

LONDON ELECTORAL HISTORY – STEPS TOWARDS DEMOCRACY

4.1 MAKING THE LONDON ELECTORAL DATABASE

Historians' traditional creativity in the use of historical sources is being ever-augmented by the possibilities inherent in new technologies.¹ That makes it an exciting time, particularly in eighteenth-century studies, which are at the forefront of innovation. The Westminster Historical Database, which was the precursor of this LED, has already become incorporated into the massive website London Lives-online; and the LED is intended as a parallel resource, in the quest to re-animate a virtual eighteenth-century world for fresh analysis.

4.1.1 The construction of the LED

Historical information contained in the LED is held in tables for poll book data, for rate book data, and for shop tax data. Further tables individuate the candidates for whom votes are recorded in the poll book tables, classify the statuses and occupations of the voters, and give phonetic codes to the surnames of all who appear in the tables of historical data.

Every poll book record is held in two tables, first in a single table in which each election contest is identified by a *POLL ID*, taking values from 11 to 67, and secondly in copy specific to each electoral contest. Each poll book record is identified by a seven-digit line number, the first two digits of which replicate the *POLL ID*. Thus line numbers for the parliamentary election for Middlesex in 1705 (*POLL ID* 11) take values from 1100001 to 1103012.

For ease of use, for each election contest a copy of the poll book data is held in discrete election-specific tables in which each candidate is identified. The type of data and the constituency whence it derives are

indicated by prefixes which (it is hoped) are intuitive. Poll book data take the prefix **P**. Within this category data relating to Middlesex take the prefix **M**, whilst those relating to London take the prefix **L**. Meanwhile, Westminster data take the prefix **W**, and Marylebone data take the prefix **X**. The year in which the election was held completes the identification of the data source. Thus poll book data relating to the City of London election of 1710 are identified by the prefix **PL1710**. Where there was more than one election in a year, or where poll book data were found in more than one source, then this is indicated by an alphabetical postfix, **A**, **B**, or **C**. In three cases, poll book data were already linked across three elections in the original source. In these cases the linked data have been preserved, whilst the disaggregated data are available in discrete tables.

Likewise, each rate book record is held in two separate tables. Again a single table contains the entire rate book database in which records are uniquely identified by a line number, the first two digits of which replicate the `Rate ID`. Meanwhile, a copy of each record is held in a series of discrete tables that identify the constituency, parish, and year of rate collection. Rate book data carry the prefix **R**. Those from Westminster carry the further prefix **W**, while Marylebone rate book records take the prefix **X** (rate data were not collected for Middlesex or London). The year in which the rate was collected completes the identification of the data source. Thus rate book data from Westminster in 1749 are identified by the prefix **RW1749**.

Elections were fought on the basis of constituencies, which in the absence of a consistent residential franchise lacked the spatial integrity of their modern counterparts, while rates were levied on parishes. The prefix to a rate book table indicates the constituency in which the parish lay, and information as to the parish is contained in a discrete field within the table.

In addition to tables of historical data, the LED also contains classificatory tables. These consist of the **Candidates** table, the **Dictionary** table, and the **Sounds** table.

4.1.2 The poll book tables

Poll book tables are the key tables in the LED, containing robust behavioural data for thousands of electors at dozens of electoral contests over a period of 150 years. Few data sources before the modern era

contain such a wealth of information at key points in history. The terms of reference of the London Electoral Database project limited data collection to surviving poll books for parliamentary constituencies lying to the north of the River Thames between 1700 and 1852.

Poll book tables exist for each of the contested elections recorded in Table 15. In brief, poll book data survive for 11 Middlesex parliamentary contests between 1705 and 1820. In addition there is individual-level data for turnout in the Middlesex election of 1727, whilst there is also a table of linked data from three parliamentary elections in 1768-9. Poll book data have been entered for 12 London parliamentary contests between 1710 and 1847, together with individual-level turnout data for the London election of 1701. Poll book data were also collected for seven London-wide non-parliamentary contests: for the election of sheriff of London and Middlesex in 1724; for the election of City chamberlain in 1734; and for the election of lord mayor in five contests between 1772 and 1840. In addition, linked data survive from three polls for lord mayor in 1831.

Meanwhile Westminster is represented by a rich, if fragmentary, series of 15 poll books from parliamentary contests between 1749 and 1852. In addition, poll book data survive from three parliamentary contests for Marylebone between 1837 and 1841, in both unlinked and linked formats.

Considerable quantities of poll data for the metropolitan region remain uncollected. No attempt was made to collect individual-level poll book data that survive from elections for aldermen² or common councilmen³ where the constituency was a ward rather than the livery as a whole (the wardmote rather than Common Hall).⁴ Strict imposition of terminal dates also excluded the surviving poll book data for the election of lord mayor in 1861.⁵

Meanwhile, strict interpretation of what constituted a poll book also excluded surviving canvassing data. So the individual-level canvassing data that survive for Middlesex in 1747⁶ and for the Paddington parish of Marylebone in 1832 were not collected.⁷ A fragment of extant poll book data from the Middlesex election of 1806⁸ remains uncollected, although it was within the terms of reference of the project, since it was deemed too fragmentary. Furthermore, polls for non-political offices, such as parish lectureships, remain uncollected.⁹

More importantly, no data were collected for constituencies lying south of the River Thames. The Southwark poll book of 1747, reported

in 1926 to be in Guildhall, no longer exists (if, indeed, it ever did).¹⁰ Meanwhile incomplete data surviving from the Southwark by-election of 1743¹¹ and the Southwark general election of 1796¹² remain uncollected. Poll data for Surrey were excluded, although a fine series survives from the early eighteenth century.¹³ Surrey's Brixton Hundred was within the metropolitan region throughout the period, while the East Surrey constituency, from which a poll book survives from 1865, was substantially built-up. Two poll books from the western Kent constituency of Greenwich have not been entered in the Database.¹⁴

To be included in the LED, individual-level voting records had to survive from the period. For poll book records to exist, it was necessary that there should have been a contested election. Election contests took place when more candidates stood for election than there were seats available to represent a constituency. Most English parliamentary constituencies returned two Members of Parliament throughout this period: the City of London was exceptional in returning four. The number of candidates contesting a general election ranged from three to six in Middlesex, Westminster, and Marylebone; and from six to nine in London's parliamentary elections.

Party structures throughout this long period were amorphous and fluid. Indeed, not until 1970 were voters in British parliamentary elections told officially for which political party each candidate was standing. The 'first Age of Party'¹⁵ in the reigns of Anne and George I was succeeded by a period in the mid-eighteenth century in which the meaning of party allegiances fluctuated very considerably. Some politicians in every generation prided themselves on being 'above party'. Those in government were *ipso facto* the 'king's men' for much of the period. But a recrudescence of party was seen in the elections of the later eighteenth century, and party allegiances became stronger in the nineteenth century.

Overall, therefore, the LED avoids the political labelling of candidates, because the terminology and meanings of such terms were flexible and fluid.¹⁶ Ascriptions are left to users of the Database, although full indications of the political contexts of the parliamentary contests are given in the electoral narratives in sections 5 and 6.

Some general elections were undoubtedly dichotomised politically: for example the City of London elections between Whigs and Tories in the early eighteenth century, or the Westminster elections of the 1780s, when Pittites were challenged by Foxites – or by pro- and anti-

Administration candidates. Other elections appear to have been three-cornered contests. Their results can be analysed in various ways; but a dichotomy can also be detected between voters who either polled only for Independent candidates or split between Independent and Whig, on the one hand, and voters who polled only for Administration candidates or split between Administration and Whig, on the other. The Westminster election of 1818 is an example of such a contest.

It should be noted that contemporary election returns made no official record of the number of votes gained by each candidate.¹⁷ However, unofficial contemporary sources such as newspapers frequently record candidates' totals. The number of votes given to each candidate according to the Database is rarely identical with the numbers given in contemporary sources. There are a number of reasons for this. First, and particularly important for explaining discrepancies in the Westminster tallies, has been the use of fragmentary manuscript poll books. Secondly, the numbers given in newspapers may not reflect the official poll book, but be derived from partisan check books.¹⁸ Nevertheless, despite discrepancies between contemporary totals of voters and those recorded in the Database, the two are broadly consistent. Hence no matter which tally is preferred by the historian, the victors always remain the victors.

Within the Metropolitan Polls in section 8 are contained the names of all candidates standing at each contested election in every metropolitan parliamentary constituency between 1700 and 1852, together with information about the tallies of votes cast for them according to different contemporary sources.¹⁹ In addition, the Metropolitan Polls include results for all contested elections for civic office (the sheriffs of London and Middlesex, the lord mayors, chamberlains and bridge masters of London) where the electorate was of London liverymen. And it contains returns for Middlesex coroners, where the electorate of freeholders approximated to the parliamentary electorate.

Amongst these elections, 57 contests are represented by individual-level data in the LED – being overwhelmingly returns for parliamentary elections from the pre-reform period. A full account of all poll book data in the LED is shown in Table 15, in which each entry in the source document is counted as one record.

Table 15
Poll book data in the LED

Poll ID	Table Name	Description	Number of records
11	PM1705	Poll book data, Middlesex parliamentary election, 1705	3,012
12	PM1710	Poll book data, Middlesex parliamentary election, 1710	3,213
14	PM1715	Poll book data, Middlesex parliamentary election, 1715	1,399
15	PM1727	Turnout data, Middlesex parliamentary election, 1727	2,491
16	PM1747	Poll book data, Middlesex parliamentary election, 1747	2,539
17	PM1750	Poll book data, Middlesex parliamentary by-election, 1750	2,835
18	PM1768-9	Linked poll book data, Middlesex parliamentary elections, 1768-9	3,476
19	PM1768A	Poll book data, Middlesex parliamentary election, 1768	3,476
20	PM1768B	Poll book data, Middlesex parliamentary by-election, 1768	3,476
21	PM1769	Poll book data, Middlesex parliamentary by-election, 1769	3,476
22	PM1784	Poll book data, Middlesex parliamentary election, 1784	3,635
23	PM1802	Poll book data, Middlesex parliamentary election, 1802	6,295
24	PM1820	Poll book data, Middlesex parliamentary election, 1820	871
25	PL1701	Turnout data, London parliamentary election, 1701	7,798
26	PL1710	Poll book data, London parliamentary election, 1710	8,292
27	PL1713A	Poll book data, London parliamentary election, 1713	4,024
28	PL1713B	Poll book data, London parliamentary election, 1713	4,166
29	PL1713	Composite poll book data, London parliamentary election, 1713	7,579
30	PL1722	Poll book data, London parliamentary election, 1722	7,136

Poll ID	Table Name	Description	Number of records
31	PL1724A	Poll book data, London shrieval election, 1724	6,612
32	PL1724B	Poll book data, London parliamentary election, 1724	6,161
33	PL1727	Poll book data, London parliamentary election, 1727	8,553
34	PL1734	Poll book data, London chamberlain election, 1734	
35	PL1768	Poll book data, London parliamentary election, 1768	5,700
36	PL1772A	Poll book data, London mayoral election, 1772	4,548
37	PL1772B	Poll book data, London mayoral election, 1772	4,558
38	PL1773	Poll book data, London parliamentary election, 1773	5,155
39	PL1781	Poll book data, London parliamentary election, 1781	5,062
40	PL1784	Poll book data, London parliamentary election, 1784	5,007
41	PL1796	Poll book data, London parliamentary election, 1796	6,322
42	PL1832	Linked poll book data, London mayoral elections, 1831	6,883
43	PL1831A	Poll book data, London mayoral election, 1st poll, 1831	6,883
44	PL1831B	Poll book data, London mayoral election, 2nd poll, 1831	6,883
45	PL1831C	Poll book data, London mayoral election, 3rd poll, 1831	6,883
46	PL1837	Poll book data, London parliamentary election, 1837	11,564
47	PL1840	Poll book data, London mayoral election, 1840	5,082
48	PL1847	Poll book data, London parliamentary election, 1847	21,269
53	PW1749	Poll book data, Westminster parliamentary election, 1749	9,463
54	PW1774	Poll book data, Westminster parliamentary election, 1774	7,514

Poll ID	Table Name	Description	Number of records
55	PW1780	Poll book data, Westminster parliamentary election, 1780	9,134
56	PW1784	Poll book data, Westminster parliamentary election, 1784	12,237
57	PW1788	Poll book data, Westminster parliamentary election, 1788	8,226
58	PW1790	Poll book data, Westminster parliamentary election, 1790	5,015
59	PW1796	Poll book data, Westminster parliamentary election, 1796	3,058
60	PW1802	Poll book data, Westminster parliamentary election, 1802	4,682
61	PW1806	Poll book data, Westminster parliamentary election, 1806	4,611
62	PW1818	Poll book data, Westminster parliamentary election, 1818	10,138
63	PW1819	Poll book data, Westminster parliamentary election, 1819	6,556
64	PW1820	Poll book data, Westminster parliamentary election, 1820	7,586
65	PW1837	Poll book data, Westminster parliamentary election, 1837	6,327
66	PW1841	Poll book data, Westminster parliamentary election, 1841	6,602
67	PW1852	Poll book data, Westminster parliamentary election, 1852	14,883
49	PX1837-41	Linked poll book data, Marylebone parliamentary elections, 1837-41	11,570
50	PX1837	Poll book data, Marylebone parliamentary election, 1837	4,480
51	PX1838	Poll book data, Marylebone parliamentary election, 1838	5,423
52	PX1841	Poll book data, Marylebone parliamentary election, 1841	11,570

Source: LED.

At this point, it is helpful to summarise the format of the Poll book table, as shown in Table 16.

Table 16
Format of the Poll book Table

Field Name	Description	Data Type	Size
<i>Poll ID</i>	Identification of election	Number	4
<i>Lineno</i>	Database line number	Number	4
<i>Parish</i>	Parish of residence of voter	Text	40
<i>Company</i>	Livery company of voter	Text	50
<i>Qualification</i>	Qualification of voter	Text	50
<i>Surname</i>	Surname string of voter as recorded in source	Text	40
<i>Stdsur</i>	Standardised surname string	Text	50
<i>Scode</i>	Russell Soundex code of surname string	Text	5
<i>Fname</i>	Forename string of voter as recorded in source	Text	25
<i>Shtname</i>	Standardised forename string, using first 4 characters	Text	4
<i>Snr/Jnr</i>	Senior/Junior of voter	Text	50
<i>Status</i>	Status of voter as recorded in source	Text	50
<i>Vote</i>	Binary coded vote entered as in source	Text	13
<i>Alley</i>	Address of voter as recorded in source	Text	50
<i>Street Number</i>	Street number of voter's residence as recorded in source	Number	4
<i>Street</i>	Standardised address of voter	Text	40
<i>Ward</i>	Ward of residence of voter	Text	
<i>Area</i>	Standardised address of voter	Text	50
<i>County</i>	County of residence of voter	Text	50
<i>Day of polling</i>	Day of polling	Number	4
<i>Occup</i>	Occupation of voter as recorded in source	Text	30
<i>Oclv4</i>	Revised Booth/Armstrong classification of voter's occupation as recorded in poll book	Text	8
<i>Oclv3</i>	Revised Booth/Armstrong classification of voter's occupational trade cluster	Text	7
<i>Oclv2</i>	Revised Booth/Armstrong classification of voter's occupational sub-sector	Text	4
<i>Oclv1</i>	Revised Booth/Armstrong classification of voter's occupational sector	Text	2

Field Name	Description	Data Type	Size
<i>Qualifying ward</i>	Ward of residence of freeholder	Text	50
<i>Qualifying parish</i>	Parish of residence of freeholder	Text	50
<i>Qualifying alley</i>	Place of residence of freeholder	Text	50
<i>Qualifying street no</i>	Number in street of freeholder's place of residence	Number	4
<i>Qualifying Street</i>	Street of residence of freeholder	Text	50
<i>Qualifying area</i>	Place of residence of freeholder	Text	50
<i>Nature of qualification</i>	Nature of property by which freeholder was qualified to vote	Text	50
<i>1st Occupier Sname</i>	Surname of occupier of freehold property	Text	50
<i>1st Occupier Fname</i>	Forename of occupier of freehold property	Text	50
<i>1st Occupier Snr/Jnr</i>	Senior/Junior of occupier of freehold property	Text	50
<i>1st Occupier Status</i>	Status of occupier of freehold property	Text	50
<i>2nd Occupier Sname</i>	Surname of second occupier of freehold property	Text	50
<i>2nd Occupier Fname</i>	Forename of second occupier of freehold property	Text	50
<i>Comment</i>	Comments made in poll book	Memo	255
<i>V1 to V13</i>	Tick boxes for votes for individual candidates	Yes/No	1
<i>Vote</i>	Vote given as recorded in poll book	Text	13
<i>No vote</i>	Elector did not vote at election	Yes/No	1
<i>Voted</i>	Turnout data	Yes/No	1
<i>Reg No</i>	Number in electoral register	Number	4
<i>Source Lineno</i>	Line number in electoral register	Number	4

Source: LED.

4.1.3 The Rate book tables

Parish rate books record the address of each rated property together with the name of the occupier and the rack rental valuation of the property.

Information in a rate book table can be used to supplement that in a poll book table by linking the two tables by means of those names and addresses that are found in both tables.

Rate book data were collected for selected constituencies and years. Its contents are shown in Table 17 and its format in Table 18. The first criterion of selection was data survival, the second of a reasonable match (in date terms) to an election contest. The guiding principle of selection was that the rate book data should supplement and add value to the poll book data. Complete rate book data were collected for Westminster in the key election years of 1749, 1784, 1818, and 1837. Furthermore, complete rate book data were collected for Marylebone in the election year of 1837.

Table 17
Rate book data in the LED

Table Name	Description	No. of Records
RW1749	Westminster rate book data, 1749	15,020
RW1774	Selected Westminster rate book data, 1774	3,888
RW1780	Selected Westminster rate book data, 1780	3,808
RW1784	Westminster rate book data, 1784	15,534
RW1789	Selected Westminster rate book data, 1789	4,137
RW1796	Selected Westminster rate book data, 1796	2,845
RW1802	Selected Westminster rate book data, 1802	3,439
RW1806	Selected Westminster rate book data, 1806	3,587
RW1818	Westminster rate book data, 1818	17,193
RW1837	Westminster rate book data, 1837	18,927
RX1837	Marylebone rate book data, 1837	28,886
Total		117,264

Source: LED.

Table 18
Format of the Rate Book Table

Field Name	Description	Data Type	Size
<i>Lineno</i>	Database line number	Number	4
<i>ID</i>		Number	4
<i>Parish</i>	Parish in which rated property was located	Text	40
<i>Ward</i>	Ward within parish in which rated property was located	Text	50
<i>Surname</i>	Surname string of ratepayer as recorded	Text	40

Field Name	Description	Data Type	Size
	in rate book		
<i>Stdsur</i>	Standardised surname string	Text	50
<i>Fname</i>	Forename string of ratepayer as recorded	Text	25
	in rate book		
<i>Shtname</i>	Ratepayer's standardised forename string, using first four characters	Text	4
<i>Scode</i>	Russell Soundex code of ratepayer's surname string	Text	4
<i>Snr/Jnr</i>	Senior/Junior of ratepayer	Text	10
<i>Status</i>	Status of ratepayer as recorded in rate book	Text	50
<i>Alley</i>	Location of property as recorded in source	Text	50
<i>Streetno</i>	Street number of rated property as recorded in source	Number	4
<i>Street</i>	Standardised location of property	Text	40
<i>2nd Occupier Surname</i>	Surname string of second ratepayer	Text	40
<i>2nd Occupier Fname</i>	Second ratepayer's forename string	Text	25
<i>2nd Occupier Scode</i>	Russell Soundex code of second ratepayer's surname string	Text	5
<i>2nd Occupier Shtname</i>	Second ratepayer's standardised forename string	Text	4
<i>2nd Occupier Snr/Jnr</i>	Senior/junior of second occupier	Text	10
<i>2nd Occupier Status</i>	Status of second occupier	Text	50
<i>Institution Name</i>	Name of institutional occupier	Text	50
<i>Description</i>		Text	50
<i>Geographical Info</i>		Text	50
<i>RV</i>	Rack rental value of property taken from rate book	Number	4

Source: LED.

4.1.4 Westminster rate book data

Almost complete rate book data were collected for the Westminster constituency for the election years of 1749, 1784, 1818, and 1837. Rate

book data were also collected for two Westminster parishes which had contrasting social and economic characteristics. St Margaret and St John, in the west of the constituency, was seen as a 'Court' parish, the centre of government, and an area of fashionable urban development. By contrast St Anne, in the north-east of the constituency, was dominated to an even greater degree than in the constituency as a whole by artisans and craftsmen, who were perhaps less amenable to the influence of the court.

Further classification by wards within parishes is to be found in the Westminster rate book database, for it was on a ward-by-ward basis that parish officials collected the rates. Each of the electoral parishes except St Paul may be further subdivided by linking poll book and rate book data. Continuing westward urbanisation also led eventually to the creation of new wards, such as the Knightsbridge wards of St George and St Margaret, and to the building of new housing in the westward Out ward of St George. The wards into which the parishes were divided are shown in Tables 19 and 20.

Table 19
Westminster rate book records by parish, 1749-1837

A = St Anne, Soho
 B = St Clement Danes, with St Mary-le-Strand and the Liberty of the Savoy
 C = St George, Hanover Square
 D = St James, Piccadilly
 E = St Margaret, Westminster, and St John the Evangelist
 F = St Martin-in-the-Fields
 G = St Paul, Covent Garden

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	Total
1749	1,347	1,731	2,474	3,449	2,857	3,162		15,020
1774	1,162				2,726			3,888
1780	1,146				2,662			3,808
1784	1,220	1,866	3,208	3,297	2,670	2,757	516	15,534
1789	1,282				2,855			4,137
1796					2,845			2,845
1802	1,272				2,167			3,439
1806	1,299				2,288			3,587
1818	1,290	1,929	4,242	3,565	2,861	2,727	579	17,193
1837	1,460	2,107	6,445	3,872	4,494		549	18,927
Total	11,478	7,633	16,369	14,183	28,425	8,646	1,644	88,378

Source: LED.

Table 20**Westminster rate book records by parish and ward, 1749-1837**

A = St Anne, Soho

B = St Clement Danes, with St Mary-le-Strand and the Liberty of the Savoy

C = St George, Hanover Square

D = St James, Piccadilly

E = St Margaret, Westminster, and St John the Evangelist

F = St Martin-in-the-Fields

G = St Paul, Covent Garden

Note: No ward data are recorded for the rate book for St Margaret and St John in 1802

Parish	Ward	1749	1774	1780	1784	1789	1796	1802	1806	1818	1837	Total
A	King Square	783	666	680	625	650		643	647	645	754	6,093
	Leicester Fields	564	496	466	595	632		629	652	645	706	5,385
B	Royal	189			173					122	123	607
	Middle	245			204					181	209	839
	Church	85			58					57	539	739
	Holywell	308			436					427		1,171
	Drury Lane	271			251					257	274	1,053
	Shire Lane	262			270					317	369	1,218
	Temple Bar	244			194					240	258	936
	Savoy	127			106					103	99	435
St Mary				174					225	236	635	

Parish	Ward	1749	1774	1780	1784	1789	1796	1802	1806	1818	1837	Total
C	Dover Street	280			270					329	372	1,251
	Conduit Street	503			481					543	604	2,131
	Out	525			928					1,013	1,555	4,021
	Grosvenor Street	588			736					748	832	2,904
	Brook Street	578			793					888	1,073	3,332
	Curzon Street									721	685	1,406
	Knightsbridge										1,324	1,324
D	Pall Mall	859			695					872	853	3,279
	Church	890			862					885	971	3,608
	Golden Square	850			839					749	828	3,266
	Great	850			901					1,059	1,220	4,030
	Marlborough Street											
E	Grand	889	811	801	784	819	858		735	574	693	6,964
	Abbey	979	891	882	907	1,017	1,006		654	1,044	1,234	8,614
	St John	989	1,024	979	979	1,019	981		899	1,243	2,169	10,282
	Knightsbridge										398	398
F	Suffolk Street	309			274					282		865
	New Street	385			326					317		1,028
	Charing Cross	431			482					455		1,368

Parish	Ward	1749	1774	1780	1784	1789	1796	1802	1806	1818	1837	Total
	Spur Alley	343			262					301		906
	Bedfordbury	427			371					386		1,184
	Exchange	308			311					266		885
	Strand	326			267					311		904
	Long Acre	303			464					409		1,176
	Drury Lane	330										330
G	St Paul				516					579	549	1,644
Total		15,020	3,888	3,808	15,534	4,137	2,845	3,439	3,587	17,193	18,927	88,378

Source: LED.

4.1.5 Marylebone rate book data

Complete rate book data were collected for the Marylebone constituency for the election year of 1837. This comprised the parishes of Marylebone, St Pancras, and Paddington. The sources of the data collected are shown in the Bibliography.

Each of the three parishes of Marylebone has rate books for 1837. St Pancras was divided into four wards that correspond to the districts used for electoral registration and found in the poll book tables. St Marylebone was divided into eight collectors' rounds, which do not map exactly onto the five registration districts found in the poll book tables, and thus cannot be used for record linkage. Paddington parish, the smallest of the three, was not further subdivided.

Table 21
Marylebone rate book records by parish and ward, 1837

Parish	Ward	Number of records	Total
Paddington	Paddington	2,893	2,893
St Marylebone	A	951	13,846
	B	1,094	
	C	1,496	
	D	1,447	
	E	1,524	
	F	1,741	
	G	2,783	
	H	2,810	
St Pancras	East	3,104	12,025
	West	3,118	
	North	3,912	
	South	1,891	
Total			28,886

Source: LED.

4.1.6 The Dictionary table

The table **Dictionary** (see Table 22) contains an example of every character string found in the *Occup* field in the poll books, together with the four-level nested occupational code assigned to it and described in greater detail in section 7. These occupational character strings naturally contain all variant spellings (including typographical errors), and so considerably exceed the number of separate *Oclv4* codes assigned to them. Occupational coding was undertaken after data entry, thus retaining intact the original occupational character string. It is thus possible for users of the Database to amend the coding as they see fit.

Moreover, the creators of the Database stress that the occupational classification adopted here is descriptive rather than prescriptive. However, the occupational codes are embedded in the Database rather than purely made available in a look-up table, as this embedding reduces the number of tables which have to be joined, and thus increases the speed of implementation of database queries.

Table 22 Format of the Dictionary Table

Field Name	Description	Data Type	Size
<i>Occup</i>	Voter's occupation string as recorded in source	Text	50
<i>Oclv4</i>	Revised Booth/Armstrong classification of voter's occupation as recorded in poll book	Text	8
<i>Oclv3</i>	Revised Booth/Armstrong classification of voter's occupational trade cluster	Text	7
<i>Oclv2</i>	Revised Booth/Armstrong classification of voter's occupational sub-sector	Text	4
<i>Oclv1</i>	Revised Booth/Armstrong classification of voter's occupational sector	Text	2

Source: LED.

4.1.7 The Sounds table

The LED is provided with a Soundex coding to facilitate record linkage. Further details of this classification system are provided in section 7.14.

One example of every surname string in the LED was taken and

placed in a new table **Sounds**, together with its appropriate Russell Soundex code (see Table 23). Just as there are more occupational character strings in the field *Occup* than there are occupational codes in the field *Oclv4*, so there are more surname character strings in the field *Surname* than there are corresponding Soundex codes in the field *Score*.

Like the occupational codes, the Soundex codes were added after data entry, and similarly are embedded in the Database. Thus the **Sounds** table represents a step in the creation of the Database in which Soundex codes were added to extant surname character strings. Just as the preservation of occupational character strings facilitates recoding, so the retention of the original surname strings allows users to experiment and adapt alternative coding methods.

Table 23
Format of the Sounds Table

Field Name	Description	Data Type	Size
<i>Surname</i>	Surname string as recorded in source	Text	25
<i>Score</i>	Russell Soundex code of surname string	Text	5

Source: LED.

4.1.8 The Candidates table

The **Candidates** table affords an opportunity to ‘hard wire’ the record linkage of candidates. This enables the user to trace the support for John Wilkes in the parliamentary election for London in 1768, in parliamentary elections for Middlesex in 1768, 1769, and in 1784, and in the election for lord mayor of London in 1772. It is also useful for distinguishing between candidates with the same name.

Candidates are identified by a forename and family name. Any titles of nobility, knighthoods, baronetcies, and other such titular identifiers are relegated to the brief biographical note in the endnotes. Using simple family names is relatively straightforward (although in more than one metropolitan election voters had to distinguish between candidates who shared the same surname). But reference to titles as the first means of identifying individuals is more problematic. Some well-born politicians did keep the same title throughout their careers. In other cases, however,

individuals gained one or more titles successively over time, whether as the result of inheritance or political award or both. In fact, it was significant that these metropolitan elections were contested by a number of titled personages,²⁰ while the titled peers of the realm sat by hereditary right in the House of Lords.

Nonetheless, given that all candidates had common identifiers in the form of forename and family name, these are the key items that are used in the **Candidates** table: see Table 24.

Table 24
Format of the Candidates table

Field Name	Description	Data Type	Size
<i>Surname</i>	Surname of candidate	Text	40
<i>Fname</i>	Forename of candidate	Text	25
<i>Alias</i>	Other names by which candidate was known	Text	
<i>Candidate ID</i>	Identification of candidate	Number	4
<i>Election</i>	Description of election	Text	
<i>Poll ID</i>	Identification of poll in LED	Number	4
<i>Vote Code</i>	Binary identification of single vote for candidate	Number	
<i>Career</i>	Electoral career of the candidate	Text	255

Source: LED.

These resources between them constitute the LED. Its information is available for use in every possible combination and/or with a capacity to insert new classifications if users so desire, by returning to the raw data.

4.1.9 Further prospects

Two further prospects for the future should also be noted. The *Career* field in the **Candidates** table (Table 24) has been designed to offer linkage keys, which will allow for the creation of a new database of wardmote elections within London, and parliamentary elections across the country as a whole. Such a database would allow historians to analyse a candidate's electoral appeal within different constituencies. Many a City politician, for example, began his political career as

Common Councilman for his ward, before the slow and uncertain ascent of the greasy pole to the aldermanic bench and the seat in parliament.

Furthermore, the *Career* field would also make it possible to link the electoral experience of candidates who moved from constituency to constituency. One notable example was Henry Hunt, who appears in the LED as a candidate in Westminster in 1818. He was an inveterate campaigner for the radicals. Thus Hunt contested Bristol twice in 1812 at a by-election and general election; Westminster in 1818; Preston in 1820; and Somerset in 1826. He tried unsuccessfully to be elected common councilman for Farringdon Without ward in 1828 and 1829. He was finally elected MP for Preston in December 1830 and sat for that constituency until 1832. Currently, this information is not contained in the printed version of the **Candidates** table but is located in the biographical details in the notes about individual candidates in sections 5 and 6. However, the design of the LED lays down a marker for future development and new linkages.

The second future prospect needs only to be noted at this stage. That is the possibility of linking electronically the multitude of historical databases, like this one, that either have been established or are in process of creation with reference to eighteenth-century British society. The technical and conceptual problems of establishing such linkages via a meta-database of databases will be immense.²¹ But the prospect of new tiers of information-matching and information-generating is a beckoning one.

Notes

¹ See for example discussions in M. Greengrass and L.M. Hughes (eds), *The virtual representation of the past* (Aldershot, 2008).

² Anon., *A true and impartial account of the poll of the inhabitants of the ward of Broad Street, upon the nomination of an alderman in the room of Sir Joseph Woolfe* (London, James Woodward, 1711). Another copy of the same poll is in Anon., *Tory partiality detected: or, a true state of the poll and scrutiny of Broad Street ward, on the election of an alderman in the room of Sir Joseph Wolfe deceased: begun the 13th of September 1711* (London, J. Baker, 1712). Each of these consists of two slates of four candidates.

³ One example is Anon., *A list of the persons who polled for Mr Dumello and Mr*

Tyson at the late election of common-councilmen for Bridge ward (London, [1740]). Manuscript polls for common councilmen may occasionally be found; a series for Walbrook ward between 1791 and 1831 is at LMA CLC/W/PA/007/Ms. 00470.

- ⁴ For the Wardmote, see section 3.3.2.
- ⁵ Guildhall Ms. 1519/1-2: to be found under new LMA call-mark. This poll was designed to force Sir Thomas Cubitt, the incumbent lord mayor, on to the Court of Aldermen in breach of the rotation principle.
- ⁶ Warwickshire RO, CR136 A253.
- ⁷ WAC, List of voters and votes cast, December 1832, T/V/65 (*sc.* a canvassing list, probably for Portman).
- ⁸ Consisting of just 26 extant records from the Middlesex poll of 1806, this has not been included in the LED, but it can be found at LMA MR/PP/1806.
- ⁹ Occasional polls survive for offices such as parish lectureships in City parishes. A poll for the office of sexton in the parish of St Anne, Westminster, in 1790 survives at WAC, A/2338.
- ¹⁰ *A list of the persons who polled at the election for the borough of Southwark, 1747* [London, 1747], listed in Anon., *Handlist of poll books in the Guildhall library* (1926), p. 23.
- ¹¹ PRO 140/147/11.
- ¹² Anon., *The names of those patriots, in the parish of St John, that supported Mr Tierney* (1796).
- ¹³ Polls for Surrey survive from 1705, 1710, 1713, 1719, 1742, 1774, 1775, 1780, and 1826.
- ¹⁴ The Greenwich poll of 1835 is in *Greenwich, Woolwich, and Deptford Gazette*, 17 January 1835.
- ¹⁵ The phrase is Geoffrey Holmes's, used in his inaugural lecture, *The electorate and the national will in the first age of party* (Lancaster, 1976), and reprinted in idem, *Politics, religion and society in England, 1679-1750* (1986), pp. 1-33.
- ¹⁶ See section 1.7.4.

- ¹⁷ For the various sources, which provide the total tally of votes attained by each candidate, see section 8, Metropolitan Polls.
- ¹⁸ These were unofficial copies of poll books, made and kept by election agents, that detailed their own voters and those of their opponents. They were made for the purpose of writing letters of thanks; to avoid wasting the time of 'knockers-up' and their friends' patience; and to identify their opponents' questionable votes for challenge at a scrutiny.
- ¹⁹ For the period 1700-1832, these names and numbers are taken from the *History of Parliament*. For the period after 1832, they come from Craig.
- ²⁰ For the classification of social titles, see section 7.13.
- ²¹ One pioneer was the AHRC-funded Armadillo Project, based at Sheffield University (2005-7), focusing on the problems and challenges of linking very different data in very different formats.