

'An Affair of Such Vast Importance to the Nation': Parliament and the 1748 Buckingham Assizes Bill.*

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The Buckingham Assize Bill of 1748, which concerned the location of the Buckinghamshire summer assize, was important both at a national and at a local level. Nationally it brought into question the competence of the ministry headed by Henry Pelham to help its supporters, the Grenville family, retain their interest in Buckingham, and thus whether it could equally help its supporters elsewhere in Britain. Locally it was a culmination of years of rivalry between the towns of Aylesbury and Buckingham for status and interest in the county. This rivalry, because of the bill, moved in 1748 into the parliamentary arena. The sources have been known for some time, mainly a debate in the House of Commons and the petitions from Buckinghamshire which were sent to Parliament; they indicate the arguments for and against and the supporters and opponents of the bill. There has been, however, little evidence for such matters for the House of Lords. However, two surviving lists in the papers

* This possibly ironic quotation is from the *Gentleman's Magazine* 18 (1748), 104, where the editor of the journal is commenting on speeches by certain MPs on the bill which the journal had printed in the preceding pages: 'So vigorous an opposition was made to this Bill, and such warm Debates attended every step, 'till it passed ... that the curiosity even of our distant readers, occasioned a request to see what could be said upon an affair of such vast importance to the nation; in comparison of which, Bills seemingly of more public concern were carried unexamined'. Horace Walpole, M.P. for Callington, and son of the prime minister, Robert Walpole, thought the bill neither wise nor 'a great national point' (*The Yale Edition of Horace Walpole's Correspondence*, ed. W.S. Lewis et al. (48 vols, New Haven, 1937–83) [hereafter cited as *Walpole Correspondence*], XVI, p. 26: Walpole's undelivered speech on the bill). He did, however, later refer to it as 'the famous contest between Aylesbury and Buckingham' (*Walpole Correspondence*, XX, 112: to Horace Mann, 31 Jan. 1750). I would like to thank Dr Robin Eagles, Dr Stephen Farrell, Sir John Sainty and this journal's two anonymous readers for reading an early draft of this article and for making many useful suggestions.

of Prime Minister Pelham's brother – one a division list and the other a management list – which are analysed here, give insights into the importance of the bill at the national level.

I

Buckinghamshire was represented in parliament before the Great Reform Act of 1832 by seven constituencies: the county and the six boroughs of Amersham, Aylesbury, Buckingham, Chipping Wycombe, Great Marlow and Wendover. Of these boroughs Aylesbury and Buckingham represented different ends of the electoral spectrum.

The right of election in Aylesbury, the largest town, the administrative centre of the county (in the 1740s it had acquired a new gaol and shire hall) and the location for the county elections, rested with the inhabitant householders. In the eighteenth century these numbered around 400 to 500 voters, thus it was the largest borough in size, occupying a fifth of the county, while its electorate was an eighth the size of the whole county electorate, which stood at c.4000. By the time of the 1832 Reform Bill the number of qualified voters in Aylesbury had risen to around 1400 after an act in 1804 (44 Geo. III, c.60) had added the freeholders of the hundreds of Risborough, Stone and Aylesbury. Whilst in Buckingham, the nominal county town, the right of election was in the corporation which numbered 13 voters (the smallest by far of the borough electorates).¹ Aylesbury, a market centre for the Vale of Aylesbury, with a flourishing lace manufacture, which was in decline in the late eighteenth century, has been described as 'squalid and venal, and without an established patron. Most of the neighbouring gentlemen preferred to leave the borough alone; elections were expensive; and rich outsiders were welcome'. Yet the town had a strong independent interest of trade and professional men, many of them dissenters. Daniel Defoe had been much kinder to the town earlier in the 18th century when he described it as 'the principal market town in the county of Bucks; though Buckingham a much inferior place, is called the county town. Here [in Aylesbury] also is held the election for Members of Parliament, or knights of the shire for the county; and county gaol, and the assizes. It is a large town, has a very

1 These figures are from R. Sedgwick, *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons, 1715–1754* (2 vols, London, 1970), I, 195–200; L. Namier and J. Brooke, *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons, 1754–1790* (3 vols, London, 1964), I, pp. 213–17; D. Fisher, *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons, 1820–1832* (7 vols, Cambridge, 2009), II, pp. 54–66.

noble market in corn, and is famous for a large tract of the richest land in England, extending for many miles around'.²

Buckingham was also a centre of the declining lace industry, but was the pocket borough of the Temple, later Grenville, family of nearby Stowe, and few (none between 1744 and 1806) who were not of this family or relatives by marriage were returned to parliament to represent the borough. In fact between 1715 and 1832 there were no contested elections at Buckingham; while, in contrast, at Aylesbury of the 50 elections held between 1690 and 1832, 26 were contested.³

Part of the rivalry between these two towns concerned the location of the twice-yearly assize court. These courts were important social and economic events, as well as important legal occasions for the town in which they were held. This was particularly true of the summer assize which 'brought landed society flocking to the town where it was held, and stimulated a variety of social activities, from theatrical and municipal entertainments to fairs and horse-races'.⁴ Thus the removal of such an event could mean severe financial loss to local tradesmen. The relocation of an assize shifted all the concomitant economic advantages to the new venue. Further, if there was a dominant political interest in the town which lost the assize, the removal would indicate a loss of political prestige and patronage, particularly at parliamentary elections. This was the case at Buckingham, where the Temple family and later the Grenville family, who through marriage became the political heirs of the Temples, had held political dominance for many generations.⁵

Though the right of choosing the venue for assize lay with the Lord Chancellor and the judges, the decision in 1747 to move the summer

2 Daniel Defoe, *A Tour through the Whole Island of Great Britain*, ed. Pat Rogers (Harmondsworth, 1971), p. 348. See also R.W. Davis, *Political Change and Continuity, 1760-1885: A Buckinghamshire Study* (Newton Abbot, 1972), pp. 21-23.

3 E. Cruickshanks, S. Handley and D.W. Hayton, *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons, 1690-1715* (5 vols, Cambridge, 2002), II, pp. 23, 30, 35-36; Sedgwick, *House of Commons, 1715-54*, I, pp. 196-97; Namier and Brook, *House of Commons, 1754-1790*, I, 214-46; R.G. Thorne, *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons, 1790-1820* (5 vols, London, 1986), I, pp. 19-20, 22; Fisher, *House of Commons, 1820-1832*, II, pp. 59-66.

4 P. Langford, *Public Life and the Propertied Englishman, 1689-1798* (Oxford, 1991), p. 179. Defoe had witnessed 'a mighty confluence of noblemen and gentlemen, at a famous horse race at Quainton-Meadow, not far off [from Aylesbury], ... and a great many persons of the first rank, and a prodigious concourse of people' (Defoe, *Tour*, p. 348). This description gives a hint of how important the assize could be economically to both Aylesbury and Buckingham.

5 See John Beckett, *The Rise and Fall of the Grenvilles, Dukes of Buckingham and Chandos, 1710-1921* (Manchester, 1994). Page 12 deals briefly with the assize bill.

assize at Buckingham, which had been held there since 1720,⁶ to Aylesbury was first and foremost a political one.⁷ The Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, Sir John Willes, instigated the move to Aylesbury just before 'the general election, in order to procure the support of a grateful electorate for his son, Edward Willes'. He was duly elected on 26 June 1747, along with Lord Inchiquin (an Irish peer and thus able to sit in the Commons), as M.P. for the borough.⁸ An accusation of political fixing was later made in the House of Commons against Justice Willes by Richard Grenville, elected M.P. for Buckingham on the same day.⁹ Thus the holding of the assize became a political issue with the Grenvilles being forced to bring in a bill, which aimed to restore the summer assize to Buckingham.

Both Edward Willes and Lord Inchiquin were supporters of Frederick, Prince of Wales, who was in opposition to both his father, George II, and the ministry headed by Henry Pelham, younger brother to the duke of Newcastle. As the Grenvilles at Buckingham were supporters of the ministry, what was initially a local spat over prestige and patronage soon took on parliamentary importance at the national level.

The bill, however, was seen by many 'as electoral rigging at its worst'.¹⁰ The country tory, the 3rd earl of Oxford, considered 'This Bill a job on the Court Side to promote the Interest of the Grenvilles in the town of

6 This is the date given in the standard accounts; yet the petition from the high sheriff and the grand jury of Buckinghamshire, pressing for the House of Lords to reject the bill, argued among other things, that for the past 60 years not only had the winter assizes, but 'the Summer Assizes have been *most commonly* held at Aylesbury' (Parliamentary Archives [hereafter cited as PA], LP 243/15; emphasis added; oddly this is the only document concerned with the bill to survive in the house of lords' main papers series). According to W. Page (ed.), *Victoria Country History of Buckinghamshire* (5 vols, London, 1905–28) [hereafter VCH, *Buckinghamshire*] IV, p. 548, n. 81: '[a]ssizes between 1666 and 1717 in winter and summer had been held seventy-four times at Aylesbury, nineteen times at Buckingham and eleven times at Wycombe; the summer assizes between 1666 and 1720, twenty-five times at Aylesbury, twenty-one at Buckingham and nine at Wycombe'.

7 As late as 1832, in a debate on the Norfolk Assizes Bill, Sir Robert Peel, 'said, that the Buckingham case was the strongest possible proof of the inconvenience of giving to the Judges the power of fixing the town where Assizes should be held', Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates*, 3rd series, XIII, cols 398–99: 4 June 1832.

8 Sedgwick, *The House of Commons*, 1715–54, I, p. 197.

9 *The Parliamentary History of England, from the Earliest Period to the Year 1803*, ed. W. Cobbett (36 vols, London, 1806–20) [hereafter cited as Cobbett, *Parliamentary History*], XIV, cols 222–23.

10 Langford, *Public Life*, p. 179.

Buckingham, and on the Prince[of Wales]'s as Court to support Chief Justice Willes for the Town of Aylesbury, who had removed the Assize from Buckingham to Aylesbury the Summer Assizes during the Election year'.¹¹ Yet the bill was no more a 'job', or an act of political fixing, than the actions of Chief Justice Willes in shifting the assize to Aylesbury. The bill was designed to restore the *status quo ante bellum* and to rectify an equally blatant piece of electioneering by Willes. Grenville power and prestige at the county level was at stake: the removal of the assize from Buckingham would have signalled that the family 'no longer pretended to influence ministers, that they had ceased to be considerable people within the county'.¹² Equally significant at a national level was the prestige of the ministry led by the Pelham brothers. If the Grenvilles could not secure the restitution of the assize to Buckingham, then the ability of the ministers to protect their friends would be called into question and the whole basis of the ministry's power might begin to erode to the possible advantage of the prince of Wales and the other opposition factions. The battle over the bill in both houses of parliament was to reflect these concerns. This parliamentary conflict also reflected the feared possible loss of political influence and patronage by other members of both the Commons and the Lords who controlled parliamentary boroughs.¹³ If Willes triumphed over the Grenvilles would their hold on their own boroughs be safe? This fear could well have been a cause for the continued large attendance figures for the bill's progress through the House of Lords (we have no such figures for the Commons, other than the voting figures which over the four divisions on the bill shrank from 308 to 253).

The Buckingham Assize Bill was also of some importance to the parliamentary position of Frederick, Prince of Wales, who supported the removal of the assize to Aylesbury. In the 1730s Frederick had been in opposition to his father George II, but had been partially reconciled upon the fall of the Prime Minister, Robert Walpole, in February 1742,

11 *Tory and Whig: The Parliamentary Papers of Edward Harley, 3rd Earl of Oxford, and William Hay, M.P. for Seaford, 1716–1753*, ed. Stephen Taylor and Clyve Jones (Parliamentary History Record Series 1, Woodbridge, 1998), p. 82.

12 L.M. Wiggin, *The Faction of Cousins* (New Haven, 1958), p. 124.

13 The success of Grenville's bill did bring 'renewed pressure from other counties' for acts favouring one town against another as the site for the county assize: Langford, *Public Life*, p. 179. This result was foreseen by Earl Waldegrave, who, in his speech against the bill in the House of Lords, said, 'should this bill become a law I make no doubt but we shall have frequent applications of the same nature with at least as weighty reasons to support them': *The Memoirs and Speeches of James, 2nd Earl Waldegrave, 1742–1763*, ed. J.C.D. Clark (Cambridge, 1988), p. 252.

and particularly after parliament had agreed to raise the prince's income to £100,000 a year in the following May. By 1748, Frederick had been in opposition again for two years. The defeat of the '45 Jacobite rebellion and the prospect of peace in America and Europe, together with a distaste by the opposition for the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, which brought to an end the War of the Austrian Succession, as being dishonourable, led the prince to declare he 'intended a perpetual opposition'.¹⁴ Frederick was trying to expand his faction in both houses of parliament, and in the Lords he may have thought the opposition to the Buckingham Assize Bill an ideal opportunity to strengthen his hand in the upper chamber. He certainly seems to have thought that the bill would be in trouble in the Lords. Sometime in the week following the third reading of the bill in the Commons, Frederick wrote to his electoral manager, the M.P. George Lee:

Th'affair of Bucks being o'er in the House of Commons, the House of Lords has been my great Attention this week, and I can tell you with great pleasure, that matters are there in great forwardness. Lord Granville, Chesterfield, Bath, the old opposing lords and several courtiers will fight it. I dare say things will come nearer there than can be imagined. The court will have but the two secretaries of state [Newcastle and Bedford] and the Chancellor [Hardwicke] to support the Bill, and how even he will dare do it against all Westminster Hall [the lawyers], I can't conceive.¹⁵

Frederick was proved to be over optimistic: the secretaries of state and the Lord Chancellor appear to have had no difficulty supporting the bill, and ministerial supporters in the Lords outnumbered the opposition in all six divisions on the bill. Nevertheless, Frederick attended the Lords on most of the days when the bill was debated,¹⁶ at a time when his attendance in the upper House was declining in relation to his earlier

14 Lord Baltimore (a leader of the prince's faction, and an Irish peer with a seat in the Commons) so declared in January 1746, as recorded by Dudley Ryder, quoted in R. Eagles, 'Loyal Opposition? Prince Frederick and Parliament' (forthcoming *Parliamentary History*). I thank Dr Eagles for allowing me to read his article before publication.

15 Royal Archives, Windsor Castle, GEO/73977, Frederick to Lee, n.d. [16–22 March 1748], quoted in Eagles, 'Loyal Opposition', and reproduced here by the gracious permission of Her Majesty The Queen. Westminster Hall was the site of the law courts.

16 He attended on 23, 29 March, and 4 April, but not on 1 April when he may have, rightly, surmised no division would take place, *Journal of the House of Lords* [hereafter *L.J.*], XXVII, pp. 194, 197, 202, 204.

practice (though he had never been a very frequent attender).¹⁷ It is perhaps of no significance that he did not vote on 23 March. He appears to have rarely voted in his parliamentary career: his only known appearances in division lists were over the votes on the Pension Bills in 1731 and 1732,¹⁸ and on the Spanish convention on 1 March 1739.¹⁹ On 23 March he may have realized that opposition to the bill was pursuing a lost cause and may not have wanted to record officially his opposition over a bill that would certainly pass. Yet he continued to attend on all subsequent occasions when the bill came before the House (with the exception of 1 April). Perhaps he was hoping for an increase in the opponents to the bill so that when it came to a division his vote might make a difference to the result. (And, of course, we do not have division lists for the subsequent votes at which he may have voted).

II

On 12 February 1748, after the reading of a petition in the House of Commons from 'the Bailiff, Burgesses, and other Inhabitants of the County Town of Buckingham' supporting a bill to restore the summer assize to Buckingham, a motion by Richard Grenville in which he outlined the case,²⁰ to bring in such a bill passed by 184 votes to 124.²¹ Richard and his brother George, the M.P.s for Buckingham, were ordered to 'prepare, and bring in, the said Bill'. On the 19th, Richard Grenville

17 In the late 1720s and 1730s he tended to attend only when the king was present. Later he attended more frequently before again doing 'little more than mirror the king's occasional appearances'. However, 'it seems clear that at times his participation in the business of parliament went beyond the merely ceremonial' (Eagles, 'Loyal Opposition?'), and the Buckingham Assize Bill was one of these occasions. In the 1747-48 session he attended the Lords nine times. All but the three attendances on the Buckingham Assizes Bill were when the king attended to open the session, give the royal assent to bills or prorogue parliament, *L.J.*, XXVII, pp. 143-236 *passim*.

18 British Library, London, [hereafter BL] Add. MS 33033, ff. 245-46 (2 Mar. 1731), 240-41 (17 Feb. 1732); The National Archives, London, SP 36/22, ff. 140-41 (1731). He appears to have abstained in the vote on whether to address the king to remove Robert Walpole on 13 Feb. 1741, *A True and Exact List of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal ... who voted for and against the Address to remove a certain Great Man* (London, 1741).

19 There are several versions of this list, but see C. Jones and F. Harris, "'A Question ... Carried by Bishops, Pensioners, Placemen, Idiots': Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough and the Lords' Division over the Spanish Convention, 1 March 1739", *Parliamentary History* 11 (1992), 270-77.

20 Cobbett, *Parliamentary History*, XIV, cols 202-4.

21 Of the four tellers, the two for the opposition were of the prince of Wales's faction, while George Lyttleton, for the bill, was a political associated of the Grenvilles.

introduced the bill and it passed its first reading. It is the debate on this occasion which is the only one for which sources have survived for either the Commons or the Lords and which give us some idea of the arguments on both sides.²² Though this account gives only seven speakers in the debate it is likely that more actually took part.

The debate was opened by Sir William Stanhope, M.P. for Buckinghamshire, who opposed the bill. This would not have surprised anyone as he had inherited the vast Buckinghamshire estates of the Dormer family situated in the south of the county, not far from Aylesbury.²³ In his speech, which Horace Walpole, M.P., described as 'a very bitter speech against the Grenvilles',²⁴ he called the bill 'the arrantest job that ever was brought to parliament', and went on to attack the Grenville family so violently that the Speaker had had to call him to order. He also attacked Buckingham's status as the 'county town' arguing that Aylesbury's position in the centre of the county (a point common to some other of the speeches that day which the bill's supporters tried to refute) and its recently constructed gaol made it the best place to hold assizes. He was followed by William Pitt the Elder, M.P. for Seaford in Sussex (a county which had a recognised division of its assizes between Chichester in the west and Lewes in the east), who unsurprisingly, as a political associate and relative by marriage of the Grenvilles, supported the bill. He first attacked Stanhope's 'violent torrent of abuse on the whole family' and then defended the Grenvilles' association with the ministry.

The next speaker was Thomas Potter, M.P. for St Germans in Cornwall, but who was to be M.P. for Aylesbury in 1754. He opposed the bill with a very learned speech, as befitted the son of the archbishop of Canterbury. He gave an historical disquisition on the locating of assizes in Buckinghamshire and elsewhere, claiming that 'the town of Aylesbury has a better right to the assizes than any other [town] in that county'. George Grenville followed, again with a history lesson on the origins of the assize in Buckingham, which included noting that an unsuccessful bill on the subject had previously been brought into parliament in 1614. His main supporting argument was, however, geographical, attempting to refute the more central position of Aylesbury in the county:

the distance between Aylesbury and Buckingham is but 17 measured miles, and to ride 17 miles more or less in the summer time, can be a matter of no moment to any person whatever. Besides, as the distance from the

22 The lack of an account of the debates in the Lords makes the lists published in the Appendices even more important.

23 Namier and Brooke, *The House of Commons, 1754-1790*, III, pp. 466-67.

24 *Walpole Correspondence*, XXIII, p. 21.

southern extremity of the county to Aylesbury is 27 measured miles, from Aylesbury to Buckingham, as I have said, but 17, and from Buckingham to the northern extremity 21, it is more reasonable that those of the southern extremity should be obliged to ride 44 miles in the summer time, and but 27 in the winter, than that those in the northern extremity should be obliged to ride 38 miles in the assize both summer and winter.

What I have said, Sir, relates only to the length of this county, which is about 60 miles from south to north; for as to the breadth it is of no consideration, because the county is in most places not above 10 or 12 miles broad; and Aylesbury lies almost as near to the eastern boundary, as Buckingham does to the western.²⁵

He concluded that the bill was not a 'private job' and was 'founded upon petitions signed by so many eminent persons and great land-holders, [and that it] surely deserves to be so far considered in this House, as to be allowed a second reading'.

The next M.P. on his feet was George Lee, who sat for Liskeard in Cornwall, who opposed the bill, being a member of the prince of Wales's faction. He argued for the assize to be in the most central town in the county and that Aylesbury, which fitted this criterion, already had the county gaol. There followed yet another potted history of Buckinghamshire, which praised Aylesbury and denigrated Buckingham. He was answered by Henry Fox, M.P. for New Windsor, who was the only minister to speak in the debate, being secretary at war, and he urged that there be a second reading so that fuller arguments could be heard. He reiterated George Grenville's geographical argument showing that both Aylesbury and Buckingham were disadvantageous to some part of the county, so that to split the two annual assizes would be the fairest outcome of the present bill.

The final speaker was Robert Nugent, M.P. for St Maws in Cornwall, who opposed the bill, and was another member of the prince of Wales's faction. He attacked the supporters of the bill's 'attempt to make parliament the dirty channel through which ministers are to convey not only their own, but the private jobs of every little favourite. If a county offends any of these favourites, it is to be punished by act of parliament'. He went on to state that surely the gentlemen of the county are the best people to judge where the assizes should be held. He then tried to turn the geographical argument in Aylesbury's favour:

That though Aylesbury be not exactly in the centre of the county, it is the most central place of that county where the judges and their

attendants can be accommodated: and if it be a little farther from the northern, than the southern extremity of the county, this is a new argument in its favour; because many of the gentlemen of that county reside in London, and on their account the assizes ought to be held rather at a town which is nearest the southern, than at a town which is nearest the northern extremity of that county, because the former is much nearer London than the latter.²⁶

He ended with a claim that the bill infringed on the prerogative of the crown (exercised through the judges) to decide where assizes should be held: for example, when Bodmin in Cornwall was given the summer assize in place of Launceston, which was 'situated in the hithermost corner of the county'. Parliament left it up to the Lord Chancellor and the judges 'to appoint from time to time a convenient place in the county [of Cornwall] for holding the assizes, in the same manner as for any other county in England'.

A second reading was agreed to by a vote of 182 to 112,²⁷ and on 2 March, after the reading of five more petitions from diverse 'Gentlemen, Clergy, and Freeholders of the County of Buckingham', this time opposing the bill, it was ordered to be printed.²⁸ On 7 March four petitions were presented to the Commons. The first two petitions from the lord lieutenant (the duke of Marlborough),²⁹ the nobility, clergy, gentry, freeholders and 'other Inhabitants' of Buckinghamshire supported the bill begging for the restoration of the recent *status quo* where the summer assize was held in Buckingham and the winter in Aylesbury. Both petitions were ordered to 'lie upon the [clerks'] Table' for perusal by any interested party. The third petition that day from the gentlemen, clergy and freeholds of the county, opposed the bill, claiming Buckingham was inconvenient for the holding of assizes by virtue of its geographical position in 'an extreme Corner of the County', and that Aylesbury, with its recently completed county gaol and shire hall was the best location for both assizes. This petition was also ordered to lie on the table. The last petition on 7 March, from the inhabitants

26 Cobbett, *Parliamentary History*, XIV, cols 239–40.

27 *Journals of the House of Commons* [hereafter C.J.], XXV, p. 530.

28 C.J., XXV, p. 534. The bill is reprinted in *House of Commons Sessional Papers for the Eighteenth Century*, ed. S. Lambert (147 vols, Wilmington, Delaware, 1975), IX, pp. 5–7. The printing was designed to inform M.P.s and lords, but the printed bill could also have been used for propaganda within Buckinghamshire.

29 Marlborough was lord lieutenant for Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire 1739–58. According to the division list in the Appendix below, he did not vote on 23 March; in fact he appears not to have attended the Lords on any of the days the bill was before the House.

of Aylesbury claimed that the removal of the summer assize to Buckingham would deprive them of benefits which they have long enjoyed. It was, perhaps, not without significance that this petition was rejected by the Commons, which immediately agreed to the bill's second reading and then for it to be sent to a committee of the whole house by a vote of 150 to 103.³⁰

The ten petitions presented to the Commons up to and including 2 March were the first batch of a total of 40 which were eventually submitted to the Commons concerning this bill (strangely only one petition was offered to the Lords when that House was considering the bill, which appears to have been an abbreviated version of one presented to the Commons). The next 30 petitions were all presented on 9 March, and all but two of these are simply listed in the *Commons Journal* with no details of their contents given.³¹ All these 30 are listed as from the gentry and freeholders of the county, some together with the clergy and some with other inhabitants. However, we cannot tell how much support or opposition was expressed in these petitions as the originals did not survive the fire of 1834 which destroyed large parts of the Palace of Westminster. Of the two petitions which are given in full in the *Journal*, one supported the bill and one, significantly from the high sheriff and grand jury of Buckinghamshire, opposed it, the latter, again, concentrating on the inconvenience of Buckingham's location in the county. All the petitions of 9 March were ordered to lie on the table.³²

On 15 March, the day of the third reading of the bill, after counsel against the bill were called in, a petition from the high sheriff and grand jury was read (probably the one submitted and read on 9 March, rather than a second one from this source),³³ and the counsel heard. This was followed by the reading of three acts of parliament bearing on the case, from reigns of Richard II, George I and the present reign of George II. The latter was concerned with clearing the debt incurred in the construction of the county gaol and court rooms at Aylesbury, from which the town of Buckingham had been exempt. All this seemed to support the opposition's case as did the fact that no counsel for the bill was called, yet the bill passed its third reading by a vote of 155 to 108, and Richard Grenville was ordered to carry the bill up to the Lords.³⁴

30 C.J., XXV, p. 538. None of the tellers sat for Buckinghamshire seats.

31 C.J., XXV, p. 561.

32 C.J., XXV, pp. 561–62.

33 The petition from this source is printed in full in C.J., XXV, pp. 561–62 (9 March), but only listed in C.J., XXV, p. 570 (15 March).

34 C.J., XXV, p. 570. The two teller for the 'Noes' were of the faction of the prince of Wales. None of the tellers in the three divisions on the bill sat for a Buckinghamshire constituency.

III

On 18 March the Buckingham Assize Bill was carried to the House of Lords by a 'Mr. Grenville', probably Richard,³⁵ and, in a House with 77 lords attending, received its first reading. It was ordered to be read 'a Second Time on *Wednesday* next [23 March]; the Lords to be summoned; and the Judges to attend'.³⁶ On the 23rd, 104 lords attended, indicating the intense interest the bill had engendered.³⁷ The petition of the high sheriff and the grand jury of Buckinghamshire against the bill³⁸ was read, and the motion to read the bill a second time was put but objected to. Two acts from the reign of Richard II concerning the holding of assizes in 'principal' and 'good Towns' were then read. The justice of king's bench, Sir Michael Foster, delivered the judges opinions on who had the right to appoint 'the Places where the Assize are to be held' and whether the king had the right to appoint the commissions of oyer and terminer and gaol

35 There were two other members of the family sitting in the Commons at this time: Richard's brothers, George, also M.P. for Buckingham, and James, M.P. for Bridport (Sedgwick, *House of Commons*, 1715–54, II, pp. 82–85).

36 *L.J.*, XVII, pp. 188–89.

37 This interest is also attested to by the fact that four peers (Thanet, Ferrers, Uxbridge and Talbot) sat for the first time in this session and took the oaths at the beginning of the day's sitting (*L.J.*, XVII, p. 192), and that seven proxies (the bishop of Salisbury, the duke of Beaufort, the earls of Home, Loudoun, Godolphin and Radnor, and Baron Masham) were entered into the proxy book between the first reading on 18 March and the debate on the second reading on the 23rd (PA, HL/PO/JO/13/23). This assumes, I think correctly, that the four proxies (Loudoun, Godolphin, Beaufort and Masham) dated 23 March were entered on that day before prayers so that they could be used if called upon. The reason why proxies were in fact not used on this bill is probably because the supporters of the bill had 14 at their disposal while the opponents only had four. Proxies could not have been used in the four divisions on 29 March as they could not be used in committees. By 4 April a further nine proxies had been registered, seven for the supporters and one for the opponents of the bill, and one held by Cholmondeley, who had 'abstained' on the second reading on 23 March and was absent from the third reading on 4 April. It was normal for the proxy vote to be cast on the same side of the division as the holder of the proxy had voted. Thus the position over proxies for the opponents of the bill was even worse than appears from the increase in those held by supporters: two of the proxies registered which were held by supporters of the bill between 23 March and 4 April were proxies of lords who had voted against the bill on 23 March: Montfort's held by Cadogan, and Portsmouth's held by Tankerville. Portsmouth usually left his proxy with Tankerville, his brother-in-law, so perhaps little significance can be attached to this 'desertion' of his former opposition to the bill. Montfort, usually a ministerial supporter, may have left his proxy with Cadogan, another supporter of the ministry, because he realized the bill would inevitably pass and wished to reinstate his credibility with the administration. Portsmouth may also have shared this reason.

38 *L.J.*, XVII, p. 192. This appears to be an abbreviated form of the petition presented to the Commons on 9 March (*C.J.*, XXV, 561–62).

delivery 'to be executed at what Places He pleases within the respective Counties'.³⁹ A debate followed, and ended with the first division on the bill, whether it should be committed. It was carried by 56 votes to 40, and it is this division which produced the list printed below in Appendix 1. The bill was then committed to a committee of the whole House on 29 March. (Converting the Lords into a committee of the whole House meant that the rules of the House were relaxed and debates were thus freer. It also meant that in any division proxies could not be used as the standing orders of the House did not allow their use in any committee. A proxy could be registered by an absent lord in the name of one who was going to be present to be used by the holder on the absentee's behalf. This restriction probably did not worry those who supported the bill as they had a clear majority in the House. Also if they lost a division in the committee, the vote could be reversed, using proxies, in the House itself after the proceedings of the committee had been reported to the House). Before the next stage of the bill, the House sat only on the 24th and 25th, when the attendances shrank dramatically to 20 and 52 respectively.

On 29 March, with 86 lords attending (including the prince of Wales), after hearing the judges opinion that the definition of a county town was 'the Place where County Courts are usually holden', the House went into a committee of the whole House, where four divisions took place, all in favour of the bill by 56 to 33, 50 to 36, 51 to 34 and 49 to 30.⁴⁰ Most of the amendments to the bill at this stage were technical, altering the wording here and there, and most were agreed to without divisions. It is clear from the four divisions in the committee that they had been pressed by the opposition in an attempt to curb the bill or at least delay its

39 *L.J.*, XVII, 192.

40 The voting figures are recorded in the manuscript minutes of the Lords, and are tabulated in *Divisions in the House of Lord: An Analytical List, 1685-1857*, comp. J.C. Sainty and D. Dewar (London, 1975). There is a discrepancy in the total numbers recorded in the first vote (89) and the number recorded in the printed *Journal* as sitting (86). This could either be a mistake by the two tellers at the division, or the clerks when recording those present: three extra lords may have entered the House after the attendance was recorded and were not added. However, the Parliamentary Archives, manuscript minutes, upon which the printed *Journal* is based, give an attendance figure of 88. The two extra attending over the figure of 86 in *L.J.*, XVII, p. 197 are Ancaster and Talbot. As both peers attended on the other two days when divisions took place over the bill (*L.J.*, XVII, pp. 191, 204), it is likely that they did attend on 29 March. We are, however, still one lord short of the total of 89 recorded in the first division on the 29th. The decline in total numbers voting in the four divisions on that day (89, 86, 85, 79) shows that even within a relatively short time attendance fluctuated during a day's sitting, or the declining figures could represent deliberate abstentions from particular votes.

progress.⁴¹ The last division was on a proposal that a proviso be added to the end of the bill 'That the Inhabitants of the Town of Buckingham shall at all Times here after maintain support and repair the Gaol in the said Town at their own Expençe'. This amendment was designed by the opposition to embarrass the supporters of the bill, and, had it passed, to have made the Grenvilles unpopular in Buckingham.⁴²

The chairman of the committee, the earl of Warwick, then reported to the House that amendments had been made to the bill. Three days later, on 1 April, in a House of 73 lords Warwick formally reported the six amendments,⁴³ which were agreed to by the House. A third reading was ordered on 4 April. On that day, with 88 attending (including the prince of Wales), the order of the day was read for the third reading of the bill. A motion was proposed to 'put off the same for Two month'; in effect a last-ditch attempt by its opponents to kill off the bill which would have been lost by the ending of the session on 13 May. The motion was defeated, and the bill was read a third time. After a debate, and a division of 54 to 29, the bill was passed and was sent down to the House of Commons to desire its concurrence in the amended bill.⁴⁴ The amendments were agreed to by the Commons on 6 April and the bill was returned to the Lords. The bill was given the royal assent on 13 May.⁴⁵

The 1748 act was to remain in force until 1849, when a Buckinghamshire Summer Assize Act removed the summer assize back to Aylesbury.⁴⁶ The Grenville duke of Buckingham, during the debate in the

41 The progress of the bill through the committee can be followed in the manuscript minutes of the Lords: PA, HL/PO/JJO/5/1/94.

42 That all the four amendments upon which the committee voted were won by the supporters of the bill can be verified by checking the tellers against the 23 March division list in Appendix 1 below:

1st division: Content teller, Sandys, 33 (voted against the bill, 23 March)

Not Content, teller, Willoughby of Parham, 56 (voted for the bill)

2nd division: Content teller, Ducie, 50 (voted for the bill)

Not Content teller, Talbot, 36 (voted against the bill)

3rd division: Content teller, Bathurst, 34 (voted against the bill)

Not Content teller, Willoughby of Parham, 51 (voted for the bill)

4th division: Content teller, Sandys, 30 (voted against the bill)

Not Content teller, Herbert, 49 (voted for the bill).

Source: PA, HL/PO/JJO/5/1/94.

43 The amendments listed in *L.J.*, XVII, p. 203, differ in one respect from those agreed to on the 29 March in the committee of the whole House as recorded in the manuscript minutes.

44 *L.J.*, XVII, pp. 192–205, 238–40 *passim*.

45 *C.J.*, XXV, pp. 620, 659.

46 VCH, *Buckinghamshire*, IV, p. 548.

House of Lords speaking in support of a petition from the inhabitants of Buckingham against the bill, said that the 1849 bill would legalize an initial 'whim of the magistrates [in 1748], to remove the assize from their town'. The marquess of Lansdowne had defended the bill on the grounds that Aylesbury was a more desirable situation for the assize.⁴⁷ The objections against the bill of 1849 permanently establishing the summer assize at Aylesbury would have been the same as those of 101 years earlier: for the Grenville family, the loss of prestige and political influence; for the town's people, the economic loss from the lack of an influx of people attending the assize and its associated activities, and, no doubt, the loss of local pride.

IV Analysis of the Voting on 23 March 1748

When the names of the peers and bishops, which appear on the division list printed in Appendix 1, are classified into supporters of the ministry (who would have been inclined to support the bill) and those in opposition to the ministry (who would have been inclined to vote against the bill)⁴⁸ it is shown that most of those who voted for the bill were supporters of the ministry and those who voted against the bill were members of the opposition. However, it is not as clear-cut as it might at first seem. Of the 56 lords who voted for the bill, eight are probably opponents of the ministry (Archer, Cadogan, Edgcumbe, Fitzwilliam, Grafton, Harcourt, Jersey, Rockingham and Rochford).⁴⁹ A question

47 Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates*, 3rd series, III, col. 383; 8 March 1849.

48 The classification used here is based on several lists of opponents and supporters of the ministry: Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS D.D. Dashwood, D/1/3/13 (list of lords and commons in opposition, 1747); BL, Add. MS 33002, ff. 377–78 (list of changes in the administration), f. 395 ('List of Employments in the House of Lords'), 32994, f. 272 (list of lords who met at Newcastle's house, 20 March 1750), f. 295 (list of lords not content, 17 Mar. 1752, on committing the Forfeitures (Scotland) Bill), 47012A, ff. 72–81 (Prince Frederick's and Lord Egmont's proposals for a new ministry c. 1750, and other lists, including those to be turned out); Cambridge University Library, Add. MS 6851, vol. 2, ff. 130–31 (lords who voted for the 2nd clause in the Mutiny Bill, 15 Mar. 1749, printed in *Tory and Whig*, ed. Taylor and Jones, p. 84); Cobbett, *Parliamentary History*, XIV, p. 272 (lords who voted against a clause in the Bill for Disarming the Scottish Highlands, 10 May 1748). These lists do not include all the peers mentioned in the division list (Appendix 1) and the management list (Appendix 2), so it has not been possible to classify 20 peers supporting the bill, and ten who voted against the bill. No bishops appear on these lists used to classify the peers.

49 All these peers appear on Lord Egmont's list of those who would be employed by Prince Frederick upon his succession to the crown. The only question mark is against Rochford who was invited in 1750 to the ministry's pre-sessional meeting. It could have been the case that Rochford was invited in order to woo him away from the opposition.

mark remains against the loyalties of a further four peers who, while currently in office, were also favoured by the opposition (Argyll, Cornwallis, Falmouth and St Albans).

It has proved more difficult to classify with the evidence available the lords against the bill. Six of the peers on the list (Bathurst, Carlisle, Ravensworth, Rutland, Sandys and Waldegrave) are all on Lord Egmont's list of those to be employed by Prince Frederick when he came to power (which would normally mark them as in opposition to the ministry), but all of them were invited to the 20 March 1750 pre-sessional meeting, designed to inform the supporters of the ministry of the contents of the king's speech and to choose a mover and seconder of an address of thanks to the king for his speech at the opening of the parliamentary session. Again these six peers may have been opponents in 1748 but by 1750 had moved over to the ministry or were being wooed by the ministry by offering them an invitation to the meeting.⁵⁰

However, while being cautious about this exercise in classification, it is clear that not all the supporters of the bill were ministerialists and that not all of its opponents were members of the opposition. One has to allow for the fact that some peers and bishops may have voted on what they considered to be the merits of the bill even if this meant voting against their normal affiliations.

V Analysis of the Management List

It is clear that the management list (Appendix 2) drawn up for or by the duke of Newcastle dates from shortly after the vote on 23 March (see below, the section on the lists before Appendix 1). It lists 50 'Lords absent'⁵¹ (15 of whom had left proxies),⁵² plus an extra six absentees

⁵⁰ The list is BL, Add. MS 32994, f. 272.

⁵¹ This must mean absent from the vote, as six of this list are recorded as present on 23 March: Cholmondely, Cowper, Delawarr, Effingham, Fauconberg [Falconbridge] and Orford (*L.J.*, XXVII, pp. 191–92). Also originally marked as absent on this list was the bishop of Exeter, but he was crossed out as being not only present but voting and was added to the lords voting for the bill, possibly by Newcastle. This adds weight to the interpretation that this is a list of peers absent from the vote, though most were also absent from the House that day.

⁵² The 15 were held by eight peers and three bishops (a peer and a bishop could hold up to two proxies each). All 11 proxy holders had been present on 23 March, but three (Delawarr, Dorset and the earl of Lincoln – to distinguish him from the bishop of Lincoln who also held a proxy and was present and voted) did not vote, which means they either left the House early and missed the vote, or they abstained. Proxies were not called for in the vote on 23 March.

added at the end of the list. It also lists 'Some Lords [who voted] against'; nine in all. As the historian does not have a division list for any of the four votes on 29 March nor for the final vote on 4 April, it is not possible to judge how successful Newcastle and his colleagues were in persuading any on this list to vote for the bill, which was presumably the object in compiling this list. That is, it was probably compiled as a lobbying list. All that can be tested is how successful were the ministry in persuading those on this list to attend the Lords after 23 March, particularly on the 29 March, and 1 and 4 April.

The first thing to say is that of the nine 'Lords against' listed, all attended on 29 March and six on 1 and 4 April. It seems unlikely that any of them would have voted for the bill (though it was presumably for this end that they had been put on this lobbying list).

Before analysing the 56 other, absent lords on the list, it needs to be noted that attendance declined after the division on 23 March, from where 96 voted out of an attendance of 104, as the voting figures for the 29 March and 4 April show: a total of 89, 86, 85 and 79 on 29 March out of an official attendance figure of 87,⁵³ and 83 on 4 April out of an attendance figure of 88.⁵⁴ (Only 73 attended on 1 April when the earl of Warwick reported from the committee of the whole House).⁵⁵ These attendance figures suggest that some lords considered that the bill would pass easily and therefore they need not attend. This was a possibly dangerous attitude for some lords to adopt as far as the ministry and the supporters of the bill were concerned. A bill could be lost late in its progress through the House by an unexpected influx of opponents, both in person or represented by their proxies, for proxies would be available on the third and final reading which had to take place in the full House and not in a committee. The supporters of the bill, however, need not have worried over the proxies of the opponents of the bill, who on 23 March held only four, as against the 15 held by the supporters.⁵⁶

Of the 56 lords listed as absent on 23 March, 20 attended on 29 March (this figure includes ten of the 15 proxies listed), while 20 also attended

53 *L.J.*, XXVII, pp. 191–92, 197. For the difference between the attendance and the voting figures, see above n. 40.

54 *L.J.*, XXVII, p. 204.

55 *L.J.*, XXVII, pp. 202–3.

56 The four opposition proxies are the ones listed at the head of the 'Absent' list of the 'Lords against' section of Appendix 1; the 15 held by supporters are the ones listed as part of the 'Lords absent' section in Appendix 2. The opponents only registered one more proxy after 23 March up to 4 April: that of Uxbridge, but he had been present on 23 March and voted against the bill. See PA, HL/PO/JO/13/23.

on 1 April (though a different 20), including this time 12 proxies. Newcastle's lobbying campaign as hinted at by the list of absentees was thus reasonably successful with a turn-out of those of the list on both occasions of just under 36 per cent, though the change in personnel who attended on 29 March and 1 April hints that some of the supporters of the bill may have regarded turning up to vote as a chore as it seemed the bill had overwhelming support and would pass. At the last division on the bill, on 4 April, this feeling amongst supporters was probably even stronger as only nine lords on Newcastle's absentee list bothered to attend.⁵⁷

It is clear, putting the Buckinghamshire Assize Bill in a national context that it stood for more than just a little local difficulty, important as it was to the two boroughs concerned and their political interests. The ministry in 1748 was conducting the end of a European war – the War of the Austrian Succession – which had lasted eight years and was to be concluded by the treaty of Aix-La-Chapelle in October that year in which the House of Hanover was to retain its succession in its German states and Great Britain (effectively putting an end to any serious challenge from the Jacobite claimant to the British throne which had recently erupted in 1745). Perhaps the Buckingham Assize Bill should be seen as a possible 'vote of confidence' in the midst of the negotiation for a peace settlement, which was a subject that could easily destroy a government in the eighteenth century and beyond. The very lack of other important issues during the parliamentary session inflated the importance of the Buckingham Assize Bill, which, if there had been another major conflict in parliament, would probably have gone through with little controversy being generated. Here the position of the duke of Newcastle, the senior representative of his brother's ministry in the Lords, might have been crucial. In February 1748, Newcastle had become secretary of state for the northern department in charge of the diplomatic effort over the ending of the war. At the same time he had become the recognised 'leader' of the House of Lords.⁵⁸ He had long been involved in the organization of the House which suited his anxious obsession with organization and the minutia of management (one manifestation of which was the compilation of lists of members of the Lords, of which the lists on the Buckingham Assize Bill were early examples), but the 'official'

57 *L.J.*, XXVII, p. 204. The bishops included Samuel Lisle, bishop of St Asaph, who was translated to Norwich on 9 April.

58 See J.C. Sainty, 'The Origin of the Leadership of the House of Lords', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* 47 (1974), 68–69.

role as leader possibly placed him in a more vulnerable position. He would have wanted to quell his characteristic anxiety by carrying the Buckinghamshire Assize Bill, while conversely the opposition to the bill and the ministry might have thought the bill a good opportunity to try and trip up the new leader. Thus the writer in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, who wrote that the Buckingham Assize Bill was 'an affair of such vast importance to the nation', may (perhaps unwittingly) have been hinting at these wider ramifications of the bill, which on the face of it was a local war between two locales and two local political interests.

Appendices: The lists

The two lists are to be found in the papers of the duke of Newcastle, who, as 'leader' of the House of Lords, was responsible for management of the upper chamber of parliament.¹ The list in Appendix 2, which shows 56 'Lords absent' from parliament (15 having registered proxy votes), together with nine peers described as 'Some Lords against', might at first glance look like a management list drawn up before 23 March 1748 when the first vote on the Buckingham Assize Bill took place. However, a detailed examination shows that the list was drawn up after that division, either on the 23rd or on the following day before the House sat, in preparation for future divisions on the bill, of which there were to be four on 29 March, and the final one when the bill passed the House on 4 April after the report from the committee was received on 1 April.

Two of the proxies listed, Godolphin and Loudoun, were dated 23 March (and almost certainly entered on that day into the proxy book). This, and the fact that the former proxy was held by Newcastle, who probably corrected this list (see below), shows that the list was not drawn up prior to the 23rd.² All the nine listed under 'Some Lords against' were present and did vote on 23 March, which shows that the list must have been drawn up after that division. The bishop of Bristol is listed as one of the 'Lords absent', as indeed he was on the 23rd, and on the following day, but is present on 25 and 29 March, and 1 and 4 April, which indicates that the list must have been compiled either directly after the division on the 23rd or on 24 March (or at least before the bishop of Bristol appeared in the House on the afternoon of the 25th).

The lists were probably drawn up by a clerk of the House on Newcastle's instructions, and were corrected by the duke: in the management list (Appendix 2) he has crossed out the bishop of Exeter as being absent and has inserted him at the end of the list of those 'Lords for the Bill' (Appendix

1 See J.C. Sainty, 'The Origin of the Leadership of the House of Lords', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* 47 (1974), 68.

2 In the list of the 'Absent' peers from the vote on 23 March, the two proxies noted of Beaufort and Masham were dated the 23 March and almost certainly entered into the proxy book that day. All information on proxies comes from PA, HL/PO/JO/13/23, and on presence in the House from L.J., XVII.

1).³ Also in the management list the bishop of Ely is listed as absent. He had recently been translated from Norwich, but did not take the oaths (which he had to do as holding a new bishopric), which enabled him to sit, until 1 April. However, he had written to Newcastle on 16 March that he had been ill with 'a great Cold', but was recovered and wanted to do his homage to the king for the new diocese and his duty to Newcastle, which he hoped to do in the next few days.⁴ These two facts also add further weight to the dating of the management list as after the division on the 23rd.

On 23 March 96 lords voted (Appendix 1), but 104 are recorded as attending, thus eight did not vote: the prince of Wales, Cholmondeley, Cowper, Delawarr, Effingham, Fauconberg, Gordon and Orford. All of these except the prince and Gordon are listed as 'Lords absent' in the management list. This does not detract from the proposed dating of this list: though recorded as present, their later absence (abstention?) from the vote must have been regarded as the equivalent of being absent from parliament, though why two of them were not listed is unknown. Also why there are two lists of absent lords, one forming the management list and one at the end of the division list, must also remain a mystery. It must be remembered, however, that these two lists (as with all such lists) were working documents, subject to errors and the personal quirks of the compiler and were not drawn up as neat documents for the use of future historians. Consequently there are likely to be anomalies in such lists.

The three parts of the division list (Appendix 1), lords for the bill, lords against and absent lords are largely laid out in alphabetical order, with additions not in any noticeable order. Because of the basic alphabetical order, it is likely that the division was originally marked on a printed list of the members of the Lords, which were not uncommonly printed at the start of a parliamentary session. The marking may have been done by one or more clerks at the behest of an interested lord, possibly the duke of Newcastle, and a neat final list drawn up from this marked printed list. Such a procedure may indicate how important the division was to the supporters of the bill. The management list (Appendix 2) was probably drawn up using a different method: the two lists, 'Lords absent' and 'Some lords against' appear in no specific order and may result from an individual noting down names from memory, stimulated by looking again at a printed list of the Lords, and the list of proxy holder may have resulted from someone cross-checking against the proxy book, and may reflect the order the proxies were entered into the book.

3 Newcastle also crossed out Gordon from the list of those who voted for the bill (Appendix 1) and an illegible lord from the management list (Appendix 2).

4 BL, Add. MS 32714, f. 355: Ely to [Newcastle], 16 Mar. 1747/[48]. See also *ibid.*, f. 272: same to [same], 26 February 1747/[48].

Appendix 1: Lords for and against committing the Buckingham Assize Bill

BL, Add. MS 33002, ff. 411v–12r: 23 March 1748.

[f. 411v] Lords for the Bill

Archer	Richmond	Herbert [of Chirbuy]
Anson	Rockingham	Leven
Ashburnham	St Albans	Moray 56
Bedford	Strafford	Bp Exeter [added in ?Newcastle's hand]
Cadogan	Tankerville	
Cardigan	Townshend	
Cornwallis	Warwick	
Devonshire	Willoughby of Parham	
Ducie [Teller]	Rochford	
Dudley	[Bishops]	
Exeter	Peterborough	
Falmouth	Canterbury	
Fizwilliam	York	
Gower	Lincoln	
Grafton	St David's	
Harborough	Hereford	
Harcourt	Gloucester	
Hardwicke	Bangor	
Hervey	Rochester	
Holderness	Chichester	
Jersey	Llandaff	46
Ilchester		
Lincoln	Argyll	
Montagu	Dorset	
Newcastle	Aberdeen	
Peterborough	Atholl	
	Edgcumbe	
	Findlater	
	Gordon + [crossed out]	

[f. 412r] Lords against

		Absent
Ancaster	Rolle	Beaufort pr[oxy: Litchfield] ⁵
Bath	Northampton	Masham pr[oxy: Bathurst] ⁶

5 Dated 23 March 1748.

6 Dated 23 March 1748.

Bathurst	Lonsdale	Warrington pr[oxy: Coventry] ⁷
Berkeley [Teller]	Sandys	Winchelsea pr[oxy: Tweeddale] ⁸
Berkeley [of Stratton]	Roths	Abingdon
Bolton	Shaftesbury	Aylesford
Carlisle	Portsmouth	[Bp of] Bath & Wells
Chandos	Worcester	Berkshire
Chesterfield		Byron
Coventry	40	Clifton
Ferrers		Craven
Feversham		Denbigh
Granville		Foley
Ker ⁹		Hereford
Litchfield		Leigh
Maynard		Middleton
Montjoy		St John [of Bletso]
Montford		Say & Sele
North		Stawell
Oxford		Wentworth
Ravensworth		Bradford
Rutland		Mansell
St John [of Battersea]		Hatton
Stanhope		
Thanet		
Tweeddale		
Uxbridge		
Waldegrave		
Ward		
Westmorland		
Leicester		
Talbot		

7 Dated 24 November 1747.

8 Dated 27 November 1747.

9 The Scottish duke of Montrose sitting by right of his British peerage, Earl Kerr.

Appendix 2: Management/Lobbying list for the Buckingham Assize Bill

BL, Add. MS 33002, f. 411r: 23/24 March 1748

Lords absent		Some Lords against
Cholmondeley	Buckingham pr[oxy: Dorset]	Chesterfield
x Delawarr	Doncaster ¹⁰ pr[oxy: Lincoln]	Feversham
Conway	Dunmore pr[oxy: Delawarr]	Montford
Orford	Godolphin pr[oxy: Newcastle] ¹¹	Ravensthorpe
Cowper	Grantham pr[oxy: Hardwicke]	Waldegrave
x Falconbridge	Home ¹² pr[oxy: Argyll] ¹³	Leicester
[Fauconberg]	Lothian ¹⁴ pr[oxy: Willoughby of Parham]	Rolle
x Effingham	Poulett pr[oxy: Newcastle] ¹⁶	Roths
x Kinnoull ¹⁵	Torrington pr[oxy: Lincoln]	Portsmouth
Lauderdale	Weymouth pr[oxy: Jersey]	
Manchester	Radnor pr[oxy: Hardwicke] ¹⁷	9
x Morton	Loudoun ¹⁸ pr[oxy: Argyll] ¹⁹	
x Chedworth	[Bp of] Salisbury pr[oxy:	
Brooke	Bp of Lincoln] ²⁰	
Fitzwalter	[Bp of] London pr[oxy:	
Halifax	Bp of Llandaff]	
Hertford	[Bp of] Durham pr[oxy:	
x Leeds	Bp of Chichester]	
Macclesfield		
Monson		
Onslow	[Bp of] Norwich ²¹	
Portland	[Bp of] Ely ²²	
Pembroke	[Bp of] Winchester	

10 The Scottish duke of Buccleuch, who sat by right of his English peerage, the earl of Doncaster.

11 Dated 23 March 1748.

12 A Scottish representative peer.

13 A Scottish representative peer.

14 A Scottish representative peer.

15 A Scottish peer who sat by virtue of his British peerage, Baron Hay.

16 Vacated on 4 April 1748 by the presence of Poulett in the Lords.

17 Dated 22 March 1748.

18 A Scottish representative peer.

19 Dated 23 March 1748.

20 Dated 21 March 1748.

21 This see was vacant and was not filled until 8 April 1748.

22 His translation from Norwich was confirmed 11 March 1748.

x Raymond	[Bp of] Litchfield
Trevor	[Bp of] Exeter [crossed out]
Willoughby	[Bp of] Chester
de Brook	[Bp of] Oxford
_____	[Bp of] Bristol
	[Bp of] Carlisle

[Bp of] St Asaph²³

50

Gainsborough

Marlborough

Kingston

Barnard

[name crossed out]

Pomfret

23 He was nominated to Norwich on 17 March but not confirmed until 9 April 1748. He was to attend the Lords on the third reading of the Buckingham Bill on 4 April.