single source may be defective in some respect. To take one example, the copy of Anon., *Lists of the liveries of London* (1701) in BL has been severely cropped in binding, with the loss of some records. For the LED, therefore, its evidence has been taken from a less mutilated copy in the Bodleian.

Other poll books exist in variant editions and recensions, and many of the lists used are problematic. Manuscript poll books may suffer from missing data, so it has sometimes been necessary to create a patchwork text from different sources. For example, the Westminster poll book of 1784 used to create the WHD lacked about a third of the records for St James's parish. For the LED, a contemporary transcript of the St James's poll book⁷² was used in preference, with the occasional gaps in this record being supplemented by the WHD edition, taken from the poll clerks' books.

As in the WHD, other records remain incomplete. The printed Westminster poll book of 1780 lacks occupational data, so for the parish of St Anne and for the united parishes of St Margaret and St John it was decided to use information for this election that was found in the original poll clerks' books.⁷³ Meanwhile, the loss of the original poll book from St George in the Westminster by-election of August 1788 was remedied by data from a contemporary transcript, doubtless once the property of an election agent.⁷⁴ And missing data from the Westminster election of 1796 have been supplemented from two contemporary transcripts. That for the united parishes of St Margaret and St John is apparently complete.⁷⁵ But those for St Anne, St Martin, and St Paul with St Martin-le-Grand are themselves incomplete, listing only plumpers for Fox, plumpers for Horne Tooke, and votes split between Fox and Horne Tooke.⁷⁶

Early poll lists were sometimes issued containing details of those voters who had polled for one slate of candidates. These lists, which were generally issued by the other slate of candidates as an invitation to check the *bona fides* of the voters, present considerable problems with split votes. The poll of the London parliamentary election of 1713 was issued as two such lists, which have been edited together in the LED to form a single table. Similarly, the poll of the London parliamentary election of 1722 first appeared as two discrete lists.⁷⁷ This election, contested by two slates of three candidates, is fortunately also to be found as the single poll book that was the preferred source for the LED.⁷⁸

Alone among the elections represented in the LED, the poll for London in 1713 is represented by a composite table, pieced together from two surviving lists of voters.⁷⁹ Each of these lists contains the names of those who gave votes to one or more of its slate of candidates. Moreover, each discrete list is preserved, the Whigs having 4,024 names in *Poll ID 27* and the Tories 4,166 in *Poll ID 28*.⁸⁰ The first stage of the process by which Table **PL1713** was created consisted in identifying and isolating those 3,315 Whigs and 3,478 Tories who gave four votes to a slate of four candidates. In the second stage, voters whose records matched between the two lists on the fields of *Company*, *Surname*, and *Fname*, and who gave not more than four votes split between the two lists, were identified, and their votes concatenated to create 404 new records. The third stage consisted of the identification of what appeared to be matching pairs from the remainder; the two lists were then edited to enable Stage 2 matching where appropriate to create a further 206 new records. Ultimately, then, a fourth stage identified those 175 voters who appeared in one list only, but who cast fewer than four votes.

Meanwhile some printed poll books exist in different or variant editions. At the simplest level, those additions and corrections in later issues have been incorporated into the poll book tables in the LED. The list of those who polled for Sir John Williams in the election for sheriff in March 1724 exists in two versions; it was not possible to determine which (if either) list was a revised version. So the list issued in the *Daily Journal*, which was a public resource, was used.⁸¹ In another case, two printed lists of those who polled for Charles Goodfellow at the London parliamentary by-election of December 1724 have survived. Correction of the spelling of names of some of the liverymen, while leaving unchanged their position in the alphabetical sort, shows the list preserved in the National Archives to have been corrected by a contemporary.⁸² That source has therefore been preferred for the LED, in lieu of the uncorrected list issued immediately after the election.⁸³

A similar decision has been made with reference to the poll book for the London parliamentary election of 1768. It was quickly reissued with additions and corrections, which have been duly incorporated into the LED table.⁸⁴ Again, two lists survive of those who polled for Frederick Bull at the London parliamentary by-election in December 1773; and the corrected source has been used for the LED.⁸⁵ And, after the London parliamentary election of 1784, two lists were recorded of those who polled for Richard Atkinson. One of these was no longer available

to historians at the time of data entry,⁸⁶ so the other has been incorporated, together with its companion list of those who polled for John Sawbridge.⁸⁷

In other cases, the printed sources have survived in multiple editions, requiring selection of the apparently most complete examples. Of the three Middlesex polls published in 1705, the LED incorporates Anon., *An exact list* (1705). And of the three editions that appeared after the Middlesex election of 1802, the LED has used Anon., *Copy of the poll* (London, E. Rider, 1803). In another case, there are rival sources in print and manuscript: for the Middlesex elections of 1768-9, the LED has preferred the manuscript poll book transcript at LMA, which contains contemporary notes linking the entries,⁸⁸ rather than the printed version at BL.

Whether manuscript or printed, poll books were inevitably compromised by human fallibility. The imprecise orthography of the poll clerks and compositors led to renderings in the Westminster poll books such as 'Cartwright Street' for Carteret Street, 'German Street' for Jermyn Street, 'Palm Alley' for Pall Mall. Others included 'Putney Street' for Pulteney Street, 'Thrift Street' and 'Fish Street' for Frith Street, and 'Tuttle Street' for Tothill Street. These obvious inconsistencies have been corrected in the LED, and other place names have been standardised, though no doubt more emendations could still be undertaken.

Further standardisation was required because the names of some streets have changed. Street names were standardised only from the middle of the nineteenth century; one of the first being the 'New Road' which ran from Edgware Road to the *Angel* in Islington. This stretch of road had 55 subsidiary names, consolidated in 1857 into 'Marylebone Road', 'Euston Road', and 'Pentonville Road'. For example, in the Marylebone poll books of 1837-41 there appear the constituent parts of Marylebone Road: New Road, Harley Place, York Buildings, Salisbury Place, Cumberland Place, Queen Charlotte Row, Homer Place, Winchester Row, Albany Terrace, Ulster Place, Allsop Terrace, Gloucester Place, Lisson Grove South, Middlesex Place and Southampton Row.⁸⁹ All of these have been standardised in the LED.

One invaluable source for this exercise is the 1901 *List of the streets*, which gives both old and new names within the administrative county of London. Incidentally, the creation of an index to this work would be a valuable addition to London's topographical history.

Sometimes different variants were used concurrently. A modest

terrace of houses, 'built to let',⁹⁰ might lie within a known street but be identified also by the name of the promoter, as in 'Smith's Terrace', 'Smith's Buildings', or 'Smith's Rents'.⁹¹ Similar names upon roads and housing are reminders that metropolitan property offered major opportunities for investors, at a time when investment opportunities were comparatively constricted. Thus it is no surprise to find that profits from London's notorious sex trades also found their way into London property.⁹²

Variants in nomenclature were also found application to large thoroughfares as well as to small ones. What is today known as Oxford Street was identified also as Oxford Road and Acton Road. On other occasions, a thoroughfare had both a formal and an informal name. Thus Crown Court, located immediately north of Pall Mall in St James, Westminster, was known informally as Paved Alley (perhaps to distinguish it from another Crown Court in the same parish). Meanwhile, it seems likely that Pissing Alley in the City of London was also known by a more formal name.⁹³

In other cases, one name superseded another. Hog Lane in St Anne, Westminster, was superseded by Crown Street and is now known as Charing Cross Road. King Square in the same parish became Soho Square. Leicester Fields became Leicester Square. And Torment's Hill in St Margaret, Westminster, became St Ermine's Hill. Occasionally, something was lost in the nineteenth-century standardisation of street names: the junction of Brewer Street and Walker's Court in St James, Westminster, now at the epicentre of the Soho sex trade, was known for much of the eighteenth century as 'Knave's Acre'.

Nor were all street names unique. In 1856, when the first attempt was made to impose some order on street naming and numbering across the metropolis, it was found (as if in a symbolic trial of strength between the royal houses of Stuart and Hanover) that London contained 48 different streets called 'Charles Street' and 46 called 'George Street'. Meanwhile, in a further genuflection to monarchy, 38 streets were called 'King Street' and 36 'Queen Street'. Westminster's parish of St James itself contained two King Streets, one (now Kingly Street) near Golden Square, the other near St James's Square.

Other names in need of editorial standardisation can be found in the Middlesex electoral records. 'Armingworth' was replaced with Harmondsworth, 'Chinkford' with Chingford, 'Chissell Street' with Chiswell Street, 'Endfield' with Enfield, 'Grazing Lane' with Grays Inn

Lane, and ‘Stebon Heath’ with Stepney. Further emendations included Isleworth for ‘Thistleworth’, Hoxton for ‘Hogsdon’ and ‘Hoston’, Ickenham for ‘Hickingham’, Laleham for ‘Lalam’ and ‘Laylamb’, Marylebone for ‘Marrowbone’, Muswell Hill for ‘Muzzle Hill’, Shoreditch for ‘Show Ditch’, and Twickenham for ‘Twittenham’.

The London poll books presented fewer orthographic problems, since all but the poll for the by-election of October 1781 came from printed sources. Nonetheless, eighteenth-century typesetters’ orthography offered some amusement: ‘Rude Lane’ has its charm, and ‘Labour in Rain Court’ sounds even more depressing than the correct ‘Labour in Vain Court’. The Six Clerks’ Office sounded like a numbered property in a terrace, as did both Three Crowns Court and Three Daggers Court. No name, however, caused the typesetters as many problems as did Marylebone’s small street known as Beaufoy Terrace, which appeared in numerous variants.

Meanwhile, the old way of identifying a property by a sign long coexisted with new attempts at sequential numbering of properties in a street,⁹⁴ as testified by innumerable advertisements in the London press throughout the eighteenth century. The Westminster parish rate books, organised as a cadastral survey (being an accurate street-by-street listing), began to include street numbers only in the late eighteenth century; but it was well into the nineteenth century before all parts of the metropolis followed suit.⁹⁵ Moreover, even where street numbering existed, it might be inconsistent: for example, Craven Street, off the Strand in Westminster, was consecutively numbered along each side.⁹⁶

Given the overlap between old signs and new numbers, it is not surprising that the street numbers given in some of the poll books and rate books seem to bear little relationship to those given, for example, in Richard Horwood’s *Plan of the Cities of London and Westminster* (1807). The process of standardisation followed only slowly.

Thus it should be stressed that the place and street name strings in the LED are codes that bring together discrete items of data that, in the historian’s judgment, appear to relate to the same entity. Thus ‘Oxford St’ in the LED is a code representing the strings ‘Oxford Street’, ‘Oxford Road’ and ‘Acton Road’ in the original poll books. The principles of coding, and the record linkage processes thereby facilitated, are discussed in further detail in section 4.

There were equally bizarre spellings of personal names, but these and other poll book fields required less editorial intervention than did those

containing addresses. Surname strings were entered as a single continuous string, thus 'Delisle' or 'Ocallaghan'. But obvious eighteenth-century contractions such as 'J^{no}', 'Cha', Jos^h', and 'Geo' were silently expanded. Clear typographical errors, such as the 'Geroge' who appeared in the WHD, were corrected.

Occupation strings presented fewer editorial problems, in part because of the use of the **Dictionary** table to implement occupational classification. This allowed such variant spellings as 'plaisterer' and 'plasterer' to be given the same occupational code. A very few occupational strings warranted editorial emendation: an improbable 'haymaker' in the Shop Tax records became a hat maker, whilst the man described in the same source with an esoteric combination as 'chain maker and carpenter' was thought to have practised his carpentry skills in chair making.

The process of standardising, classifying, and interpreting data that reaches the historian in non-standard forms is a fundamental first step towards systematic analysis. Comparable processes are undertaken by historians of all subjects who standardise dates and spelling, and who group items of information together, by geographical or any other system of classification.

So the data in the LED amount to an edited version of the sources upon which it is based, just as those sources are closely related to, but distinct from, the electoral acts to which they refer. As the publisher of the Westminster poll book of 1780 noted in his preface:

From the noise and confusion of the hustings during the time of taking down the names of the voters, and the expedition in printing a numerous and long-contested poll, like the present, several mistakes must unavoidably have happened, notwithstanding every possible care has been made use of to prevent them.⁹⁷

But it is the poll records, warts and all, which provide historians with evidence; and with the opportunity to reflect upon the multiple ways that evidence can be used.

2.1.5 The metropolitan electorates

Voters in eighteenth-century metropolitan elections constituted an elite. It may have been a broad elite, of liverymen in London, of freeholders in

Middlesex, and of householders in Westminster and Southwark, but it was nonetheless still an elite. It was not representative of the population at large. Historians may, however, estimate the extent to which those who polled were representative of their populations of eligible voters (liverymen, freeholders, or householders) by examining what would now be called the turnout. Turnout (whether an elector voted or not) constitutes the atom of political behaviour; analysis of the political choices of those who voted constitutes a second-order explanation. Political commentators frequently (if misguidedly) neglect the impact of differential turnout, and invoke only second-order explanations of change in political representation. Issues of 'who actually voted' logically come before 'who voted for whom'.⁹⁸

Turnout may be estimated for London, for which a population of eligible liverymen may be found. The practice of making livery lists goes back to the beginning of the poll book period; indeed, the earliest list in the LED is a livery list, rather than a poll book. The livery lists of 1701, in which an asterisk was used against the names of each liveryman who polled, suggest a turnout of over 70 per cent of eligible liverymen. Meanwhile, the London poll books of 1710 and 1727 record unpolled electors (some of whom were overseas) and indicate a crude turnout of almost four-fifths of the eligible electorate. A livery list issued in 1733 recorded not only the names of the members of each of the livery companies but also the date of their admission.⁹⁹ Further livery lists were made in the middle of the eighteenth century: one, dated from internal evidence to 1750, lists 7,470 liverymen and gives the occupations of some of them.¹⁰⁰ Another, issued in 1751, enumerated 6,535 liverymen, of whom nearly 4,700 lived within the London, while a further 1,400 lived in Southwark, Westminster, Middlesex, Surrey, Essex and Kent.¹⁰¹ Two livery lists issued in the 1790s enumerated between 9,000 and 9,500 liverymen.¹⁰² The practice of issuing livery lists continued until the beginning of the nineteenth century, when one was published in parts corresponding to the place of residence of each liveryman.¹⁰³

However, livery lists are not without their problems. Listings derived from submissions made by livery companies sometimes neglected altogether the members of small companies, which may have made no response to a request for information (note the absence, in Table 7.6.1 below, of any returns for the Tinplate Workers in 1701 and 1750). On the other hand, livery lists derived from poll books are *ipso facto* of little value for estimating turnout. Later eighteenth-century livery lists appear to have

derived in part from poll books.¹⁰⁴ Nonetheless, it seems likely that turnouts in the range of three-quarters to four-fifths of the City of London electorate were common,¹⁰⁵ while the infirm and those living at a distance were the least likely to vote.

Several livery companies maintained lists of their members, which may be used (as they were in electoral scrutinies) to check the qualifications of voters. The City Elections Act (1725)¹⁰⁶ provided for the return of lists of liverymen by the clerks of the various livery companies, but it is clear that this was the codification of an extant practice in respect of disputed elections. Throughout the eighteenth century the Society of Apothecaries seems to have printed lists of members entitled to practise their calling.¹⁰⁷ Later the practice of issuing livery lists became more common, and in the last thirty years of the eighteenth century both the Drapers and the joint livery of the Tylers and Bricklayers appear to have issued annual lists, followed in the early nineteenth century by the Goldsmiths.¹⁰⁸ Other companies issued printed livery lists from time to time, and there are some further survivals of manuscript lists in the Guildhall library. One possible exercise would be to check London's poll books against the livery companies' apprenticeship admissions registers¹⁰⁹ in order to explore both turnout and the age-structure of those liverymen electors who had undertaken a formal apprenticeship, although the work involved would be considerable.

Contemporaries were aware of the uncertainties generated by the absence of any formal listings of potential voters. An attempt was made in 1788 to introduce what would have amounted to a new system of electoral registration for county electorates.¹¹⁰ But the statute proved to be too costly to implement, and it was repealed in 1789 without ever having been fully used.¹¹¹ There was neither the political nor the administrative will to find a solution. Thus earlier bills to introduce electoral registration in 1785 and 1786 had failed, as did a later attempt in 1828.¹¹²

In the absence of electoral registration, appearance in the Land Tax registers constituted a *de facto* entitlement to vote in county elections, such as those in Middlesex, until the end of the eighteenth century.¹¹³ The financial exigencies of the Napoleonic wars, however, forced Pitt to raise revenue by Land Tax redemption, allowing people to exchange their tax liabilities in return for an immediate cash payment. Fresh legislation then followed in 1802 to preserve the right of voting of the redemptioners, whose names had been removed from the Land Tax registers.¹¹⁴ As a result of such manoeuvres, the registers became an increasingly unsatisfactory

record of eligibility to vote in county elections from the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Meanwhile, in the case of Westminster, there was no list of electors eligible to vote, before the introduction of electoral registration in 1832. Yet there is good evidence that, in hotly contested elections, a high proportion of those who wished to exercise their franchise did so. The Westminster election of 1784 famously lasted for 40 days, but by the last week so few came to poll that the constituency may be regarded as having ‘polled out’ with 12,300 voters having polled.

Eventually, electoral registration in 1832 was intended to resolve the uncertainties; but the new system generated special problems in places like Westminster, where the traditional electors, in Westminster’s case qualified as adult male householders ‘paying scot and bearing lot’ (local taxes), were allowed to retain their right to vote, alongside those newly eligible as householders occupying property with a rack rent valuation over £10. In the transition period, some voters were registered twice.¹¹⁵ The LED contains an example: Samuel Addington of St Martin’s Lane (Westminster) was registered both as a £10 householder and as a ‘scot and lot’ householder (LED records 6712891; 6714100).

In detail, a number of qualifications about the sources also need to be noted briefly. The problem of missing data is the most intractable. Another potential problem is the question of known systematic error. The poll book data for Marylebone within the LED were taken from a marked electoral register of 1841. The records for 1837 and 1838 thus suffer from a bias towards those electors (two-thirds of the total electorate) who survived to be included in the later electoral register. The remaining third of electors in 1837 and 1838, who had moved away from Marylebone or died, were not listed and are lost to historians.

Other printed polls also suffer from data loss to a lesser extent. The published polls for the London parliamentary election of 1784 are for Sawbridge and Atkinson only. Almost all liverymen polled for one or other of these, a handful perhaps for both, and the systematic error of data loss is slight. Again, the printed polls for the three elections for lord mayor in 1831 do not record a few dozen votes given to minor candidates. However, as the overwhelming majority of these votes are likely to have been split with a vote given to a mainstream candidate, the systematic error caused by their omission is negligible.

Another area where there is a possibility of error, unknown to historians, is in people’s declarations about their occupation. Certainly, the

census authorities later in 1891 drew attention to ‘the foolish but very common desire of people to magnify the importance of their occupational condition’.¹¹⁶ Such behaviour may have occurred in London a century earlier when an individual identified as ‘labourer’ can sometimes be found being translated into a ‘gentleman’ in successive elections – always assuming that the individual in question was one and the same. There are also some uncertainties as to the use of terminology, such as the ‘yeomen’ listed in Westminster in 1784, when the clerks appear to have used the term as something like a synonym for ‘labourer’.¹¹⁷

Yet tests for consistency, when electors are traced from one election to the next, indicate that many voters gave themselves publicly the same occupation (or a closely related occupation) over a span of years, suggesting that there was some verisimilitude to their occupational declarations – which, under the system of open voting – were made publicly in the hearing of all. Of course, illegal occupations were not stated. Those rarely appear in the official censuses either, although the 1881 census did include a ‘retired opium smuggler’, a ‘supposed brothel keeper’ and a ‘pick a pocket’.¹¹⁸ The occupational representations in the LED are therefore the respectable face of the metropolitan economy – and they are, in their own right, a valuable source for historians to analyse.¹¹⁹

2.1.6 Electoral scrutiny

Fiercely contested elections, in the days of open polling, could be rumbustious affairs. Crowds, wearing favours in their political colours, would gather to witness the proceedings, and to shout encouragement for their own side. It created a form of pressure as well as an atmosphere of excitement. Some voters, furthermore, were encouraged in their allegiance by ‘treating’, in which known taverns provided free drinks for one side or another, at the cost of the candidate. Such excitements did not happen all the time, because many elections were low-key affairs. But certainly the proceedings were not conducted with the silence and decorum of twenty-first-century elections.

On the other hand, bribery in the form of direct payment for votes was not common in the large electorates, because the cost would be too great and the outcome uncertain. The notorious ‘Eatanswill’ electorates, where votes were traded for money or gifts, were rightly criticised by reformers before 1832, but such cases applied chiefly to the smallest and

most venal boroughs, not to the large open constituencies.

Indeed, evidence that the London elections in this period were carried out with tolerable care comes from the investigations, also known as ‘trials’, that were undertaken by the House of Commons from time to time, at the request of the defeated candidates. At the scrutiny before the declaration, some votes would be rejected – not on grounds of bribery, but on the grounds that the voter was not properly qualified under the local franchise. At the scrutiny of the votes polled in the election for a sheriff of London and Middlesex in March 1724, the total was reduced by about 14 per cent. And the scrutiny that followed the Westminster election of 1749 reduced the total by about 15 per cent.¹²⁰ But such proportions were unusually high, following elections that were unusually fiercely contested.

A scrutiny after the London parliamentary election of February 1701 reduced the total number of votes cast by 440, suggesting that about 110 voters were successfully challenged. Another scrutiny following London’s parliamentary election in 1727 reduced the total number of votes cast by 820, indicating that 205 voters, about three per cent of the total, were rejected. In 1770, the scrutiny following the poll for Lord Mayor was abandoned with no change in the number of votes.¹²¹ At the scrutiny following the poll for MP for the City of London in 1784 the total number of votes cast was reduced by less than one per cent, with no effect on the outcome of the election.¹²² And, most notably, the scrutiny undertaken after the disputed Westminster election of 1784 got no further than considering votes from the relatively small parish of St Anne, of which only a handful were rejected, before it, too, was abandoned.¹²³ These results were the more impressive in that there were repeated accusations of partisanship on the Commons committees that sat on the petitions.¹²⁴

One reason for the low level of voters rejected at the scrutines was the practice by the candidates of employing inspectors at the polls, who were able to challenge prospective voters with suspicious credentials.¹²⁵ In Westminster, for example, these inspectors were numerous and well-rewarded: in 1774 the agents for Percy and Pelham Clinton employed 15 inspectors who received £20 each for their services, and another who received £25.¹²⁶ In the particularly intense campaigns of the 1780s, the polling of ‘bad’ or dubious votes may have been a matter of policy. George III, who was implacably opposed to Fox, went so far as to write to Pitt on 13 April 1784 that ‘though the advance made by Mr Fox this day can only

have been made by bad votes, yet similar measures must be adopted rather than let him get returned for Westminster'.¹²⁷ Unfortunately for the agitated monarch, his chief minister was not able to oblige on this occasion.

Indeed, the evidence of rejected tenders to vote offers some comfort to historians that by and large the inspectors did their job with tolerable efficiency. In defence of the process, Charles James Fox noted in the debate on the Westminster scrutiny that individual voters were checked against the parish books, and, in dubious cases, enquiries were made at the putative voter's place of residence to verify or disallow his claim.¹²⁸

There may also have been some cases, not of fraudulent voters, but of personation, whereby one individual illegally voted in the name of a valid voter. (This practice is remembered in the mythic twentieth-century exhortation that Ulstermen should 'vote early, and vote often'). Some personation must have occurred during this period, but any cases which escaped the attention of the partisan inspectors at the hustings must necessarily escape the scrutiny of the historian. At very least, however, it can be accepted that the names and occupations of those who did vote were those of qualified voters, whose appearance at the poll seemed in good order.

Defeated candidates regularly accused their successful rivals of polling unqualified voters: that was part of the stock-in-trade of eighteenth-century electioneering. Indeed, the identification of unqualified or otherwise fraudulent voting was clearly one motivation behind the publication of poll books.¹²⁹ Among the Westminster elections such allegations were most frequent in 1788, when Hood's petition to the Commons was a comprehensive indictment of electioneering techniques.¹³⁰ It alleged:

That the returning officer admitted a great number of persons to vote for the said Lord John Townshend, who, by the ancient usage and custom of the said city and Liberty, had no right to vote at the said election, and others who were disqualified from, and incapable by law of, voting at the said election; and that the names of many persons were received upon the poll as voting for Lord John Townshend, who, in fact, did not vote for either of the candidates, but were votes given by other persons, falsely assuming their names and characters, and several persons were admitted to poll more than once at the said election; and that, as well before the said election, as during the time of taking the said poll, many persons, by bribery, gifts, promises of reward, and other undue and illegal practices, did corrupt a great number of the voters to poll at the

said election on the part of the said Lord John Townshend.

In the same year, Sir William Young reported a string of allegations to the Marquis of Buckingham:¹³¹

The question is not of title to vote in most cases, but of identity; most families being at this season out of town, a rascal was found to personate every absentee. The suborners of perjury not regularly conferring, very many instances occurred of an absentee being represented by four or five, all admitted to vote on their mere attestation.

Yet it seems most unlikely that rational rascals knowingly impersonated someone who had already voted. Party agents routinely kept lists of those who had polled to check against their canvassers' lists of promises. Furthermore, instances of identical poll book records are very rare, and generally the result of polling by a father and his son having the same name, address, and trade. William Fox, a victualler of George Street in St Margaret and St John, apparently polled three times in the Westminster election of 1788: but this is a very rare instance – and two of these at least could have been family members with the same name.

In 1788, there were particularly picturesque allegations about the opposition Whig Townshend's canvassers in Westminster. They were said to have identified empty houses, those occupied by women, and the houses of those who said they would abstain. Strangers were then brought into Westminster from Hoxton and Shoreditch to assume the identities of the occupiers of these houses. These impostors were taken to houses in Covent Garden, where they were dressed and tutored, before being taken to poll. Others were alleged to have assembled and been victualled at Sheridan's Theatre Royal in Drury Lane before creating mayhem at the hustings. For this, they were said to have received 5s a day, or £3 if they voted. But it seems unlikely that there were 'very many instances ... of women having voted dressed as men', as Hood's lawyer alleged.¹³² The rhetorical claims, though entirely unsubstantiated, indicate something of the electoral tactics of creating a buzz of partisanship for one cause – and allegations of malpractice against the rival cause. Ultimately, however, those who convinced the inspectors and polling clerks of their eligibility to vote must also be accepted as being of equal standing by historians.

Notes

- ¹ A.E. Housman, 'Preface to Manilius' in idem, *Collected poems and selected prose*, ed. C. Ricks (Harmondsworth, 1989) remains a classic exposition of the editorial role, and of waspish wit.
- ² Analysis of aggregate electoral data may be traced back to A. Siegfried, *Tableau politique de la France de l'Ouest sous la troisième république* (Paris, 1913). For the nineteenth-century English electorate, see T.J. Nossiter, 'Voting behaviour, 1832-72', *Political Studies*, 18 (1970), pp. 380-9, and idem, 'Aspects of electoral behaviour in English constituencies, 1832-68' in E. Allardt and S. Rokkan, *Mass politics: studies in political sociology* (1970), pp. 160-89. For the increased sophistication of multiple regression analysis, see J.A. Turner, *British politics and the Great War: coalition and conflict, 1915-18* (New Haven, Ct, 1992).
- ³ Voting details may be available at ward level in local government elections. Much of this information is buried in the pages of local newspapers, and its collection and publication is a valuable addition to historical knowledge of local politics and party formation. See S. Jordan, K. Ramsey and M. Woollard, *Political representation and Bristol's elections, 1700-1997* (Bristol, 1997); and, for London, A. Willis and J. Woollard, *Twentieth-century local election results* (Plymouth, 2000), 3 vols.
- ⁴ Constituencies were grouped into yet larger units to correspond with census registration districts in K.D. Wald, *Crosses on the ballot: patterns of British voter alignment since 1885* (Princeton, NJ, 1983).
- ⁵ W.S. Robinson, 'Ecological correlation and the behaviour of individuals', *American Sociological Review*, 15 (1950), pp. 351-57. J. Shover and J. Kushma, 'Retrieval of individual data from aggregate units of analysis', in J. Silbey *et al.*, *The history of American electoral behaviour* (Princeton, NJ, 1978), pp. 327-39, and G. King, *A solution to the ecological inference problem: reconstructing individual behaviour from aggregate data* (Princeton, NJ, 1997) are more recent contributions to this thorny problem. But the methodology is abstruse, and it remains doubtful whether the behaviour of individuals as opposed to groups can indeed be inferred from aggregate 'ecological' data.
- ⁶ For a historical example of the 'ecological fallacy', in this case the spurious association between Roman Catholicism and Conservative voting, see Wald, *Crosses on the ballot*, pp. 150-1.
- ⁷ 35 & 36 Victoria, c. 33 (1872). The practice of open voting was famously defended as the exercise of a trust by John Stuart Mill in his *Considerations on representative government* (1861) against the demands of George Grote and others for the ballot. Since the ballot is necessarily secret (see *OED*, s.v. 'Ballot', to give a secret vote), the

familiar expression ‘secret ballot’ is a pleonasm, although the phrase is so entrenched that it is hard to avoid. An example of a semi-secret voting system was that used from 1621-1939 in the Papal Conclaves to elect a new Pope: the cardinal electors signed their voting papers, albeit folding the document to reveal the vote whilst concealing the signature. In the later twentieth century, this system was replaced by a ballot, whereby each elector writes one name on a card which is then folded to confer secrecy. See F.J. Baumgartner, *Behind locked doors: a history of the papal elections* (New York, NY, 2003), pp. 145-6, 236.

- ⁸ For locations of poll books, see J.M. Sims (ed.), *A handlist of British parliamentary poll books* (Leicester, 1984); J. Gibson and C. Rogers (eds), *Poll books: c. 1696-1872: a directory of holdings in Great Britain* (4th edn, Bury, 2008); and E.M. Green, ‘New discoveries of poll books’, *Parliamentary History*, 24 (2005), pp. 332-67. R. Chapman, ‘Poll books for the county of Middlesex’, *West Middlesex Family History Society Journal*, 11/3 (1993), pp. 16-23, is derivative and adds little.
- ⁹ See P. Bourke and D. DeBats, ‘Identifiable voting in nineteenth-century America: toward a comparison of Britain and the United States before the secret ballot’, *Perspectives in American History*, 11 (1978), pp. 259-88; P. Bourke and D. DeBats, *Washington county: politics and community in antebellum America* (Baltimore, Md, 1995); and A.G. Bogue, ‘The quest for numeracy: data and methods in American political history’, *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 21 (1990), pp. 89-116.
- ¹⁰ See J. Elklit, ‘Open voting’, in R. Rose (ed.), *International encyclopaedia of elections* (2000), pp. 191-3; and J. Elklit, ‘Nominal record linkage and the study of non-secret voting: a Danish case’, *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 15 (1985), pp. 419-43. For an overview of this ‘New Political History’, see J.A. Phillips (ed.), *Computing parliamentary history: George III to Victoria* (Edinburgh, 1994).
- ¹¹ Examples of this kind of poll book are remarkably uncommon. One for the metropolitan region, albeit not for a parliamentary election, is *List of pollers for Richard Hoar, 6 January 1738/9, Guildhall broadside 9/7. The names of the twelve hundred and forty seven gentlemen of the livery of London ... who poll'd for John Wilkes, esq., at the general election in March, 1768* (R. Withy, 1768) is a piece of Wilkite ephemera printed in gold on blue waxed paper. A ‘List of the freeholders who voted for Colonel Luttrell’, from the Middlesex by-election of 1769, is printed in *Oxford Magazine*, 3 (1769), pp. 91-5. Another, from Southwark, Surrey, is to be found in [Hector Campbell], *The names of those patriots, in the parish of St John, that supported Mr Tierney* ([London], 1796).
- ¹² See, for example, *A list of the persons who polled for Mr Dumello and Mr Tyson at the late election of common-council men for Bridge ward, London* [London, 1740].

- ¹³ Systematic information about religious affiliation is rare, with the significant exception of poll books from Ireland. Poll books from Abingdon, Oxfordshire, in 1734 and 1754 identify dissenters. While some Quakers may be identified from their affirmation in lieu of swearing the oaths, it seems likely that returning officers allowed Quakers through on the nod, rather than disrupting the electoral process unduly. The right of Quakers to affirm was granted by 7 & 8 William III, c. 34 (1696); it was made permanent by 1 George I, c. 6 (1714); and extended to Moravians (followers of the German Protestant sect) by 22 George II, c. 30 (1749).
- ¹⁴ Indications of family relationships appear to be confined to those who share a common forename and surname combination. In the LED they are distinguished in a discrete field as 'sen' [senior] and 'jun' [junior]. Elsewhere, for example in Newcastle-under-Lyme, the convention was to distinguish 'A.B. son of C.B.' from 'A.B. son of D.B.'
- ¹⁵ Tax assessments are very rare in poll books, but that from the Bath, Somerset, by-election of 1855 records the rate assessment of each voter. Meanwhile the poll book for Newry, Down, in 1868 records the voter's qualification, the rateable value of his property, and his religious affiliation. The only metropolitan poll with tax assessments so far encountered is that for the election of alderman for Vintry Ward in 1827, CLRO Misc. MSS. 199.9 – now to be found under LMA classification.
- ¹⁶ All London parliamentary poll books record the livery company of each voter entitled to poll under the old franchise.
- ¹⁷ Information about previous voting behaviour for entire electorates is rare. Exceptions include Anon, *A state of the polls for the two elections for representatives in parliament for the county of Cambridge* (Cambridge, F. Hodson [1802]), which includes the voting behaviour of individuals at both the by-election and the general election of that year. Meanwhile Anon., *Acland's comparative poll book* (Hull, James Acland, 1835), published after the election in June 1835, also included information on the voting behaviour (classified by party) of those who had also polled in the Kingston upon Hull constituency in 1832 and January 1835.
- ¹⁸ Information about unpolled electors is necessarily problematic before the introduction of electoral registration in 1832. Whilst feasible in freeman boroughs, it was impossible in inhabitant boroughs or scot and lot constituencies like Westminster. But the London poll books of 1710 and 1727, where the livery franchise was akin to a freeman franchise, contain useful lists of unpolled electors. Lists of unpolled electors are more frequently encountered in post-registration borough poll books, for example, that from Whitehaven, Cumberland, in 1832.
- ¹⁹ Much of the poll data for Westminster between 1784 and 1820 is taken from the poll clerks' books.

- ²⁰ Poll book data for St Anne, St Martin, and St Paul with St Martin le Grand at the Westminster election of 1796 are taken from a contemporary transcript. This list of plumpers (single voters) for Fox, plumpers for Horne Tooke, and split votes between Fox and Horne Tooke, comes from the library of Sir Alan Gardner. This suggests that candidates also took a close interest in the voting of their opponents even when there was no possibility of a scrutiny.
- ²¹ See contextual discussion in M. Knights, 'John Locke and post-revolutionary politics: electoral reform and the franchise', *Past and Present*, 213 (2011), pp. 41-86.
- ²² The printed poll books for the closely fought election for the City of London chamberlain in 1734, and also those from the contest for lord mayor in 1772, were published by the committees of the parties opposed to those candidates whose votes were recorded.
- ²³ See P. Jupp (ed.), *British and Irish elections, 1784-1831* (Newton Abbot, 1973), pp. 127-8, for the use of the printed poll book from the Westminster election of 1818 by Hobhouse's canvassers the following year; and WAC E/3349/4/37 for the similar use of the poll book by Lamb's canvassers.
- ²⁴ In nineteenth-century Colchester, Essex, poll books were issued in paper wrappers, showing the party's colours, for distribution with the candidates' thanks to those who had polled for them.
- ²⁵ G.M. Trevelyan, *The two-party system in English political history* (Oxford, 1926), p. 6. The approach of Namier, especially in the chapter 'Why men went into parliament', in L.B. Namier, *The structure of politics at the accession of George III* (1929), i, pp. 1-76, acted as such a solvent upon ideas of permanent party affiliations that some of the most enthusiastic Namierites tried to eliminate 'party' even from periods of great party strife, causing a later reaction against Namierism.
- ²⁶ D. Hannay (ed.), *Letters written by Sir Samuel Hood (Viscount Hood) in 1781-3* (Navy Record Society, 1895), pp. 155-6.
- ²⁷ But there were some exceptions. J.A. Phillips, *Electoral behaviour in unreformed England: plumpers, splitters and straights* (Princeton, N.J., 1982), p. 328, reported supplementing a lacuna among the printed poll books for Maidstone with a manuscript. The manuscript poll book of the Yorkshire election of 1734 was analysed by P. Adman, W.A. Speck and B. White in an appendix to J.F. Quinn, 'Yorkshiremen go to the polls: county contests in the early eighteenth century', *Northern History*, 21 (1985), pp. 137-74. Manuscript poll books were also used in D. Hirst and S. Bowler, 'Voting in Hertford, 1679-1721', *History and Computing*, 1 (1989), pp. 14-18, and in R. Hall,

- 'Whig party fortunes in the Yorkshire county election of 1708', *Northern History*, 32 (1996), pp. 111-32.
- ²⁸ Although regrettable, this purge was not the disaster that it might appear to have been. The preservation of borough poll books was only required from 1843, and the polls of a considerable proportion of contested borough elections were published. For printed poll books, see Sims (ed.), *Handlist of British parliamentary poll books*, together with Green, 'New discoveries of poll books'.
- ²⁹ No printed poll book survives for any metropolitan constituency after 1841.
- ³⁰ Printed poll books in large constituencies were expensive. The Westminster poll books of 1749 and 1774 were priced at 2s 6d, whilst a publisher's advertisement for the 1818 poll book offered the work in eight parts at 1s each. See Anon., 'A collection of addresses, pamphlets, posters, squibs, etc. relating to the Westminster election, 1818' (a BL nonce volume of electoral ephemera). Poll books were a minority taste, and print runs were probably small.
- ³¹ Marked registers have been used for the Marylebone elections of 1837, 1838, and 1841, for the London election of 1848, and for the Westminster election of 1851. The last printed poll book for London was published after the election of 1837; the last for Westminster after the election of 1841.
- ³² A canvassing book for the Middlesex election of 1747 is at Warwickshire RO, CR 132 A253. Meanwhile, a canvassing book for the Paddington parish of Marylebone in 1832 survives at WAC, T/V/65.
- ³³ A list distinguishing polled and unpolled electors in each livery company survives for London election of 1701: Anon., *The lists of the liveries* (1701). A list of voters also survives for the Middlesex election of 1727 (Alnwick Castle Muniments Room, YV2b).
- ³⁴ D. Hirst, *The representative of the people? Voters and voting in England under the early Stuarts* (Cambridge, 1975), pp. 122-9. For example, a poll list from Clitheroe, Lancashire, in 1640 is reproduced in W.S. Weeks, *Clitheroe in the seventeenth century* (Clitheroe [1927]), ii, pp. 229-30.
- ³⁵ M. Kishlansky, *Parliamentary selection: social and political choice in early modern England* (Cambridge, 1986), p. 186. M. Knights, *Politics and opinion in crisis, 1678-1681* (Cambridge, 1994) used manuscript poll books from the period.
- ³⁶ 7 & 8 William III, c. 25 (1696).

- ³⁷ 11 George I, c.18, s. 1 (1725).
- ³⁸ 19 George II, c. 28, s. 6 (1746).
- ³⁹ Two examples show the process in action. Following a petition arising from the controverted Westminster election of 1708, the high bailiff John Huggins was required to lay before the Commons all the poll books, together with lists of the would-be voters rejected at the scrutiny: *CJ*, 16, p. 24. Similarly, the Commons in April 1769 required the Middlesex sheriff to produce the poll books in response to a petition against the return of Henry Lawes Luttrell: *CJ*, 32, pp. 385-7.
- ⁴⁰ 6 & 7 Victoria, c. 18 (1843).
- ⁴¹ TNA PRO 30/8/237, fo 791. See also [Trial of the Westminster election by a committee of the House of Commons, 4 April – 9 May, 1789] in Lincoln's Inn Library, LP 297. This printed Commons sessional paper is not included in S. Lambert's reprint edition.
- ⁴² LMA Westminster poll books, WR/PP.
- ⁴³ Sims, *British parliamentary poll books*, remains the most complete and reliable guide to printed editions. Some further printed editions of metropolitan parliamentary poll books, not recorded by Sims, have been discovered in the course of this research, and are noted at relevant points.
- ⁴⁴ G. Rudé, 'The Middlesex electors of 1768-9', *English Historical Review*, 75 (1960), p. 605.
- ⁴⁵ The manuscript poll book at LMA, used by Rudé in this study, contains a contemporary record that indicated against the name of each voter his choice at each of the three parliamentary elections of 1768-9. This resource may well have been compiled for canvassing purposes.
- ⁴⁶ Rudé, 'Middlesex election', p. 609.
- ⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 615.
- ⁴⁸ See D.C. Moore, 'The other face of reform', *Victorian Studies*, 5 (1961), pp. 7-34, *idem*, *The politics of deference* (Hassocks, 1976); and P. Joyce, *Work, society and politics: the culture of the factory in later Victorian England* (Brighton, 1980). But see the important qualifications in D. Eastwood, 'Contesting the politics of deference', in J. Lawrence and M. Taylor (eds), *Party, state and society: electoral behaviour in Britain since 1820* (Aldershot, 1997), pp. 27-49.

- ⁴⁹ J.R. Vincent, *Poll books: how Victorians voted* (Cambridge, 1967), pp. 17-18: for example, the drink trade acted as a Tory lobby, not universally but particularly in constituencies where the Liberal candidate was 'dry' and pro-temperance.
- ⁵⁰ T.J. Nossiter, *Influence, opinion and political idioms in reformed England: case studies from the north-east, 1832-74* (Brighton, 1975), pp. 119-200.
- ⁵¹ J.H. Plumb, 'The growth of the electorate in England, 1600-1715', *Past and Present*, 45 (1969), pp. 90-116.
- ⁵² W.A. Speck and W.A. Gray, 'Computer analysis of poll books: an initial report', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, 43 (1970), pp. 105-112; 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*, 48 (1975), pp. 64-90.
- ⁵³ D.E. Butler, *The British General Election of 1951* (1952), p. 1, credits his colleague R.B. McCallum for coining the term, based upon the Greek word for the pebble dropped into an urn to vote.
- ⁵⁴ M. Drake, 'The mid-Victorian voter', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 1 (1971), pp. 473-90.
- ⁵⁵ J.C. Mitchell and J. Cornford, 'The political demography of Cambridge, 1832-68', *Albion*, 9 (1977), pp. 242-72.
- ⁵⁶ M. Drake, *Introduction to historical psephology* (Open University: Milton Keynes, 1982) remains a useful handbook, although it fails to make clear the sheer difficulty of implementing a satisfactory record linkage routine.
- ⁵⁷ R.J. Morris, *Class, sect and party: the making of the British middle class - Leeds, 1820-50* (Manchester, 1990). Meanwhile R.J. Morris, *Men, women and property in England, 1780-1870* (Cambridge, 2005) adds rather more to the social history of the propertied middle class than to the history of their political behaviour.
- ⁵⁸ Phillips, *Electoral behavior in unreformed England*.
- ⁵⁹ J.A. Phillips, *The Great Reform Bill in the boroughs: English electoral behaviour, 1818-41* (Oxford, 1992), and J.A. Phillips and C. Wetherell, 'The Great Reform Act of 1832 and the political modernization of England', *American Historical Review*, 100 (1995), pp. 411-36.
- ⁶⁰ O'Gorman, *Voters, patrons, and parties*.

- ⁶¹ V.W. Turner, *The ritual process: structure and anti-structure* (Ithaca, NY, 1977), p. 167, discusses rituals of status reversal ‘in which ... groups or categories of persons who habitually occupy low status positions in the social structure are positively enjoined to exercise ritual authority over their superiors; and they, in turn, must accept with good will their ritual degradation’.
- ⁶² William Paley, *The principles of moral and political philosophy* (2 vols, Dublin, 1785), ii, p. 197.
- ⁶³ Functionalist anthropological accounts of such rituals, such as M. Gluckman, *Rituals of rebellion in south-east Africa* (Manchester, 1954), are increasingly disfavoured. They have been replaced by more historically aware accounts of the process of political change, such as the model of oscillating equilibrium developed by E.R. Leach, *Political systems of highland Burma: a study of Kachin social structure* (1954).
- ⁶⁴ F. O’Gorman, ‘Campaign rituals and ceremonies: the social meaning of elections in England, 1780-1860’, *Past and Present*, 135 (1992), pp. 79-115.
- ⁶⁵ For the anthropological fascination with moments that mark changes of status, see esp. A. van Gennep, *Les rites de passage* (Paris, 1908); translated by M.B. Vizedom and G.L. Caffee as *The rites of passage* (1960).
- ⁶⁶ M. Taylor, ‘Interests, parties and the state: the urban electorate in England, c. 1820-72’, in Lawrence and Taylor (eds), *Party, state and society*, pp. 50-78, esp. pp. 52-3, 54.
- ⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 67-9.
- ⁶⁸ On John Moody, see J.A. Hone, *For the cause of truth: radicalism in London, 1796-1821* (Oxford, 1982), pp. 63-4.
- ⁶⁹ The implications of the Moody case are also discussed in section 1.10.2.
- ⁷⁰ Corfield, Green and Harvey, ‘Westminster man’, pp. 157-85.
- ⁷¹ See details in section 6; and, for problems/challenges of classification, section 7.
- ⁷² Guildhall, Westminster poll book, 1784.
- ⁷³ LMA Westminster Poll Books (1780), St Margaret and St John, WR/PP/1780/1-3; St Anne, WR/PP/1780/4-5. These are the only parishes for which complete data survive among the poll clerks’ books.

- ⁷⁴ LMA Westminster poll books (1788), WR/PP/1788/23.
- ⁷⁵ WAC Westminster poll books (1796), E/3081A.
- ⁷⁶ Guildhall, Westminster poll book, 1796.
- ⁷⁷ Anon., *A list of the persons who have polled for Humphry Parsons, Esq., Francis Child, Esq., Aldermen, Richard Lockwood, Esq., Commoner, or one or more of them, at the late election, for Members of Parliament, for the City of London* [London, 1722] and ‘A list of the persons names who have polled for Robert Heysham, Esq., Alderman, Peter Godfrey, and John Barnard, Esqrs, at the late election of Members of Parliament for the City of London, 1722’, *Supplement to the Freeholder’s Journal*, 27 April 1722.
- ⁷⁸ Anon., *A poll of the livery-men of the City of London, at the election of members of parliament, begun on Tuesday, April the 10th, 1722* (London, T. Payne, 1722).
- ⁷⁹ This exercise replicates, for the sake of LED completeness, work done by W.A. Speck and W.A. Gray, as reported in ‘London poll books, 1713’, in *London Politics, 1713-17* (London Record Society, 17, 1981).
- ⁸⁰ A list of disqualified voters may be found in *Daily Courant*, 3 Dec. 1713.
- ⁸¹ *Daily Journal*, 20 March 1724, ‘A list of the members of the several companies that polled for Sir John Williams, Alderman, to be sheriff for the City of London, and County of Middlesex’: BL Burney 242b. Anon., *A list of the persons who have polled for Sir John Williams, alderman, at the late election for sheriff for the City of London and county of Middlesex* (London, 1724): BL Hargrave Ms. 139, fos 167-82. ESTC T 105993.
- ⁸² TNA SP/46/144, fos 30-32.
- ⁸³ *Daily Post*, 7 Dec. 1724.
- ⁸⁴ Anon., *The poll of the livery of London for four citizens to represent the said City in parliament* (London, John Rivington, 1768). One of the copies at Guildhall has the additional addenda leaf. This may date from 1770, when the death of William Beckford triggered a parliamentary by-election and a reissue of the poll book.
- ⁸⁵ Anon., *A corrected list of the persons who have polled for the Rt. Hon. Frederick Bull* (London, Charles Rivington, 1773).

- ⁸⁶ Anon., *A list of the persons who have polled for Richard Atkinson, Esq., which the liverymen of the City of London are desired speedily and carefully to examine* [London, 1784]. ESTC T 200237.
- ⁸⁷ Anon., *A list of the liverymen of London, who voted for Mr Alderman Sawbridge, and Richard Atkinson, Esq. at the late election for members of parliament for the City of London, carefully corrected from the sheriff's attested copies of the poll* (London, W. Lane, [1784]). ESTC T 198099.
- ⁸⁸ See above, n. 45.
- ⁸⁹ Anon., *List of the streets and places within the administrative county of London* (1901), p. 355. This list indicates what 'old name' streets are contained within each 'new name', but unfortunately there is no index of 'old name' streets to identify, for example, Nassau Street in Soho as the old name for Gerrard Place.
- ⁹⁰ In the context of relatively limited opportunities for secure investment in the nineteenth century, 'building to let' was a common phenomenon, and remained so until the Rent Acts and Leasehold Reform Acts of the twentieth century intruded (for good or ill) state regulation into the relationship between landlords and tenants.
- ⁹¹ In Rathbone Place, off Oxford Street, there survives today an ancient street sign giving its name as 'Rathbone's Place'; another, in Gerrard Place, gives its name as 'Wheeten's Buildings in Nassau Street'.
- ⁹² D. Cruikshank, *The secret history of Georgian London: how the wages of sin shaped the capital* (2009).
- ⁹³ James Smith, Blacksmith, polled in 1727 from an address in Pissing Alley. Seven years later James Smith, Blacksmith, polled giving his address as Bread Street, Star Court, a *cul de sac* on the eastern side of Bread Street (and out of sight of the main thoroughfare) which might have been Pissing Alley in its formal guise. However, A. Harben, *A dictionary of London* (1918) suggests that the name was an old one for Little Friday Street.
- ⁹⁴ The numbering of houses within a street was given statutory force by 8 George III, c. 21 (1767), although this applied only to the City of London. For context, see P.J. Corfield, 'Walking the city streets: the urban odyssey in eighteenth-century England', *Journal of Urban History*, 16 (1990), pp. 149-50.
- ⁹⁵ According to H. Phillips, *Mid-Georgian London* (1964), p. 6, rate collectors first began to identify houses within each street by numbers in the period 1830-50, but those in Westminster had preceded that. It should be noted that the apparently

systematic numbering of houses shown in Richard Horwood's *Plan of London* (1799) bears little relationship with the systems of numbering used by rate collectors or in the poll books.

- ⁹⁶ Anon., *List of the streets and places ...* (revised edn, 1912), p. v.
- ⁹⁷ Anon., *Copy of the poll ... for the city and liberty of Westminster* (1780). The publisher's advertisement is on the verso of the title-page. Thomas Cornwall testified in 1789 that forty years before 'they made a misentry with regard to my occupation ... they called me carpenter instead of apothecary': TNA PRO 30/8/237, fo 910.
- ⁹⁸ The long-term decline in turnouts at British parliamentary general elections in the second half of the twentieth century has belatedly focused attention on differential or party-specific turnout as an important explanatory factor in political representation. See H.D. Clarke, D. Sanders, M.C. Stewart, and P. Whiteley, *Political choice in Britain* (Oxford, 2004), especially chapters 7 and 8.
- ⁹⁹ [An alphabetical list of the livery-men of London, 1733], BL 1303 d.12.
- ¹⁰⁰ Anon., *A list of the liverymen of the several companies of the City of London* [London, 1750]. Although undated, this document records that Stephen Theodore Janssen was sheriff, thus dating it to 1750. Inconsistencies between companies in the recording of forenames and occupations of liverymen, and in the ordering of the liverymen alphabetically or by seniority, suggest that it was compiled from lists submitted by the companies. This list was used by G. Rudé in *Wilkes and Liberty*, pp. 212-3, where it was dated to 1756.
- ¹⁰¹ Anon., *A list of the names of the liverymen of the City of London* (London, 1751).
- ¹⁰² Anon., *A list of the livery of London alphabetically arranged* (London, H.L. Galabin, 1792); and Anon., *List of the whole body of the liverymen of London* (London, J. Wilkes, 1796).
- ¹⁰³ [Anon., *A list of the livery of London, alphabetically arranged under their several wards, districts, and other places of residence* (London [1802])]. This volume, in IHR, lacks a title page. No other copy can be traced in NSTC.
- ¹⁰⁴ Anon., *A list of the liverymen of London* (London, J. Miller, 1776), stated on the title page that it was 'collected from the last poll for chamberlain'. Meanwhile Anon., *List of the whole body of the liverymen of London* (London, J. Wilkes, 1792) claimed to have been 'checked by the poll books of the last contested election'. Finally, Anon., *A list of the livery of London alphabetically arranged* (London, H.L. Galabin, 1796) stated that it was 'taken from the poll books of the last election'.

- ¹⁰⁵ Turnouts in London elections were slightly lower than the proportions estimated for other places by O’Gorman, *Voters, patrons, and parties*, pp. 182-91, and by Phillips, *Great Reform Bill*, pp. 32-6, probably because London’s franchise did not require residence and distant electors had less incentive to vote than did local residents.
- ¹⁰⁶ The City Elections Act (1725) made provision ‘as has been usual’ for requiring the livery companies’ clerks to deliver lists of liverymen in the event of a controverted election. The scrutiny following the by-election for sheriff of London and Middlesex in 1724 began by calling for lists of liverymen from their respective company. These were then checked for instances of multiple voting, of voting by those who were disqualified by having had their livery fines returned, and of personation. See BL Hargrave Ms. 139, fos 285-7.
- ¹⁰⁷ See *A catalogue of the several members of the Society of Apothecaries* issued at various dates throughout the first half of the eighteenth century.
- ¹⁰⁸ Anon., *A list of the court of assistants and livery of the worshipful company of Drapers* (annually from 1769); Anon., *The names of the Master, wardens, assistants and livery of the worshipful company of Tylers and Bricklayers* (annually from 1772); Anon., *A list of the wardens, assistants, and livery of the worshipful company of Goldsmiths* (annually from 1802); Anon., *The names of the master, wardens, assistants, and the rest of the livery of the worshipful company of clockmakers* (1802).
- ¹⁰⁹ C.R. Webb (ed.), *London livery company apprenticeship registers* (41 vols, 1996-2004).
- ¹¹⁰ 28 George III, c. 36 (1788).
- ¹¹¹ It was suspended by 29 George III c. 13 (1789), and repealed by 29 George III c. 18 (1789). See E. and A. Porritt, *The unreformed House of Commons*, i, pp. 26-8; and O’Gorman, *Voters, patrons, and parties*, p. 132.
- ¹¹² J. Prest, *Politics in the age of Cobden* (1977), pp. 1-9, contains a useful summary of attempts to introduce electoral registration.
- ¹¹³ Land Tax duplicates for Middlesex may be found at LMA MR/PLT and WR/PLT. Unfortunately virtually nothing survives for the period before 1780, and the registers for 1767, used by George Rudé in his pioneering study of the Wilkite movement (above, n. 45), are now deemed too fragile to be consulted.
- ¹¹⁴ 42 George III c. 116, s. 200 (1802).

- ¹¹⁵ For that reason Arthur Morris, the high bailiff and returning officer, noted that it was difficult to establish precisely the total size of the electorate: see his submission to *Return of electors registered as qualified to vote in the last General Election in Great Britain*, BPP (1836), XLIII, p. 404.
- ¹¹⁶ Cited in W.A. Armstrong, 'The use of information about occupation' in E.A. Wrigley (ed.), *Nineteenth-century society: essays in the use of quantitative methods for the study of social data* (Cambridge, 1972), p. 210. See also discussion in R.J. Morris, 'Occupational coding: principles and examples', *Historical Social Research*, 15 (1990), pp. 3-29.
- ¹¹⁷ This identification was revealed by linking records by name and address to poll books from previous and successive elections.
- ¹¹⁸ 'Comic and curious occupational titles from the 1881 census', by Matthew Woollard (2000) – copy from author.
- ¹¹⁹ For the problems and potentialities of studying occupations, see section 7.11.
- ¹²⁰ For the Westminster scrutiny of 1749, see BL Lansdowne Ms. 509; WAC E/3079; and Anon., *Considerations on the determination of the scrutiny for the City and Liberty of Westminster* (London, J. Barnes, [1751]). This pamphlet is at ULL.
- ¹²¹ *London Chronicle*, 27 Oct. 1772.
- ¹²² Figures for the final declaration of the poll are in *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, 5 May 1784.
- ¹²³ For the Westminster scrutiny of 1784, see BL Add. Ms. 36,226; Bodleian Ms. Eng. Hist. c. 236; Anon., *History of the Westminster election* (2nd edn, 1785), pp. 539-74; and Anon., *Thoughts on the merits of the Westminster scrutiny, and the probable causes of its institution* (1785). Contemporary debates on the scrutiny shown in Anon., *Fox and Pitt's speeches in the House of Commons* (London, J. Debrett, 1784) have been replicated in historians' debates between the Pittite P. Kelly, 'Pitt versus Fox: the Westminster scrutiny of 1784-5', *Studies in Burke and his time*, 14 (1972-3), pp. 155-62; and the Foxite L. Werkmeister, 'Pitt versus Fox: a response to Paul Kelly', *ibid*, 15 (1973-4), pp. 45-50.
- ¹²⁴ An act of 1770, known as Grenville's Act after its sponsor (10 George III c. 16) had attempted to regulate the composition of the parliamentary committee to remove partisanship; but the issue remained under intermittent dispute until the Election Petitions Act (1868) substituted the jurisdiction of a committee of judges.

- ¹²⁵ Each candidate in county elections was allowed an inspector by 7 & 8 William III, *c.* 25, s. 3 (1696). For cities and towns being counties in themselves, the right of the inspector for each candidate to keep a check book of the poll was allowed by 19 George II, *c.* 28, s. 5 (1746), implying that the existence of such inspectors was by that date commonplace.
- ¹²⁶ BL Add. Ms. 33,123, fo 119.
- ¹²⁷ Cited in L.G. Mitchell, *Charles James Fox* (Oxford, 1992), p. 70.
- ¹²⁸ Cited in L. Reid, *Charles James Fox: a man for the people* (1969), p. 208.
- ¹²⁹ Lists of those who ‘appear to have voted for’ Trentham in the Westminster by-election of 1749 were produced by Vandeput’s committee to gain evidence for a scrutiny.
- ¹³⁰ CJ, 44, p. 125. An election print (George, no. 7,363) entitled ‘Six voters made out of one, in favour of Lord John Townshend’ showed one man in six different disguises. George also cites an advertisement pasted to the print in BM Department of Prints and Drawings, offering for sale ‘all the curious and valuable wardrobe, in which all the various voters masqueraded at the last election for Lord John Townshend’.
- ¹³¹ R. Grenville, *Memoirs of the court and cabinets of George III* (1853-5), i, p. 418.
- ¹³² TNA PRO 30/8/237, fo 785.