THE DUKES:
A STUDY OF THE ENGLISH NOBILITY IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

DISSERTATION

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

This dissertation is a study of the English dukes in the period 1714-1784, the heyday of the English aristocracy. The study of the dukes is placed in the framework of the nobility as a whole in order to establish the milieu in which they lived and worked.

The English dukes were selected as the center for this study in the English nobility in the eighteenth century because they form a notable group of manageable size in which the attitudes, functions and attributes of the aristocratic class as a whole should be seen. The dukes formed the apex of the hierarchy which constituted the inherited English social and political structure. This dissertation treats of the holders of non-royal English ducal titles; eighty-one individuals provide the core of the study.

The eighteenth century began politically in 1714. Only by this date had the issues of the seventeenth century been settled, although two challenges to the settlements appeared in the rebellions of the '15 and the '45. The year 1714 saw the end of the House of Stuart and the beginning of the Hanoverian line upon the British throne. The new dynasty represented the final working out or culmination of the Revolution of 1688 in the Protestant succession.

The Hanoverian dynasty owed its position in Britain to the Whigs and from its establishment was, and largely continued to be, the servant, indeed, the prisoner, of this political group. The political
party in the modern sense had not as yet evolved, but the process had begun and was to receive great impetus from the long tenure in power of Sir Robert Walpole as the leader of a party.¹

During the Hanoverian period the long process of substituting a national group encompassing many interests for that of local and seigneurial leadership was taking place. The Whig Party, although many of its leaders and followers were peers and large landowners, did not represent the landowning class alone, for in 1714 a majority of the landowners were Tory.² The strength of the Whigs lay also in the commercial classes of the cities and in those groups which dissented from the established Church of England.³ That great Whig politician, the Duke of Newcastle, writing in 1747 of the preferment of an individual stated, "He is a particular friend to one of the most considerable dissenters in Sussex, which obliges me to be much concerned for him."⁴ The Whigs are often pictured as the more liberal and democratic political group in England because of their commercial and religious connections, but the power of decision within the party actually rested with a very narrow and aristocratic group of politically active

individuals from closely-related families. Members of both political
groups were drawn almost exclusively from the gentle class.

The Tory party became powerless and almost insignificant on the
national scene due to the monopoly of the Whigs. The Tories were
tainted with Jacobitism and were painted as disloyal or untrustworthy
by the Whigs. Nearly all of the politically active nobles were Whig,
for the Tories, regardless of rank or station, received few favors
from the government which the Whigs controlled.

The German kings were more interested in their Hanoverian Elec-
torate, where they ruled, than in their English kingdom where they
were under strict constitutional restraint. They poorly understood
the English and their constitution but they found ready guidance from
the Whigs in political matters, and this guidance undoubtedly helped
to assure the long period of Whig ascendancy. Political changes in
the period 1714–1760 were not made upon consideration of factors of
national importance, but rather at the behest of the Whig factions in
which personal and family considerations were of great weight. Yet
during the period of Whig ascendancy the responsible cabinet system of
government, managed by a recognized first minister, became established
as normal. The king retained the right to name his ministers but found
that for orderly government he was forced to name the Whigs; the
concept of a loyal opposition was only nascent.

The year 1760 with the accession of George III marks the beginning
of the end of the period of Whig dominance of the crown. George III
was determined to free himself from the Whig grasp and was largely able to do so by 1763 by becoming a political manager in his own right: the crown wouldbestow patronage rather than the Whigs. After 1763 individuals representing the great Whig families were rarely in high political office for the king was largely able to rule, although under increasing criticism, until the American colonial debacle in 1782. The Whigs returned to office in that year only to be ruined by disunion, personal rivalries and the opposition of the king, and were finally ousted in December 1783 into political oblivion when the kingdom was 'trusted to a school-boy's care' by George III in the person of William Pitt, the Younger.

The group of political leaders who ruled Great Britain from the Hanoverian succession to 1763 was Whig almost to a man. The group was closely knit and made up of related families which possessed birth, wealth and abilities. Wealth alone was not enough for entrance into the group: Birth, talents, power, wit and manners were requisite in this society of gentlemen. The Whigs possessed the accommodations of their position of power; their country seats, mansions, fields and parks bespoke their position in government and society. They were politicians secondarily, for they were at base agriculturalists.

The privileged group of Englishmen possessed qualities which fitted them to rule. They were largely successful men and were generally hardworking in local and national administrations. They knew
both the cosmopolitan aristocrats and English ordinary folk, especially rural folk, from actually mingling with them. They served the nation well as strong champions of parliamentary government and of the rights of Englishmen. In nearly every field of public endeavor they followed the course of duty as diplomats, administrators, orators, military leaders and as protectors and encouragers of trade and empire. They lived, led, and made the history of England for over fifty years.

Thus it is seen that a study of this leading and guiding part of the British people in the eighteenth century is needed for an understanding of the functioning of the state in this pre-reform and pre-democratic age.

This study of the English dukes in the eighteenth century is organized in a manner which develops the attitudes and values of the noble class and which portrays the aristocratic setting in which the dukes lived and acted. Chapter II, "On Political Authority, Property and Peers," treats of the relationship between the holding of landed property and political authority in the eighteenth century as seen in the works of Locke, Hume and Burke. It also shows the reasons for the peerage, how persons were raised to the peerage, and how landed property, added to service of various kinds, could lead to a rank in the peerage. The chapter also deals realistically with the practical uses of peerage creations in the political life of the century.

Chapter III, "The Nature of the English Aristocracy in the Eighteenth Century," shows the place and attributes of the group. In
it the term "gentleman," as defining the basic social group to which all members of the governing class belonged, is explained, as are the terms "aristocracy" and "nobility" as they are used in this study. The chapter deals also with the life of the aristocrats in both town and country. A section is devoted to the sources of income of the noble class, both from the land and from positions in the state. Little is known in the present state of research concerning noble investments in commercial or capitalistic enterprises. The intellectual interests and educational endeavors of the group are considered along with the marriages of members of the aristocracy. The work of the nobles in service to the state is assessed.

Chapter IV, "Nobility and Privilege in Eighteenth Century England," deals with the whole concept of privilege in the century as it is applied to a noble class. The area of noble privilege in England in the century is shown to have been extremely narrow, for it applied only to the person of the noble and not to his family, and most of the legal privileges were trifling in themselves. This fact helps to explain the absence of bitter class feelings in England. The English noble differed from his continental counterpart most completely in that he lacked the basic privilege of freedom from taxation. The majority of the privileges of the English noble sprang from his position in parliament and from his ownership of land.

Chapter V, "The Dukes: Their Creation and Political Activities," includes remarks on the origin of the ducal title and its use in England; the rule on ducal creations and the creations of the Stuarts
and the Hanoverians. The peerages of England, Scotland, Ireland, Great Britain and the United Kingdom are explained and the types of peerages included in this study are outlined. The nature of political parties in the period is explained and the parts taken by the dukes in the crisis of Queen Anne's death are shown. The positions held by the dukes in government, as heads of administrations, as members of the cabinet, in the House of Commons (before succeeding to their titles), in positions of trust and of honor, military and naval commissions, and others, are enumerated in order to show the extent of participation of the group in eighteenth-century governmental activity.

Chapter VI, "The Dukes: Their Economic Position, Incomes and Expenditures," is devoted to the general economic position and interests of the dukes in eighteenth-century agricultural and capitalistic developments. The sources of their income from landed estates, positions in the government, sinecures and investments are shown. An assessment is made of the patterns of ducal expenditures; for maintaining their titles and positions in society, provisions for children, for taxes, for legal and other services, for paying debts and for helping dependents.

Chapter VII, "The Dukes: Other Aspects of Ducal Life," treats of the general habits and interests of the ducal class as a whole. The education of the dukes is shown as completely as sources will permit. The marriages of the dukes are studied in an effort to see from what classes, and for what apparent reasons, they chose their
wives, in order to determine the extent of class consciousness among them. The social pattern of the ducal families in town and country is shown, as well as some of their attitudes to others within their own group.

Chapter VIII, "Conclusions," brings together by way of appraisal the conclusions reached upon the place of the dukes in English political and social life in the eighteenth century in the light of the material presented in the earlier chapters of this dissertation.

Serious investigation into the place of the nobility in the life of England in the eighteenth century is sadly lacking. All authors who have worked in eighteenth century studies simply give the nobility and aristocracy due weight in affairs despite the fact that little serious research has been done to establish the extent of aristocratic leadership and influence. That there exists no systematic study of the English nobility is due no doubt to the difficulty of disentangling the nobility from the life of the nation as a whole; that is, an English "noblesse" did not exist.

Especially lacking is any work on the economic position of the nobility as a whole. Only in special studies of certain noble families, such as in Gladys Scott-Thompson, The Russells in Bloomsbury (1940) and in A. S. Turberville, A History of Welbeck Abbey and its Owners (1936), have the sources been touched in this area. Professor Goodwin of the University of Manchester edited a small volume of essays by various authors entitled, The European Nobility in the Eighteenth Century (1953) in which Professor E. J. Habakkuk of the University of Oxford
contrasted an essay on the English nobility. This essay, while generally useful and enlightening in some areas, leaves the most important and basic questions unanswered and pleads for further research in the nobility.

Many studies in the field of eighteenth century English history deal in some degree with the peerage or with the aristocracy. A. S. Turberville, *House of Lords in the XVIIIth Century* (1927) deals mainly with the peerage and the functions of the Lords, while his excellent article, "The Younger Pitt and the House of Lords," *History*, XXI (1937), treats of Pitt's increase in the size of the peerage. Sir Lewis B. Namier, *England in the Age of the American Revolution* (1930), especially Chapter I, draws an excellent picture of the upper classes and of the social structure of England during the period. The same author's *The Structure of Politics at the Accession of George III* (1929), contains much useful information on the nobility, especially on pensions or 'additional salary' for the nobles and on what the author terms the 'Aristocratic Dole.' J. L. and Barbara Hammond, *The Village Labourer* (1911) contains stimulating comments upon the landowning class, although the viewpoint is slanted in the direction of the authors' Fabian political convictions. Lord Passfield and Beatrice Webb, *English Local Government* (1906-1908) also contains much information, presented in great detail, which aids in an understanding of the position of the privileged classes. Many biographical works contain material of importance for a study of the nobility.
One of the most brilliantly written, sympathetic and descriptive portraits of aristocratic life in the late eighteenth century is to be found in the first section of Lord David Cecil's delightful biography of Lord Melbourne.

Observations on the English aristocracy are found extensively in the works of authors who dealt in some way with the period, but most of the observations are literary and not based upon research in the aristocracy itself. In this class are the comments scattered through the works of Matthew Arnold and, to some extent, the works of Walter Bagehot, although his English Constitution contains much that is thought-provoking upon the aristocracy. Ralph Waldo Emerson, English Traits, deals in a literary manner with the attributes of the aristocracy as Emerson found them in the nineteenth century. W. E. H. Lecky's great work on the century, A History of England in the Eighteenth Century (1882-96), contains material on nearly every aspect of life in the century but the section dealing with the aristocracy, found in Volume I, Chapter II, is short and is mainly a literary compilation of the strengths and weaknesses of an aristocracy, with special comments on the actions of the English one.

Basil Williams, The Whig Supremacy, 1714-1760, is an excellent history of the whole period and contains good general remarks on the place and function of the aristocracy. Edward Hughes, North Country Life in the Eighteenth Century: The North East, 1700-1750, deals mainly with the gentry and the rising coal fortunes and scarcely
This dissertation is based almost completely upon printed primary sources. A vast amount of material exists in printed form for a study of the nobility in the century which can be used to fill the gap in our knowledge of this ruling class. Obviously the first work to be consulted in a study of the English nobility in any period should be George E. Cokayne, *The Complete Peerage*, for it is a mine of information, collected most painstakingly, which has hardly been utilized at all for a study of the nobility as a whole. Arthur Collins, *The Peerage of England*, continued and enlarged by Sir Egerton Brydges (1812), is generally useful and trustworthy, and can be used as a supplement to *The Complete Peerage* to fill in for the absence of the volumes past the letter "S" in the latter work. This dissertation has relied heavily upon these two works on the peerage as sources for information concerning individuals, marriages, offices and honors, and the like, held by the peers. The *Reports* of the Historical Manuscripts Commission contain the papers, in part or in full, of some of the greatest nobles of the century. These *Reports* have been heavily used in this dissertation.

The correspondence, letters and memoirs of many persons prominent in the political and social life of the period have been published and these sources give a very complete picture of life in the century. The eighteenth century was the great age of the writer of polite letters, and the collections of those of Horace Walpole, the Earl of
Chesterfield, and of Lord Hervey testify to the usefulness of such works. Family correspondence, such as the delightful Correspondence of Emily, Duchess of Leinster, 1731–1814, give a picture of the attitudes of families to their own problems, hopes and fears, of their relations with their own social group, and of their attitudes toward men and measures in the period. A group of collections of correspondence, which might be termed friendly correspondence, or better perhaps gossipy correspondence, usually written by women to friends in their social set, exists, which give interesting and informative attitudes toward contemporary events. In such a group The Letters and Journals of Lady Mary Coke (1889) and The Autobiography and Correspondence of Mary Granville, Mrs. Delany (1862) ought to be included.

The correspondence or memoirs of many of the prominent politicians of the period have been published, such as The Correspondence of John, Fourth Duke of Bedford (1842), The Autobiography and Political Correspondence of Augustus Henry, Third Duke of Grafton (1898) and Memoirs of the Marquis of Rockingham and his Contemporaries (1852) as well as many others. These volumes contain material on the political arrangements and social life of the period along with discussions of national policy, economic conditions, the weather, and nearly any conceivable subject. These collections of letters, and many more, which were used or consulted in the preparation of this dissertation, are listed in the bibliography.
Political authority in eighteenth-century England rested upon a very stable and ancient base; respect by the mass of the people for authority which was traditional. Freedom in this society lay simply in the ready assent men gave to rules which were laid down by rightful authority and which were befitting to gradations in society.

Such a basis of authority was possible in a relatively simply organized agricultural and commercial community. Common systems of beliefs, usages and ways of living existed to which the society gave willing obedience. The community became a graded structure and men were of low or high degree according to the law of life, the law of nature, and the law of God. The hierarchy was graded in its higher ranks as in its lower, and the bond of custom held fast the lines of the divinely-appointed order.

The people of England in the eighteenth century therefore did not create the political power to which they gave obedience, they accepted as an honored heritage a system of subordination in which men changed but deference to rank and to family stood firm. The main basis for this political authority was social status within the traditional hierarchy, the status of a ruling class which largely monopolized power and land ownership and which fostered traditions and doctrines congenial to its continued exercise of authority.
The hierarchy of England based its power and authority then on social status and landed wealth. As the community of England became more complex, as the interests of the state broadened, the traditional authority had of necessity to be shared with forms of wealth other than land, namely, mercantile wealth. The House of Commons in the eighteenth century increasingly represented the broadening mercantile middle class as well as the landed gentlemen of the shires.

The economic and social basis of the hierarchy was understood and accepted by the people. Political authority was over the people, above them in this pre-democratic political and social structure. Landed wealth brought with it respect and deference. Long possession of great landed wealth was often recognized by conferance of a rank in the peerage, and this was largely a recognition of existing power and influence. In this society the use of titles of rank and of respectful address was common to persons of quality.

Political authority was exercised largely on the basis of individual obedience and of personal loyalty to a superior who reciprocated by grants of favors, patronage and protection. This attitude of obedience, of loyalty, of respect, was possible because both the rulers and the ruled worked and lived within an area bound by traditions and modes of behavior which were equally binding on both. This personal element was of the utmost importance for the administration of government and the maintenance of law and order was largely dependent upon local magnates.
Modern governments differ from governments of earlier times mainly in that they are initially concerned with legislation which is required due to the great complexity of life in an industrialized community. The problem of legislation were secondary in the agricultural and commercial life of eighteenth-century England. The government was largely concerned with basic problems of "governing," for without the trained and efficient civil service of the modern state this function of government demanded and received primary attention. The central concerns of the government were with internal matters, domestic and foreign trade, and foreign affairs in general. The government was most active in all matters in time of war.

Broadly speaking, government in the eighteenth century was concerned with the men who would control, not with specific measures which they would propose. The measures which provoked endless controversy and which were often the basis of political arrangements dealt with foreign issues, especially the relation of Hanover to English policy, and the strategy to be followed in war, that is, whether the main effort should be made by land or by sea.

The composition of the ministries which governed England during this period was not essentially a matter of the political principles of either the Whig or the Tory party. The period 1714-1763 was the age of the dominance of the government by the Whig party, and after that date this dominance was broken by George III, who distrusted parties and factions and who endeavored to re-establish what he considered the true balance of the constitution.
In the formation of ministries from both the Whig and Tory parties matters of place, or in more modern speech, patronage, played a most important part. The Whig party, from its long tenure of power, broke into many factions, and for the smooth working of the government many of the factions, usually under noble leadership, had to be satisfied. Thus government came largely to be a struggle between factions in power with factions out of power. The political arrangements of the day were both facilitated and impeded by family connections and personal friendships in the upper reaches of the hierarchy.

English politics in the century were mainly personal and local in nature. It was late in the century before large political issues became uppermost. Men were elected to parliament for their own purposes and not primarily to represent constituents or to present definite points of view. Through parliament they had influence, and through that influence they might receive favors for themselves or their dependents, or could at least maintain a watchful eye on their own interests.

Political issues of paramount importance were largely lacking during the reign of the first two Georges. The position of the House of Hanover was secure and as the century progressed latent feeling for the Stuarts became largely sentimental. Likewise, the position of the Church of England ceased to be a major preoccupation for it was thoroughly subservient to the state and it mainly strove to protect its exclusive rights and privileges. Controversy of a philosophical nature
within the Church continued, but under the benevolent protection of
the government it nearly ceased to be of vital concern to the nation.
The bond of custom preserved to a great extent during this period the
conception that the rule of rank and wealth was just, right and neces­
sary. The distribution of political power among the classes of the
population did not become an issue of national importance until after
1815. Yet during this period, 1714-1783, public excitement was often
fostered against government policy, especially by John Wilkes in 1763,
but the issue was hardly one of incipient class conflict. Others,
including the Duke of Richmond, demanded universal suffrage which would
have radically changed class government, but such demands did not,
during this period, become national issues.

The essential requirement for participation in government to any
extent, even for the most limited participation, even to voting
and sitting in the Commons, was to be propertied, which in the
eighteenth century meant primarily landed property. The tradition of
the close association of property and political authority was made
statutory by the Tories in Queen Anne’s reign, when they twisted the
tradition to their own purposes. Such a bill had been introduced by
the Tories in 1696 and again in 1703, but it had been stopped by the
House of Lords until the passage of the statute 9 Anne c. 5, which
made it necessary for a knight of the shire to possess 600 pounds
annual income from land, while a burgess was required to have an
income from the same source of 300 pounds.\textsuperscript{1} Petitions against this bill came from London, Oxford and other cities, where those who had "personal estates," that is, the representatives of the newer wealth, protested the landed requirement. But this Act of 1710 made exceptions for Scotland, the Universities, heirs of men qualified to be knights of the shire, and heirs of peers.\textsuperscript{2} In operation the act disqualified very few because of the practice of creating fictitious qualifications, which was simply transferring enough landed property to an individual to qualify him until he had taken his seat and then returning it to its real owner.\textsuperscript{3} Younger sons of peers were usually given settlements enough to qualify them by their families.\textsuperscript{4} Some of the great political figures of the century, including Burke, Pitt, Fox and Sheridan, were fictitiously qualified.\textsuperscript{5} Thus land gave political leadership and the larger the holdings of land the greater tended to be the political influence of the holder, if he cared to exercise it.

The dependence of the nation on the propertied class was of long standing and was essential for orderly and peaceful government. Popular political activity was likely to mean mob action and violence,

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{1} Edward Porritt, \textit{The Unreformed House of Commons} (Cambridge, 1909), I, 166.
\item \textsuperscript{2} Ibid., p. 168.
\item \textsuperscript{3} Ibid., p. 171.
\item \textsuperscript{4} Ibid., p. 173.
\item \textsuperscript{5} Ibid., p. 174.
\end{itemize}
as is evidenced by the Gordon Riots and the rioting of various trades, such as the weavers, against government policy. The governing class, noble and non-noble alike, looked warily at popular political activity of the "mobb" and their feelings are readily understandable. They could not foresee an educated and organized mass electorate and it is not surprising that they felt the mass of the people to be incapable of directing the English government.

The political realists of the Georgian era were more interested in political manipulation than in political theory, yet no nation is without a set of operating ideas in politics which could be termed a political philosophy, or modes of political behavior, or conventions of political activity.

The man who influenced the thought and action of the eighteenth century to a very large degree was John Locke. Not only in political thought but also in philosophy, religion and education, this doctor of medicine made significant contributions. Locke's political writings, especially A Letter on Toleration (1689), and the Second Treatise of Government (1690), made lasting impressions on his contemporaries and influenced greatly the future political thought of western Europe and of America. In Locke's work there is a continuous appeal to reason, the reasonableness of the Christian religion, of toleration and of political authority.

Locke did not develop his concepts independently but depended upon the work of many earlier authors, from the Greek and Roman
Locke built his system on the theory of the social compact as was usual with political writers of his day. Man in nature had certain rights which he wished to protect, and in order to do this, he found it necessary to form a civil government. In forming a community man did not surrender any of his natural rights to life, liberty and property for the purpose of government was to protect these rights, not to invade them. Thus Locke's system was built on innate and indefeasible individual rights. Although law was made through a legislature which was to express the will of the majority of society, even this body was not supreme, for it held a trust from the people and had to respect the inalienable rights of the individual.

The political writings of Locke were called forth by the Revolution of 1688 and were intended to support the cause of King William. This was accomplished, but what is even of greater significance is that Locke made the Glorious Revolution an example of progress against the current trends of government toward a Hobbesian ideal of royal absolutism.

The natural rights of the individual as explained by Locke had a liberalizing influence upon the state. The chief emphasis and attention given by Locke was to the right of property. He affirmed often that the main object of political society was the protection and preservation of property. Locke explained the existence of private property by the theory that when man removed something from the state
of nature and "he hath mixed his labor with it, and joined to it something that is his own, he thereby makes it his property."\(^6\) Locke did not mean that the state was to guarantee only the property that one man might claim through his own labor. The inequalities of property Locke explained through the agreement of men to use gold and silver as a medium of exchange, thereby signifying that they agreed to "disproportionate and unequal possession of the earth," for gold and silver "may continue long in a man's possession without decaying."\(^7\) This defense of property is the keystone of Locke's work and if property, or other natural rights, should be threatened or endangered by civil government, a government thereby puts itself "in a state of war with the people, who are thereupon absolved from any further obedience," and "have a right to resume their original liberty" and to establish a new government.\(^8\)

Locke's philosophical exposition of government to a large extent solidified the ideas of the nature of the English constitution in the eighteenth century. In contemporary correspondence and in speeches in parliament, the conception of the balanced nature of the English constitution, as an equipoise between the vested interests of the realm, which is essentially Lockian, if derived from Harrington, is omni-present.

\(^6\) John Locke, *Two Treatises of Civil Government*, (Everyman, 1924), p. 130.
\(^7\) Ibid., pp. 140-141.
\(^8\) Ibid., p. 229.
The compact theory of government as espoused by Locke and many of the political thinkers who followed him, received critical examination at the hands of the Scot philosopher, David Hume. Hume's criticisms had little effect in the area of real politics and he could hardly have expected that they would, for they were destructive of the very basis upon which Locke had explained government. By most eighteenth century theorists of politics, Hume was not quoted approvingly, but rather was condemned for his examination in areas which were considered sacrosanct. Nor is Hume's attack upon reason typical of the age in which he lived.

Hume was one of the great political philosophers of the eighteenth, or any, century. He wrote as a philosophe of the enlightenment yet his incisive criticism actually destroyed the philosophic basis for the rationalism of that hopeful century. Hume demonstrated that reason is a subjective quality which can be concerned only with the demonstration of logical relationships or with the establishment of matters of fact. In any other sense it is extremely limited, for man ordinarily considers a thing reasonable if it is in agreement with his inclination or propensity. Thus he strongly felt that reason as a guide to action was fallible and that man's value judgments are not derived from the operation of reason, but by the human faculty which he called "passion." He considered reason to be the "slave of the passions."

Hume's attack upon the contract theory was devastating; so much
so that it ceased to be used seriously as a basis for argument among political thinkers. The idea that contemporary rulers based their authority on a contract made in bygone ages by ancestors long dead and forgotten, Hume showed to be impossible and simply a figment of the mind. Even if such a contract had existed it would not be binding on future generations; if it were operative then the present generation would lack any power of self-determination. Hume felt that government arose out of historical necessity, probably as a result of primitive warfare, in order to procure protection and security. "When men submit to authority of others," he declared, "it is to procure for themselves some security against the wickedness and injustice of men, who are perpetually carried by their unruly passions, and by their present and immediate interests, to the violation of all the laws of society."9 In other words, men agreed to political authority because it was the only way they could exist and advance.

David Hume can be called a conservative rationalist, for though he distrusted human reason, he did not distrust human intelligence or its ability to solve political and social problems. Hume believed that the norms of political and social conduct are immanent in

historical experience. His practical advice to the magistrate bears out this contention:

As established government has an infinite advantage, by that very circumstance of its being established; the bulk of mankind being governed by authority, not reason, and never attributing authority to anything that has not the recommendation of antiquity. To tamper, therefore, in this affair, or try experiments merely upon the credit of supposed argument and philosophy, can never be the part of a wise magistrate, who will bear a reverence to what carried the marks of age; and though he may attempt some improvements for the public good, yet will he adjust his innovations, as much as possible, to the ancient fabric, and preserve entire the chief pillars and supports of the constitution. 10

Hume accepted the importance of property in the foundation of government. James Harrington's Oceana, was well known to Hume and he was evidently influenced by Harrington's conception of government as essentially one of economic balance between the vested economic interests in the state. Hume felt that Harrington placed too much emphasis on the economic side of government, "but it still must be owned that the opinion of right to property has a great influence on this subject." 11

The relationship between property and the organization of the state Hume clearly recognized. The idea of the government trying to alter the property base of society seemed to him highly dangerous.

"I must, therefore, be of the opinion," Hume stated, "that an alteration in this particular ((property)) would introduce a total alteration

in our government... Let us cherish and improve our ancient government as much as possible, without encouraging a passion for such dangerous novelties." In his theoretically perfect commonwealth Hume would restrict political activity to those who had considerable property. He would require freeholders to possess property worth twenty pounds a year, and leaseholders, property worth five hundred pounds, while county electors would have property worth two hundred pounds a year, all of which reflects the attitude of the century toward property.13

The acceptance of the necessity for a close relation between property and political authority by the influential thinkers of the century is nearly universal. We shall see shortly that Edmund Burke accepted and made use of this political and economic concept in his writings and his speeches.

The idea of economic balance in the nation is closely allied to the universal conception of a mixed or balanced constitution. This conception is a reflection of the experience of the English political philosophers. The balance in the government was described by a system of trinities: King, Lords and Commons, representing monarchy, aristocracy and democracy. In yet another manner it might be described as: Executive power, landed power and money power, or yet, as representing

12 Loc. cit.
King, property and administrative talents. Locke and Hume agreed on this point and felt that resistance by the people was called for when one branch encroached upon or threatened the existence of another. Each member of the constitution had a right to self-defence and of maintaining its ancient bounds. Hume went so far as to make such a division universal. "It may therefore be pronounced an universal axiom in politics, that an hereditary prince, a nobility without vassals, and a people voting by their representatives, form the best monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy." It would be difficult to find two persons more unlike than George III and David Hume, yet both agreed that the balanced constitution met the needs of the nation fully. "I own myself," George III wrote, "a sincere friend to our constitution, both Ecclesiastical and Civil, and as such a great enemy of innovations (sic) for, in this mixed government, it is highly necessary to avoid novelties. We know that all wise nations have stuck scrupulously to their ancient customs." This trinitarian structure of government appealed to philosopher and king alike because it mirrored the hierarchical nature of English society; it was in essence the institutionalization of the social structure in the constitution.

16 Ibid., p. 139. Essay III, "That Politics may be Reduced to a Science."
17 The Correspondence of King George III with Lord North, from 1768 to 1783, ed., W. Brodham Donne (London, 1867), I, 89. February 23, 1772.
The reflection of the hierarchy was not absolute for the parts of the
government were not independent of one another but were in fact highly
interdependent. The power of the king was limited to the extent of
the prerogative which parliament permitted him to exercise, and his
field of independent action became narrower as the century progressed.
Certainly in the eighteenth century he could name his own ministers
to a large extent, but even this power rested finally upon the will-
ingness of the House of Commons to support his choice.

The House of Lords, having an historic position as the King's
Council, claimed a pre-eminence which it in fact did not possess. The
lords were vulnerable to pressure from all sides, from the king, due
to his power of advancement and creation; from the ministry which
recommended measures and personal advancements to the sovereign, and
more indirectly even from the House of Commons.

The House of Commons was only roughly representative of the
"democracy," for seats had not been redistricted since the late middle
ages. The concept of 'virtual representation' was used rather than
actual representation. The fact that some members of the Commons
represented no one at all made it relatively simple, although often
expensive, to influence affairs in the lower house. The lords as
great holders of landed property controlled many seats in the counties
and could by their representation influence legislation and attitudes
toward governmental policies and personnel. Thus the distinctions
claimed among the parts of the balanced constitution were more appar-
ent than real.

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The peers in the eighteenth century claimed a paramount position as advisers to the sovereign. Even more important is their belief that they, as an upper house, acted as a balance between the position and power of the king on the one hand and the power and numbers of the people on the other. This belief exercised a lasting influence, for in 1783 the Earl of Abingdon in addressing the House of Lords, reminded it of its position, "of holding between the king and people the balance of the state in the scale of its government; or as Charles I used to express it, 'of being that excellent screen between the prince and the people, to assist each against the encroachment of the other.'"\(^{18}\)

Still in 1831 during the debates on reform, the Duke of Sussex, who was for the Reform Bill, reminded the peers that their duties were plainly marked out, they "stand between the people and the crown, invested by the constitution with the sacred charge of maintaining the prerogative of the one, and protecting the just rights and privileges of the other."\(^{19}\) This concept was held so strongly and widely due to the belief of the lords that they represented the nation as a whole, the land of England, a permanent and enduring thing.

The House of Lords was the direct legislative organ of the men who governed the country indirectly by their influence upon the electoral machinery of the House of Commons and by their dominance of the

\(^{18}\) *Parliamentary History*, XXIV (1783-1785), 135-36. December 15, 1783.

\(^{19}\) *Parliamentary Debates*, 3rd Series, VIII (1831), 307. October 7, 1831.
The cabinet and of the departments of administration. The House as a legislative organ was least important; it was the influence of the individual peers which had the greatest significance. The lords as individuals dominated the cabinet almost completely.

In turn the House of Lords was subservient to the ministries which were largely composed of peers or their close adherents. This subservience of the House to the wishes and desires of the ministry is understandable in the light of the control which a ministry might exercise. In the first instance, the ministry had a potent weapon in its control of the election of the sixteen representative peers of Scotland. In theory they were to be elected freely by their fellow peers, but in fact their selection was largely made at the suggestion of the Secretary of State for Scotland, who could hardly be expected to be indifferent to political considerations. Secondly, a stable block of votes in the Lords came from the Bench of Bishops. The creation and translation of bishops was customarily within the power of the ministry, although the sovereign at times took a personal interest in such matters. Even though the king should insist upon exercising his prerogative in person, he would hardly appoint to a bishopric a known enemy of his ministers.

The Bench of Bishops could be regarded as a political creation in the eighteenth century. Although they held their seats in the

Lords due to their ecclesiastical offices, they remained faithful to the political combination which had made their advancement possible. The ministry exercised a real control over the bishops by the practice of translation. The income of the bishoprics differed enormously, from the great income of such a see as that of Canterbury of 7,000 pounds a year, to the lowly and highly inadequate income of a see like Bristol of 450 pounds. 21 It was quite natural for bishops to desire more opulent sees for the expenses of one see differed but slightly from another, yet the power of recommendation for translation lay in the hands of the ministry, or in its chief official. If a bishop wished to move on to a richer diocese, he would have to be diligent in his attendance upon the House and to follow closely the ministry's desires in his voting. Thus the control of ecclesiastical preferment was a potent factor for the ministry in the control of the House. 22

Thirdly, the individual peers themselves were dependent upon the ministry for hope of advancement to a higher rank in the peerage. The sovereign usually accepted the suggestions of the ministry in this regard, for he fully realized the practical usefulness of this power in securing the cooperation of individual peers in the House. Fourthly, many of the peers would support a ministry which had the confidence of

22 Ibid., p. 52.
the sovereign because they were placemen. They held positions, such as Lords of the Bedchamber, which brought them into close personal attendance upon the king. The fifthly, some of the peers were in need of funds and they received money directly from the ministry, with the full knowledge and consent of the king, from the secret service funds. Such grants or payments to peers who were unfortunate enough to have fallen heir to "decayed estates" or who had suffered from their reckless extravagance or ill luck at cards, were kept in special accounts with which the king was intimately connected. Thus it can be seen that the ministry had sufficient means and methods of assuring itself of the compliance of the House of Lords as a body.

The belief that representatives of the landed interest were best qualified to possess a great voice in parliamentary affairs was not claimed for the Lords alone, but also for the House of Commons. It was assumed that the Lords possessed land but it was required by law that members of the House of Commons possess it, as has been shown, while a 40 shilling freehold was required in order to vote, but both provisions were often violated. This belief was universal in the politically active class; even Gibbon, writing in his Decline and Fall, could say of an assembly in Gaul that it was "to consist of a...number of the most honorable and opulent possessors of land, who might justly

23 Pares, George III and the Politicians, p. 41.
24 George III - North Correspondence, II, 421-22. April 18, 1782.
be considered as the representatives of their country.\textsuperscript{25} Gibbon was writing fully in the eighteenth century sense, a sense which was fully approved of by his sovereign, George III, who writing in 1774 of the election about to be held for a new parliament, wrote to Lord North to say, "...besides, I trust it will fill the House with more gentlemen of landed property, as the Nabobs, Planters, and other Volunteers are not ready for the battle."\textsuperscript{26}

The union of political power and property as the only stable basis of government is seen in the thought of one of the most influential writers of the eighteenth, or of any, century: Edmund Burke. Although Burke was a House of Commons man, his remarks on property apply most strongly to the position of the peers. "It is true, that peers have a great influence in the kingdom, and in every part of the public concerns. This is because of property and cannot be changed as long as property is power."\textsuperscript{27} Burke would not want to change the system; the fact that alarmed him was that the peers did not support themselves in independent greatness and "were apt to fall into an oblivion of their proper dignity and run into abject servitude."\textsuperscript{28}

It was the end of the period of Whig dominance of the crown and

\textsuperscript{25} Edward Gibbon, \textit{Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire} (New York, Modern Library, n.d.) I, 149.
\textsuperscript{26} George III - North Correspondence. I, 201. August 24, 1774.
\textsuperscript{27} Edmund Burke, "The Cause of the Present Discontents," \textit{Works} (Boston, 1865) I, 457-58.
\textsuperscript{28} Loc. cit.
of the government which brought forth Burke's fears. He saw the
danger that the peers might become allies of the crown and thereby
attempt to overturn the balance of the constitution through dependence
on the crown for their existence. He appeared to be blind to the
fact that the balance of his ideal constitution had long since ceased
to exist through aristocratic nomination of a portion of the member-
ship of the House of Commons.

Thus Burke stated clearly that to him the greater power must be
in the hands of those who have the greatest stake in the country, that
is, that the deepest basis of the constitution was property. Property
had to have privileges appended to it for only then would men of means
be eager to preserve the institutions from which they procured their
benefits. Burke conceived of the British constitution as an attempt
to institutionalize the general principle of the welfare of the whole
community as the basic reason for government, and this welfare could
only be protected by the privileged upper classes. 29 Democracy to
Burke was impractical for he felt that the powers of government must
be in the most virtuous hands; he equated virtuousness and property
and this was his justification for the British constitution.

Abstract political theory received scant sympathy from Burke for
he was essentially an expounder of the political and social institutions

29 Arthur K. Rogers, "Burke's Social Philosophy," The American Jour-
nal of Sociology, XVIII (1912-13), p. 65.
as he found them or as he idealized them. The Revolution of 1688-89
was the basis of Burke's political thoughts on British parliamentary
government. He saw that, as a result of that event, effective political
control had passed to the hands of the Whig nobility and this accounts
for the large part the conception of the role of the nobility played
in his explanation of the constitution. In 1790 he stated, "the
Prince of Orange...was called by the flower of the English aristoc-
rac y to defend its ancient constitution, not to level all distinc-
tions..."30 The demands of Burke upon the nobility to take their
place in the constitution were constant, but reached fever pitch when
he called upon them to resume their status, that is, when he asked
the impossible, the resurrection of the Whig system.

In order to see more clearly Burke's ideas of the place of the
nobility in the state we must understand his conception of the English
nation. The state for Burke was no artificial creation which had
arisen to meet a present need, but rather was the product of the past
history of a people. If a constitution and a society had emerged
together, that was proof to Burke that they were suited to one another.
A government which existed by prescription, had in Burke's mind the
aspect of a thing eternal and to tamper with it was almost sacri-
legious.31 Burke attempted to picture the institutionalization of

31 Alfred Cobban, Edmund Burke and the Revolt Against the Eighteenth
the social system of England in its constitution, and he expressed
his ideas succinctly:

Our constitution is a prescriptive constitution, it is
a constitution whose sole authority is that it has
existed time out of mind...your king, your lords, your
judges, your juries, grand and little, are all pre-
scriptive...Prescription is the most solid of all
titles, not only to property, but which is the source
of that property, to government.\textsuperscript{32}

Much that is medieval in origin is evident in Burke's conception
of society. He vindicated the community as an organic, hierarchical
whole. It was only in society, in the organized community, that
Burke would recognize liberty. It is readily seen that to Burke the
postulates of the natural rights school, that society was formed upon
the rights of disparate persons, each with individual rights, was
nonsense. If a community were split into fragments like this, all
efforts to build it on an individual basis must be doomed to failure:
to Burke individual rights meant anarchy.\textsuperscript{33}

To Burke national society was simply a great communitas in which
each class had its privileges and duties, all held together by a
recognized discipline. To be recognized as a society, people must be
"in that state of habitual social discipline in which the wiser, the
more expert, and the more opulent conduct, and by conducting enlighten
and protect the weaker, the less knowing, and the less provided with

\textsuperscript{32} Edmund Burke, "Reform of the Representation in the House of
Commons," \textit{Works}, (Bohn Edition), VI, 146 ff.
the goods of fortune."\textsuperscript{34} This to Burke was the natural order, this was the society that was reflected in the type of government which England possessed. This society and this government were the products of the working of Divine Providence in the affairs of this world; it was the idea "that the awful author of your being is the author of your place in the universe."\textsuperscript{35}

The task of the legislature in this organic society was to express national feelings and desires. Burke did not regard government as a compromise between various economic interests in the community, or of various pressure groups, in the modern sense. The concept of the task and duty of the legislature was vital to Burke and he stated it vividly in his speech on Economical Reform:

\begin{quote}
In my opinion it is our duty when we have the desires of the people before us, to pursue them, not in the spirit of literal obedience, which may militate with their very principles, much less to treat them with a peevish and contentious litigation, as if we were adverse parties in a suit... For my own part, in what I have meditated upon that subject, I cannot indeed say that I have the honor to follow the sense of the people. The truth is, I met it on the way, while I was pursuing their interest according to my own ideas.\textsuperscript{36}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{34} Edmund Burke, "Appeal from the Old Whigs to the New," Works, IV, 174.
\textsuperscript{35} Ibid., III, 79.
\textsuperscript{36} Edmund Burke, "Economical Reform," Works (Bohn), II, 65.
Burke conceived of "the people" in the abstract as much more than simply a number of diverse individuals inhabiting the various counties of England. They were a social whole who by nature desired and devised government. Each individual who helped to form the people had his place on the ladder of life, some few were to lead and the mass were to follow in unsuspicious obedience. It was Burke's conception of 'national harmony' which made his ideas of the people appear realistic. Each class had its duties and its privileges, although the class division in society was based upon the privileged position of property. When Burke spoke broadly of the people he meant the people of all classes working together as a cooperative whole. He expressed this concept forcefully and lucidly in the Appeal from the Old Whigs to the New, where he stated, "When the great multitudes act together, under the discipline of Nature, I recognize the PEOPLE...In all things the voice of this grand chorus of national harmony ought to have a mighty and decisive influence. But when you disturb this harmony, — when you break up this beautiful order...when you separate the common sort of men from their proper chieftains, so as to form an adverse army, — I no longer know that venerable object called the people..." 37

The 'proper chieftains' in this beautiful order which Burke described were to be men of property in both houses of parliament who were representatives of the landed interest and from whom safe

leadership could be reasonably expected. Above all Burke looked to
the aristocracy to perform the function of leadership; in his writings
and speeches one sees a picture, although undoubtedly an idealized
one, of the functions of this privileged class.

Although Burke was a great believer in leadership from above, he
was also a party man and saw the necessity for party in the English
system, for party provided the means by which the people could be
represented. He visualized men of property and position using their
influence as a public trust, delicate in their sense of honor, acting
only from just motives and to his mind these should be the men to
exercise public authority. The aristocracy of Burke's ideal was not
to govern without response to popular demand, as we have seen, for he
had no objection to sincere criticism. But an aristocracy delegated
to perform the task of governing by the mass of men was in his view
the quintessence of political wisdom.  

The respect in which Burke held the aristocracy approached adora­
tion. The House of Lords he respected for its part in the balanced
constitution and as the guardian of the privileges of the aristocracy.
Burke's statement, "Our House of Lords, the chief virtual representation
of our aristocracy, the great ground and pillar of security to the
landed interest, and that main link by which it is connected with the

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38 Harold J. Laski, Political Thought in England from Locke to
law and the crown..." expresses admirably his conception of its role in government and the economic connection between property and political power.

Burke could see no objection to the large part played by the aristocracy in society and government, for by its actions it was giving life to the constitution and stability to the state. "All this violent cry against the nobility I take to be a mere work of art. To be honoured or even privileged by the laws, opinions and inveterate usages of our country, growing out of the prejudice of ages, has nothing to provoke horror and indignation in any man."

The idealization of the peerage by Burke is evident. Although a holder of a title might by his actions make himself unworthy of his inherited distinction, the title itself merited respect. He conceived of the peerage as a source of continual strength to the nation. "I respect the original title, and the first purchase of merited wealth and honour through all its descents, through all its transfers, and all its assignments, may such fountains never be dried up! May they ever flow in their original purity, and refresh and fructify the

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Thus Burke would honor the brilliance of the original gift and hopes that the heirs may represent the purity of the original grantee.

The hereditary principle of the aristocracy completely captivated Burke's mind. He conceived the aristocracy in a sense as the perpetual representatives of all of the people; the ever-living Volkgeist of the nation. The epitome of this feeling is expressed in his famous appeal to the Duke of Richmond:

You people of great families and hereditary trusts and fortunes, are not like such as I am, who, whatever we may be by the rapidity of our growth, and even by the fruit we bear, and flatter ourselves that, while we creep on the ground, we belly into melons that are exquisite for size and flavour, yet still are but annual plants, that perish with our season, and leave no sort of traces behind us. You, if you are what you ought to be, are in my eye the great oaks that shade a country, and perpetuate your benefits from generation to generation.  

This is the most expressive of all of Burke's panegyrics on the aristocracy and it was written at a time when he was urging the nobility to assume its part in government, against what he felt to be the danger from the encroachment of the crown. Burke's appeal came too late, for it was impossible to revivify a system already dead. The actions of George III had ended the undoubted ascendancy of the Whigs

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41 Edmund Burke, "Economical Reform," Works, (Bohn) II, 104.
and with this action the heyday of the aristocracy was over, although the aristocrats continued to play a most important part in government and their influence lasted well into the nineteenth century.

The main political thinkers and writers of the eighteenth century placed their hopes for stable government in the combination of political power with landed wealth. The representatives of this group are most commonly met in the peerage; but the peerage had existed long before such conceptions of government had been enunciated. The methods and uses of peerage creations had changed with the passing of the centuries; yet in the eighteenth century there existed a mixture of both the new and the old, and it should be possible to see this change by examining the peerage as it existed in this century.

In English law peers could be created by two methods. In the first method, it came to be recognized in the course of time that a person called by royal writ of summons to sit in a full parliament in the House of Peers by the style and title of a barony, had the right to be summoned to future meetings of the parliament. A person was usually called to fulfill an obligation to the king, and in time it was accepted that the person so called to sit in the king's council as a baron, and who did in fact sit, was thereby ennobled, a recognition of previous de facto creation. This method of creating peers had its limitations, for if the person called did not actually sit in a full parliament, regardless of the reason, he was not ennobled and had not,
Therefore, an hereditary title. 43

Thus it can be seen that the right of peerage appears to have been originally territorial, that is, annexed to land, honors, castles or manors, as a part of feudal obligation. As time passed, actual proof of tenure by barony became no longer necessary to constitute a valid reason for summons, but only the record of a writ of summons to a person or his ancestor was sufficient evidence of tenure. One advantage of this means of creation was that the title passed to the heirs general and was in no way restricted. This method of creation by writ had been in abeyance long before the eighteenth century. 44

The second method of creation is by royal letters patent under the great seal, which is simply a royal grant to a subject of any degree or dignity of peerage. This method is a surer manner of creation for it does not depend upon attendance at a given parliament, but on the other hand the inheritance of the peerage is limited to the heirs enumerated in the patent itself, and not to heirs general, as in creation by writ. 45

The method of creation of peers in the eighteenth century was simple and easily understood but the explanation for the preferment of an individual in the peerage was complex and not readily observable.

44 Loc. cit.
45 Loc. cit.
In order to clarify the reasons for the creation or advancement of peers, the basis and purpose of the English nobility must be understood, as well as the personal and political qualifications which were requisite for an individual before he could sit in the privileged House of Lords. Although peerage honors flowed from the crown, the individual was rewarded in the normal sequence of events upon the recommendation of a political leader; service did not reward itself.

"Pendant longtemps le seul intérêt assez considérable pour figurer dans le grand conseil national," wrote M. Remussat, "ce fut l'intérêt de la terre et de l'agriculture. Voila le fond de l'aristocratie anglaise." The reasoning of this writer was essentially correct, that the land and agriculture were the real sources of the aristocracy. But land and land alone would not bring a person into the nobility, although it would give him a place in the social aristocracy. Other factors being equal, a representative of the landed interest would certainly be preferred, and the elevations into the peerage during the Georgian period continued to be made from the country gentlemen.

It is relatively rare to find in eighteenth-century writing discussions of the reasons why persons were raised to the peerage, but

some do exist in the periodical literature of the day, in correspondence, and in debates in parliament. A writer in the Gentleman’s Magazine in 1787 asked some searching questions about the aristocracy. "Are titles of nobility in this, or any other kingdom, conferred only upon persons of real merit? Will not a large estate, parliamentary interest, or a variety of circumstances, often procure them without any personal merit in the men thus enobled?" The writer continued and partially answered his own questions. "Men are often first called to the peerage because they are either descended from opulent parents, or have themselves acquired large estates, without possessing any shining abilities, or having performed any action of importance." In order to evaluate this writer’s criticisms of peerage creations, it is necessary to look at some of the public statements by political figures of the day.

William Pitt, the Younger, who nearly doubled the size of the nobility during his years in office, should be an authority par excellence on the subject of why persons were created peers. In this case, in a debate on the Regency Bill in 1789, Pitt "mentioned the fluctuation (sic) of wealth and property in the country, and the propriety of occasionally raising monied men to the peerage, in order to give the landed interest its fair balance and share of the honours in the power

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of the crown to bestow. The men of property were to be raised as representatives of an economic group, rather than for any personal merit, in order to maintain the mythical balance in the constitution.

In their thoughts in regard to the basis and the purpose of the peerage, William Pitt and Charles James Fox substantially agreed. In the Quebec Bill debate, on the question of whether or not an aristocracy should be established in Canada, Fox felt that "it became necessary to look what were the principles on which aristocracy was founded, and he believed it would be admitted to him, that they were two-fold, namely, rank and property, or both united. In this country the House of Lords formed the Aristocracy, and that consisted of hereditary titles, in noble families of ancient origin, or possessed by peers newly created on account of their extended landed property." Pitt, however, did not want nobility to be equated with property alone, for this would soon lead to a loss of prestige for the class. "Our aristocracy was not merely respectable on account of its property," Pitt declared, "though that was undoubtedly no small consideration in the scale of its respectability; but it was essentially respectable for its hereditary distinctions flowing from the crown,

49 Parliamentary History, XXVII (1788-89), 943, January 16, 1789.
50 Ibid., XXIX (1791-92), 410, May 11, 1791.
as the source of honour. Pitt wanted to have property as a base yet gild it with the favor of the crown.

Edmund Burke was ever solicitous of the welfare of the aristocracy. The aristocracy of his conception was a natural one which served the nation by providing both leadership and example. This aristocracy was not a caste, but a representative group, somewhat based upon hereditary succession, but it was also to represent the talents of the present age. In the debate on the Quebec Bill Burke gave his idea of the aristocracy, or what it should be.

He pointedly condemned what he called a close aristocracy which...would be a dead weight on any government, counteracting and ultimately clogging it in action. He recommended above all things an open aristocracy, and said he had always thought the power of the crown to make an admiral who had distinguished himself a peer, and occasionally to decorate the old nobility by the infusion of new ones on account of their merit and their talents, one of the first and most excellent principles of the British constitution.

Burke's statement pointed out a cardinal principle of the English nobility in the eighteenth century, that it was open to real merit and talent, and this fact is essential to an understanding of its place in the state. The increasing power of the nobility during this period was partly based upon the fact that it did not consist of a closed class of noblesse, but was open to qualified persons,

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51 Ibid., XXIX (1791-92), 415, May 11, 1791.
52 Ibid., XXIX (1791-92), 420-21, May 11, 1791.
although the road to preferment was tortuous and at times indistinct and the requirements very high.

An attempt was made in 1719 to close the ranks of the peerage by restricting severely the royal prerogative of creation, at a time when the total non-royal peerage numbered only one hundred and seventy-six. This, the Peerage Bill of 1719, met strenuous opposition in the House of Commons, although George I was willing to have his prerogative reduced. One of the great objections to the Bill was that it would give the peerage "an Aristocratical authority" by making the number stationary. This objection was answered with great perspicacity by Mr. Hampden, who pointed out, "that the limiting the number of peers would rather diminish than increase their power and interest, since these were mainly owing to the constant addition of riches which the peerage received by the enobling of wealthy commoners." The closing of the peerage might have made the peers more haughty but this act would have seriously weakened the proprietied base of the group in the final analysis. A more material objection was that the fountain of peerage honors would have dried up for the "wealthy commoners" in the House of Commons.

In legal theory the peerage existed for two reasons as they were given by Bracton: first, ad consalendum, second, ad defendum regem.

53 Ibid., VII (1714-1722), 589-593, March 5, 1719.
54 Ibid., VII (1714-1722), 618, December 1, 1719.
55 Blackstone, Commentaries, I, 227.
Thus the theoretical basis for the peerage was one of service and personal ability. This medieval theory still existed in the eighteenth century, but the element of personal merit had largely become a myth; the merit expected was largely of an economic and political nature.

Robert Walpole, the chief opponent of the Peerage Bill of 1719, gave his idea of why a person was created a peer in a concise manner in the debate on the Bill, and it should be noted that Burke’s reasoning closely follows that of Walpole.

But though illustrious birth forms one undisputed title to pre-eminence, and superior consideration, yet surely it ought not to be the only one. The origin of high titles was derived from the will of the sovereign to reward signal services, or conspicuous merit, by a recompense which, surviving to posterity, should display in all ages the virtues of the receiver, and the gratitude of the donor.56

The future Earl of Orford was speaking here of the theory of why a person was created a peer, but being a practical politician, he knew that the power to create was exercised in fact by the person who held the reins of political power. He had an insight into the reluctance of sovereigns to permit the exercise of their prerogative of creation.

But it may be observed, that the king, for his own sake, will rarely make a great number of peers, for they, being usually created by the influence of the first minister, soon become, upon a change of

56 Parliamentary History, VII (1714-1722), 619, December 1, 1719.
administration, a weight against the crown." Although Walpole's remarks were aimed at Stanhope and Sunderland, and they were certainly barbed, it was recognized that peerage creations were essentially of a political nature. This did not mean that the sovereign surrendered all control of his legal prerogative; his refusal to act effectively stopped action. We shall see that the kings kept a keen interest in this matter and refusals were not uncommon.

It was the exigencies of politics which in the normal course of events caused peers to be created. A group in control of the government would attempt to secure peerages for faithful followers in order to reward them and also to secure leadership and strength in the House of Lords. Lord Hervey was cognizant of all political affairs due to his position as vice-chamberlain to Queen Caroline and because of his contact with George II. He was also a famous writer of polite letters and kept a journal in which he recorded the political and social occurrences of the day. In reference to peerage creations Hervey noted in 1734, "There are no peers to be made; and if I can guess at the way of thinking of those where the power of creation lies, it is one that will long be dormant and very sparingly used. Our strength now in the House of Lords will leave the natural reluctance to the exercise of that power undisturbed." In other words, Sir Robert

57 Ibid., VII (1714-1722), 622, December 1, 1719.
Walpole felt his position in the House of Lords to be secure.

Peerage creations were used by the politicians of the day to reward followers for service in many areas of national activity. Persons of rank and the politicians of the day were besieged with requests for help in securing peerage honors. John, fourth Duke of Bedford, both as a great landed magnate and as an active politician, was often used as a means of attempting to secure such honors. Mr. Thomas Villiers, an active diplomat who headed missions to Dresden, Vienna and Berlin, and who was also a friend of Bedford's, desired the Duke's help in securing an honor, but not just any trifle. He informed the Duke that, "I believe I might have been long since decorated with a ribbon, had I any ambition in appearing to vulgar or weak people greater than I was (sic)...."59 This remark was in answer to Bedford's statement that the king "threw out a ribbon or some such mark of distinction" to distinguish ministers at foreign courts who through signal service merited the king's favor. Bedford continued that he knew of Villiers' dislike of "any such gewgaw distinction," but "...with regard to the more real and honorable distinction you mention in your letter, viz., a peerage, I know the king's thinking so well on that subject and the many prior engagements that are already entered into..."60 that it was out of the question at that time. One rebuff did not stop Villiers, for later he had his wish and


60 Ibid., I, 126. Duke of Bedford to Thomas Villiers, July 13, 1746.
was created Earl of Clarendon.

The diplomatic field was not the only one where service and success could bring the reward of a peerage. The Duke of Bedford was First Lord of the Admiralty from 1744 to 1748 and honors within the realm of Admiralty affairs were within his recommendation. George Anson, the great admiral who had circumnavigated the globe and in the process had captured a Spanish treasure galleon, was in 1747 the working head of the Admiralty under Bedford. The Duke successfully worked to secure a peerage for Anson and was congratulated on his endeavor by Henry Legge, "....the pleasure it must give your Grace to have accomplished the rewarding of Mr. Anson according to his merits and your own wishes..." 61 Thus Burke's conception of the open aristocracy is seen working, although in conjunction with powerful aristocratic support. Merit and service did not reward themselves.

The sovereigns would upon rare occasions make second creations of titles in order to keep ancient names alive. In 1660 Charles II recreated the ducal title of Somerset in the Seymour family, which had lost it by the ax in Tudor days. The ancient title of Duke of Northumberland was recreated by George III in 1766 for Hugh Smithson, husband of Elizabeth, the last heiress of the Percies. It will be noted that such creations or recreations were not made without the

61 Ibid., I, 221. Henry Legge to Duke of Bedford, June 12, 1747.
qualification of blood, or near blood-relationship to the holder of the original title and, of course, the person so created had to possess the means whereby he could maintain the state of the title. It is difficult to imagine a poor person who had a claim to a title through blood relationship pressing such claim, for he would not have been able to maintain the expected standard of life of a noble.

In creating or promoting peers the king had to take into consideration the effect that such an act would have upon the attitude of existing peers. This was especially true of the ranks above the earldom, for the problem was a personal one, that of precedence.

George III, who was known for his almost immovable resolution, became angry when pressed to create an Irish marquis because of the effect such a promotion would have upon the English earls. "I am heartily sick," George wrote to Lord North, "of Lord Harcourt's mode of trying step by step to draw me to fulfill his absurd requests. I desire I may hear no more of Irish Marquisses; I feel for the English earls, and do not choose to disgust them." George was quite willing to create and promote below the rank of marquis those who should be proposed by the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, as well as those the first minister might wish to make Irish peers, but he was convinced that he was correct about marquesses. He informed Lord North that, "every

62 George III-North Correspondence, II, 15. March 29, 1776.
day gives me fresh reason to abide my resolution of not creating Marquises in Ireland.\textsuperscript{63}

The creation and advancement of peers created complications which often vexed the lives of ministers as well as the king. It was impossible to satisfy all of the claims for honors without making the peerage too numerous and feelings were certain to be aroused if one received a peerage and another did not. This problem was especially acute in a closed group or profession, for peerage meant a great deal as a mark of status. In 1778 George III found himself about to create three peerages from the legal profession at one time, and he felt this to be far too great a number. Thurlow had been promised a peerage but this fact made the Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, De Grey, angry because he was not honored. George III attempted to extricate himself and he had to go to great lengths to do so. He informed North, "as to the Chief Justice thinking himself ill-used if Mr. Thurlow is made a peer, it has not the smallest foundation. I offered him the Great Seal and a Peerage; he declined both."\textsuperscript{64} But past actions did not deter the Chief Justice from pressing his claim. The king went to the extent of having a personal interview with De Grey to save North the blame of a refusal. George asked the Chief Justice to withhold pressing his claim to a peerage for "the sake of his service," and he promised to create him a peer at the next creation, and if the Chief

\textsuperscript{63} Ibid., II, 18. April 13, 1776.
\textsuperscript{64} Ibid., II, 169. April 3, 1778.
Justice should, die in the meantime, the peerage would be conferred on his son. To all of this the Chief Justice agreed and later sent his son to explain his "hearted acquiescence." 65

The Duke of Bedford appears to have been very successful in having his recommendations accepted, not only by George II, but also by George III. The Earl of Kildare had long desired to be at the head of the Irish peerage and he had recourse to Bedford in his endeavor. It was notorious that it was much easier to be created or promoted in the peerage of Ireland than that of Great Britain, and perhaps this made Bedford's work easier in this case. Bedford wrote to Kildare in 1761 congratulating him and informing him that the king intended to create him a Marquis of Ireland, and then a duke, when he should create such again, except in his royal family. Bedford's success in securing the promotion and a promise of a dukedom for Kildare, for this was a most unusual occurrence, pleased him greatly. "This mark of the King's approbation gives me infinite satisfaction, especially as I have been entrusted by your Lordship in the conducting (of) this affair." 66

Well might Bedford be pleased with his efforts, for few indeed would receive this honor from George III, and his success reflected his position of influence with the king.

During most of his reign George II was reluctant to create peers, but near the end of his reign he appears to have taken only a nominal

65 Ibid., II, 172. April 15, 1778. 66 Bedford Correspondence, III, 5, Duke of Bedford to Earl of Kildare, February 24, 1761.
interest in the persons to be so honored. The Duke of Newcastle reported to the Duke of Bedford in July, 1760 that the king had readily consented to create "every person your Grace shall propose." Newcastle himself came unprepared to the royal cabinet, for "...I had really forgot the names of the Lords who were to be promoted to Earls..." but in spite of this the king consented to advance the unnamed lords. 67 This episode may be an indication both of the royal attitude after years of struggle with ministers about peerage matters, and of the frequent state of the Duke of Newcastle's mind.

Peerage creations had great practical uses which far transcended personal considerations of merit or of service. The exercise of this prerogative was used as a public sign of the strength of a ministry, as a reward for political activity, to soften disgrace or dismissal from office, as an inducement for the election of a man to the House of Commons, and as a reward to a man in the House of Commons through making his wife a peeress.

The use of peerage creations as a sign that a ministry held the confidence of the sovereign was a common occurrence. This was especially true during the early years of the reign of George III when ministries changed with great rapidity. The Marquis of Rockingham and his followers who were called to office by George III in 1765 made up a weak ministry and received little support from the king.

Rockingham attempted to get the king to dismiss persons from office who had voted against his measures and he also asked the king to create peers as a mark of royal confidence. The Marquis could have had no doubt of the royal attitude toward his administration after receiving this curt answer to his request: "As to the peerages, I thought I had yesterday, as well as on many other occasions, expressed an intention of not at least for the present, increasing the Peerage, and remain entirely now of that opinion." 68

As early as 1705 it can be seen that peerages were used as rewards for political activity. In this case, John, second Duke of Argyll, who was one of the commissioners to secure union between England and Scotland, had the promise of an English peerage as a reward for his services in that cause which was so close to the heart of Queen Anne. He wrote to Lord Godolphin reminding him of the support he had in this from the Duke of Marlborough. "I say, my Lord, in consideration of all this ((for union)) I do hope your Lordship will do me the favour to intercede with the Queen that I may have the peerage of England now which your Lordship knows was the only favour I presumed to ask of the Queen...This is a favour to me and my friends which the crown can easily grant." 69 The duke received his English peerage and could therefore sit in the parliament at Westminster.

Perhaps one of the best known cases of the use of a peerage to pay a political debt was that given to Henry Fox for his help in forcing the Peace of Paris of 1763 through the House of Commons. It was known that Fox desired to go into the House of Lords and he openly admitted it in his Memoir. This peerage "was an honour I had long and indeed beyond measure been ambitious to obtain for my family." Actually, Fox's peerage was one of form, for his wife Caroline had been created Baroness Holland in 1762, after he had returned to office under Bute. The only factor which worried Fox was that upon Lord Bute's retirement from office, he would be in a disadvantageous position in the House of Lords to protect his friends who held positions due to his influence, for entrance into the Lords meant an end to his personal influence in the House of Commons. Perhaps Fox knew of Robert Walpole's remark when he took his seat in the Lords as Lord Orford. Once in the House of Lords, Lord Holland's ambition was still not fulfilled for he desired to leave the lowest rank of the peerage and to be created an earl. His period of political usefulness was finished and even the reputed influence of the Duke of


71 Correspondence of Emily, Duchess of Leinster, 1731-1814, ed., Brian Fitzgerald (Dublin, 1949), I, 364. Lady Holland to Marchioness of Kildare, April 8, 1763. Hereafter cited as Leinster Correspondence.
Grafton could not secure his promotion.\textsuperscript{72} For once in his career, Henry Fox had undersold himself.

Peerage creations and promotions were also used to cushion the fall from power of political figures. Henry Fox, Lord Holland, complained that the dismissal of Henry Bilson Legge as Chancellor of the Exchequer was meanly done for he was not permitted to go into the House of Lords, even though his wife was already Lady Stowell, a peeress in her own right.\textsuperscript{73} An even stronger evidence of this use of the peerage is given by Lord Hertford's appeal directly to the king in 1782 for a promotion as a mark of royal favor and as a reward for past services:

\begin{quote}
As it is proposed to dismiss me from your Majesty's service merely for my attachment to your Majesty, let me intreat you... to shelter me from the disgrace which will accompany it by giving me a higher rank in the Peerage, and permit me to owe it to your own grace and nomination. I have served your Majesty more than twenty years....\textsuperscript{74}
\end{quote}

Peerages were at times promised and given in order to insure the election of a candidate who was favorable to royal wishes to a seat in the House of Commons. The peerage, of course, would be granted to the owner of a borough, the man who had a considerable parliamentary interest. George III, who kept a watchful eye on all votes in the House of Commons and knew from day to day, not only the results of

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{72} \textit{Ibid.}, I, 518. Lady Holland to Duchess of Leinster, September 3, 1767.
\item \textsuperscript{73} \textit{Lady Sarah Lennox}, I, 39-40. Lord Holland's Memoir.
\item \textsuperscript{74} \textit{The Correspondence of King George the Third from 1760 to December 1782}, ed., Sir John Fortescue (London, 1927), I, 27. Lord Hertford to George III, April 3, 1762 (sic) 1782 (Napier).
\end{itemize}
divisions, but who had voted for and against measures, used peerages to increase his influence in the lower house. In 1776 we find him writing to Lord North to remind him to send the names of the titles of those to be created English peers that they might be instantly prepared, "for Mr. Harley’s election much depends on the soon expediting Mr. Foley’s peerage." Mr. Foley became Baron Foley in due time, a political use of the prerogative of creation. At this date, 1776, George created twelve peers, and up to this time, from 1760 to 1776, he had created thirty-four, and the number of peers totaled two hundred and thirty-seven.

As we have seen in the case of Lady Holland, if a man wished to remain in the Commons, a peerage could be conferred upon his wife, and the title would descend to the eldest son. Such creations were known to all to be a product of service of some sort rendered by the husband. The creation of Lady Hester Pitt as Lady Chatham in 1761 and the grant of three thousand pound pension per annum for three lives to William Pitt angered the London mob who had worshipped the "Great Commoner." Richard Bigby reported the attitude of the Londoners to his patron the Duke of Bedford, "The city and the people are outrageous about Lady Cheat’em as they call her, and her husband’s pension."

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75 George III-North Correspondence, II, 21. May 11, 1776.
76 Loc. cit., Note.
77 Bedford Correspondence, III, 51. Richard Bigby to Duke of Bedford, October 12, 1761.
The anger of the Londoners can be easily understood. The acceptance of the peerage and the pension was indicative to them that they had misplaced their confidence in William Pitt and his popularity suffered as a result. Pitt himself did not accept the Earldom of Chatham until 1766 and the attitude of the aristocratic class was well expressed by Lady Holland:

I believe that I shall like Lord Chatham better than I did Pitt; tho' I did not dislike him in the way I did several others, and was a little in the mob style about the great man; but I think his going into the House of Lords and putting an end to all that popular stuff is sensible in him...78

Pitt's demagogic appeal to the populace was not appreciated by the ruling class. Popular support did not make leaders yet, but it did support them.

Peerages were sometimes given and advancements made for no apparent reason other than the personal influence of the person asking the favor. Such advancements were often made in the peerage of Ireland for it was definitely of a secondary status to that of Great Britain. A fine example of promotion in the Irish peerage for no apparent reason or evident service is that of Lord Braco in 1758. In that year Earl Temple applied through the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, the Duke of Bedford, in behalf of Lord Braco, born William Duff, and who had been made an Irish baron by Walpole in 1735, "as

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78 Leinster Correspondence, I, 461. Lady Holland to Marchioness of Kildare, August 6, 1766.
thinking it then of consequence to the King's service, who desired to be raised to the rank of earl in the Irish peerage. Newcastle asked this promotion as a favor of Bedford and "did not enter into the merit or demerit of the case." Lord Braco had a great estate in Scotland, was barely known elsewhere, even by name, and therefore Newcastle felt that his promotion could never cause the Irish peers any uneasiness, since he never left Scotland. Bedford consented to attempt to secure the desired promotion though only as a favor to Newcastle, for he frankly informed him that the Temple-Grenvilles had no more claim to his favor than did the person in whose behalf the request was made. In spite of Newcastle's disclaimer, the creation of Irish earls caused complaints to be made to the Lord Lieutenant by those who considered themselves equally entitled to that honor. Although Bedford lacked any enthusiasm for the project, he was successful in securing the earldom for Lord Braco, who in 1759 was created Viscount Macduff and Earl of Fife. The peerage promotion was secured through personal favor and influence, first on the part of Lord Braco with the Grenvilles, then the Grenvilles with Newcastle, and finally of Newcastle with Bedford. Thus in this one promotion we see united the main political elements which made up Pitt's coalition ministry of 1757, and it is evident from the above that mutual

forbearance and smothered dislike on the part of the Whig factions were the only factors which made Lord Braco's promotion in the peerage possible.

The exercise of political power in England in the eighteenth century was so interwoven with the traditional social and economic fabric as to be almost indistinguishable from it. Those who possessed landed wealth, and as a derivative, social status, performed the necessary functions of government as of right. The mass of Englishmen gave unhesitating obedience to their social and political superiors, and this willingness to subordinate themselves to those who held the greater advantages, made the English constitution function in this aristocratic century.

The political thinkers and writers of the century, as we have seen in the examples of Locke, Hume and Burke, expounded the idea that property was the only stable base for political authority. They saw in the England of their day the example from which they preached. They saw in its government an easily recognizable reflection of those groups which possessed economic advantages of the day; as Burke stated it so well, "Property is power."

The power of property was most closely reflected in the peerage and in the House of Lords. As the holders of the traditional power of property the peers felt themselves to be the irreplaceable bulwark of the rights of property and to hold a balance between the King and Commons in the trinitarian structure of Britain.
The peers in the eighteenth century continued to be created from the landed class almost exclusively. The peerage remained open to those who were deemed to have shown sufficient service in politics, law, war and diplomacy, but due to the fact that leadership in all of these areas was expected from persons descended from established landed families, the norm on creations was rarely breached.

The evidence is overwhelming that peerages were created for political reasons in the normal course of events. The idea that peerage creations were more than a simple political transaction persisted because titles brought to the individual prestige because they were granted by the crown, the source of honor, and were supposed to involve personal merit in the person ennobled. Regardless of the honor or merit involved in peerage creations, we know that they had great practical political uses which could not be overlooked by any leader of the government.

The English government, based as it was on a hierarchy of classes, each with its own privileges, worked with amazing success for the whole century, giving a degree of liberty which drew encomiums from continental observers, laying the foundation of empire, inaugurating the Industrial Revolution, and, finally, meeting the challenge of a revolutionized France. Its ability to live with or to solve the internal problems and external challenges which beset Britain in no small part rested upon the leadership provided by the landed and largely titled class. The strength of the eighteenth-century system of government weakened when the aristocracy lost its predominant economic position.
due to commercial, industrial and technological changes. It lasted in form and largely in fact until the era of reform in the nineteenth century.

In a century which accepted the principle of subordination and which deferred to formal balance, we see that an aristocracy and a nobility were popularly accepted and philosophically justified. Seeking concrete fact, the historian would know more of the personal characteristics, personal ways of life, personal contributions to eighteenth-century life of this ruling class. These will be treated, so far as the sources allow, in later chapters, using the dukes, the apex of the society, as material. Before this is essayed, however, two chapters are called for to state certain basic facts as relevant to the ducal rank as to the others in the hierarchy of privilege.
CHAPTER III
The Nature of the English Aristocracy

The aristocracy of England in the eighteenth century was unique among European aristocracies. It was an aristocracy, based principally upon great landed wealth, which ruled and administered the nation. While in other nations the relative position of the aristocracy in the state was decreasing, that of England was increasing in power, prestige and wealth. What elements existed in the English aristocracy which made it differ from the others? What was the milieu in which the dukes lived and worked and exercised their influence?

The broadest possible base for a ruling class is a social distinction which sets it apart from the generality of subjects. In England no legal barriers separated the different social strata, but custom and convention supported the hierarchical social order based upon class domination and class subordination.¹ The distinctions between different classes in the same society are capricious and fugitive and are modified by many exceptions which tend to make judgments concerning them appear contradictory.²

The term "gentleman" in English usage set apart the class of persons to whom social and political influence was given. The

appellation of "gentleman" was understood in many ways for Sir William Petty designated six meanings or usages of the term:

"...(1) one whereof is to be very civill, as a son.
(2) another is to have and enjoy annuel riches, especialy in Terra Firma, (3) to have consanguinity or affinity by marriage to and with many other gentlemen, and for many years past, (4) having such estate, reall and personal, as whereby hee is able to subsist without the practice of any mercenary employments, he refundeth his incomes in due and laudable proportions - not onely upon his owne family, neighbors, and companions, but also upon all other worthy objects and occasions - dispersing the fruiites without danger of destroying the tree, (5) besides the last mentioned faculty, to bestow his labor and time upon just government and defence of the whole civitas, his neighbors and friends. (6) Another sort of gentleman is hee who clotheth and adorneth himselfe elegantly, who hath knowledge and practice of the small work hereafter mentioned....and is commonly proud to the humble and humble to the proud, affecting rather the outward signes of a lively honorable person, than the reall demonstrations thereof."

Sir William's listing of the attributes of a gentlemen appear to be exhaustive and all of them apply to the use of the term in the eighteenth century with the exception of the last. By the last definition Sir William indicated that there were many interlopers in the rank of gentleman but from his description they would certainly have been easily recognizable. The real gentleman then was landed, was born of gentle stock or married to it, did not work for his income, was active in government, and displayed his gentility by his civility.

The social basis of the aristocracy was the ideal of the gentleman. To this ideal all ranks of the aristocracy had to conform as fully as possible, for this society of gentleman had set standards for the mind, for the emotions, for taste and basically for political action. A group thus agreed upon fundamentals, possessed an inner unity which made political differences, regardless of bitterness, only surface disagreements.

The rank of gentleman was relatively open and easy of access. Regardless of the humble station from which a man came, as soon as he had property and culture it was possible for him to account himself a gentleman, and to write "Esquire" after his name. The son of a self-made gentleman would be recognized and accepted, for he would have been bred and educated in the values and standards of the gentleman. Daniel Defoe recognized early in the century that a man could make himself a gentleman, at least on the surface, and be accepted by the gentry as a gentleman, if he had land, wealth and the outer accomplishments of the gentle class.

The Estate (of 1800 pounds per annum) is purchased by a citizen, who having got the money by honest Industry, and pursuing a prosperous Trade, has left his Books and his Warehouses to his two younger sons, is retired from the World, lives upon the Estate, is a Justice of the Peace, and makes a compleat Gentleman: His eldest Son bred at the University, and thoroughly accomplished, is as well received among the Gentry of the County,...as if he had been a Gentleman by Blood for a hundred Generations before the Conquest.31

In England the style of gentleman had no legal foundation and carried with it no privileges or immunities, thus it was not necessary to prove any number of generations of gentility, as was the case in continental monarchies. 4

In England the only legally privileged body of men, as we shall see in the next chapter, were the peers of the realm, and their privileges were of a political nature due to their functions in the state. Between them and the rest of the social aristocracy, or the gentry, there were no other definable distinctions. This is of importance in establishing the strength of the English nobility and of English society in the century. The English nobility escaped invidium, not because any man could be made a peer, but because any man could lay the foundations for gentility or could make himself a gentleman. 5

The class of gentlemen, broad-based on adequate numbers, was essentially the leisured class. It had the wealth, usually landed wealth, which made it possible for it to develop its abilities in the highest degree. It was the class which was most highly educated among the lay population and it was educated basically in the classics and the traditions of the ancient world. That these gentlemen were trained upon examples drawn from the classical writers especially, may have had a great influence in developing a liberal outlook in

5 Ibid., p. 543.
the aristocracy of the century. The sons of the gentry and of the peers were often educated together in the public schools and in the universities and this helped to form a common base for the class of gentlemen.

This leisured class, which is almost synonymous with the governing class, did not set down its aims or methods in an organized treatise. The writing and correspondence of the century is filled with general maxims for the guidance of the group, and their guide to action and decision appears often in the much repeated phrase "Virtue and Wisdom." These terms, which became a part of the values of this class of English society, came from the Greek writers who used the terms arete and sophia, and through their renewal during the Renaissance, denoted a philosophy of life and of leadership, of social obligation and of restraint in the use of power. Lord Chesterfield attempted to explain to his son the meaning of Virtue in the society of his day:

Virtue is a subject that deserves your and every man's attention...that Virtue consists in doing good, and in speaking truth; and that the effects of it are advantageous to all mankind; and to one's self in particular. Virtue makes us pity and relieve the misfortunes of mankind; it makes us promote justice and good order in society; and, in general, contributes to whatever tends to the real good of mankind. To ourselves it gives an inward comfort and satisfaction, which nothing else can do, and which nothing can rob us of.

Examples of virtue and wisdom were to be found in the ancient authors and might even be learned on the grand tour of Europe, especially in Italy. The trip to Italy, and often a residence there of several years, became a part of the education of the youth of this class. Dangers were involved in this search and the eye of Lady Holland did not miss them. She wrote to her sister Emily, Duchess of Leinster, regarding a return visit to Italy for the Duchess's son, "But, dear sister, don't leave him too long in Italy; except virtue, nothing is to be learnt in it. Its women are dangerous in every respect, nothing to be learnt from them, vice and illness frequently got by them..."9

Gibbon, in writing the Decline and Fall, had the England of his day in mind as he pointed out the weakness and failures of the Roman Empire, and his work was a stupendous warning to the rulers of England. Gibbon, a member of the class of gentlemen, a landowner, admitted himself to be "as high an Aristocrate as Burke"10 in his political thinking, and repeated time and again the necessity of the recognition of duty as well as right. "In proportion to his wisdom and virtue," said Gibbon, "the master of an empire is confined to the path of his sacred and laborious duty. In proportion to his vice and

9 Correspondence of Emily, Duchess of Leinster, 1731-1814, ed., Brian Fitzgerald (Dublin, 1949), I, 506. Lady Holland to Duchess of Leinster, April 24, 1767. Hereafter cited as Leinster Correspondence.
The governing class of eighteenth century England was satisfied with scattered maxims for the guidance of the youth of the class which would inculcate the full meaning of its position in society. The gentleman possessed not only virtue and wisdom, but also quality or character. This quality was something outside the laws of the realm and could be recognized by the attributes of the individual. George Bubb Dodington, who knew the society of his day as well as any other person in the kingdom, explained the quality or character of an English gentleman to a young and rich heir in 1755:

Give me leave to tell you that, in my sense, the character of an English gentleman is a serious character. It is not a family, an estate, or an employment that gives it; 'tis not the Patent of the King; it is the Patent of the People only that bestows it. A gentleman must love his country, and look a little into its constitution, to know why he loves it; and if called to mount on horseback in defence of it, or his friend or mistress, he must know how to do it... He must know how to defend himself, and must only not know how to offend. He must wear his sword, like his wit, only pointed against those who, by undeserved provocation, run wilfully upon it...12

11 Edward Gibbon, The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire (New York, n.d.), II, 863.
Dodington, who was later created Lord Melcombe, would have surprised and astonished his contemporaries, had they known that he was giving advice on the subject of a gentleman's character. From some of his actions it would have appeared that he needed the advice, although his thoughts on the subject fit well into contemporary thought upon the subject of the quality of a gentleman.

In writing of the governing class of gentlemen in eighteenth-century England, it is necessary to be as exact as possible in the use of terms which describe that class. In general the term aristocracy is used here in the sense of a social estate which rules, leads and protects the people; it includes the nobility, as well as the relatively large class of titled non-peers and the great class of country land holders known as the gentry. The usage of the term was often modified by the addition of the word "natural." Natural aristocracy is difficult to define with exactness because it was used in different connotations by writers and speakers. In one sense it was used to mean an aristocracy of talent, but more commonly it referred to the natural superiority which could come to a man who had every advantage of family, fortune, education, environment and experience in life. This is the sense in which Burke used the term, as well as William Pitt, the Younger, and Charles James Fox.\(^\text{13}\) It was this aristocracy which was the solid fabric of the state. Edward Gibbon

\(^\text{13}\) Edmund Burke, "The Appeal from the Old Whigs to the New," \textit{Works, IV}, 17\textsuperscript{3}–17\textsuperscript{5}. Here Burke draws his most extensive picture of his conception of a natural aristocracy.

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used the term in speaking of events in France in 1789 when he felt that the French were missing a great opportunity to make a "liberal translation" of the English system by destroying "the only true foundation, the natural aristocracy of a great country."\textsuperscript{14}

In England the term nobility encompassed only the peers of the realm, that is, those persons of the rank of baron or above, and by courtesy, their wives. All nobles are peers for the rank within the nobility had no effect upon the quality of the person. As Coke stated it "...as there be diverse degrees of nobility, as dukes, marquesses, earles, viscounts, and barons, and yet all of them are comprehended within this word, pares, ...everyone of the nobles is a peer to another, though he be of a several degree...\textsuperscript{15} The civil state in England consisted of only two branches, the nobility and the commonalty.\textsuperscript{16} The distinction, as in France, between a noblesse de l'epée and a noblesse de robe of recent anoblissment, is unknown to the laws of England.

In England all degrees of nobility and honor are derived from the king as the fountain of honor and he may institute new titles or degrees of peerage as he wishes, for the degrees are not of equal antiquity. The nobles of England in the higher ranks usually hold

\begin{enumerate}
\end{enumerate}
several degrees of nobility, the barony at one time encompassing all honors. The holding of a superior degree of nobility does not extinguish the inferior. For example, the eldest son of a duke usually is called by his father's second title, thus the eldest son of the Duke of Bedford is called the Marquis of Tavistock, the title of his father's marquisate. This is simply a courtesy title or popular title, for the duke himself holds all of his titles during his lifetime. Although all titles stem from the king, he could not be properly termed a peer. The king was the head of the peerage but not of it, since he had no peers.

The terms "peer" and "lord of parliament" are often used interchangeably but they are by no means synonymous. In the eighteenth century, as today, a person could be a peer and not a member of the House of Lords. In the first instance, it should be noted that peeresses in their own right are excluded from the House. Secondly, and by far the most important exception, is that of the peers of Scotland. After the Act of Union of 1707 the peerage of Scotland was represented at Westminster by sixteen peers elected by the peers of Scotland from their total number, and the peers thus selected were designated as the "representative peers of Scotland." Thus the other peers of Scotland lost their right to sit for the duration of the parliament, although they were capable of being elected to sit in a

17 Ibid., p. 397.
future parliament. Therefore, although remaining peers they could not correctly be designated lords of parliament. The Irish peers sat in their own House in Dublin and not at Westminster.

It is also necessary to note another difference which existed and which continues to exist up to the present day. Not all members of the House of Lords are peers. The exception must be made in the case of ecclesiastical members, the archbishops and bishops, for although they are styled "Lord Archbishop" and "Lord Bishop," they are present in the upper house in the right of their offices and not as a result of the enoblement of their blood. They are designated therefore as lords of parliament and not as peers of the realm.

The aristocratic leaders of England developed over the centuries a public philosophy toward the state. For them, power, position and rank were coupled with a tradition of public service which made them conspicuous when contrasted with their continental counterparts in the realm of royal and local administration. In the continental monarchies royal administration was usually in the hands of a skilled bureaucracy which was completely under royal control, and as a result the national aristocracies became largely useless and expensive anachronisms. The service-aristocracy of England at least in part earned its position of influence, for it provided the country with its executive power, for every cabinet regardless of its political nature was

predominately made up of peers or members of the wider social aristocracy. It formed the great unpaid magistracy, it offered to a large extent the army and navy, it dominated the diplomatic service of the nation, and as lord lieutenants of the counties, had a predominant county influence. This habit of public service came to be expected of the aristocracy. Sir Richard Steele, speaking on the Peerage Bill of 1719 stated this concept strongly: "...a man of honour and integrity knows, that he is a peer for the sake of his fellow-subjects, and that this right is vested in him and his family for the sake of society, not for himself and his successors only..." On the whole it can be claimed for the aristocracy that it performed well its expected functions in society, or, as Lord Chatham stated it when referring to the barons of Magna Carta and calling upon the Lords of his own day to emulate them, "Those Iron Barons (for so I may call them when compared to the Silken Barons of the modern days, were guardians of the people..."22

The English aristocracy in the eighteenth century remained a class of country gentlemen and it never broke away from the life it controlled. The nobles never became a class of court drones who wasted both time and money in obsequious flattery addressed to the person of the sovereign. They threw themselves into the active

19 Sir William Holdsworth, A History of English Law (London, 1903-
1938), X, 55.
22 Parliamentary History, XVI (1765-1771), 662.
country life and country pleasures, and their persistence perhaps explains the physical vitality of the aristocracy.\textsuperscript{23}

Although a peer might be a great man in London, he was never greater than when on his own landed estate and about local business and pastimes. The English aristocrat lived on the land, knew many of his tenants personally and took a paternalistic attitude toward their activities. Much of the respect that is due the aristocrats stems from the fact that they had deep local roots, that they took an active part in local affairs, that they excelled in sports, and as a result their influence was enormous. Thus it can be seen that they did not rule by laws alone.

If country life was to the liking of the aristocracy, it was also expensive. In counties where an aristocrat held large areas of land, the voters, followers and tenants of the lord expected and received many benefits from his hand. He was expected to be generous and open with his hospitality and entertainment, not merely at election time, but during every season that he was in residence. "A curious fact is that many of the noblemen live in town to economise," wrote de Saussure to his Swiss correspondent, "and though they are surrounded with great luxury, they declare that in their country seats they are forced to spend far more, having to keep open house and table, packs of hounds, stables full of horses, and to entertain followers of every description."\textsuperscript{24} De Saussure recognized, however, that town life had

\textsuperscript{23} Hammonds, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 303.
\textsuperscript{24} Cesar de Saussure, \textit{A Foreign View of London in the Reigns of George I and George II} (London, 1902), p. 208-209.
drawbacks for the nobility, for "When in town they did not have the same expenses but they are not so much thought of as in the country, where they are like little kings, according to the good they do and to the extent of their bounty." 25

The absence of a brilliant and inviting court life in London undoubtedly had an effect upon the desire of the English nobles to be upon their estates. Gibbon, who always judged from his English prejudices regardless of his liking for things French, noted that "the splendour of the French nobles is confined to their town residences; that of the English is more usually distributed in their country seats..." 26 Nearly every observer and visitor to the England of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries noted this peculiarity of the English. Ralph Waldo Emerson observed that the aristocracy was marked by their predilection for country life and found that they were usually called the "country families." 27

Country property was a prerequisite for entrance into the charmed circle of the social aristocracy. Richard Rush, United States Minister to the Court of St. James, noted in 1817 that the "leading classes" preferred country life to any other:

The permanent interests and affections of the leading classes, center almost universally in the country, and these classes get accessions to their numbers from

25 Ibid., p. 209.
27 Ralph Waldo Emerson, English Traits (Boston, 1876), p. 177.
those who amass wealth through manufacturing and commercial industry; who often make it the end and aim of their accumulation, to purchase landed estates and live upon them. Heads of families go into the country to resume their stand in the midst of the feelings and attachments to which I allude; and are to partake of the pastimes of the country life where they flourish in such variety, exhilaration, and pomp.  

The good republican Rush felt that the enthusiastic fondness of the English for the country "was the effect of their laws, and principally of those relating to descent." He did not deny that much good could come from this love of country life and saw clearly the hold of ancestors on English thinking. "Scarcely any persons who hold a leading place in the circles of their society, can be said to live in London. They have houses in London, in which they stay while parliament sits, ...but their homes are in the country; their turreted mansions are there, with all that denotes perpetuity - heir-looms, family memorials, the library, the tombs." Thus country property provided the principle residence of the family, maintained its continuity with the past, and became associated with the family name itself.

As we have seen, the position of the aristocrat in the country depended upon the ownership of land, and very often of immense areas of land. If this influence was to be kept alive, it was necessary to keep these large landed estates together regardless of the effect of the land monopoly upon the mass of the rural population. In effect, the large estates made it nearly impossible for a tenant to ever hope

29 Ibid., p. 455.
to become an independent land owner himself. The work of the aristocracy in rural areas in part compensated for this land monopoly, for the aristocracy collected and spent, as well as paid, most of the local rates. This again was a source of prestige for them. It has been suggested that the activity in local areas was not altogether disinterested, for by assuming the local burdens of taxation and administration, the national government was kept from interfering in local affairs to too great an extent.\textsuperscript{30}

The great estates which were the repository of the traditions of the aristocratic families of England were protected in law from immediate dissolution through the rule of primogeniture, as will be explained in the next chapter. The practice of the settlement of the landed estates through the marriage contract also served to safeguard the real property of a family.

The aristocracy in the eighteenth century followed a well-known pattern or routine of life in the country and in the city. The county seat was the social center not only for the family living there, but also for the local gentry and for a continuous stream of guests who appeared when the family was in residence. When parliament was in session, many of the aristocrats lived in London in their town houses and took part in the social season which lasted most of the winter.

\textsuperscript{30} Emile Boutmy, \textit{The English Constitution} (London, 1891), p. 156.
Life in the country was preferred to that of the city by most of the aristocracy, for there was their actual home. They were kept busy by entertaining, by their sporting activities and in supervising the management of their broad acres. In 1731 Sir Thomas Robinson spent a week as a guest of Sir Robert Walpole at his seat at Houghton and described the activity he found to Lord Carlisle: "We were generally twenty and thirty at two tables, and as much cheerfulness and good nature as I ever saw where the company was so numerous....They hunted six days in the week, three times with Lord Walpole's fox hounds, and thrice with Sir Robert's harriers, and indeed it 'tis a very fine open country for sport." Not only field sports but also organized games, such as cricket, were played by the men in the country. In inclement weather and at other times, amateur theatricals were performed in the houses with the household and guests taking various parts.

Not all of the time spent at the country seat was used in recreation of various sorts. A most serious part of the business of the aristocrat was planning and overseeing the management of his estates. Many of the aristocrats of the century were well known as "improving landlords" who took an active interest in the problems of farming and did all in their power to improve the welfare of their tenants, and thereby increase their own incomes.

Much of the actual work on the estates was under the direction of a trained person, usually termed a land steward, who would carry out his employer's plans and take care of countless details, such as making the quarterly payment on the land tax, the assessments for the church, for the poor, for the constable; and who would oversee the repair to tenants' houses, the upkeep on the manor house, and the care and fencing of the gardens and the park. These men were on the whole well paid for their position was one of great responsibility; Laurence gave as an example of the annual salary of a steward 150 pounds, which appears reasonable, and he probably had perquisites in addition.

The esteem in which a good land steward was held is indicated by the death of Lord Pembroke's steward in 1779, "Everything...is thrown into confusion at Wilton House by the Death of Adcock...and Ld. Pembroke is now left helpless, and without a creature to do his business." Evidently a suitable land steward was difficult to find, for it was nearly five months before another was secured. "The new Steward's name...is Pryce, a very sensible able man, I think... This man is perfect master of his business, brought an excellent character from the People for whom he had been concerned in business

33 Ibid., p. 153.
in different counties, and in my opinion will improve the Estate exceedingly..."35

"The season" in London approximately coincided with the sitting of Parliament. Social activities were at their height when the aristocratic country families gathered in the capital. Much of the time of the men was taken up in political activities of various kinds; activities which were often combined with social life through political meetings at dinners given in the great houses or in the political clubs. The making of calls was a regular feature of this season. It was a method of keeping in contact with friends from many parts of Britain, of learning news and of discovering attitudes toward governmental policies. Callers were usually received in the morning when a gentleman would be in his "undress," that is, he would not be formally dressed and wigged for the street. If the caller found no one of the family at home, he left word with the servants and the person called upon was expected to return the call soon afterwards.

For the women of the aristocratic class the social season in London meant an end of their semi-isolation in the country and the beginning of a period of parties, balls, social calls, entertainment and shopping. The season was one in which the woman could discover the latest styles in clothing, could shop for the latest of new cloth and ribbons in the shops and could visit with family and friends. The

35 Ibid., p. 480. Dr. Eyre to Lord Herbert, May 21, 1780.
practice of performing "commissions" for friends or relatives who
were not in the capital was very common. The term "commission"
covered nearly anything which one could do for another, from buying
cloth for dresses to discovering the most fashionable portrait
painter for a friend.

Music and the opera, along with the theatre, provided the chief
pleasures of the aristocratic class during the season. Dinners and
parties were often held after the opera or the play and lasted well
into the morning. The pleasure gardens, such as Ranelagh and
Vauxhall, provided a more public type of entertainment for all classes
during their visits in London. Lady Mary Coke reported in 1767 after
a visit to Ranelagh, "I think I never saw so much great Company to­
gether. I make use of that expression instead of good, for great and
good are not always the same. There was ten Duchesses, Countesses
in plenty, and I believe I may say hundreds of Nobility, yet not one
royal person."36 All classes resorted to these gardens for music,
food, and walks along pavilions or specially planted avenues of trees
and shrubs.

The importance of the social season in London was not in the
pleasures it provided alone, but also in the link it provided between
the rural and urban interests of the aristocratic governing class.
Although largely rooted and established upon their landed estates, the

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36 The Letters and Journals of Lady Mary Coke (Edinburgh, 1889),
II, 6. May 27, 1767.
aristocracy did not become provincial in its outlook. The great
town houses of the higher nobility provided constant contact with the
city and with the latest trends in art, architecture and fashion.
As De Saussure observed in 1725, "...the finest mansions in England
are those belonging to the Duke of Buckingham, in St. James Park;
of the Duke of Montagu, in Great Russell Street; and of the Duke of
Bedford, in Bloomsbury Square. The first two are magnificent resi­
dences, rendered so by their architecture, their paintings, sculp­
tures, gildings, and works of art and decoration." 37 Although the
greater nobles had these great houses, they were in no sense an urban
aristocracy; they were essentially landed in their wealth and were
most at home upon their estates. In 1777 James Boswell visited
Chatsworth, the great country seat of the Dukes of Devonshire, and
in the course of a conversation with the steward remarked about "the
gradual change of living in the course of three generations. This
duke's (William, fifth duke) Grandfather used to live nine months
in the year at Chatsworth, the late duke six, and this lives three." 38
Thus it may be that such a great noble as the Duke of Devonshire
found it more convenient to spend increasing amounts of time in the
capital, but it will be seen in a later chapter that the Dukes of
Devonshire took an unusually active part in politics and held

37 De Saussure, Foreign View, pp. 71-72. 1725.
38 Private Papers of James Boswell, from Malahide Castle, prepared
for the press by Geoffrey Scott and Frederick A. Pottle (Mt.
Vernon, N.Y., ), XIII, 61. September 23, 1777.

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important official positions which necessitated their absence from Chatsworth. It was probably true generally that the aristocrats spent less time upon their estates as the century progressed.

The basis of the esteem in which the aristocracy was held in the eighteenth century was that the aristocracy represented old families which had given service to the state. Representatives of these families were held in popular reverence by the English and distinction of birth remained in the public mind the greatest cause for esteem. A second factor which influenced the attitude of the public to the great families was that they were the possessors of hereditary wealth. "Upon this disposition of mankind to go along with all the passions of the rich and the powerful is founded the distinctions of ranks and the order of society," was the opinion of Adam Smith.39 Though this was true, Smith felt that it was the cause of the "corruption of our moral sentiments." For it followed "that wealth and greatness are often regarded with the respect and admiration which are due only to wisdom and virtue, and that the contempt, of which vice and folly are the only proper objects, is often most unjustly bestowed upon poverty and weakness...."40 As the eighteenth century progressed, the development of wealth into a class-test tended to supersede that of distinction of birth. This attitude became very

40 Ibid., p. 102.
The primary and the largest source of income of the English aristocracy was from rent payments by their tenants. These large owners of land at times farmed under their own management, but usually they lived upon rent payments. Some small income came to lords of manors from the payment of heriots (heriots), especially in the west of England, and from fines and surrenders which were paid by tenants when they bought or sold tenant rights. These were termed "no small part of the Lord's casual profits," by Laurence. Agriculture remained the most important economic activity throughout the eighteenth century.

The aristocratic class also received income from investments in government securities and from urban property holdings, as well as from mineral deposits on their lands. Mineral deposits were usually leased for long periods of time at varying rates of return. At present it is unknown to what degree these secondary sources of income contributed to the welfare of this class.

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42 Edward Laurence, Land Steward, pp. 59-60; p. 140.
43 Edward Hughes, North Country Life in the Eighteenth Century: The North-East, 1700-1750 (London, 1952), passim. Contains an excellent description of coal mining and the coal trade during the period; many examples of country families interested in the business but contains no information relative to the titled nobility.
It should not be supposed that the aristocracy which had a near monopoly on the great offices of state displayed a contempt for financial reward. The search for pensions and places for themselves and for their relatives never ceased; in fact it was one of their main preoccupations. The income came from an office, or a "place," from fees derived from an office, or from pensions and annuities. The aristocracy used its position in the state as a source of income supplemental to its landed income.

In a sense, the search for lucrative positions for the aristocratic politicians was the cement which held administrations together. As Lord Chesterfield informed his son, "In our Parliamentary government, connections are absolutely necessary; and, if prudently formed, and ably maintained, the success of them is infallible." Both in the formation and maintenance of "connections" or political alignments, offices for the aristocrats and their followers were of the utmost importance. "Those capital occasions of strife called places, ...are of all others, the most apt to set mortal men at variance...." Matters of patronage appear in correspondence concerning the most serious matters of state, for the fear is ever present that one's friends might be "left in the lurch."

44 Chesterfield Letters, IV, 1593. To his Son, November 2, 1750.  
46 Ibid., I, 78. Earl of Sandwich to Duke of Bedford, April 26, 1746.
Henry Fox was one commoner who had no desire to be left in the lurch and he had powerful aristocratic support in his endeavors. Great fortunes were to be made from various offices but none quite compared with the Pay Office, which Henry Fox held for some years. Fox was a wise and able man, unscrupulous in his political connections, who possessed important and influential friends. He first derived advantage from the favor of the Duke of Cumberland, uncle of George III. This influence would have been formidable, yet he had other connections with many of the first and most powerful families of the realm. He eloped with Caroline Lennox, daughter of the Duke of Richmond, and after a period of disgrace in the eyes of the Lennox family because of his action, his influence returned. He was a great friend of the Duke of Bedford, who was one of the most powerful men in the kingdom and was also in the good graces of the Duke of Marlborough, the Duke of Bridgewater, the Marquis of Hartington, with all the Cavendishes, Lords Gower, Sandwich, Weymouth, and others.  

He held several offices but none so lucrative as the Pay Office, which he held during and after the Seven Years' War. As a result, he became very wealthy and had his ambition partially fulfilled by being created Baron Holland, although he never achieved his coveted earldom.

48 Leinster Correspondence, I, 518. Lady Holland to Duchess of Leinster, September 3, 1767.
Caroline Fox, Lady Holland, had spent many years beside her husband in political dealings of all kinds. She was a wise woman indeed, well read in the literature of the day, and possessed of a philosophic attitude to ambition, at least in others. Her most intimate thoughts she expressed in a long correspondence with her sister Emily, Marchioness of Kildare, later Duchess of Leinster. She expressed her feelings in her usual calm manner to her sister, "...some pursuit is necessary for man, especially an English man; 'tis an animal quite incapable of living a rational life...and quite insufficient to itself. It must be running after a fox, a hare, a blue ribbon, a place or some such thing, or given to play. Nature has given us women the best in this queer jumble of life." 49

This letter must have brought a sardonic smile to the marchioness' face, for she and the marquis were the parents of eight children as of this date and would become the parents of nine more, and Emily would have three more by her second husband. Secondly, the idea of men running after places was quite real to Emily for her husband had the greatest desire for a dukedom, which he did not attempt to hide. If Lady Holland had known of the great efforts of the Marquis of Kildare to secure a place a few years previously, she might have omitted this remark from her witty letter, for from the correspondence which passed

49 Ibid., I, 460. Lady Holland to Marchioness of Kildare, August 9, 1766.
between Emily and her husband, we are able to secure one of the best pictures of the trials and tribulations of attempting to secure a place of profit.

The Marquis of Kildare had an income of approximately 12,000 pounds a year with which to support a large and growing family. Out of this sum he was required to pay his mother an annuity of three hundred pounds. His mother insisted upon prompt payment of her money, although she had an independent income, probably a charge upon the Kildare estates, of three thousand pounds a year. The marquis was quite annoyed "that a single old woman should be so distressed for the delay of the paying of three hundred pounds for a month or two." 50

In Irish politics the Marquis of Kildare was recognized as head of the anti-Castle faction. He held the office of Master General of the Ordnance in Ireland which brought him an income of 1200 pounds a year. In his efforts to secure his faction's predominance against that of Archbishop Stone and the pro-Castle group, he went to London in 1762 in order to present his views but met with delay and repeated disappointment. While he was away from Carton, his country seat, he kept his wife fully informed of his progress or lack of it. The tardiness of the officials in London caused him to burst forth in anger in a letter to his wife: "Pretty treatment for a person so circumstanced as I am in regard to character, rank, and fortune..." It's

50 Ibid., I, 130. Marquis to Marchioness of Kildare, May 13, 1762.

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really like a rogue, or a fool who did not know what he was about, and not to be bore (sic) by a person who can live tho' he had not an employment." His final remark was most revealing and was an attempt at self-assurance and a balm for his wounded feelings. In spite of his political troubles in London, the Marquis could still dash off a little love ditty to his wife back in Ireland:

Careless am I who will reign
O'er Britain's Isle,
Nothing on earth shall give me pain
So Emil'y smiles.52

The Marquis might write glibly about the possibility of living without additional income from public office but just four years before his wife had written to him from Carton, "Ruined you will be indeed if you give up the Ordnance, but think that one year's income of it pays all the expenses we are at here."53

Even as great a noble as Kildare had of necessity to be careful about his expenditures. He had improvements to make at Carton and at his town house in Dublin which were expensive. His wife was addicted to the current game of chance called Loo at which she spent all available time and consistently lost. The household of the Kildare's was placed on a strict budget for Emily informed the Marquis that during his absence, "we go on living pure and cheap, agreeable to the economical scheme."54

51 Ibid., I, 127. Marquis to Marchioness of Kildare, May 6, 1762.
52 Ibid., I, 132. Marquis to Marchioness of Kildare, May 18, 1762.
53 Ibid., I, 97. Countess to Earl of Kildare, May 28, 1759.
54 Ibid., I, 140. Marchioness to Marquis of Kildare, November 23, 1762.
The two elements which were uppermost in the minds of the Kildares in their desire to increase the family income, were the improvement and enlargement of their seat, Carton, and the provision for their many children. This was openly stated by the Marchioness:

It is certainly very right and necessary that you should take every opportunity of laying the foundation, as you say, for future emoluments where there is such an increasing family. I would never rest content on that score but keep a diligent watch towards everything of that kind which suits your active temper too, better than quietness, and need not hinder but rather forward our enjoyment of our Carton life, since it will enable us the more to go on with our schemes for improvement there without reproaching ourselves for spending what our poor brats may want.\textsuperscript{55}

Lord Kildare was not the only one out of humor at this time. Lady Holland reported that her brother, the Duke of Richmond, was displeased at not being made Lord Lieutenant of Sussex, and that the Duke of Marlborough was made Lord Chamberlain, while he had nothing. The family had evidently been putting great pressure on Henry Fox for help in their endeavors to secure preferments and places, for his wife reported, "these things make Mr. Fox very sick indeed of being minister."\textsuperscript{56}

The use of influence with the government to secure places or pensions was universal in the eighteenth century. The system included

\textsuperscript{55} Ibid., I, 161. Marchioness to Marquis of Kildare, December 23, 1762.

\textsuperscript{56} Ibid., I, 359. Lady Holland to Marchioness of Kildare, January 22, 1763.
the highest nobles and the lowest followers of members of parliament. The great had their just pretensions and their desires carried weight with the government; while the little man depended upon the influence of the great with the government in order to secure positions. The Duchess of Bridgewater, sister of the Duke of Bedford, begged her brother's help in securing an advancement in the army for her second husband, Colonel Sir Richard Lyttleton, whose petition to the king for advancement was not acted upon, for he "hasn't enough weight to get his petition supported by the ministry...although others in the army have been advanced by favour."57

The Duke of Newcastle was the master patronage-dispenser of the eighteenth century and he in part maintained his position of power due to the fact that so many persons in every area of life owed their places to his activity. Richard Bigby, a personal friend and chief political agent of the Duke of Bedford, constantly kept a weather eye on available positions. In October, 1761, he called upon Newcastle to see what he had available, for, although contemporaries considered Newcastle a fool or worse, he did possess a keen appreciation of a man's worth or price. Rigby reported to Bedford, and in the report can be seen the deftness with which Newcastle made a position for Rigby dependent upon the desires of Bedford:

He cast about for anything that is, or is likely to be, vacant; and told me that my pretensions were heightened

57 Bedford Correspondence, I, 113. Duchess of Bridgewater to Duke of Bedford, May 26, 1746.
by the great consequence of my patron, of which I ought to avail myself, and in doing which, I should have his whole weight and support. 58

Newcastle was conscious of his powerful position and all who were politically knowing were also. James Boswell recorded an incident which showed that Newcastle had a sense of humor, even in his favorite area of ecclesiastical patronage. Newcastle was chancellor of the University of Cambridge and on one of his visits to Cambridge a certain Dr. Ogden was recommended to him. The Duke took out his note book and pencil and said, 'Then I'll put him down for...' while he paused the levees were conjecturing, 'for dean of such a place' or some other preferment. His Grace however finished, 'for a very ingenious man!' 59

Many of the positions sought by members of the governing class had few, if any, real functions; that is, they were sinecures. If some duties were connected with a position, these were performed by agents, except on ceremonial occasions. The holder of the office received the salary attached and paid the agent a yearly wage. The offices of Groom of the Stole, held by the Earl of Pembroke, and that of Master of the Horse, held by the Duke of Richmond, were reported in 1735 to carry salaries of three thousand pounds a year. 60 Many

59 James Boswell, Private Papers, I, 130.
positions, especially under George I and II, were filled for life by an individual, and in many cases with reversion for several lives to the heirs of the holders. George III was determined to end this practice and to appoint to office only "during pleasure." In 1778 the King almost forced Lord North to take the appointment of Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, during pleasure, with a salary of four thousand pounds per annum.61 Lord North had been in a mood of depression and this was George III's method of inducing him to remain in office.

Pensions were at times given to worthy persons of eminence who might or might not possess political influence. Often these came from the person of the sovereign himself, from the Privy Purse. George III's pension to Dr. Johnson is an example of this, and there can be no doubt of Johnson's political principles. There are also instances of royal pensions going to favorites, and in some cases pensions were paid in order that destitute aristocrats might keep up appearances. George II granted Lady Molesworth a pension, "because she had not bread to eat," yet she appeared at the celebration of the King's Birthday in "an immense fine gown," which was in the eyes of Lady Caroline Fox, "a pity and not consistent with great propriety, decency, and good sense..."62 But evidences of royal gifts to improvident nobles

62 Leinster Correspondence, I, 271. Caroline Fox to Countess of Kildare, January 31, 1760.

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are rare, although grant of office was much more common. In most
departments of government ability or lack of it in the individual
office-holder was hardly taken into consideration, for subordinates
performed the arduous and detailed jobs. But, as Henry Fox pointed
out to Bub Dodington, one of the greatest placemen of the century,
there was one area where ability was requisite: "Capacity is so
little necessary for most employments that you seem to forget that
there is one where it is absolutely so - viz., the Admiralty."63

The eternal search for advancement and places of profit lost
much of its glitter once the goal had been achieved and, if possible,
the pocket sufficiently lined. Again Lady Holland gave us a fine
picture of what life could be like when on top and satisfied, and at
the same time what prospects had been when the game was just commenc­
ing. She was writing from her beloved Holland House after Henry Fox
had returned to office in 1762, and she likened the place to a "coffee
house" and the great activity was wearing for her:

Last time he was in business the case was greatly dif­
f erent; a great increase in income, arriving at the
thing we had long had in view, the low spirited way
he (Fox) had been in before, all contributed to make
up for what was disagreeable in it, added to the view
of getting something for one's children - al present
il n'y a rien de tout cela, we lose time and get
nothing.64

63 Historical Manuscripts Commission, Report on Manuscripts in
Various Collections. The Manuscripts of Miss M. Wyre-Matcham,
George Dodington, March 16, 1757.
64 Leinster Correspondence, I, 354. Lady Holland to Marchioness of
Kildare, December 19, 1762.
The aims were nearly always the same for the placemen or pensioners: personal advancement, social prestige, to pay debts, to improve the family seat, and to provide for children. The security which could be felt in a place of profit, or with a pension, depended almost wholly upon political orthodoxy in the eyes of the patron, the party, or the sovereign granting the place or pension. Opposition meant dismissal and often disgrace. George III was unsparing in his punishment of those who opposed the Peace of Paris of 1763. Richard Rigby reported to the Duke of Bedford, who had helped to arrange the preliminaries of the peace, that "I believe there will be a general deroute, from the Duke of Grafton's Lieutenancy of the county of Suffolk to the underlings in the Custom-House,..." as a result of opposition.65

The two parties which from time to time controlled the executive were in essence agreed upon the basic questions of government. They were both aristocratic parties, the leadership of which at least nominally came from the peerage. Non-titled persons achieved leadership only through conjunction with persons of family, or through court favor, or a combination of both. Regardless of the means used to achieve office, the cabinet was always motivated by the feelings and habits of the upper classes of the nation. Whatever they did, whatever their political opinions might be, they were held together by

the stamp of a common culture and by their high social position.66

The aristocratic influence in government kept the executive in tight rein until the time of George III. Although the king desired to have more personal influence in government, neither he nor the great landed families desired to build up the power of the government to interfere in local affairs and this rarely happened in the eighteenth century. Representatives of the landed families could afford to be relatively independent even of the king, for they were conscious of the fact that they might remain ministers for relatively short periods, but that they would remain, as long as they lived, great individuals in their own right. Their social position meant much more to them than an official position, unless they were utterly dependent upon a "place" for economic security.67

Charles James Fox, who was looked upon as a radical in the 1790's, could say that the increase in virtue was tied to the example of the nobility. He felt that "that prejudice for ancient families, and that sort of pride which belonged to nobility, was right to be encouraged in a country like this; otherwise one great incentive to virtue would be abolished, and the national dignity, as well as its domestic interest, would be diminished and weakened."68 William Pitt reciprocated Fox's feelings and added that "Aristocracy was the

67 Ibid., pp. 4-5.
true...poise of the constitution. It was the essential link that held the branches together, and gave stability and strength to the whole; aristocracy reflected lustre on the crown, and lent support and effect to the democracy, while the democracy gave vigour and energy to both, and the sovereignty crowned the constitution with authority and dignity. Thus in Pitt's mind the social system and the system of government made up one harmonious whole, uniting all classes of the nation.

Gibbon, in his usual perspicacious manner, summed up the value of an aristocracy to a nation:

Whenever the distinction of birth is allowed to form a superior order in the state, education and example should always, and will often, produce among them a dignity of sentiment and propriety of conduct which is guarded from dishonour by their own and the public esteem. If we read of some illustrious line, so ancient that it has no beginning, so worthy that it ought to have no end, we sympathize in its various fortunes; nor can we blame the generous enthusiasm or even harmless vanity, of those who are associated to the honour of its name.

The ranks within the aristocratic landowning class were primarily social gradings. The ranks appear to correspond roughly to gradations in landed wealth. A conception existed concerning the amount of land or wealth necessary to maintain the dignity of a given rank. Yet it is impossible to state what the amount of land was necessary for any rank from baron to duke, for there was no sharp break discernible.

69 Ibid., p. 414.
Time and fortune changed the property base of many titles without doubt; the increasing wealth of those low in rank might make it possible for them to request an advance in rank to match their wealth, but the duke without adequate wealth cut but a sorry figure in the century.

New peers were created from the social aristocracy almost completely, and long tenure of a great amount of land entitled a person to just pretensions to a title in the peerage. The coveted title might not be achieved, and if it were achieved the time lag would be very great. Many aspired to peerages but few could be granted. In 1704 there were 161 temporal peers but by 1780 the number had risen to only 182. Yet within the period up to 1783, 144 peers had been created; that is, the mortality rate among peers was very high indeed.

The peerage was an open avenue of ascent and descent, for as we have seen, it recruited members from the social aristocracy, and it sent its younger sons back into that social aristocracy from whence it came. The sons of peers went into the army, the church, or the professions, for they were completely unprivileged. This social movement helped to establish a degree of homogeneity in English society which gave it great strength.71

The English aristocracy did not develop that love of military glory which became synonymous with aristocracy in so many continental

countries. The military side of the nobility, its feudal attachment to the monarch, had broken down in England centuries before. It is true that the high commissions in the military services were often held by those of high rank but they did not become a military caste. The main explanation for this is that there was no standing army of any size in which the nobles could participate. Furthermore, the English aristocrats did not have to depend upon military rank in order to maintain their social or economic position.

The danger to be expected from the military spirit of the nobility did not escape notice in the Old English Journal in 1747:

...another inconvenience resulting from too numerous nobility, is the necessity they will always find of keeping up an army...As our nobility increases I don't doubt but a standing army will prove requisite, that our young men of quality may have some calling, and not be totally idle...When all our country gentlemen are peers, their younger sons must be officers. The Custom-House, the Stamp-Office, the Board of Trade, etc., will cease to be proper hospitals for the needy relations of men who have influence in elections.72

The unknown author's prognostication proved to be incorrect in regard to the military; his criticism of the sinecures for the younger sons of the nobility was also incorrect, for they continued to provide "hospitals" for them for many years to come. Indeed, they did not cease to be criticized; the volume of criticism only increased.

The fact that no legal restrictions existed in England on the right to acquire land made it possible for the country families to be

continually refreshed by additions from the middle class. As we have seen earlier, the process of making middle class persons into "gentlemen" was a continuous one which could last from one to many generations. Thus the social status pattern which required that families be landed, led the wealthy middle class to buy rural estates, and this pattern obviated an urban aristocracy.

The English aristocracy displayed much social cohesiveness as would be expected from such a group, yet it was not exclusive. Lord Chesterfield explained what good company was to his son in 1748: "It consists chiefly (but by no means without exception) of people of considerable birth, rank, and character; for people of neither birth nor rank are frequently, and very justly, admitted to it, if distinguished by any peculiar merit, or eminency in any liberal art or science."73 The degree of cohesiveness of any social class is most clearly seen in its attitude toward marriage. The marriages of the aristocracy were usually between persons of the same or closely allied class. It was unusual for an English noble to marry a foreign woman, for alliances with foreign families could do little for an Englishman. Marriages were fairly common between nobles and wealthy bourgeois heiresses for obvious reasons, or as Defoe explained it: "The ancient Families, who having wasted and exhausted their Estates and being declin'd and decay'd in Fortune...have restored and raised

73 Chesterfield Letters, IV, 1239. To his Son, October 23, 1748.

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themselves again, by mixing Blood with the despis'd tradesmen...We find innumerable Families, not of Gentlemen only, but even of the Nobility of the highest Bank, have restored their Fortunes by such Heiresses..."74 We shall see later in greater detail the ducal attitudes to such marriages. At times, marriages took place between nobles or gentlemen and non-gentle persons such as actresses, singers and beauties but on the whole these were uncommon and were frowned upon by the families concerned.

The English aristocracy of this age was well known for its travels, for its ability to pay the highest prices for paintings and objects of art which suited its taste, for its country houses which were built or rebuilt in the latest style; but it was not a brilliant intellectual society which produced great thinkers who were interested in the new and the unusual and who were agitated by movements in literature and philosophy. In essence it was satisfied with what it had produced and with its place in the eighteenth-century scheme of things socially and politically. Walter Bagehot described the attitude of the "best" English people by saying that they keep their minds in a state of "decorous dullness." "They maintain their dignity, they get obeyed, they are good and charitable to their dependents, but they have no notion of the play of mind, no conception that the charm of society depends on it. But a good government is well worth a great deal of social dullness. The dignified torpor of

English society is inevitable if we give precedence not to the cleverest classes but to the oldest... Bagehot may have over-emphasized the dullness of the "best" classes; it is rare to find criticism of the upper classes on that basis in the eighteenth century. The dullness of the court under the Hanoverians was often complained of, but the robust life of the aristocracy left little time for thoughts of dullness.

The education of the youth of the aristocratic class was often haphazard. Early training was given in the home by women or by governors and tutors. Private dames' schools and boarding schools provided elementary education and early language study for some of the children. Some of the youth of the gentle class went on to the great Public Schools, such as Eton, St. Paul's and Winchester, at an early age before proceeding to the universities. The universities educated only a minority of the youth of this class, for unless a youth planned to enter the church a university education did not particularly fit him for his role in life. In Chapter Five the educational pattern of the dukes will be explored in detail, but as yet no study has been made for the nobility as a whole.

The Grand Tour of Europe was the climax of the education for a great many of the sons of the aristocracy. The trip lasted from a few months to several years in some cases, and the young man was often

accompanied by a tutor or governor during most of the time. The boy was expected to continue his studies while upon his travels, but also to see all that was of value in the country through which he was traveling. The tour served several useful purposes besides the general broadening of outlook that it might give. The trip made it possible for the boy to improve his command of foreign languages, to learn the graces at foreign courts and to observe the government at work when opportunity offered, as well as to get to know the persons of influence in each nation. The trip afforded a chance for the young man to improve his virtue as well as his wisdom, especially in Italy where he could observe the work and monuments of the ancients. The young gentleman of the eighteenth century often took advantage of strange customs and strange ways in the foreign countries he visited to have love affairs and generally to sow his wild oats.

The subjects of study for the gentleman of the century were functional in nearly every respect for their place in society. The study of languages was basic for any young man who hoped to make a career for himself in the diplomatic or military fields. In the early years, Latin, French and sometimes Greek were taught, and the modern languages were often taught by native French, Italian or German masters. German became increasingly important under the early Hanoverian kings, for it was their native language and they liked to have persons near them who spoke the language. The study of history was considered of great importance for it was felt necessary for an understanding of
the government of England and the liberties of Englishmen. It also provided examples of virtue and wisdom and the result which could be expected from the lack of these twin necessities.

The general heading of "the Graces" covered not only the social abilities of the class of gentlemen, but also the ability to ride and to fence well. Horsemanship and fencing were essential to the training of these persons who were expected to be able to do their part in the defense of the nation as well as in the pastimes of the nobility. The efforts of Lord Chesterfield in the education of his son made up the most comprehensive of the eighteenth-century educational programs. The type of education which he planned for his son was to make it possible for the boy to be of service to the state and to be able thereby to provide a means of livelihood for himself. Chesterfield felt deeply that education and capabilities without the art of pleasing were almost useless. In order to impress on the mind of his son the importance of knowing the graces, Chesterfield told him of the abilities of the Duke of Marlborough:

Of all the men that I ever knew in my life (and I knew him extremely well) the late Duke of Marlborough possessed the Graces in the highest degree, not to say engrossed them; and, indeed, he got the most by them, for I will venture (contrary to the custom of profound historians, who always assign deep causes for great events) to ascribe the better half of the Duke of Marlborough's greatness and riches to those Graces. He was eminently illiterate; wrote bad English and spelled it worse.76

76 Chesterfield Letters, IV, 1261. To his Son, November 29, 1748.
In this polite society, Chesterfield was hardly overemphasizing the art of pleasing, for many got ahead with little else. The quality of being "unpolished," that is, without the Graces, caused comment before nearly any other factor.

In an assessment of the place and contributions of the nobility and the social aristocracy in the life of England in the eighteenth century, it must be borne in mind that the class was relatively small in comparison with the total population of the nation. The nobility itself numbered fewer than two hundred, while it might be estimated that the social aristocracy as a whole numbered only a few thousand. This small group was in a position of dominance in the state from 1689 until 1832. Although it lost its dominant position in the era of reform, it continued to supply leadership for many years to come and it has not ceased to do so up to the present moment.

In the eighteenth century, this class felt that it had a right to the monopoly it held on the high offices in the state. It felt that its function was to govern and that it was the only class capable of providing stable government. The aristocracy believed that due to its ownership of much of the land of the kingdom that it was the natural ruling class. Although in a position of power and influence in all aspects of local and national life, this group of leaders did not stand aloof and apart from the people whom they led. They were eminently an aristocracy which lived on the land and close to the people, knowing local as well as national problems and taking part in local pastimes and sports as well as in the more elaborate and refined
entertainments and celebrations of the London social season.

This class of landholders was essentially a group of amateurs in government who felt that special service to the state was incumbent upon them. This was ingrained, not only as a right, but as a duty. Matthew Arnold called the eighteenth century the "flowering-time of the English aristocracy" and regarded it as the worthiest and most successful aristocracy of which history makes record.\footnote{Arnold, "Democracy," X, 18.}

The aristocracy did not rule the nation without an eye to financial reward from the government, as we have seen. The performance of the most burdensome duties in the realm of local affairs was unpaid, but the aristocrats were willing to forego monetary reward in this area in order to resist the growth of a bureaucratic state. In spite of its desire for places and pensions from the national government, especially on the part of the nobility, the aristocracy as a whole was not selfish. It taxed itself fully and often onerously when occasion demanded it, and it did not seek exemption from this burden. Furthermore, it did not seek to create privileges for itself which would have set it apart from the mass of subjects. Social prestige and popular deference were its main rewards in this society built upon subordination. Thus the English aristocracy was far different from the privileged classes of France before the Revolution and the main difference lay in the long and unbroken tradition of public service which was
created due to the victory of the aristocracy over the crown in the Glorious Revolution of 1688-89. 78

It should not be supposed that each and every person within the nobility and the social aristocracy lived up to the ideal of service to the state, which was its guiding principle and obligation. Many, as will be illustrated in the special study of the dukes, took no active part in affairs and wasted their time in luxury and indolence as might be expected in such a privileged group. In economic affairs they were blind to the just desires and rights of the mass of tenants to own their own land and they used their influence in government to secure legislation enclosing great areas of land for their own use and profit. The system of great estates did much to create a rural proletariat owning little besides their own labor, who, in the years soon to follow, would provide the mass of industrial workers in a greatly changed and urbanized Britain. 79

Regardless of the strengths or weaknesses of the aristocracy, its position in society and in the state could be maintained only as long as it, and it alone, possessed the necessary qualities of character, wealth and knowledge which made possible the exercise of leadership and statesmanship. The aristocracy lost its unique economic position when wealth produced from land was overtaken by the new wealth created by capitalistic enterprises; the rule of the

79 Sir Ernest Barker, National Character, p. 152.
aristocracy was not far from over when the political intelligence of
the aristocracy was no longer as superior to that of the middle classes
as it had been. Yet the influence of the aristocracy remained great
for it had invested in capitalistic and commercial enterprises and
this tended to lessen class divisions in the economic sphere, while
the social climate of Britain encouraged the new industrialists to
desire to become associated with the gentle class. This fusion of the
aristocratic tradition with capitalistic enterprise was made possible
because of the absence of rigid class lines and the appeal which the
lives and activities of the upper classes had for the possessors of
new wealth.

Demands for reform in parliamentary representation were becoming
increasingly vocal, especially from the middle class, for the corrupt
practices of eighteenth-century politics made the necessity for
change obvious to men of such diverse backgrounds as the Duke of
Richmond and John Wilkes. As the contrast between the constitution
of England and the economic and social realities of the nation became
greater and greater, the day of reform grew closer and closer. When
that reform became inevitable in the years following the Napoleonic
Wars, the aristocracy did not stand dumbly in the way; indeed, a
section of the aristocracy took the lead in carrying it through, and
in this manner retained in large part its social and political ad-
vantages. The tradition that gentility and office holding went hand
in hand was strongly upheld in the nineteenth century. Even Lord
Grey, who led the Reform Bill to passage in 1832, in 1827 regarded "the son of an actress as being de facto incapacitated" for the premiership. He was referring to his political enemy, George Canning, whose father had gentle connections but whose mother had once been an actress. The English aristocracy was able to learn for it was not bound by outmoded theories of right, although personal prejudices were present; it did not, as some continental aristocracies did, attempt to undo the reforms which had been made. It simply made the best of its new position in the state, transmitted some of its mores to the new men, retained its conservative outlook, and continued its tradition of public service to the democracy which was now its master.

Privilege in some form has existed in all societies, both ancient and modern, regardless of the type of political and economic organization under which a society operated. It was only in the minds of the political philosophers of the eighteenth century and in the minds of the economic philosophers of the nineteenth century that egalitarian political and economic systems existed. Privilege is a fact in history. It means the granting of rights or immunities to selected individuals or groups within a population to insure the performance of a function, and the preservation of these rights or immunities after the conditions requisite for the performance of a function have become obsolete.

Legal systems have recognized the existence of privilege: in many instances. Feudal law was essentially the codification of privileges and duties which were mutually binding upon king and vassal, lord and serf, which made it possible for the system to work. The English common law recognizes and respects the privileges and immunities of individuals, of classes, and of localities.

Privilege is often equated with the existence of a class structure in law but this is not necessarily the case. A more powerful factor in the existence of privilege is social recognition which makes it operative. Privilege is not confined therefore to a legal system where privileges are enumerated but can exist in any realm of human
activity. Privilege was combined, especially in England, with the
general social and political fabric. In the English mind it was asso-
ciated with the concept of family, and of the antiquity of a family,
of inherited potential for good through the expectation of leadership
and service from a family, and with the soil, which made privilege and
subordination appear to be in the natural order of things.

The existence of privilege was construed to have arisen as the
result of a grant from some sovereign person or body in order to fa­
cilitate the performance of some useful function. In other words,
privilege arose due to the necessity to pay or bribe a person to
perform an act and to make effective his action. It is more likely
historically that privilege was the product of power in the first
instance and that the pre-emption became accepted with the passage of
time because the men or groups which obtained the privilege were
strong enough to demand and get special treatment from the kings and
special recognition from the masses. Any system of privilege neces­
sitates subordination in the area in which the privilege exists.

The bases upon which a system of privilege can be formulated are
manifold. Wealth is the most common basis of privilege for it breeds
the conditions under which privilege develops. In nearly every society,
privilege is appended to the sacerdotal function, as in exemption
from taxation, military service, and the like. Likewise, in many
societies the military receive special privileges due to the necessity
for security in the state. Also, some professions receive special
privileges, such as the medical profession, due to their functions in daily life.

Privilege therefore has many aspects. It can be mainly social as in the case of precedence or of special deference and in this sense, it is honorific. When it becomes political and legal it takes on the aspect of a class system and may become burdensome or tyrannous. Economic privilege is probably the most widespread aspect of all and can take many forms, such as ownership of most of the available land and of exploitation of a mass peasantry.

The concept of privilege has great importance in the study of nobility and its position in the state. It is the combination of a privileged landed class and political power which distinguishes the English nobility in the eighteenth century. The privileged position of the English noble originally was based upon distinctions of birth or of personal merit, but by the eighteenth century wealth as a class test tended to supersede distinction of birth, and personal merit was becoming largely a myth. This may mean that the old landed families were benefiting from capitalistic investment and from the technological improvements which were being made.

The eighteenth century was the epitome of aristocratic privilege and control. Political philosopher and poet alike exalted the social structure of the day with its subordination as reflecting the balance and symmetry of nature and expressing the history of the English people. The England of the eighteenth century was wealthy and self-confident, polished in manner and studied in thought; little bothered
by mean detail and unworried by obvious inequalities in its inherited social, political and economic structure. It seemed meet and right that the few should rule, that the few should own the land, and that the few should appropriate the higher pleasures of life.

It was a nineteenth-century French historian, Emile Boutmy, who saw the epitome of privilege in the English aristocracy of the eighteenth century: "If ever a privileged class existed, it was the English aristocracy in the eighteenth century. It constituted by itself that populus anglicus which monopolized as of right public offices and honors, as opposed to the rest of the nation, the plebs, who were admitted to it in certain exceptional cases and after a period of probation more or less prolonged in the ranks of the landed gentry."¹

To a citizen of republican France who looked back and studied the England of the eighteenth century, the evidence of privilege was most profound. Yet it is necessary to examine closely the privileges of the nobility in England in order to determine the correctness of Boutmy's statement. First, must be determined as exactly as possible the group to which M. Boutmy refers. He uses the term, "the English Aristocracy," very loosely but apparently means more exactly the titled nobility, since he excludes the landed gentry from the larger social and economic aristocracy. Secondly, he considers as the basis

of privilege only the patent fact that the aristocracy monopolized the right to public offices and honors, a political and economic aspect of privilege. He does not suggest that by tradition and training they constitute the only class within English society capable of rendering the leadership necessary in the English state. Thirdly, the claim that the aristocracy constituted by itself "the English people" showed a lack of appreciation of the actual role undertaken by the aristocracy as the leading and guiding part of the free-born English people, proud of its traditions and of its accomplishments. Fourthly, M. Boutry considers the English nobility to have been almost caste-like in its attitude to outsiders and to the newly admitted peer. He fails to see the close connection between the landed gentry, or the country families, and the nobility; that they were essentially equal in their social and political attitudes; that they were all "gentlemen" bound together by similar attitudes toward the necessity for the rule and guidance of men of landed property.

That privilege existed for the nobility there can be no doubt; but it is necessary to look into the state of privilege in the eighteenth century and to see as exactly as possible the areas in which privilege was operative. The social aspects of privilege are ever-present but are nebulous and in any case undefinable. It is more profitable to look for and to examine other aspects of privilege in the realm of politics, law and economics.

The system of privilege in England is most often thought of as
a part of feudalism and that feudalism existed in full theory in the eighteenth century. Such is not the case. Feudalism as conceived and practiced in England developed as a result of the Norman Conquest by which the king claimed ownership of all land and feudalized it by grants to his tenants-in-chief who owed service as a result. The reciprocal relationship between king and vassal which is the essence of feudalism was ended in England by the Convention Parliament in 1660 when it abolished all feudal incidents or dues due to the sovereign in return for land holding. Thus it is often said that feudalism was abolished in 1660 at the Restoration. This does not mean that all bodies and institutions which had arisen in the past centuries of English history were abolished. The inherited social structure remained intact and the House of Lords and the privileged position of the Church of England were restored. Also, manorial courts continued to exist for the copyhold tenants, and franchisal courts derived from private hundred courts survived into the nineteenth century. The Chancery Court of the Palatinate of Durham continues to exist to this day.

The abolition of feudal dues meant that in fact as well as in theory the landholders owned the land they possessed and that they retained few legal holds over their tenants. The evolution of a free tenantry had been of long duration in England, and the statement by

2 Helen Cam, "The Decline and Fall of English Feudalism," History, XXV (1940-41), 216.
Hume of "a nobility without vassals" forming the best aristocracy becomes meaningful in this light.

Since the nobles of England possessed few feudal privileges even before the Restoration, it can be seen that the events of 1660-61 were of social rather than political consequence. It was the absence or loss of feudal privilege which marked the main differentiation between the English and the continental nobilities. This fact is of prime importance in explaining the ready acquiescence of the mass of English people in the century in the social pretensions of the nobility and in understanding the absence of bitter class animosities in the nation.

The privileges which were undoubtedly held by the English nobility had their bases not in the feudalism but rather in the functions of the nobility in the life of England. The first and greatest source of privilege was the ownership of land which brought with it economic advantage and social status. The second source of privilege, especially personal privilege, was membership in the House of Lords.

The necessity for calling all peers to sit in parliament was reaffirmed at the Restoration in 1661, and the House of Lords returned to the English political scene with its rights and privileges intact. The peers claimed again to be at the base of the constitution as the representatives of the land of England. The privileges of the lords were mainly personal ones which went with membership in the House. Some of them, of course, were shared by the Commons, such as freedom of speech, freedom from arrest, and the like.
It had been recognized by nearly everyone since the Restoration that the House of Lords was of secondary importance to the House of Commons — as Chesterfield termed it, "that Hospital of Incurables."^3 This does not mean that the House was ineffectual in itself, for it had its part to play in the balanced constitution and its positive assent was necessary to all legislation. Yet as a House, it left much to be desired; attendance was extremely poor, except for the bishops, due to the fact that activity in the House of Lords did not produce political leaders; rather the individual lord gained prominence nationally through the cabinet.

The basic reason for the position held by the noble both in the Lords and his influence in the nation depended, as has been shown, upon his ownership of extensive landed property. The individual lord usually had greater influence in his home county, due to his position as a landed magnate, than he had in his own House. Some of the greater nobles, such as the Bedfords, the Devonshires, and Marlboroughs, could have equal influence in both areas. The nobles were a rather closely knit group due to their common economic and social interests and also by fact of intermarriage between noble families. The landed and social influence of the nobility made it possible for them to influence greatly the composition of the House of Commons.

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^3 The Letters of Philip Dormer Stanhope, Earl of Chesterfield, ed., Bonamy Dobree (London, 1932), VI, 2752. To his Son, August 1, 1766.
The distinction between a peer and a commoner in England was very real. It was more than distinction of influence, of wealth, and of social position. Noble privilege existed in many areas and was easily recognizable as such. Some other areas of privilege were not exclusively noble but were largely for the benefit of nobles.

Certain privileges of the nobles were wholly social and honorific. The noble and those closely related to him had the honor of attendance upon the person of the sovereign in the public exercise of his royal office and as his personal companions and aids. Various court positions, such as lords of the bedchamber, were filled by nobles. The nobles came within the orders of precedence which set them apart from each other, but not to the same degree that their nobility set them apart from the mass of the commonalty.

Of far greater significance than the honorific privileges of the English noble were his privileges in the parliamentary and legal areas. The first and greatest privilege of the peer was his representation in parliament in a separate house with real, though diminishing powers of legislation. It did not escape notice in the eighteenth century that nobles were not born legislators, "Some... look upon the Institution of Nobility to be one of the grossest Impositions upon the Common Sense of Mankind; they confine it indeed to the hereditary Nobility... but it seems an Absurdity to them that a Man should be born a Legislator, as if Wisdom or Knowledge of
Government run in the Blood. Yet the practice of inheritance by primogeniture saved England from the great number of nobles with legislative power who infested other European monarchies, even though many of the English nobles did not take their legislative prerogative very seriously unless their property happened to be threatened. From this privilege sprang many other important though lesser privileges. The limited privilege of freedom from arrest both before and after a parliament term was a privilege possessed by English peers and peeresses (and Irish after the Union), which lasted until it was for all practical purposes abolished in 1838.

No doubt the best-known privilege possessed by peers was the right of trial by the House of Lords, or trial by peers. This privilege was very old, for it was based upon Chapter XXIX of Magna Carta, that all shall be judged by their peers, per judicium parium suorum. This privilege applied only in criminal, treason or felony cases, or misprision of the same. Peers who were accused of misdemeanors were tried like commoners, by jury. The right of trial by peers was abolished in 1948.

The peers also held other privileges in connection with legal procedures. In an impeachment trial a peer gave his judgment on his honor, not on his oath, but in civil or criminal cases he had, like a commoner, to be sworn. In the Court of Chancery a peer received a "Letter Missive," from the Lord Chancellor couched in courteous terms, to appear while a commoner received a writ of subpoena to appear in court. Once in court he had to be sworn like other men. Justices of the Peace had no power of taking recognizances from peers, and peers and peeresses could be bound over only in the courts of King's Bench and Chancery. Where benefit of clergy existed, any peer or lord of parliament was to be held as a clerk convict who might make purgation, although he had benefit of clergy only once. Benefit of clergy was abolished in 1827 and in 1841 a special act was passed which took away any such privilege for the peerage and peers were to receive the same punishments as other subjects upon conviction.

A valuable privilege of the lords of parliament in the eighteenth century was that of proxy. If a member of the House of Lords wished to remain upon his estates about local affairs, or to go off on a tour, or attend to any other business, the privilege of proxy made it possible for him to vote on pieces of legislation which he or his

8 Blackstone, Commentaries, I, 402.
9 Pike, Constitutional History, p. 264.
10 Ibid., p. 261.
11 Ibid., pp. 261-63.
party considered important. This privilege originally depended upon a special license from the king, *ex licentia regis*, but this requirement was soon evaded. The rule developed that no procurator, that is the holder of a proxy, could hold more than two; it simply meant that the proxies were pledged to support the policy of a minister, regardless of the person of the procurator. Ministers often wrote to their supporters who could or would not appear in person at Westminster in order to secure their proxies. Sir Robert Walpole who knew fully the value of a single vote, requested Lord Carlisle's proxy in 1734:

> I...take the liberty of sending you a proxy. No pains is spared by the other side to supply their absent friends, which makes the same necessary on our part. The Duke of Devon, the Duke of Grafton...are not full of proxies. If your Lordship will be pleased to sign the proxy, it may be filled up, by your direction, by such person as appears by the book not to have two proxies.\(^12\)

In case a lord of parliament or peer should appear in the Lord's Chamber in person, his proxy was automatically annulled. The privilege of proxy continued in force until 1868.\(^13\)

The peers also possessed the privilege of protest or dissent to any measure or address passed by the House which did not meet with their approbation. This privilege could be exercised only by the leave of the House and was of importance in that it made it possible for a peer to explain his objections to any proposal. The protest,


along with the names of the protestors, was entered upon the Journals of the House and these protests contain much valuable thought concerning public questions of that day; they are in a sense minority reports. This right dated from the time of Edward III but fell into disuse until revived during the reign of Charles II.\textsuperscript{14}

The ancient privilege of advising the king, which had been one of the basic rights and duties of the magnates, and whose most distinguished confirmation in Magna Carta was only one of many assertions of this principle in both charter and statute, took many forms. This had been the early function of the larger form of the curia regis which evolved into the House of Lords. In the middle ages the peers had possessed the right of tendering individual advice to the king, as well as through the curia regis, and a relic of this idea persisted in the eighteenth century. If this had continued in full practice, it would have been impossible for ministerial responsibility to have fully developed. Every peer, according to the generally accepted doctrine, had the right to demand an audience of the sovereign in relation to public affairs. This privilege was made use of by George III in efforts to destroy Fox's India Bill in 1782 and his interference, through Lord Temple, caused the bill's failure. When the attitude of the king was reported in the debate, Temple did not deny that he had spread about the royal feelings toward the bill. Earl Fitzwilliam

\textsuperscript{14} Loc. cit.
answered him directly that irresponsible advice could not be tolerated, "for no person was to go into the king's closet and give his advice, who was not responsible to the country for the consequence of that advice."15 This privilege has for all practical purposes fallen into disuse, for no minister could permit contradictory and irresponsible advice being rendered to his sovereign.16

A privilege which existed until fairly recently, not being abolished until 1887, was that called scandalum magnatum. By this term is meant the reporting of false stories concerning high personages, and it applied to defamation of all peers and lords of parliament, as well as the great officers of state. This privilege arose under Edward I in order to restrain inventors of tales likely to cause discord between the king and other high personages.17 De Saussure, who visited England in 1727, was struck by this privilege. "The peers of the realm have several privileges....there is a law called scandalum magnatum, which forbids under heavy fine scandal to be spoken of then."18

The privilege of the frank for mail pertained to the members of the House of Lords as well as to the Commons. This privilege covered

17 Pike, Constitutional History, pp. 264-266.
all letters originating within the country. In the eighteenth century the receiver, not the writer of the letters, paid the postage. Therefore, a frank on outgoing mail saved the receiver the cost of the letter, and peers often franked letters for friends and relatives.

The degree of noble privilege is most easily seen in the area of economic and fiscal matters. Among continental nobilities exemption from direct taxation was considered to be one of their most prized privileges. The English peers differed in a most marked degree from their continental counterparts in this area, for they never claimed exemption from direct or indirect taxation.

After the Restoration, the direct land tax became the principle source of revenue for the central government. Land taxes had been assessed before this period, but the system which was to endure for nearly the whole of the eighteenth century was worked out, after much trial and error in its administration, during the reign of William III. 20

Since the nobles were land holders, and many held thousands of acres, much of the burden of the tax fell upon them. In a sense the nobility taxed itself through this form of taxation, partially due to the fact that excise taxes were unpopular with all sections of the nation. In the administration of the land tax, which fluctuated from one to four shillings in the pound, parliament imposed a quota of the

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19 Loc. cit.
tax upon each county and set up boards of tax commissioners who would levy the taxes upon the land in the counties. These commissioners were drawn mostly from the local gentry headed by a few peers, plus some merchants, doctors, and lawyers.21

It was not, therefore, the existence of the land tax which concerned the landowners of the day, but rather the quota of the tax which should be assessed upon a county, for the tax was grossly unequal from county to county. The incidence of taxation was a favorite topic in political propaganda of the period and ministers were called "tyrants" and other such names when it was increased. Therefore, the landowners were particularly zealous to see that two factors remained in status quo. First, that the inequalities in the quotas should not be changed, especially if it was to the detriment of a particular county; and, secondly, to see that land evaluations were not increased, for the evaluation was based upon returns made during the Commonwealth.22

The inequalities in the levy of the quotas for various counties persisted in part due to the general lassitude of the mid-century ministers23 but more particularly due to the inequalities in representation in the Commons from the various counties. It is significant

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21 Ibid., p. 4.
22 Ibid., p. 2.
23 Ibid., p. 175.
that when talk of reform in parliamentary representation was bandied about in 1780 it was a peer who called attention to the fact that this was dangerous to "property." The Marquis of Rockingham observed that the idea of borough reform was contemplated, especially of rotten boroughs and stated, "...I think a little attention to the Security of Property is not beneath the consideration of the Gentlemen Freeholders in Yorkshire. Counties low rated to the Land Tax have found some security from their being very numerously protected by having a pretty large proportion of M. P.'s chosen for counties...which are low rated." Thus, although not exempt from taxation, the nobles strove to keep its incidence low and to protect themselves as well as others by resisting parliamentary reform.

As we have seen, the nobility used its privileged position to secure economic benefits for itself through pensions and sinecures which were available to them through their influence with the ministry in power, especially if the individual noble was a staunch supporter of the ministry to which he applied. The nobility was at one with the gentry in supporting legislation which provided for duties on imported foodstuffs; thus protecting the price of English agricultural produce. Since they paid the land tax and assumed local responsibilities, they felt that agricultural protection was their due. Likewise, class legislation of an economic nature, such as the prohibition on the

importation of bar iron from the colonies was passed because the charcoal used to smelt iron in England was made from wood purchased from many large estates and such sales were undoubtedly one source of revenue to the nobles.

Many privileges of the nobility, which in the earlier centuries of English history were of significance, dropped into disuse or became obsolete with the passage of time. One example of such an obsolete privilege was that granted by Henry III to all lords of parliament, spiritual or temporal, in coming to or in going from parliament to take two deer in the royal forests without warrant.\(^{25}\)

Many privileges existed which were not exclusively noble privileges, but which were enjoyed by the peers, as wealthy persons, as well as by the gentry and others of means. In many instances these privileges were of great importance to the social and economic position of the nobility and therefore must be mentioned in this study.

On the continent the hunting of wild animals was a special privilege of the nobilities, for it was considered an aristocratic pastime or sport. In England hunting was not restricted to the nobility alone, but rather the privilege went with the ownership of a large amount of land. The right to hunt was one of the most effectively protected rights in England and severe penalties were provided

\(^{25}\) Pike, Constitutional History, p. 267; Blackstone, Commentaries, I, 168.
for poachers by the so-called game laws. Hunting was restricted by law to a small class of owners of freehold estates worth 300 pounds per annum. The hunting privilege was protected not only against poaching, but also by laws against trespassing, buying or selling game, taking birds' eggs, and even of killing hares on one's own property which was worth less than the 300 pounds per year. All qualified persons were also required to secure a game permit. Penalties were severe on those caught breaking the game laws, for by 1828 the penalty had grown to transportation for seven years upon the third offense. The power to arrest those infringing upon the provisions of the game laws was given to land owners and to game keepers. It usually was illegal for hunters to trespass upon another's land, so the English farmers were protected and lacked this complaint of continental peasants. Most of the game laws were repealed in 1831 and the penalties for infractions are now pecuniary.26

The pretensions of the aristocracy to deference from other groups in society was strengthened by their close association with religion. Religious authority had great command over the minds and emotions of men and the Church of England taught respect for and obedience to superiors and acceptance of the status quo in church and state. The Church of England in the eighteenth century was largely identified with the governing class primarily because the sacerdotal

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authority had been largely amalgamated with property. The bishops of the church sat in the House of Lords as they had done since the middle ages when they were representatives of great landed power as well as of an ecclesiastical organization. In the eighteenth century, as we have seen, they were nominated by the minister in office and reflected in their House the political values of the party to which the appointing politician belonged.

The relationship between the holders of landed property and the church is seen most sharply in their privilege of selecting many of the parish clergy. This privilege of advowson, or the right of presentation to a church living, is commonly called lay patronage. It means the right of presentation of a canonically qualified minister to a church or ecclesiastical benefice. The lord who had built a church and endowed it with land had a common right to nominate any minister he pleased to take the church; it does not mean that the lord himself could take bodily possession of it and its appendages, but the privilege of giving a qualified minister that right. This privilege appeared only when there was no incumbent, at all other times it was dormant.27

Advowsons were looked upon in the eighteenth century as valuable pieces of property and they could be sold like any other property.

27 Blackstone, Commentaries, II, 22.
An advowson appendant meant that the right of presentation went along with the manor, was passed on at the transfer in fee simple. An advowson in gross, or at large, meant that the right had been sold or separated from the manor and was owned by another. In this century advowsons were of particular value in providing places, and often well-paid places, for the younger sons of the nobility or for other dependents; and thus the parish clergy came under the control of the patrons, who in many cases were noble, and the clergy reflected the political and social opinions of the patrons.

If there should be one rule which more than any other helped to mould the attitudes of the English nobility, it was that of primogeniture. This law, along with entail, served several purposes. First, it provided for passing a title to the eldest son of a noble or other titled person, and, secondly, it provided for the undivided inheritance of an estate. Primogeniture by itself probably did not have a very great direct effect in keeping together the great estates, for it did not by itself restrict the right of the heir to alienate an estate. In order to make it very difficult, or as nearly impossible as the law could make it, for an heir to disperse an estate, the law of entail was used. The principle of entail had been protected by the statute De donis conditionalibus in the reign of

Edward I. Entail restricted the right of the inheritor of an estate to alienate it, but this entail was restricted to one life and twenty-one years by decision in the Duke of Norfolk case in 1681. In order to prolong the period during which an estate would be protected against alienation, and to evade the Norfolk case ruling, the strict marriage settlement was used. The strict marriage settlement was made at the time of the marriage of the eldest son of a family and provided for the immediate maintenance of the couple, and the wife's jointure and made provision for the children by empowering the raising of capital sums on an estate at the time of marriage of the children or when they should come of age. Thus it essentially secured that the estate should pass to the eldest son, legally intact, but burdened with provisions for other members of the family.29 This method was normal in all noble families, and also in the families of the more substantial country gentlemen.30

Primogeniture applied only in cases of intestacy and only to real property. All other forms of property could be divided among the heirs in general. An estate which was unentailed and which was not covered by the provisions of a strict marriage settlement, could be freely alienated by the inheritor. This was rarely done, because of the necessity for having a landed estate as a source of income for

30 Ibid., p. 18.
maintaining the state of life which was expected of a noble. Without an estate, his status in the social and political life of eighteenth-century England would have been greatly reduced.

The area of privilege in the social, political and economic life of the nobility in the eighteenth century was important but was also very narrow. Most of the exclusive privileges of the nobility which have been enumerated were obsolescent even in the eighteenth century. The greatest factor in the small role of privileges in the century was the fact that English law was common for all, high or low.

The Rights of an Englishman are not the Rights merely of the Wealthy and the Great, but of all without distinction. The same laws extend their protection alike to all; and whether a nobleman strikes a labourer, or a labourer a nobleman, it is equally a violation of the Law, and the same Justice is open to both.31

It was the absence of a class system based on legal distinctions which differentiated the English social system from that of continental monarchies, and this fact repeatedly struck the minds of visitors to England in the eighteenth century. Voltaire, for example, compared the German nobilities with the English and showed the gulf which separated their thinking. "This custom ((trade)) appears monstrous to a German, whose head is full of coats of arms and pageants of his family. They can never conceive how it is possible that the son of an English peer should be no more than a high and powerful citizen,

31 John Bowles, Dialogues on the Rights of Britons, between a Farmer, a Sailor, and a Manufacturer (London, 1792), second edition, p. 18. Pamphlet, Howey Collection, University of Missouri.
while in Germany they are all princes." 32

The English state was one of classes, or of superior and inferior social groups, based mainly upon distinctions in rank or property. The manifestations of privilege were mainly social in nature, that is, the customary deference shown by the lower social classes to the superior ones. This is the actual basis of a system of subordination which was considered of such importance for the functioning of society. Indeed such subordination was imperative in a state whose structure was hierarchical, for without it government would have been impossible. Dr. Johnson felt that the increased prosperity in the England of his day was the chief cause of a breakdown in subordination. In his usual emphatic way, he stated, "Subordination is sadly broken down in this age. No man now (1778) has the same authority which his father had, — except a gaoler." 33

An evaluation of the use of privilege by the nobility in the eighteenth century must be done in terms of the accepted usages in economics, politics, and social life of the period. The economic use of privilege to secure additional income from the government was accepted and was not considered unethical or immoral. It was closely related to the modern patronage system. Not only were there many noble dependents to provide for, but also positions had to be found

for many who followed aristocratic leadership in the House of Commons. Therefore, the use of their privileged position in the state was not one of personal selfishness, but rather it was used to facilitate the continued influence of the noble class as a whole. The remarkable thing to note is that the English nobility did not attempt to create new privileges for itself nor did it attempt to make its privileges exclusive.

It has been shown that most of the privileges enjoyed by the nobility were in some manner connected with the ownership of land or were held due to the legislative function of the peers. "The word 'land' possessed apparently some sacred quality," Boutmy wrote, "and privileges seem to have attached themselves to it of their own accord. In other countries it was birth that brought privileges with it; in England it was 'land' which attracted them and which in a manner forced their bestowal by the legislature."[34] It was the proprietors of the soil of England who saw that these privileges appeared and functioned, due to their control of the government. It was the basic privilege of the law of primogeniture and entail which was protected, the right of individual inheritance of real estate, which was the foundation of economic power. Although feudal tenures had been abolished soon after the Restoration, as has been shown, this rule of primogeniture, which had once been an integral part of feudal thought and law, continued in force.

34 Boutmy, The English Constitution, p. 158.
The rights and privileges of the English nobility were not oppressive to any other class in the population for they were few in number and were used to protect the whole fabric of the noble position rather than wholly to the personal advantage of individual peers. The English nobility was more attentive to the interests of the masses of people than any other such privileged group, and this was one of the main sources of its strength, control and continued influence.
CHAPTER V

The Dukes: Their Creation and Political Activities

The organization of the English people in a hierarchical structure is of ancient origin; military, economic and social factors evidently determined the nature of the hierarchy. The titles which designate positions in the English noble hierarchy, duke, marquess, earl, viscount and baron, are not of equal antiquity. The oldest title is earl, which was used in Anglo-Saxon England to designate the most powerful men in the kingdom, the ealdormen.¹ The title dux was also used in Saxon documents, for many of the royal charters were assented to be persons thus described, but this usage of the term did not imply the later concept of pares.² After the Norman Conquest the title count, or comes, was used briefly rather than earl, but the older title soon replaced it, although the title countess was retained for the wife of an earl.³

In France at that time the use of the titles dux and comes appears to have been a matter of indifference, without implication of superiority or inferiority. An interesting remnant of this earlier French and English usage of the two titles is seen in the claim of the English Earls of Derby, Huntington and Shrewsbury to be "cat-skin" earls.

² John M. Kemble, Codex Diplomaticus Aevi Saxonici (London, 1847), passim.
³ Thoms, Book of the Court, pp. 101-102.
That is, they claim they were once entitled to wear four (quatre) guards or rows of ermine on each shoulder of their robes of honor, which is now the right of a duke.

The Norman Conquest brought into England the more fully developed feudalism of the continent and the title baron or baro became the common denominator of all titles. In France at that time the ducal title was restricted to the great feudatory nobles who held in capite from the crown and the title was far superior to any other dignity. The dukes, who later claimed to be the only peers of France, dux et pairs, were often stronger than the king himself and at times challenged the rights of the throne. The title had originally been used in the late Roman Empire to designate a provincial military commander, and the Latin title dux became duc in French, duca in Italian, and duke, or various other spellings in English.

The use of the ducal title as a designation of rank in the feudal hierarchy did not occur in England until feudalism itself had begun to decline. After the conquest the ducal title was a royal one, for William I was titled not only rex Anglorum but also dux Normannorum, his earlier title inherited from his Norse ancestors. The ducal title held by the king did not refer to his English possessions but only to his Norman one. The title did not become a part of the English peerage until Edward III created his son Edward of Woodstock, Duke of Cornwall, in 1337. Thus the ducal title was the third created or
recognized by the crown, the titles of marquess and viscount are later additions to the peerage. The use of the ducal title for subjects, though in England restricted to the royal family, was becoming more common in Europe in imitation of the French practice, for in France the title was used in the fourteenth century and afterwards to designate the greatest nobles of the country. The date of the creation of the Duchy of Cornwall is significant for Edward III created the title on March 17, 1337 before repudiating his homage to Philip VI of France in preparation for assuming the crown of that country, thereby precipitating the Hundred Years' War. Thus Edward III was copying the current French practice and at the same time completing the hierarchical perfection of the English peerage by bringing it into line with continental forms.

The rule on ducal creations from Edward III to the accession of the Stuarts was that only persons in the royal family, or closely related persons, or individuals who were about to be related, should receive this distinction. The exceptions to the rule were few. William de la Pole, Marquess of Suffolk, was created Duke of Suffolk in 1448 and Sir Charles Brandon, Viscount Lisle, was created Duke of Suffolk in 1513 to make him a suitable husband for Archduchess

Margaret, Regent of the Netherlands; but the marriage failed to take place and he later married the king's sister. Henry de Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, was created Duke of Warwick in 1444, and this may be an exception. The creation of John Howard as Duke of Norfolk in 1483 appears to be an exception, for he was only distantly related to the sovereign through the Mowbray dukes of Norfolk, who could claim royal blood through a marriage with Thomas de Brotherton, fifth son of Edward I. Sir John Dudley, Earl of Warwick, was the first man who neither was nor afterwards became a relative of the sovereign to be created a duke, for he was made Duke of Northumberland in 1551 and was executed in 1553.6

The ducal title appears to have been a dangerous one for a subject to hold who was not of the blood royal or closely related to it. No more dukedoms were created by the Tudors, and the title itself became extinct under Elizabeth with the execution of Thomas Howard, Duke of Norfolk in 1572. The hiatus lasted until the accession of James I in 1603 when the Duchy of Cornwall automatically came out of its dormancy for his eldest son.7

The Stuart sovereigns abandoned the ancient rule on ducal creations and James I and Charles I each created one non-royal duke. James I created his favorite George Villiers, Marquis of Buckingham, 6 Complete Peerage, VIII, Appendix A, p. 721. 7 Loc. cit.
Duke of Buckingham in 1623, and Charles I created Dame Alice Leigh, wife of Sir Robert Dudley, a duchess. In comparison with the number of earlier ducal creations and revivals, Charles II literally opened a floodgate by his creations. In the beginning of his actual reign, at the restoration in 1660, he used the title as a reward to some who had suffered in the royal cause or who had helped him regain the throne. Later Charles used the title in a less high-minded fashion for he conferred it upon two of his mistresses and six of his bastard children. In 1660 Charles created General Monk, who was at the time the most powerful man in the kingdom and who had made it possible for the restoration to take place, Duke of Albemarle. In the same year he revived the Dukedom of Somerset for the Seymours and the Dukedom of Norfolk for the Howards, and later he created the Dukedom of Newcastle for the Cavendishes (1665) and the Dukedom of Beaufort for the Somersets (1682). In 1670 Charles created his mistress Barbara Villiers (or Palmer), Countess of Castlemain, Duchess of Cleveland, and in 1673 created Louise de Keroualle, Duchess of Portsmouth. Charles attempted to provide for his numerous bastard children by conferring titles of nobility upon them and by other royal grants. The ducal titles which were created for his children are Monmouth (1663), Richmond (1675), Southampton (1675), Grafton (1675), Northumberland (1683) and St. Albans (1684). Charles also created the Dukedom of Ormonde in Ireland in 1682. Thus Charles' creations and revivals totaled fourteen.
No dukedoms were created during the short reign of James II but following the Glorious Revolution William and Mary continued the policy of creating non-royal dukedoms. Most of the creations during this reign were made among the nobles who had aided in the Revolution, and many became known in later history as the great Whig dukes. The dukedoms created or revived were Bolton (Powlett) 1689, Schomberg (1689), Shrewsbury (Talbot) 1694, Leeds (Osborne) 1694, Bedford (Russell) 1694, Devonshire (Cavendish) 1694, and Newcastle (Holles) 1694. Thus seven ducal titles were added in this reign.

Evidently William III had planned further creations for at his death Queen Anne found herself besieged with requests. The Earl of Rutland had been promised a dukedom by William, and he used what influence he could command to bring to the attention of the Queen his pretensions. His chief emissary must have been Lady Rachel Russell for she wrote to him:

If we are not successful it shall not be from negligence,... but the Queene is positively determined not to create or promote any one single person, there are soe very many that aske, and whoever is refused will be angry. The number of peers are already soe numerous and so much faute found when the late King made any, that her Majesty takes it to be most prudent not to break - at this junction of time the ice in any manner whatever...

Anne did not wait long to break the ice for John Churchill, Earl of Marlborough, was made Duke of Marlborough in 1702; John Sheffield, Earl of Mulgrave was made Duke of Buckingham and Normanby in 1703; John Manners, Earl of Rutland received his promised Dukedom of Rutland in the same year; Ralph Montagu, Viscount Monthermer was created Duke of Montagu in 1705; and Henry Grey, Marquess of Kent, was made Duke of Kent of 1710. Thus Anne created only five ducal titles during her reign.9

Upon the death of Queen Anne in 1714 the throne passed as designated in the Act of Settlement of 1701 to her next Protestant relative, George, Elector of Hanover, son of Anne's second cousin Sophia, granddaughter of James I. The new king, George I, owed his new royal title to the Whigs and his ducal creations reflect strongly his bias in their favor. In all, he created or revived ten ducal titles. Robert Bertie, Marquis of Lindsey was created Duke of Ancaster and Kesteven in 1715; Evelyn Pierrepont, Marquis of Dorchester became Duke of Kington-upon-Hull in 1715; Thomas Pelham-Hollis, Earl of Clare, became Duke of Newcastle-upon-Tyne in 1715; William Bentinck became Duke of Portland (1716); Philip Wharton, Marquis Wharton, became Duke of Wharton (1718); Archibald Campbell, Duke of Argyll in the peerage of Scotland became also Duke of Greenwich in the peerage of Great Britain (1719); Charles Montagu,

Earl of Montagu became Duke of Manchester (1719); James Brydges, Earl of Carnarvon became Duke of Chandos (1719); Lionel Sackville, Earl of Dorset, became Duke of Dorset (1720); and Scroop Egerton, Earl of Bridgewater became Duke of Bridgewater (1720). These dukes are often referred to as the "Succession Dukes."

The reign of George I marks the last wholesale creation of dukedoms in English history. These creations tended to cement the greater nobles to the Hanoverian dynasty as well as to reward service to the person of George I. The frugality of later creations may also attest a desire to return to the older pre-Stuart rule on ducal creations.

Perhaps also the number of nobles who could adequately support the ducal state had about been exhausted, although no doubt requests and claims for the title continued to be advanced. George II created only one non-royal ducal title and that was granted to the Duke of Newcastle who played such a large role in the politics of George's reign. Newcastle had no children but he desired that his title pass to his nephew, Henry Pelham-Clinton, and he induced the king to create a new title, Newcastle-under-Lyme, or Line as it was spelled in the patent, which designated the nephew as heir. George III was determined to restore the old rule on ducal creations and was largely able to do so after 1766. The two dukedoms which George III created in the peerage of Great Britain were for the purpose of continuing ducal titles in a family, for in both cases the men upon whom dukedoms were conferred had married heiresses of dukes. In the first, Hugh (Smithson) Percy
married the heiress of the Duke of Somerset, and since the Somersets
had married the last heiress of the Percies, Earls of Northumberland, the title Duke of Northumberland was revived for him in 1766. In the second ducal creation George Brudenell, Earl of Cardigan, married the daughter of John, second Duke of Montagu, at whose death in 1749 the title became extinct, and Brudenell added Montagu to his name. He desired the Montagu title to be revived and his wish was granted in 1766. Only one other non-royal creation was made during the reign of George III, and that was made during the Regency when Arthur Wellesley was created Duke of Wellington.

The peerages into which the dukes were created were not all of the same type or antiquity. The differences in the peerages did not affect the quality of the peers, they were all equal, but were the result of the history of the British Isles and of the unions which took place between the various parts.

The oldest of the peerages, and the one which had precedence over others, was that of England, and creations were made in this peerage by the sovereign until the Act of Union of England and Scotland in 1707. A partial exception exists, for the dormant Duchy of Cornwall in the English peerage is automatically revived upon the birth of an heir to the throne. At the accession to the throne of a Duke of Cornwall, the title is said to have merged with the crown. The peerage of Scotland continued to exist after the Stuarts ascended the English throne and creations continued to be made in it until the Act of Union. After that date, only the automatic revival of the
Duchy of Rothesay for the heir to the throne continued. The third peerage in which creations were made was that of Ireland. Any subject could be created an Irish peer, not just Irish subjects, and creations were made in this peerage in relatively large numbers until the Act of Union of 1801.

The two peerages created by the Acts of Union superseded the earlier separate peerages. After the Act of Union of 1707, peerage creations were made in the peerage of Great Britain rather than in the respective peerages of England or Scotland with the exceptions noted. The peerage of the United Kingdom was created due to the Act of Union of 1801 of England and Ireland, and thus all peerages after that date were in the new peerage with one exception; and that far beyond our period, when Queen Victoria created the Duke of Abercorn in the Irish peerage.

This study of the dukes does not include all of the dukes in the various peerages. It is restricted to the holders of dukedoms in the peerages of England and of Great Britain, to the exclusion of the dukedoms in the peerages of Scotland and of Ireland. Three ducal families held titles in the peerages of both England and Scotland: the dukes of Hamilton and Brandon, the dukes of Argyll and Greenwich, and the Duke of Queensbury and Dover. In this category only the dukedom of Hamilton and Brandon is included in this study for the dukedom continued throughout the period, and still continues today, while the dukedom in the peerage of Great Britain of the Scottish Dukes of
Argyll became extinct in 1740 with only one holder between 1714 and that date, and that of Queensbury and Dover became extinct in 1778.

The study therefore includes all of the individuals who held dukedoms in the two peerages of England and Great Britain during the period of 1714-1784 with certain exceptions. The royal dukes are excluded, that is, the sons, brothers and other relatives of the sovereign upon whom dukedoms were bestowed. The mistresses of the sovereigns who were created duchesses in their own right are excluded. These are Barbara Villiers or Palmer, created Duchess of Cleveland by Charles II in 1670, Louise de Keroualle, created Duchess of Portsmouth by Charles II in 1673, and Ermengarde Melusina von der Schulenberg created Duchess of Munster in the peerage of Ireland in 1716, and Duchess of Kendal in the peerage of Great Britain in 1719 by George I.

Two other dukes are excluded because they are of little importance in a study of the dukes in Great Britain in the eighteenth century. They are Sir Frederick von Schonberg or Schomberg, Duke of Schonberg in the peerage of England (1689) and his son Meinhardt, Duke of Leinster, in the peerage of Ireland (1691). The Duke of Schonberg was honored with his ducal title by William III for his military aid especially in Ireland, and he was killed at the Battle of the Boyne. His son, the Duke of Leinster, died in 1719 when the title became extinct.

The individuals who held dukedoms in the two peerages in the period 1714-1784, with the exceptions as stated, number eighty-one.
and they comprise the *dramatis personae* of this study.

It is important to determine the number of ducal titles during the period in order to see the size of the group at the head of the English peerage. At the end of the reign of Queen Anne in 1714, there were twenty ducal titles in the peerages of England and Great Britain. George I created ten dukedoms and two became extinct during his reign, thus at the end of his reign in 1727 twenty-eight dukedoms existed. George II created one dukedom and five became extinct during his reign; thus in 1760 twenty-four dukedoms existed. George III created two dukedoms to the year 1784, while during the same period four became extinct. Thus in 1784 twenty-two dukedoms existed; a net increase of only two in the seventy-year period in the number of non-royal dukedoms in the two peerages.

In the period of greatest aristocratic ascendancy in English history, the fact that the dukes were a very small and select few who headed the peerage would have made them important as individuals in many areas of activity for they were at the apex of the society of the day. It is more important for this study to attempt to determine what positions they held which were in some way connected with the government. That is, did they play a leading role in the state?

In the year of 1714 (summer), the state of the health of the invalid Queen Anne continued to worsen until it was evident to physicians and statesmen alike that little time remained for the last of the Stuarts to rule in Britain. The Act of Settlement of 1702 had
provided for the Protestant Succession in the person of Sophia, Electress of Hanover, but she had died at an advanced age early in the summer of 1714 and her son, the Elector George Lewis of Hanover, was heir to the British throne. Sentiment and feeling for the Stuarts remained strong in Tory and high church circles and correspondence between the leading Jacobites, Bolingbroke, Wyndham, Ormonde and Oxford, continued with the exiled Pretender and his court in hopes of arranging a continuance of the Stuarts on the throne. The failure of the Pretender to agree to guarantee the position of the Church of England, and his own Roman Catholicism, were great barriers to agreement on his return and split those who were sympathetic to the Stuarts into Jacobites and Hanover Tories. The continuing illness of the Queen and the accompanying intrigues caused the mounting tension to develop into a major crisis.

On the morning of July 30 the illness of the Queen was clearly fatal, and the Privy Council was called together at Kensington Palace to meet the crisis of her impending death. The Privy Council had become largely a formal body of some eighty persons, too large for effective action. Yet at this crisis the body roused itself to a last manifestation of its power. Twenty-three members of the Council appeared at the palace and their decision fixed the Hanoverian Succession.

12 Loc. cit.
The Whigs and Hanoverians were prepared with a plan of action in the crisis while Bolingbroke, the Secretary of State, and the Jacobites were indecisive. The lead in securing the peaceful accession of George I was taken by the Dukes of Shrewsbury, Somerset and Argyle, who had been in close contact with Bothmar, the Elector’s agent in England. Somerset and Argyle, both strong Hanoverians, appeared at the meeting of the Privy Council, exercising their rights as Privy Councillors, although they had not been summoned, and spoke strongly for the succession. The Duke of Shrewsbury, who presided over the Council, was made Lord Treasurer by Anne, her last act, and he, along with Somerset and Argyle, formed the middle group which held the balance between Whig and Tory and assured the Protestant Succession.13 Thus at the very beginning of the period considered in this study, the decisive and resolute political action of these three dukes sealed the fate of the Pretender.

In speaking of the political activities of the dukes, or of members of any other group in England, the party labels of "Whig," "Tory" or "Jacobite" are usually attached. Yet it is only in a very general sense that such labels of "party" can be taken as exact reflections of the political principles of an individual. Much speculation and study on the part of historians have been spent in an


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effort to understand the meaning of party in the eighteenth-century sense. It is undoubted that the term "party" was used loosely and inexacty by contemporaries and care must be taken not to read into the term as used in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the modern conception of a highly centralized and organized group largely agreed upon matters of principle and program. In the English government as it had evolved up to and during the eighteenth century the modern responsible political party could not have existed, for the king controlled the executive through his choice of ministers, controlled the church, the army, and the bureaucracy as well. The idea of the cabinet as being representative of the legislature, to all intents and purposes, had not developed. Even as late as 1784 the younger Pitt stayed in office with the king's support in spite of repeated defeats in the House of Commons. The minister who had the full support of the king, and control of royal patronage, used this extensive influence to create the majority needed in the Commons to carry on the king's business.\(^\text{14}\) Another factor which helped to retard the growth of the responsible political party was the aristocratic nature of the English social structure. The members of the aristocratic class, whether termed "Whig" or "Tory," loved their independence of action and would brook dictation neither from ministers nor from the electorate itself.

Priding themselves on being the authors of the Glorious Revolution, the Whigs, as a party or "connection," dominated politics under the first two Georges. Somewhat paradoxically, they professed themselves to stand for the limitation of the powers of the crown while claiming to be the only trustworthy defenders of the right of the Hanoverians to those powers; upholding the Hanoverian Succession and title they effected a "silent revolution" by engrossing in their own hands the royal patronage and thus assuring to themselves, for more than forty-five years, practical exercise of royal power.15 As a corollary of anti-Jacobitism, since Jacobitism connoted popery as well as absolutism, they adopted a policy of religious toleration which made them the political "front" of the non-conformists, while their doctrine of "moderation" in affairs of church and state explained their refusal to tamper seriously with the legal disabilities of dissenters or otherwise to alter a system of representation which they could operate to their advantage.16

Although the Whigs controlled the national government from 1714 to 1760 the two-party system was not dead, for the Tories at all times retained a considerable representation in the House of Commons, although they were not a real opposition party and were perhaps too few to have formed an administration even if they had had the chance.17

16 Loc. cit.
17 Trevelyan, The Peace and the Protestant Succession, pp. 316-17.
The Tories usually allied themselves with any dissatisfied Whig faction which happened to oppose the government or ministry of the day. The Whig allegation that the Tories were untrustworthy was unfair, for the Stuart cause was dead and had ceased to stir English hearts, as witnessed by the '15 and the '45, but it lingered as a warm sentiment in many a squire's heart.18

The gentry in the counties provided the greatest area of influence and power of the Tories, and since they were effectively excluded from the national government, they remained in a sense the "country party" for the main source of their representation in the Commons came from the squirearchy. The Tories were the party of the Church of England, and the cry "Church and King" was their most frequent one. The country clergy often dependent on the Tory squires, were Tory in spirit and sympathy. The Whigs were conscious of the great power of the Tories and of the clergy in the counties and left them alone. Walpole's maxim quieta non movere was never better applied. Thus in a very real way the Whig connection, since it had control of the national government, can be termed the "court party" or perhaps better the party of the courts, i.e., the king's or the Prince of Wales', while the Tories and dissatisfied Whigs can be termed the "country party."19

18 Feiling, Second Tory Party, p. 2.
19 Ibid., p. 5.
The "Whig historians" interpreted the political actions of George III as an effort to undermine the constitution of Britain, blaming his reputed ideas on the malevolent influence of Lord Bute, the Dowager Princess of Wales, or on Bolingbroke's Patriot King. The facts appear to be that George was striving to "be a King" not against the Whigs or Tories as such, but against a political class, largely made up of the aristocracy, which had controlled the government under his grandfather and great-grandfather. The Whigs had been accustomed to the relative political inertia of the crown, and came to feel that the crown ought to be inert and to register decisions rather than to make them. In attacking a system which had transferred power from the king to "connection" George III rightly saw in the great Whig dukes "the peg on which the Whigs were hung" and this accounts for his harsh treatment of the Duke of Devonshire, the "Prince of the Whigs," when he refused to attend the Privy Council in 1763. The refusal of the king to create new ducal titles was only a sound, common-sense perception of the fact, the putting the royal quietus on the supreme nucleus of all Whiggism, for the title was the final reward and ducal status the most enduring "peg" for political activity or opposition.

In their personal participation in the political life of England in the eighteenth century, the dukes played a significant but not at

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all times a leading role. The dukes did not lack political experience, for they were reared in an atmosphere replete with politics and as heirs to titles looked forward to taking an active part in affairs by being elected to the House of Commons, often from a shire where the family was influential or from a family borough. Of the eighty-one dukes who are noticed in this study, it is interesting to see that thirty-four had served in the Commons, not an unrepresentative number considering that some inherited the ducal title before coming of age.

Peers were usually given important positions in the cabinet for family connections during the period of Whig ascendancy, and far beyond, were of utmost importance. The value and strength afforded by a ducal title in the cabinet was great, at least it gave something for the Whigs to look up to and perhaps to hold them together. It is of value to note that every cabinet during the period contained at least one duke; the cabinets of the period of Whig ascendancy, from Charles Townshend's cabinet of 1714-1717 through the Newcastle-Pitt cabinet of 1760-1762, the number of dukes in each cabinet ranged from two to five (Pelham's, 1745) and on only two occasions were there only two. In the cabinet of the Earl of Bute, 1762-1763, only one duke, Bedford as Lord Privy Seal, was in the cabinet and only in the Whig administrations of the Marquis of Rockingham (1765-66; March-July, 1782) did the number of dukes rise again to three during the period.
The number of dukes who held cabinet positions is significant for several reasons. In the first, it shows that the political principles of the great noble families were almost uniformly Whig. Secondly, it appears obvious that the possession of a ducal title did not automatically give a man influence in politics on the national level but rather that his usefulness in office depended upon his political principles, as is quite evident by the conspicuous rarity of dukes in the cabinets of George III.

Lord Rosebery in his biography of Lord Chatham stated: "The great posts were mainly given to peers...In those days an industrious duke...could have almost what he chose." This generalization of Lord Rosebery is very wide of the mark, unless most of the dukes were unindustrious, for representatives from only eleven of the thirty-one ducal families which existed at some time during the period held a position of cabinet rank in the twenty-three administrations from that of Charles Townshend in 1714 through the Fox-North administration of 1783. Of the ducal families which held cabinet positions, Thomas, Duke of Newcastle, alone held cabinet office eleven times; John, Duke of Bedford held such positions eight times, and various Dukes of Devonshire eleven times; thus three titles held more cabinet positions that all of the other ducal families combined. Thus it is evident that the abilities or influence of the individual duke, not the ducal

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rank, was the deciding factor in appointment to cabinet positions.

The position of prime minister, or the acknowledged leader of the cabinet under whom administrations were formed, was attained by four dukes during the period of this study. These dukes were Newcastle, Devonshire, Grafton and Portland; and it can be said without fear of contradiction that not one of them was a great man or possessed of outstanding ability in his own person. Thus it is necessary to endeavor to see why these four men achieved political leadership.

Thomas Pelham-Holles, Duke of Newcastle, had a longer political career than any eighteenth-century duke. In 1711, when barely nineteen years of age, he began his political activities as a staunch Whig and advocate of the Hanoverian Succession, and as a reward he was created Duke of Newcastle in 1715.22 His political interest continued and he was in ministerial office almost uninterruptedly from 1717 to 1762.23 During his long political life Newcastle considered his main work to be the maintenance of a Whig majority in the House of Commons. In this work he had an immense advantage due to his great wealth and territorial influence. He "owned" twelve boroughs, but his success largely followed his attention to election details and his lavish expenditures on campaigns, by which he materially

23 Ibid., p. 38. Information concerning the dukes who achieved the premiership is from The Dictionary of National Biography, passim, and authorities as cited.
reduced his fortune. He created a political system which was enduring as long as he retained his own influence with the king. Upon the death of his brother Henry Pelham in 1754, the Duke became First Lord of the Treasury and leader of the cabinet in his own right. He resigned office in 1756, when the Devonshire-Pitt administration came in, but his influence was too great for him to be kept permanently out of office, and with the resignation of Devonshire in 1757, Newcastle and Pitt formed the administration. Pitt as Secretary of State conducted the great war which made Britain supreme in the world, while Newcastle as First Lord of the Treasury attended to the control of parliament and affairs at home.

It was the peculiarities in Newcastle's personality which so often attracted the attention of his contemporaries but his Whig principles were never doubted, although his actions were often considered ill-advised or stupid. The comments upon Newcastle and his activities are legion in the correspondence of the period, as is only natural, and his name became synonymous with political control.

Newcastle never felt secure in his political control and this was noticed by all, for it reflected itself in his sense of personal insecurity and fears, fears of colds, sea voyages, and the like. His general characteristics were well defined by Hervey in 1753 when the Duke faced political opposition in Sussex: "But he was born to be a figit, a fright and a bustle, the usual alacrity of his restless
machine has doubled all of its movements upon this occasion."²⁴

The passage of years caused no change in Newcastle's character
and habits, for upon the death of George II he was at least on the
surface full of indecision, "...the Duke of Newcastle asks every-
body's advice whether he shall resign (as he had always said he
would when this happened) which is a certain sign he has not the
least thought of it."²⁵ Caroline Fox was correct in her analysis of
the situation, for Newcastle stayed on as long as he possibly could.
He stayed in office until he was forced out, and he discovered that
the greatest source of his power was in other hands, as Richard Rigby
reported to the Duke of Bedford regarding the Peace of 1763: "...Mr.
Fox (Henry) told me today the opposition would never divide sixty;
and he would show me what my friend the Duke of Newcastle's interest
was without the court."²⁶

Indeed, the young king was unwilling to play the role his grand-
father had played and to be the tool of the Whigs. Newcastle found
his position to be increasingly difficult and finally impossible. In
October, 1762, at the age of sixty-nine, he resigned after having been
in office almost continuously for forty-five years. Only once more

²⁴ Lord Ilchester, Lord Hervey and his Friends, 1726-1733 (London,
1950), p. 171. Hervey to Benjamin Hoadley, Bishop of Salisbury,
August 14, 1733. Hereafter cited as Ilchester, Hervey.
²⁵ Correspondence of Emily, Duchess of Leinster, 1731-1814, ed.,
Brian Fitzgerald (Dublin, 1949), I, 300. Lady Caroline Fox to
Countess of Kildare, October 30, 1760. Hereafter cited as
Leinster Correspondence.
²⁶ Correspondence of John, Fourth Duke of Bedford, ed., Lord John
Russell (London, 1842), III, 161. Richard Rigby to Duke of Bed-
ford, November 26, 1762. Hereafter cited as Bedford Correspondence.
would Newcastle return to office, and that in his seventy-third year, as Lord Privy Seal in Rockingham's short-lived administration. Upon its fall in 1766, he retired and died in 1768. This amazingly long career in government is hardly equalled in the annals of British history, and it was made possible by Newcastle's family connections, his landed position, his wealth and his own willingness and eagerness to be the electioneer-in-chief of the Whigs. As a statesman he ranks low but as a politician and dispenser of patronage, lay and ecclesiastical, he was unrivalled among the peers.

William Cavendish, long known as Marquis of Hartington before succeeding his father as fourth Duke of Devonshire in 1755, might justly be termed the reluctant ducal premier. Descended from the foremost Revolution family and well liked by all, he was a person under whom others could serve without jealousy or envy. He appears to have had little desire to head an administration, but with the fall of the Newcastle-Pitt ministry in 1756, he was prevailed upon to take office as First Lord of the Treasury, with Pitt as Secretary of State wielding the real power. The ministry lasted only a few months, for Newcastle desired to return and the cabinet worked poorly together; at last in July, 1757 Pitt and Newcastle formed a new coalition and Devonshire willingly retired from office.27 Devonshire thus became prime minister largely owing to his family position as "Princes of the Whigs" and due to his own honest and upright character.

27 Feiling, Second Tory Party, pp. 63-64.
Newcastle was to find that he was not the only great Whig duke to be treated shabbily by the young George III. Devonshire, whom Walpole set up as the standard of Whiggism, found his position so difficult that he resigned his court position and finally his lord lieutenancy of Derbyshire in 1762. George III proscribed him from office and personally struck his name from the roll of Privy Councillors. The Earl of Bute, Groom of the Stole and head of the cabinet as well as being the personal adviser and confidant of the king, was disliked by the Whigs who blamed him for their predicament. "My friends tell me," Bute wrote to Sir James Lowther, "the House of Lords is to be the principal scene of action, where I am to be arraigned for the King's preferring the Duke of Marlborough, a Tory, to the Duke of Devonshire a Whig, for making the Peace and being anti-German." The Whigs not only talked but organized a coalition about Pitt in an effort to force their return to office. A political dinner was held at the Duke of Devonshire's where Pitt and Temple met the Dukes of Newcastle, Grafton and Portland and the Marquis of Rockingham. This tour de force was not successful and the Whigs returned to office only at the pleasure of the king. The political picture

had changed under the new king and neither rank nor fortune could recover for the Whigs their lost position. The Duke of Devonshire did not live to take part in the continuing struggles with the king, for he died at the age of forty-four at Spa in 1764 where he had gone for his health.

The third ducal premier in the eighteenth century was Augustus Henry Fitzroy, Duke of Grafton, great-great-grandson of Charles II. His political principles were Whig, but he took little part in politics early in his life, not making his maiden speech in the House of Lords until 1762 when he spoke against the peace with France. In 1765 he was made Secretary of State in Rockingham’s ministry and at its fall in 1766 became First Lord of the Treasury in the administration of William Pitt, Pitt himself being the prime minister. This government was an odd mixture of political interests, for it contained king’s friends, Chatham’s followers and orthodox Whigs. The ministry unfortunately lost its leader when Chatham became ill in mind as well as body and retired to Bath. Grafton was prime minister for all purposes until he became so in fact after September 1767. He remained head of the administration until his resignation in January 1770. Grafton’s administration was a turbulent one, for it faced questions of basic importance and they were handled poorly. The Wilkes affair would have been enough for one administration, although the king must

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take a large degree of responsibility for this problem, and the great problem of American taxation arose to cause endless trouble.

The private life of the Duke, as well as his political ineptness, failed to make the life of the administration a calm one. He was strongly attacked in the Letters of Junius, beginning in 1769, and his public entertainment of his mistress, Nancy Parsons, shocked even his aristocratic circle. The duke was a great lover of the hunt and of the races at Newmarket and sadly neglected the official duties of his office. Finally, he stepped down from office in 1770 to be followed by Lord North.

In politics the duke began as a Whig and then became a close follower of Chatham, and then a supporter of the Tory government of Lord North. Yet he disagreed with North's American policy, broke with him in 1775, and returned to office as Lord Privy Seal in the pure Whig administration of 1782. The political career of this duke is interesting to contemplate; his part in politics was acted in a time of transition, when the emptiness of the traditional party labels became obvious. His high rank and early political actions in the reign of George III brought him to prominence, but he lacked the determination and willingness to attend to business once in high office. Only in such a period in history could such a man have attained the premiership.

\[32\] Feiling, Second Tory Party, p. 106.
The fourth and last ducal prime minister to fall within the scope of this study was William Henry Cavendish-Bentinck, third Duke of Portland. The Bentincks arrived in England in the train of William III and their abundant Whiggism was increased by the marriage of the second duke to Lady Margaret Harley, daughter of Edward, second Earl of Oxford, whence the name Cavendish. The third Duke sat in the House of Commons until he succeeded his father in 1762, and held his first office in Rockingham's administration. He was a strong Whig and fought both Tories and the King's party in many elections. He was particularly at odds with Sir James Lowther and spent great sums fighting him in politics and at law. With the fall of Lord North in 1782, the Duke of Portland became Lord Lieutenant of Ireland in the second administration of Rockingham. At the death of Rockingham in July, 1782, Shelburne became head of the ministry but the Whigs worked poorly with him and finally withdrew. When Shelburne's ministry fell in April, 1783, the famous, or infamous, Fox-North coalition was formed with Portland as First Lord of the Treasury and nominal head of the administration. This ministry was radically unsound and had the King against it from the very first and it fell in 1783 un lamented by anyone. Portland had great loyalty to Charles James Fox and this attachment continued until political alignments in England were largely shaken and broken by the effects of the French Revolution and the political acumen of William Pitt, the Younger. In 1794, after repeated invitations, Portland joined Pitt's ministry as Home Secretary. In the Home Office Portland made his greatest contribution
during a very difficult time. After the death of Pitt, and the fall of Grenville's short ministry in 1807, Portland again became prime minister.33

Portland was obviously an ally of the Marquis of Rockingham and was generally considered the leader of the Rockingham Whigs after the fall of the Fox-North coalition. He was certainly an able man and his rank and wealth placed him above jealousy as a leader of the discordant Whigs. The real work of his faction of the Whigs appears to have been done by Charles James Fox and by Edmund Burke. The duke himself spent much time at his country seat, Bulstrode, where he collected a fine gallery and his name is perpetuated in the famous Portland Vase now in the British Museum. Again in the case of Portland, family connections, rank and wealth made it possible for a man to achieve political leadership in this aristocratic society. Portland had the distinction of leading two administrations; in the first instance he led a Whig one and in the second a solidly Tory one.34

The offices which the dukes held in the cabinet, other than the premiership, were usually high and dignified positions. The positions of Secretary of State, of either the Northern or Southern department, were held by Newcastle, Bedford, Grafton and Richmond. The dukes as Lord Keepers of the Privy Seal were more numerous for the position was held by Kingston (twice), Kent, Devonshire, Marlborough (third.

34 Loc. cit.
Duke), Bedford, Marlborough (fourth Duke) and Newcastle. The posi-
tion of Lord President of the Council was held by Devonshire (three
times), Kingston, Dorset (twice), Bedford and Newcastle. As repre-
sentatives of the king in Ireland, as Lord Lieutenants, the dukes
were represented by Bolton, Grafton, Dorset (twice), Bedford and
Portland. Thus only eleven ducal families are represented in the
cabinet, certainly signifying that title alone would not bring politi-
cal status, although it often made it possible to be politically
active. It is also possible that many of the dukes had no predilec-
tion for active political lives, and that some like the Norfolks were
excluded for religious reasons, although this would hardly account
for the absence of more than half of the dukes from important na-
tional political offices.

It was the exigencies of political arrangements which usually
conferred political office on a duke rather than his rank and social
priority. Newcastle in 1746 found that although he preferred the
Duke of Dorset as viceroy in Ireland he had to take the Earl of
Harrington, for a contest had been going on between the two, "but
circumstances of administration such, that the appointment of Lord
Harrington was the only means to preserve unanimity and harmony,"
and he hoped that matters could be worked out.35 The Duke of Dorset

35 Bedford Correspondence, I, 79. Duke of Newcastle to Duke of
Bedford, November 6, 1746.
had to wait until a later time for his position.

James Boswell, who questioned wherever he went and wrote down nearly everything he heard, reported in 1783 remarks made by Lord Mountstuart regarding the position of the Duke of Gordon, a great Scots magnate, which strongly emphasize the relative powerlessness of a ducal title:

You take the Duke of Gordon. Were I a minister, I should not care for the Duke of Gordon, who has not a word to say. What is it to me that a man has 70 miles of estate? There are but three ways a man can have weight with a minister: Talents, Parliamentary interest, or a great deal of money to buy parliamentary interest. The Duke has it not.36

Thus the factor of the possession of talent or ability should be given some weight in considering the positions held by the dukes. It must not be over-weighted for some of the positions held by them required little real ability in administrative matters; indeed, often the actual duties of an office were performed by deputies. The eighteenth century placed little emphasis on the expert in a field or area of activity, unless the admiralty be excepted, and a noble or other office holder could follow his own inclination or interests in deciding what office he would accept when his party or faction had the command of the king to form a government.

The rank of duke did not protect a man from political exclusion. The Duke of Bedford, a leader of a large faction of the Whigs and an

important politician in his own right, had acted as British pleni­potentiary in the negotiations leading to the Peace of Paris in 1763. The treaty was unpopular and Pitt in particular disliked it, as well as the duke who had negotiated it. Pitt refused to serve with Bedford in George Grenville's ministry in 1763, stating that "he (Bedford) must have no office at all at this time; perhaps some years hence he might be admitted to an employment of rank about the court...." But George III refused the opposition demands and Bedford became Lord President and Pitt stayed out; although this was Bedford's last cabinet post. As we have seen in the cases of Newcastle and Devonshire, the Whig dukes were to discover early in George III's reign that their nearly exclusive right to great offices was a thing of the past.

The essential raison d'être of the peers was to act as hereditary councillors to the crown, but by the eighteenth century this function had come to mean largely their activity in the House of Lords. Therefore, the question arises of how seriously the dukes took their duty of attending the debates and divisions in the House of Lords? It is to be remembered that they held the privilege of proxy and could therefore absent themselves on occasion. Therefore the attendance of the dukes upon the House of Lords has been surveyed at the formal opening of parliament and for five days thereafter at the beginning, or close to the beginning of each decade during the period. The compilations

37 Bedford Correspondence, III, 238. Earl of Sandwich to Duke of Bedford, September 5, 1763.

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are for the dukes of England and Great Britain only and the information is from the Lords' Journals:

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38 Journals of the House of Lords, XX (1714-18), 21 ff.
39 Ibid., XXII (1722-26), 233 ff.
40 Ibid., XXIV (1731-36), 318 ff.
41 Ibid., XXVI (1741-46), 357 ff.
42 Ibid., XXVIII (1753-56), 3 ff.
The attendance of the dukes at the opening of parliament and for the immediate period following is significant. Rarely, if ever, did even one-half of the dukes attend the formal opening of parliament, and attendance upon those occasions tended to be greater than on subsequent days when they would under normal circumstances have been expected to have remained in town. It is evident from this survey that they did not look upon their legislative function as a duty to be performed, but rather as a right to be exercised at will.

As was shown in the previous chapter most of the personal privileges of the dukes, indeed of all peers, had their origin in parliament as a result of the legislative functions of the peers. Yet the dukes did not take very seriously their conciliar function; of course,
proxies may have been held by the dukes present, but under ordinary circumstances proxies were only called for when legislation of prime importance was before the House. Still, proxies could only be useful in the final vote, and they could not provide the place of the physical presence of the peer in debate on the floor, where his thoughts might be of weight.

The reason for the laxness in attendance upon the House perhaps lies in this: that the attendance of the individual peer was not of great importance so long as the House functioned in the manner in which the political party or faction which controlled the House of Commons wanted it to function. Most of the Dukes were Whig in their political principles and so was a majority of the House of Commons; thus only leadership, not strict attendance, was needed in the upper House. As is well known, much of the leadership in the Whig party came from nobility, therefore doubly assuring the peers' leadership; in their own House and in the Commons.

It is not surprising that the area of major political interest for the dukes was not in their own House - as has been shown from their attendance records - but in the House of Commons. The dukes who were politically active spent vast amounts of time in activity and correspondence regarding the composition of the House of Commons. Some of the seats were owned by dukes, that is, were pocket boroughs, or rotten boroughs, while others, especially in the counties, traditionally elected a member in the dukes' "interest," that is, under his influence. It was only in open boroughs or boroughs which had a large
number of electors that real contests took place. Contests between candidates were often, in fact, struggles between rival politicians, and such campaigns often led to great expenditures of money on both sides.

The active participation of the peers in elections to the House of Commons was unethical if not illegal. The Commons had resolved in 1641 that letters written by peers in order to influence elections "do necessarily tend to the Violation of the Privileges of Parliament, and the Freedom of Elections..." but this resolution was completely ignored. In 1701 the Commons made their position even stronger by a Standing Order, "that any Lord of Parliament, or any Lord Lieutenant of any county, to concern themselves in the Elections of Members to serve for the Commons in Parliament, the same is a high Infringement of the Liberties and Privileges of the Commons of England." The peers made not even a pretense of conforming to this Order and protests were heard from time to time against the practices of the peers.

The nobles had political "agents" who looked after votes for them in counties in which they had political interests. The Earl of Sandwich in 1745 feared that his absence in diplomatic service at the Hague would cause his antagonists in Huntingdonshire to stir up opposition to his candidates, and he therefore asked the Duke of Bedford to have Mr. Butcher, the Duke's principal agent, write to the Duke's agent there, to get the promise of as many freeholders to vote for

46 Journals of the House of Commons, II (1640-42), 337.
Sandwich's candidates as possible, "as the appearance of your Grace's declaration in my favour will have the very best effect." Thus the voice of a duke, especially one of Bedford's prominence, could have great weight.

In the boroughs the task of securing the election of a favorable candidate was at times much easier, especially if the corporation were small. The electors could be bribed in one way or another, and the Duke of Bedford was quite willing to do it. "Your Grace's kind intentions of sending warrants for two bucks, will be gratefully acknowledged. Venison is always acceptable to corporations where the members are above the commonalty and not too numerous. The Gentlemen of (New) Sarum are not averse to...my brother, and I am in hopes two or three meetings of jollity and entertainment will fix him in their esteem." The bribery was often in the form of food, beer and entertainment for the electors, but ducal venison must have been a real treat for the gentlemen of the corporation in this case.

The dukes also took an interest in individual persons in the House of Commons who were there due to ducal efforts. The person so elected would naturally be considered less than grateful if he voted contrary to the will of his noble sponsor. The dukes also had proteges in the Commons, as in the case of William Pitt, the Younger, who received particular help from the Duke of Rutland. Pitt had great backing for a seat: "Lord Chatham's son, Mr. Pitt, a particular

48 Bedford Correspondence, I, 44. Earl of Sandwich to Duke of Bedford, August 30, 1745.
friend of mine, having declared himself a candidate for the University of Cambridge, I cannot forbear at his desire from requesting your interest in his behalf. Pitt won his seat of course and he, being Pitt, would probably have won it without such powerful backing, but to a lesser man noble support often meant victory or defeat.

The position of lord lieutenant and custos rotulorum in the counties was eagerly sought. These were crown appointments and the lord lieutenant was invariably a local magnate, usually, although not necessarily, a peer. The lord lieutenant had command of the militia in times of emergency and appointed deputy lieutenants and the officers of the militia; and had as well some functions in nominating local justices. As custos rotulorum he was supposed to preside over the quarter sessions of the justices, although he rarely did so, and he appointed the Clerk of the Peace. The office carried great prestige and a certain amount of civil and military patronage as well. The position carried direct political influence in the affairs of the county and the ministers preferred lord lieutenants who would take part in political campaigns and support them at election time.

Since it was requisite that a lord lieutenant of a county be a large landowner, it is not surprising that some of the ducal families held the lieutenancy of a county during the whole period, or at least each duke in a family held it once during the period. The dukes of

Devonshire held the lieutenancy of Devonshire during the whole of the period, except that William, fourth duke, had his lieutenancy taken from him by George III. The lieutenancy of Lincoln was held by the dukes of Ancaster and Kesteven; of Hampshire by the dukes of Bolton; of Huntingdon by the dukes of Manchester; of Leicester by the dukes of Rutland, and Berkshire by the dukes of St. Albans. Nearly every ducal family held such a position sometime during the period. Of the English dukes only the Norfolks and the Cleveland-and-Southamptons did not. William, second Duke of Cleveland and Southampton, descendant of Charles II by Barbara Palmer (Villiers) was a nonentity.52

Politics involves both the exercise of power and the distribution of rewards connected with the possession of power. The preceding section has concerned itself with the interest of the dukes in those positions which entailed direct political power - the power to make decisions and to enforce those decisions. Their graces were interested in another type of places, those which conferred prestige and honor with monetary rewards, but which were outside the scope of direct political influence and responsibility. The dukes were, relatively more or less successful in acquiring a share of these honorific and lucrative posts in competition with fellow-aristocrats, than in obtaining cabinet or other high political positions in the state.

The dukes felt that they had special claim to positions in the various noble orders and the one which they desired above all others

52 Complete Peerage, III, 282. s.v. Cleveland
was to be enrolled as a Knight of the Most Noble Order of the Garter, for it carried great prestige. The number of knights was restricted and during the whole period fewer than half of the dukes obtained this distinction, thirty-nine of the eighty-one. It is notable that in certain ducal families every holder of the title was created a Knight of the Garter, while in others no holder was so honored. All of the dukes of Devonshire, Grafton, Kingston and Marlborough received it, while none of the dukes of Manchester, An­caster, Bridgewater, Chandos, Norfolk, Hamilton and Brandon and Queensbury and Dover, were able to obtain it. The Norfolks were probably excluded from the order because most of the dukes were Roman Catholic, while the Hamilton and Brandon, and Queensbury and Dover titles were principally Scottish which would make it more probable that they would be created Knights Brethren of the Most Ancient Order of the Thistle.

The task of carrying on the administrative work of the state was in the eighteenth century becoming more a departmental matter, for the original duties of the great officers of the Royal Household were diminishing. After 1714 the great Household offices, Lord Chamberlain, Lord Steward, Master of the Horse, became political to the extent that they changed with the administration. This is significant for it shows the developing distinction between the royal household itself and the governmental functions of the monarchy.53 These

positions were held by nobles and often by dukes, not necessarily eminent statesmen, but simply as a result of rank. Some of the ancient positions in the kingdom, such as Lord Great Chamberlain of England, Chief Butler of England and Earl Marshal of England were hereditary in the titles, respectively, of the dukes of Ancaster, Cleveland and Southampton, and Norfolk. These positions were honorary and were in being usually only during a coronation or its festivities.

The lesser honorary positions held by the dukes were very numerous, and some carried financial rewards and traditional privileges. Some of the positions had their origins in some function connected with the royal forests, such as wardens, rangers, keepers and master foresters, while others were directly connected with hunting, such as Master of the Harriers, Master of the Stag Hounds and Master Falconer of England, an hereditary title in the family of the Dukes of St. Albans. Other positions, such as stewards of the various "honours," governships of royal castles, such as Windsor and Carisbrooke, were held by many of the dukes. Positions which were more highly honorable and which were lucrative were the positions of Captain of the Band of Gentlemen Pensioners and Captain of the Yeomen of the Guard.

The dukes held a host of different offices which were lucrative and which were in some way connected with the law courts or with the Exchequer or Customs branches of the government. Many of the titles of the positions sound anachronistic to modern ears and were often in fact anachronistic in practice in the eighteenth century. The
positions arose largely to facilitate the keeping of legal records or to collect fees due to the crown in the law courts or in the exchequer or customs. The duties of the offices, if there were such in the eighteenth century, were performed by deputy clerks who were usually salaried. In the courts the positions of Clerk of the Hanaper in Chancery, Keeper of the Records in Common Pleas, Receiver General of the Profits of the Seals in King's Bench and Common Pleas and Hereditary Registrar of the Court of Chancery (St. Albans) were held by dukes some or all of the time during the period. The customs and exchequer also provided lucrative sinecures for the dukes, for they held, among other positions, those of Collectors of Tonnage at ports, "inward and outward," Remembrancer of the First Fruits in the Court of the Exchequer, Clerk of the Treasury, and Collector of Customs. It may appear strange that noble dukes would be interested in such ignoble-sounding positions but the income from the positions made them attractive.

The title of dux or duke was originally a military one, as we have seen, and in the feudal system the military relationship had been a basic one. By the eighteenth century in England the conception of a peer as a military figure had largely disappeared, although on the continent the military function remained very important. Only in the crisis of the Rebellion of 1745 did the peers, with royal permission, attempt to take an active personal part in military affairs. On that occasion thirteen regiments of dragoons and eight of horse, in all
7,000 men, had been authorized to be raised. The Duke of Bedford raised and paid for his regiment and the Duke of Montagu raised a regiment of horse. The Dukes of Devonshire, Rutland, Bolton, Ancaster and Kingston also were authorized to raise regiments. It appears that few of the regiments were actually raised, Walpole stating it was certain that not six of them were, and that few ever saw active service, although most of the dukes received funds from the Exchequer for the purpose. There evidently was some competition among those authorized to raise regiments, for the Earl of Halifax reported that some were promising "ten pence a day to all that will enlist over and above his Majesty's pay...I heartily wish it may not get air in our part of the country. The Duke of Bedford gives no premium; those who engage with him have only the King's pay and yet his Regiment is almost complete as I hear already." Bedford had success in raising his regiment and actually served with it, although many of the nobles did not.

55 Horace Walpole's Correspondence, ed. W. S. Lewis, et al. (New Haven, Conn., 1954), volume 19, p. 110. Horace Walpole to Sir Horace Mann, October 1, 1745.
56 Ibid., volume 19, p. 128. Horace Walpole to Sir Horace Mann, October 15, 1745.
57 Walpole, George II, II, 97.
59 Bedford Correspondence, I, 51. Lord Stair to Duke of Bedford, October 11, 1745.
Of the eighty-one dukes who comprise this study only twenty-four held military commissions or saw military service, while only two had seen service in the navy. One of the dukes, Marlborough, was created a duke because of his military service, and he attained the highest rank of any duke, that of Captain-General of England. Of the other twenty-three dukes who held commissions, five became full generals, three lieutenant generals, two major generals, three colonels of horse, six colonels in service, one a lieutenant colonel and two became captains. The sixth Duke of Bolton and the second Duke of Leeds were full admirals but neither continued sea service after inheriting the ducal title. Service in the militia was undoubtedly more general on the part of the dukes. Fifty-seven of the dukes were at some time lord lieutenants of counties and would have, in right of this office, command of the militia of the counties. They were probably entitled therefore to wear the militia uniform. The wearing of uniforms was particularly important when abroad visiting foreign courts where uniforms were much more in evidence than they were in England. Thus, the military services of the dukes were of little importance in the eighteenth century as a source of national strength, and military offices were of minor significance as a source of income for the holders of ducal titles.

Although the dukes were at the top of the social and political structure, they were not free from popular pressures. They might be very great persons when at their seats and about local business but to city mobs they were politicians plain and simple. The Duke of
Bedford faced at least three attacks upon his person due to his position on public questions.

In 1757 both the Duke of Bedford and the Duke of Dorset were embroiled in disturbances which grew out of the fear of foreign service which arose because of the Militia Bill of that year. Military forces had to be called out to protect Bedford House and the Duke of Dorset's seat, Knowle. 60

In 1765 Bedford spoke and voted against a bill to increase duties on Italian silks and this action angered the Spitalfields weavers who led riots against the duke. Bedford House again had to be protected by both infantry and cavalry. 61 The Duke recorded his most dangerous encounter with the mob in his Journal, and it must have been very harrowing. The Duke was at Honiton and found a "vast concourse of people" at the door of his inn. He was greeted with hisses, groans, and the cries: "Wilkes and Liberty" and "The Peacemaker," reflecting the general excitement following the Middlesex election and Bedford's part in the Treaty of Paris of 1763. The Duke mounted his horse and attempted to ride off but the mob followed him and incited "near twenty bull-dogs" to attack his horse, then they threw stones at him, a great many of which hit me, though without any damage to myself. Upon this I galloped forward." 62 Thus the dukes were made very

60 Walpole, George II, III, 41.
61 Bedford Correspondence, III, 278 ff. Duke of Bedford to Duke of Marlborough, May 19, 1765.
conscious of public opinion and were held responsible for their political opinions and acts.

The inherited position of the dukes did not make them immune from the wrath of their fellow politicians. The Duke of Montagu served as governor of George III's children and in the King's opinion did an excellent job. When a separate household was established for the Prince of Wales in 1780, the King rewarded Montagu by making him Master of the Horse, with Lord North's approval. With the change of the ministry in 1782, George III was forced to make many changes in the personnel around him against his will, "...the number I have saved...is incredibly few." Even his favorite Montagu was strongly attacked but George refused to agree to his dismissal, "...I declared that I would sooner let confusion follow than part with the governor of my sons and so unexceptionable a man..."\(^{63}\)

Only by the most strenuous efforts was Montagu saved in order to remain in the royal service. Thus the dukes were only as secure in office and places as was their party or faction in power. On the other hand, the dukes had no very great security against royal displeasure, for they could be dismissed from their lieutenancies in the counties, as Devonshire and Grafton discovered in 1763, when they opposed the royal will, and from the Privy Council.

The eighteenth century dukes inherited rank, wealth and social

\(^{63}\) The Correspondence of King George III with Lord North, from 1768 to 1783, ed., W. B. Donne (London, 1867), II, 420, March 27, 1782.
position from their forebears and were inured to the troublesome
game of politics almost from their cradles. It is interesting to
attempt to discover if they inherited anything else. The problem
of the presumed inheritance of attributes and ability through a
family is particularly significant when applied to an hereditary
body like the peerage. Francis Galton, in his book *Hereditary
Genius*, showed that intellectual ability has frequently run in fa-
milies, a not always present, but a very real factor. Galton
based his classification on a person's reputation as a fair test of
high natural ability. He felt that no person gained a high reputa-
tion without being gifted, and that few who possessed gifts failed
to achieve eminence. His statements were certainly naive, for he
felt that hindrances in society were not effectual in repressing
high ability, an absurd generalization in the light of present-day
knowledge of the functioning of any society. Regardless, Galton was
a statistician of merit and his findings command attention.

Eavelock Ellis' study of *British Genius* carried the inquiry
beyond Galton. Ellis used as the basis of his computations the per-
sons who were of sufficient importance to be included in the *Dictionary of National Biography*. He excluded royalty as well as the
hereditary nobility, in order to eliminate those persons for whom

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64 Francis Galton, *Hereditary Genius: An Inquiry into Its Laws and
65 Ibid., p. 49.
66 Ibid., p. 40.
the accident of birth counted so much. Also eliminated were those who were allocated fewer than three pages, with some exceptions for the earlier centuries of British history when detailed information concerning the individual was lacking. As a result of his exclusions he was surprised to learn how few persons of really pre-eminent ability were omitted.\(^\text{67}\) The total number of persons of genius in his study was 1,030 - 975 men and 55 women; while the eighteenth century supplied the largest number of persons considered, 372, and the nineteenth century next with 223.\(^\text{68}\) The greatest number of persons of genius came from the landed families or small country gentlemen on the borders of the aristocracy, and "to this class must be attributed a very important part of the men who have furnished the characteristics of British civilisation."\(^\text{69}\)

Galton and Ellis were interested in determining the relationship of heredity and intellectual ability as evidenced by the careers and contributions of individuals. If we apply the method of Ellis, without his exception of the nobility, we find that thirty-nine of the eighty-one dukes who are noticed in this study are included in the Dictionary of National Biography. If we use Ellis' rule of at least three pages of notice, then only Thomas, Duke of Newcastle and John, Duke of Marlborough could be included. Indeed it is remarkable that

\(^{67}\) Havelock Ellis, *A Study of British Genius* (Boston, 1926; originally published in 1904), pp. 2-4.

\(^{68}\) Ibid., pp. 9-10.

\(^{69}\) Ibid., pp. 66-68.
almost half of the dukes were of sufficient importance to be noticed by separate treatment or articles. They are there not for genius or purely intellectual endowment, to be sure, but for their part in the realm of politics or other governmental activity.

Birth, rank, wealth or family connections alone did not cause a person to be noticed in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, for if it had been otherwise, all of the dukes would have been included. As it is, only in the ducal families of Dorset, Kingston and Richmond is each holder of the title given separate treatment. Thus the value of heredity as a factor in the prominence of individual dukes in the same family does not appear to be very great. Of course the basic weakness of the rule of primogeniture is that the ablest son is not necessarily the first born.

It is evident from the account of the creation and political activities of the dukes, that the ducal title was the most difficult peerage rank to achieve at any period in English history. Even in the heyday of ducal creations, many aspired to the rank but few achieved it. It took a combination of service, connections and great influence to reach it under ordinary circumstances. In the society of the day the dukes were great men, but only rarely did they take a decisive part in politics, as in the crisis attending the death of Queen Anne and the Hanoverian Succession. In the development of English political parties during the Hanoverian period, the dukes played a significant part. Nearly all of them called themselves Whigs, and the explanation is not far to seek, for most of their titles were
created after 1688. The contribution of Newcastle alone to the con-
tinued exercise of power by the Whigs was enormous. The dukes took
an active interest in politics, especially at election time, even if
they did not actually hold high political office and take a leading
role. They were at all times represented in the cabinet either be-
cause they were leaders of factions within the Whig party or because
it was politically wise to have the prestige of a ducal name in an
administration. The possession of a ducal title did not mean that
an individual was an active politician, or that he wanted to, or
could, be politically active on the national scene; only representa-
tives of one-third of the ducal families held cabinet positions
during the period, while only four became heads of administrations.
In the ordinary routine of attending the House of Lords, the record
of the duke was poor, for rarely did one-half of them attend. The
dukes desired positions of honor and of profit from the government and,
if they were Whigs, they had a fair chance of securing them. The mili-
tary services of the dukes were of minor importance in the eighteenth
century, even in the crisis of the Rebellion of 1745. Taken as a
whole the nobility made up a relatively large section of the politi-
cally active class, and the dukes took an active and at times a
leading, but rarely decisive, part in political affairs.
The Dukes: Their Economic Position, Incomes and Expenditures

The material standard of any noble group tends to be higher than that of any other group in a hierarchical society. The noble is expected to live in a state befitting his rank and in a style which serves as a model for those lower in status in the hierarchy. In order to meet the standard expected, a noble had to possess a large income in comparison to those without official rank. Naturally with the rise of commerce, and later of industry, as a source of income many commoners could maintain a noble style of life and possessed incomes in excess of some of the noble families. As will be seen in the next chapter, the English nobility had no very great feeling against marrying heiresses to middle class fortunes in order to improve their economic position, and this proved to be one of the sources of strength for the nobility, both economically and socially.

As far as is known in the present state of research, which is meager on the economic side of the nobility, the primary source of income was in the form of rent payments from land. At present, our knowledge of the extent of landholding by nobles and the income they derived from it is unsatisfactory, for we have only a nineteenth-century compilation which can be considered as only a rough approximation of the actual fact of landholding and of landed incomes. A great need exists for further research into the sources of the income of the eighteenth-century nobility in order to fill this gap in our
knowledge. The second major source of income for the nobility appears to have been from positions held in or from the government. The emoluments from offices or "places" must have been a great source of income for some of the ducal families, for the constant reference to them is indicative of their economic as well as their social-status value. Nearly all of the ducal title holders held offices which were, or appear to have been, sinecures.

Since little of the information presented here on the economic status of the dukes came from the printed papers of those dukes, the question of the reliability of the information naturally arises. The information came largely from memoirs and correspondence of the period which were not written by the person whose financial affairs were discussed; while the income figures presented in the nineteenth-century account were probably little more than guesses based upon whatever facts could be uncovered from information disclosed in tax reports, probated wills, and the like. Pension and annuity reports in the correspondence are probably the most reliable of all the economic information. At times the pensions and annuities are reported as the same figure in several sources and this may lend greater credibility to the reports, although not necessarily so.

The relative economic position of the dukes was very good, for there can be little doubt that nearly all of them possessed sufficient income to support their titles. De Saussure reported in 1727 that the Duke of Bedford possessed more than 50,000 pounds a year, while many others had ten, twenty and thirty thousand pounds a year. To this
foreign observer the wealth of the English nobles was dazzling, "a
duke possessing five or six thousand pounds sterling a year is not
considered wealthy. Being so rich as they are, it is not surprising
if English peers spend a great deal and have numerous coaches,
horses, and servants."¹ Bedford was felt by all to be unusually
wealthy, but Horace Walpole intimated in 1756 that Sir James Lowther
was wealthier and that Bedford had fallen to be not above the fourth
richest man in England.² Yet in 1779 Bedford is used as an example
of great wealth by James Boswell when he philosophized, "Reduce the
Duke of Bedford to 3,000 pounds a year, which is in itself a very
good fortune for a gentleman who never had more, and you would make
him as completely miserable as I should be if reduced to 200 pounds
a year."³ It was also reported, as an evidence of ducal wealth, that
the Duke of Marlborough had about thirty footmen, and one of them had
no other job but to light the lamps around the billiard table!⁴

Dukes who possessed extremely large incomes which tended to make
them conspicuous even among their peers in rank, appear to have been
few, for except for Bedford and Marlborough, the Dukes of Devonshire,
Newcastle and Portland are the only ones who receive unusual notice,
on this point, in the correspondence of the day.

¹ Cesar de Saussure, A Foreign View of London in the Reigns of
George I and George II, tr. and ed., Madame von Mayden (London,
² Horace Walpole's Correspondence, ed., W. S. Lewis, et. al. (New
Haven, Conn., 1954), IX, 185. Walpole to George Montagu;
April 20, 1765.
³ Private Papers of James Boswell, from Malahide Castle, eds.,
Geoffrey Scott and Frederick A. Pottle (Mt. Vernon, N. Y., 1928-
1934), XIII, 225, April 15, 1779.
The Dukes of Devonshire who owned famed Chatsworth House as well as Hardwicke Hall and other residences were extremely wealthy. At the death of William, fourth duke, in 1764, the Countess of Dalkeith, herself the daughter of the Duke of Argyll, reported that the fifth duke, William, husband of the famous Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire, inherited 35,000 pounds a year from his father, yet the late duke had left his daughters 30,000 pounds and his two younger sons 2,000 pounds a year.\footnote{John, ninth Duke of Argyll, 
Intimate Society Letters of the Eighteenth Century (New York, 1910), I, 300 ff. Lady Dalkeith to Lady Susan Stewart, July (?), 1764.} In the nineteenth-century compilation entitled Our Old Nobility, by Howard Evans, who wrote under the pseudonym "Noblesse Oblige," the Dukes of Devonshire were said to own over 220,000 acres of land in fourteen counties of England and Ireland and to have an income in excess of 172,000 pounds per year.\footnote{Howard Evans, Our Old Nobility (London, 1879), I, 132 ff.} The Devonshires reportedly had the patronage of forty-two church livings, twenty-three of which were vicarages, which meant that they received income from them.\footnote{John, ninth Duke of Argyll, Intimate Society Letters of the Eighteenth Century (New York, 1910), I, 300 ff. Lady Dalkeith to Lady Susan Stewart, July (?), 1764.} Perhaps the family motto Cavendo tutus (Safe by being cautious) was followed with success.

The Duke of Newcastle spent a lifetime in politics and spent his own as well as royal money in election campaigns. When Newcastle left office in 1762 as First Lord of the Treasury, the king, knowing that he had weakened his fortune in the royal service, had the Duke of Devonshire ask him if he would take a pension in any shape, privately or publicly, but Newcastle refused. "I never served his
Majesty nor his royal predecessors with any view to the emoluments.

I was determined when I left his service, not to be any charge to
him."6 This offer of a pension, reportedly 4,000 pounds per 
and its rejection, even led Horace Walpole, who soundly disliked him,
to say that the Duke of Newcastle, "who with all his faults and weak­
nesses was never stained with avarice and rapaciousness."7 And,
indeed, Newcastle was incorruptible personally. Basil Williams made
a close study of Newcastle's accounts in the British Museum and esti­
mated his income as near 40,000 pounds per annum in 1734. Newcastle
had five seats, one in London, two in Surrey, one in Sussex, and
Nottingham Castle, and owned land in eleven counties. He also owned
the Clare Market Estate in London, which grossed him 8,000 pounds
per annum. Thus his ownership of land in so many counties helped his
political career as well as supplying him with money which he liberal­
ly used in campaigns.8

The Dukes of Portland, one of the great and wealthy families,
owed most of their income to William III. A. S. Turberville, who re­
searched at length in the Portland papers, reported that Henry, first
duke, inherited from his father, Hans William Bentinck, first Earl of

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6 Memoirs of the Marquis of Rockingham and His Contemporaries, 1760-
Newcastle to H.H.H. the Duke of Cumberland, May 26, 1762. Here­
after cited as Rockingham Memoirs.
7 Horace Walpole, Memoirs of the Reign of George III, ed., Sir Denis
Le Marchant (Philadelphia, 1845), I, 421.
8 Basil Williams, "Newcastle and the Election of 1734," English His­
torical Review, XII, (1897), 450-454. For an estimate on New­
castle's income in 1726, which is approximately the same as
Williams' figures, see: S. E. Nulle, Thomas Pelham-Holles, Duke of
Newcastle, His Early Political Career, 1693-1724 (Thesis in History,
Portland, great estates in Westminster, Essex, Norfolk, Cheshire, York, Cumberland, and other counties, valued at 850,000 pounds. The first Duke invested heavily in stocks in the South Sea Company and the collapse of the boom in the stock was a financial disaster for him. His financial plight induced him to take the governorship of Jamaica; he made a good governor during the years 1722-1726, but an illness of a few days, probably a fever, brought his death on July 4, 1726 at the age of forty-four. Evans reported the Portlands to be one of the richest ducal families in the nineteenth century; perhaps the marriage alliances with the Cavendish-Devonshires helped to rebuild their fortunes. Regardless, they held over 153,000 acres of land, exclusive of their London property, which brought them 24,000 pounds per annum from fee-farms.

The Marlboroughs received their wealth mainly from the founder of their House, the great Duke of Marlborough. The comments upon the royal favors granted to Marlborough and the extent of his wealth are legion. The Duke was granted a pension of 5,000 pounds per annum for his lifetime from the Post Office and Sarah was granted a pension of 2,000 pounds per annum from the Privy Purse. After the great victory of Blenheim, the nation presented him with Blenheim Palace which was reported to have cost 500,000 pounds, but not all of it was paid for.

10 Loc. cit.
11 Evans, Our Old Nobility, p. 5.
by the state. This gift struck the imagination of the English but such gifts had danger: "The Duke of Marlborough is building a very great Palace at Woodstock, which the Queen made him a grant of; and 5,000 pounds a year out of the Post Office is settled on him...in order that he...may be able to maintain the grandeur of it. Great is the man, and great have been his actions, but all these favours create enemies." After Banillies (1706) a pension of 4,000 pounds per annum was granted to the duke and his heirs forever and Marlborough House on Pall Mall, built at a cost of 40,000 pounds was presented to him.

At the death of the great duke in 1722, his wealth was reported to be enormous. Sir John Vanbrugh, who perhaps was not an unbiased witness since he had many conflicts with Sarah over the building of Blenheim Palace, reported to Lord Carlisle concerning Marlborough's wealth:

The Treasury, a little before he died, found he had a full million rolling in the government, on loans, etc., besides his Stocks, his ninety-nine year's annuities, not subscribed in, his land, his Post house 5,000 pounds a year, his mortgages, and God knows what he may have besides in foreign banks. He has left his widow (I wish some ensign had her) 10,000 pounds a year, to spoil Blenheim her own way; 12,000 pounds a year more.


13 Evans, Our Old Nobility, p. 19 ff.
to keep herself clean, and plague folks at law with; 2,000 pounds a year to Lord Sunderland forever, and as much to the Duchess of Montagu for life...and the gross of his wealth (for these are but snippings) to Lady Godolphin and her successors, according to the grand settlement.

Vanbrugh's account is so definite in many areas that it appears that he had a great deal of specific information, although it is evident that he thought the Marlborough wealth to be endless. The "grand settlement" refers to the succession to the Marlborough title, for Marlborough had no sons living. The patent for the title declared that the title was to pass to the eldest daughter, Henrietta Churchill, Countess Godolphin and to her heirs, and if there should be no issue there, then to the heirs of the second daughter Anne, who was the wife of Charles Spencer, Earl of Sunderland; the latter, of course, supplied the heirs to the title, the Spencer-Churchills, Dukes of Marlborough.

The great duke and Sarah had the reputation of being greedy and stingy and the duke's political enemies had accused him of making money on army stores during his European campaigns, although he denied this. At his death there was a general expectation that the duke would make some public benefaction out of his great wealth but the will disclosed none and this was considered mean and niggardly by his peers. "Tis great pity, as your Lordship observes, that the Duke made

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no disposition to public uses, the want of which reflects cruelly upon him."\textsuperscript{15}

Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, lived on and on until 1744, thereby outliving her famous husband for twenty-two years. Sarah was opinionated, easily offended, and generally difficult to get along with. She quarrelled with her grandson, Charles, Lord Sunderland, son of her second daughter Anne, and his succession as third Duke of Marlborough in 1733 left him in desperate financial straits, for his grandmother, as Dowager Duchess, evidently held and controlled the mass of the Marlborough fortune during her lifetime. As Hervey reported to Henry Fox, a friend of the new duke:

Your friend Lord Sunderland, now Duke of Marlborough, will certainly be ruined by his succession to his new title. He thinks he must increase his expenses with grandeur, and the éclat of his way of living with that of his appellations; he is, without the addition of 1,000 pounds a year to his income, doubling the charges of his disbursements, which before were so extravagant that he was in this year three score thousand in debt... If his grandmother should live seven years he will be ruined. He is now reconciled to her.\textsuperscript{16}

The third Duke did not stay on good terms with his grandmother for long, but he had an ally in his troubles in the person of John, fourth Duke of Bedford. Bedford had married as his first wife a

\textsuperscript{15} Loc. cit.
granddaughter of Sarah, Diana, sister of the third Duke and she had brought with her in the marriage a dowry of 30,000 pounds and Bedford was to receive 100,000 pounds more upon the death of Sarah. Sarah was no respecter of persons and she treated Bedford very badly. In fact, upon the death of Diana, she practically accused Bedford of causing it by negligence. When in 1736 Marlborough and his grandmother were on bad terms again, Bedford offered to come to his assistance. Bedford reportedly offered to supply Marlborough with money until he should come into his inheritance to the sum of ten thousand pounds a year, "if he will go to law and torment the Old Dowager!"

The Duke outlived his grandmother and at last came into his own. Marlborough followed a military career but with little success, especially in the unfortunate raid on St. Malo; Horace Walpole, who held a high opinion of the bravery and character of the duke, commented that the French "learned that they were not to be conquered by every Duke of Marlborough." The duke's troubles ended with his death at Munster on October 20, 1758, where he was serving with the army.

17 *The Autobiography and Correspondence of Mary Granville, Mrs. Delany,* ed., Lady Llanover (London, 1861), I, 554-555. Mrs. Pendarves to Dr. Swift, April 22, 1736. Hereafter cited as *Mrs. Delany.*


It is evident that not all of the dukes were as wealthy as those first mentioned. But nearly all of the dukes, regardless of inherited wealth, sought and received either pensions or places which were in the hands of the government to bestow. These positions were often of feudal origin and had no duties attached to them; but if some duties remained, they were performed by deputies or clerks. In discussing the positions held by the dukes during this period, only those where information is available concerning financial reward will be mentioned. The eighty-one dukes in this study held during their lifetimes a grand total of two hundred and forty positions which were non-political and non-military. The positions were by no means evenly divided, for some held none and others very few.

The Duke of Bolton, Charles, third Duke, was a well-known pensioner. He was the holder of at least eight positions, most of which were certainly rewarding, during his lifetime. It was he who married the actress, Lavinia Fenton, after twenty-three years of life together and three illegitimate sons as a product of their union. The duke was made Captain of the Band of Gentleman Pensioners in 1740 and Lord Egmont reported a bon mot of Lord Chesterfield, "that it was very hard on the Band to put the last of the pensioners at their head." The word last had a double meaning, not only that he was a great

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pensioner, but it "has also a reproach with it, in as much as the
nation have of late years been much animated against lords who have
pensions." Even the death of Bolton in 1754 was cause for comment,
for Sir Thomas Robinson stated that it usually easier to get money
from the King when some money returned to him and that was the case
in 1754, for large pensions fell to the crown by the death of the
Duke of Bolton and Lord Grantham.22

The bastards of Charles II were on the whole well provided with
sinecures and other economic benefits by which to maintain their ducal
titles. Nearly all of them also married well and no doubt thereby
increased their holdings of land and as well their capital wealth.

The Dukes of St. Albans, descendants of Charles II and Nell
Gwynn were not too great a drain on the Exchequer. The first Duke
married Diana de Vere, the sole heir of the last Earl of Oxford, one
of the oldest noble houses in England. The Dukes were granted two
hereditary offices, Grand Falconer of England, which produced 1, 372
pounds a year; and Hereditary Registrar of the Court of Chancery which
brought to the holder 640 pounds per annum. They reportedly possessed
fewer than 10,000 acres of land.23

The Dukes of Richmond and Lennox, descendants of Charles II and
Louise de Keroualle, Duchess of Portsmouth in England, and later

21 Loc. cit.
22 Carlisle Manuscripts, p. 209. Sir Thomas Robinson to Lord
Carlisle, December 7, 1754.
23 Evans, Our Old Nobility, p. 197.
Duchess of Aubigny in France, were well provided for by King Charles. He granted to them the famous "Richmond Shilling," that is, the dukes were to receive one shilling per chaldron of coal shipped on the River Tyne which was to be consumed in England. Walpole reported in 1770 that the grant brought the Duke 12,000 pounds per annum.24 This grant remained active until 1799 when by Act of Parliament the Richmonds gave up this grant in return for an annuity from the government of 19,000 pounds. The Richmonds reportedly held over 280,000 acres of land.25

The second Duke of Richmond, Charles, inherited the title of Duke of Aubigny in France from his grandmother who was Duchess of Portsmouth for life in England and Duchess of Aubigny in France, a title granted to her by Louis XIV in return for her services to France while residing in England. Lord Hervey reported in 1734 that the Duke of Richmond "gets 8,000 pounds in all by old Portsmouth's death."26 Portsmouth was old, in fact eighty-nine at her death, and as a result of her French title the Richmonds became the only family in England to be peers both in France and England, and presumably the Aubigny estates continued to be a source of profit to the dukes.

The Richmonds were a proud family and, although they held relatively few high positions, they served the nation well, especially

24 Walpole, George III, II, 259 (1770).
25 Evans, Our Old Nobility, p. 122 ff.

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in military matters; the second Duke, Charles, was a general and the third Duke, Charles, who had served gallantly at Minden eventually became a Field Marshal in 1796. The third Duke was popularly known as the "Radical Duke" for he favored universal suffrage and annual parliaments, and, as a result, lost favor with some of the great Whig families. He had been Master General of Ordnance in Rockingham's Administration, but although many good Whigs, including Burke and the Duke of Portland, lost their places upon Rockingham's death in 1783, Richmond retained his position, although it was politically unwise. His sister, Lady Sarah Napier, asked him why he remained and he answered:

It may seem vain to say I think I can be of service in the Ordnance, and yet no man ought to take a place if he is not of the opinion he is fit for it. I own I think I am. I have begun great changes, I mean them for the good of my country and not for my own emolument. If I forsake my plan for fear of being abused for avarice, which I know I don't deserve, is it not forsaking all the good I propose to do?28

This high expression of sentiment by the Duke portrayed his basic patriotism and also perhaps a general fear of being considered avaricious, especially since the family was so favored by state grants.

27 Rockingham Memoirs, I, 339.
His sister Sarah replied to the Duke that such feelings were to be applauded but that to remain was not wise politically, "Some will say he wants power, patronage, or something; your great patriot loves a place as well as his neighbors." 29

The Dukes of Grafton, also descendants of Charles II by Barbara Villiers (Palmer) were well provided for by the king. They had been granted handsome pensions; 9,000 pounds per annum from the Excise and 4,700 pounds from the Post Office, which they retained until 1795, when by Act of Parliament these were exchanged for an annuity of 870 pounds. The Graftons also held lucrative sinecures, the Rangership of Whittlebury Forest at 236 pounds per annum and Receiver General of the Profits of the Seals in King's Bench and Common Pleas which brought 3,780 pounds per annum. The total pensions of the Graftons were figured by Evans to be more than 18,770 pounds per annum. 30

For the economic and financial positions of the other bastards of Charles II who lived in this period, the records available indicate but little. The Duke of Northumberland, George Fitz-Roy, who died in 1716 when the title became extinct, was a military man by training and held several positions which may have been lucrative. He was Chief Butler of England, Lord Lieutenant of Berkshire and Surrey, Constable of Windsor Castle, and keeper of several of the royal forests, and

\[29 \text{ Loc. cit.} \]
\[30 \text{ Evans, Our Old Nobility, p. 1 ff.}\]
had an income of about 3,000 pounds per annum. The Duke was the second son of Barbara Villiers, Duchess of Cleveland, and Charles II, and was well thought of by all, in fact was considered to be the best of the king's children. Macky gave him a good character, "He is a man of honour, nice in paying his debts, and living well with his neighbors in the country..."31 Charles II created his first son by Barbara Villiers, Duke of Southampton in 1675, and this Duke inherited his mother's title of Cleveland in 1709 and is usually referred to as the Duke of Cleveland and Southampton. He was considered to have a weak intellect or, as Hervey stated it, his name was "proverbial for idiocy" and is of no importance historically.32 The second and last holder of the titles, William (1696-1774), was also a nonentity. This son was undoubtedly provided for by his father as were his brothers and half-brothers.

It appears that there were always more persons, ducal and otherwise, who were ready to take lucrative positions than there were positions to be had. Trouble frequently arose when changes in offices had to be made and the holder who was to be displaced demanded a *quid pro quo*. In 1757 when a new ministry was formed by Pitt-Newcastle, the Duke of Dorset was set aside as Master of the Horse, but he also

32 Ilchester, Hervey, pp. 117-118. Hervey to Stephen Fox, December 2, 1731.
held the Wardenhip of the Cinque Ports, so in order, probably, to
make up for his loss of the Mastership, he had a pension of 3,000
pounds per annum added to his Wardenhip.33

The ancient position of Master of the Fox Hounds and Harriers
was a sinecure, and a lucrative one, in the eighteenth century. It
apparently had a salary attached of 2,000 pounds per annum, at least
in 1730. In that year the position was offered to Lord Carlisle with
such a salary. From that sum the holder had to pay his deputy and
any other charges which arose from the office, but as Robert Walpole
stated, "his majesty...leaves the distribution of the whole and the
nomination of inferior offices with their several appointments to
your Lordship's pleasure and discretion."34 It appears from the
deliberate way in which Sir Robert stated the proposal to Lord
Carlisle, that the possibility of making more than the 2,000 pounds
salary could be easily realized due to his freedom in nominating per-
sons to fill the inferior offices. Walpole was cynical in such
affairs and would have certainly made the most of such a rewarding
offer of a "place."

Positions in the cabinet evidently carried considerable financial
reward, at least under George II. Sir Thomas Robinson stated in 1733
that Cabinet Councillors' positions brought with them, due to pensions

33 Walpole, George II, III, 31.
34 Carlisle Manuscripts, p. 77. Sir Robert Walpole to Lord Carlisle, July 14, 1730.

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added by the King, 3,000 pounds per annum. It is very doubtful if salary alone would cause a man to desire to be of the Cabinet, but as a source of income for the dukes it cannot be overlooked.

One of the best examples of finding a position for a duke which was honorable and rewarding is the case of Thomas, fourth Duke of Leeds, in 1748. It is evident from the sources that the Duke possessed few capabilities for serious work, a fact which was recognized by all. The reason he received attention was because he was the Duke of Newcastle's brother-in-law, and Newcastle asked favors for him.

On August 11, 1748 John, Duke of Bedford, answered a request from Newcastle that a place be found for Leeds. Bedford's solution was for Lord Halifax to move to the Board of Trade and give up his position as Chief Justice in Eyre of the Forests South of the Trent, so that the Duke of Leeds could succeed him. "I...mention this as a means of getting the Duke of Leeds into an employment suitable for him, and at the same time putting an efficient man at the head of the Board of Trade." By September 3, 1748 Bedford had found time to write to Lord Halifax explaining the situation and Newcastle's request to bring the Duke of Leeds into "some honorable employment in His Majesty's service, which did not require much attention or application.

Finally on September 15, 1748 Henry Pelham, Chancellor of the Exchequer and First Lord of the Treasury, the Prime Minister in fact, took time, undoubtedly at his brother's suggestion, to write to Bedford to say that the Duke of Leeds had been with him, and "is in exceeding good humour, very much pleased with what is designed for him, and submits as to time and manner to whatever shall be thought proper." Leeds received his Chief Justiceship South of Trent and later North of Trent.

One of the very wealthy dukes of the period was Hugh Smithson who married, in 1740, Elizabeth, the daughter and sole heir of Algernon, seventh Duke of Somerset, at whose death in 1743 the ducal title went to the nearest male heir, Sir Edward Seymour, a descendant of the first duke. But the title to the Earldom of Northumberland went to Smithson by a special remainder, for his wife was the last descendant of the Percies. Her grandfather, Charles, sixth Duke of Somerset, had married Josceline Percy, sole heir of the Earl of Northumberland. Therefore, upon the death of his father-in-law, Algernon, the "Proud Duke" of Somerset, Smithson had his name changed to Percy by Act of Parliament and became eighteenth Earl of Northumberland. Honors and positions came to the new Earl of Northumberland very rapidly: Knight of the Garter, 1757; Lord Lieutenant of Northumberland, 1760; and under George III honors came in even

37 Ibid., I, 497. Duke of Bedford to Lord Halifax, September 3, 1748.
38 Ibid., I, 521. Henry Pelham to Duke of Bedford, September 15, 1748.
greater number for he was a full supporter of the King. He was a Privy Councillor in 1762 and Lord Chamberlain to the Queen, as well as being made Lord Lieutenant of Middlesex and Westminster.

In 1763 the Earl was appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and in this position he displayed his wealth for all to see and envy. On his return, Horace Walpole painted a full picture of the effects of Northumberland's regime in Ireland:

...where his profusion had been so great, that it seemed to lay a dangerous precedent for succeeding governors, who must risk unpopularity...or ruin their fortunes...Lord Northumberland had an advantageous figure and much courtesy in his address, which being supported by the most expensive magnificence, made him extremely popular with the meaner sort...the old nobility beheld his pride with envy and anger,...for his expense was a mere sacrifice to vanity, as appeared by his sordid and illiberal behaviour at play.39

The Northumberland display of pomp offended the old nobility and the Earl was a poor loser in games of chance, but he was a rare winner in other areas. The aim of the Earl was to reach the highest rank in the peerage and, as has been shown, George III created him a Duke in 1766, one of his very few ducal creations.

The new Duke of Northumberland possessed great wealth and according to Evans' compilation held 185,000 acres of land and had an annual income of 186,000 pounds.40 The Duke was a good agriculturist and was known for his efforts at reforestation on his great estates. He was

40 Evans, Our Old Nobility, p. 155 ff.
also a great builder or re-builder, for he had Northumberl land House and Sion House rebuilt, and refurnished the old baronial seat of the Earls of Northumberl and, Alnwick Castle. He expended great sums on his chief seat, Stanwick, in Northumberl and. Although the Duke was wealthy and had received more than gracious attention from George III, he asked for royal aid in a Middlesex election held to fill a vacancy caused by a death, in September 1779. George III ordered Lord North, "to prepare a warrant for my signature instead of that of the Treasury. If the Duke of Northumberland requires some gold pills for the election; it would be wrong not to give him some assistance." 
Thus George III had to dip into his Privy Purse in order to help the Duke win an election; that of a King's man, no doubt.

The Dukes of Rutland possessed considerable wealth, although not on the same scale as the Northumberlands. The Dukes had, according to Evans, 69,000 acres of land and an annual income of 90,000 pounds, as well as extensive London property. The Rutlands were not great holders of office except for John, third Duke, who held court positions as well as being Groom of the Stole and Master of the Horse. Walpole explained the Duke's dislike of the Stole thus, "The Duke of Rutland was not pleased with the office of Groom of the Stole, which

42 Evans, Our Old Nobility, p. 56 ff.
had fewer employments in its disposal,...(it was) given therefore to Lord Holderness; but the very next day the Duke was appointed Master of the Horse... Rutland preferred the position with the greater number of places and got it.

The Dukes of Norfolk, the premier Dukes, Earls and Barons of England, were unrivalled in family alliances and blood; the family had more K. G.'s (twenty-two) than any other; and they possessed twenty distinct peerages. At the Reformation the Norfolks had been great recipients of land taken from the church and monasteries by Henry VIII, and were reported by Evans to have an annual income of nearly 270,000 pounds. The Norfolks also received lease rents and a percentage of the price of coal which was under their property from mining operations. The Dukes played little part in politics during the century for they were Roman Catholics, except that Charles, the eleventh Duke, who inherited the title in 1786, had renounced Catholicism during the Gordon Riots in 1780. The credulity of the period is no place better shown than in the willingness of the people to believe anything of the Roman Catholics. Upon the death of Thomas, eighth Duke, in 1732, Sir Thomas Robinson reported, "The Duke of Norfolk died at two this morn;
it is currently reported he was poisoned by the Jesuits some months since, on account of his having made some declarations that carried the appearance as if he intended to turn Protestant. Edw. Edward, the ninth Duke, a Tory and a staunch Roman Catholic, inherited the title in 1732 and lived until 1770, dying at the age of ninety-one. Shortly after inheriting the title, he and his Duchess appeared at court.

...they were received with great distinction. The Duchess...behaved much to her credit; she assured the Queen, though she and the Duke were of a different religion, they had as much duty and regard for the King as any of his subjects, and should be glad to every occasion that gave 'em an opportunity to show it...The court was very well pleased with this visit, the Duke and Duchess of Norfolk are both such bigots, it was not expected they would give this open declaration of quitting the interest of the Pretender.

In spite of this declaration the Duke received nothing from the Whigs; Roman Catholicism, Toryism, and perhaps Jacobitism, were all cut out of one cloth to the Whigs.

The Chandos family received most of its immense fortune from the first duke, who was Paymaster of the Forces Abroad, 1705-1713. This position was a very lucrative one for the Paymaster had every opportunity of using government funds in his private speculations, since accounting was usually years behind and all he had to be able to do was meet current demands upon his accounts. The Paymaster also could receive a percentage of the cash subsidies which the English paid to

48 Ibid., p. 96. Lady Irwin to Lord Carlisle, January 16, 1733.
their continental allies. This position was by far the best a money-seeker could wish for, as Henry Fox, later Baron Holland, was to discover.

James, first Duke, nicknamed "Princely Chandos," spent huge amounts of money on his residence, Canons, in Middlesex, and on a retinue of servants and a "concert" of twenty-four musicians to ornament the beautiful palace. The palace was extremely uneconomical and, in spite of some rich marriages, by 1780 the third and last Duke of Chandos was reported to be completely bankrupt. The third Duke resigned the Lieutenancy of Hampshire, really because he was not made Governor of the Isle of Wight, and as George III reported, "I have since heard he is completely ruined, and means to retire to Florence..."49 The report of the financial condition of the Duke was correct and upon his death in 1789, Canons was torn down and the furnishings sold to pay the family debts.

The Dukes of Manchester played a very small part in eighteenth-century affairs. Reportedly, they possessed a very small income50 and George, the fourth Duke, who inherited the title in 1762, was reported in 1767 to be without funds or credit and ready to go abroad. "The Duke of Manchester must seek another country, the house in this square is to be sold, the castle in the country to be let, but who is there

49 George III-North Correspondence, II, 303-304. February 10, 1780.
50 Evans, Our Old Nobility, p. 118 ff.
can take it? He has not paid a tradesman since his father dyed."51
The house was quickly sold to Mr. Child, the banker, for 10,000
guineas.52 It may be noted that none was created K. G., and that
each held sinecures in order to secure an additional income to keep
up the title.

The incomes of the dukes evidently varied greatly, from the
wealth of the Bedfords or Marlboroughs to the comparative poverty of
the Manchester or the bankruptcy of the Chandos family. The amount
necessary to keep up a title is difficult to determine in any exact
sense. It was reported that 300 pounds a year would make a very poor
earl in 1721, as indeed it would have.53 In 1778 Dr. Johnson reported
to Boswell that Lord Shelburne told him, "that a man of high rank, who
looks into his own affairs, may have all that he ought to have, all
that can be of any use, or appear with any advantage, for 5,000 pounds
a year."54 This was, of course, a sizeable sum of money per year and
would have kept nearly any individual in great state. Yet the ex­
penses attendant upon an estate were often very great, as is wit­
nessed by some sage advice given to a young commoner in 1740 in

51 Emily F. D. Osborn, ed., Political and Social Letters of a Lady
Sarah Byng Osborn to John Osborn, March 31, 1767.
52 Ibid., p. 170. Sarah Byng Osborn to John Osborn, April (?),
1767.
53 Carlisle Manuscripts, p. 35. Lady Lechmere to Lord Carlisle,
August 19, 1721.
54 James Boswell, The Life of Samuel Johnson, ed., Roger Ingpen
(Boston, 1925), p. 772.
regard to his estate:

The annual expense of the house, gardens, and park is near a third of the clear produce of the estate, whether one live there or not, which is an insupportable grievance. The high price of labor, the dearness of provisions and difficulty of getting them for want of markets, the expectations such a house creates and the number of hangers on, with which the kitchen is always full, are further grievances. People seem to expect that a man's expense should be measured by the size of the house, and not of his estate, which is so absurd...55

If this could be said of a commoner's estate, how much more applicable it is to a noble estate. Yet, for the noble, the estates which were the major sources of his income were only one major source of his expenditures. The greater nobles also had mansions in London which they had to keep up even though they were only occasional visitors to them, except during parliament term, or during the social season. Servants were hired in great numbers by the nobles, and although their wages were very low, the expense of boarding them must have been large. Daniel Defoe quoted as a source The Country Gentleman's Vademecum for the costs of a nobleman's household. This source stated that a nobleman's establishment comprising twenty-five or thirty persons maintained "gentilly and plentifully" should cost from 1,200 to 1,500 pounds per year, and of this the servants' wages would amount to only 170 pounds.56

55 Historical Manuscripts Commission, Rare Manuscripts (London, 1895), p. 257. Francis Hare, Bishop of Chichester to Francis Maylor, April 2, 1740.
Although the major expenditures of the dukes appear to have been in maintaining their estates, in keeping up their London mansions and in providing for their families, these were only part of their necessary outlays. The inherited social position of the dukes brought with it many responsibilities. A ducal family which had been established and had owned the same land for generations, perhaps giving it by various tenures to members of the same tenant families for the same generations, developed a feeling of responsibility for what they could with reason term "their people." The protective attitude of the noble toward the tenant was reciprocated by a feeling of loyalty and support, for the tenant felt his well-being to be dependent upon that of his lord. Certainly a London merchant, for example, a "New Man," who purchased a manor and retired to the country, would neither have had a feeling for the problems of his new tenants nor have received the support from them that a representative of an old family obtained. The attitude displayed toward the human needs and desires of tenants was certainly one distinction between the "old" and "new" families. Naturally the nobles did not live on all of their manors and some rarely visited those at a great distance, except perhaps to hunt. The nobles had land stewards who managed their manors for them, collected rents, kept tenant cottages in repair, and the like, and who were largely in control of affairs on the manors. It is often human to blame distresses or illiberal treatment on those present rather than those absent, and the steward was often blamed for local difficulties, while the lord of the manor was praised for the reverse.
The attitude of an old and very aristocratic family to the needs of their tenants in time of distress and devastation is seen in the actions of the Bedfords. The Marquis of Tavistock, the eldest son of the Duke of Bedford, was well thought of by all and universally praised, but unfortunately died as the result of an accident in 1767. In 1766 his tenants and others in his neighborhood were in distress because of the scarcity and high price of provisions, and he wrote to his father telling him that he planned to do as he had done some years previously, to sell his wheat to the distressed at five shillings a bushel; "that will be an infinite relief to them and a very fair price to me as a farmer." He also planned to buy rye on the next market day and to sell it at cost to the distressed "so by mixing these together they will have excellent bread at a pretty fair price." This was not exactly philanthropy but it displayed a continuing and intimate desire to protect the unfortunate from want and unfair prices in time of need. The Marquis himself defrayed the cost of transporting the rye from the market, "ten wagon loads."

The Duke of Bedford himself, although thought to be mean and grasping by his political opponents, displayed the concern of his class and a very warm and human facet of his personality when concerned with his people in distress. The Bedfords had owned Thornley in Bedfordshire for generations, and when a terrible flood struck the

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57 Bedford Correspondence, III, 347. Marquis of Tavistock to Duke of Bedford, October 22, 1766.

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area in 1770, the Duke sent his steward five hundred pounds for the relief of those who had suffered and promised more if needed. "The care of the poor and their stock is the first thing to be thought of." The next day, November 27, the Duke wrote again to suggest that perhaps the money could best be used to buy clothes for "the poor and miserable children who have escaped out of the cottages almost naked," and he ordered all the clothes made up at Woburn, his seat, to be sent to the village. Examples of this type of expenditure of money on the part of nobles could be expanded easily. Not that they spent a great deal of their income for this purpose, but they were conscious of their inherited responsibilities as landlords for the human needs among relatively helpless classes.

The dukes as heads of families and great landowners required the services of attorneys and solicitors in the conduct of their business affairs. The laws relating to the ownership, use, lease and descent of landed property were complex and only one trained in the law of property could have advised a landowner concerning his rights and duties. Most of the ducal land was let to tenants by various tenures and terms, and keeping account of these must have required the expenditure of large sums of money. As the holder of a title, a duke was head of his family, and at the marriage of his children, especially of

the eldest son, settlements had to be drawn up providing for the inheritance of property, real and personal, for dowries for daughters, annuities for sons or widows, and a host of other provisions, all of which necessitated the employment of lawyers.

Proceedings at law were expensive and often lasted for years, devouring great sums of money. The first Duke of Chandos engaged in many law suits concerning his business ventures and spent five hundred pounds in one suit alone which dragged on for years. The Duke of Portland and Sir James Lowther were great political rivals in the north of England and fought legal as well as political battles. Portland attempted to stop actions which were taking place on land which he claimed, but Lowther filed suit against him claiming that the area had not been included in Portland's deed and that therefore he did not own it. The Portlands had held the land for over sixty years, believing they owned it. This situation led to repeated suits which lasted for years and was not finally settled until the passage of the Nullum Tempus Act which specified that if land had been held for twenty-one years without challenge it belonged to the holder.

The Douglas peerage case lasted for many years and cost the litigants enormous sums of money. The Duke of Hamilton and Brandon, one of the principals in the case, who was still a minor and on tour,

wrote to his mother, the Duchess of Argyll after she had informed him of the action at law:

I think Law Suits at all times are very bad things...I am not avaritious (sic) Was I helping the poor, relieving (sic) the distressed, I should not grudge the money that was given away - on the contrary, I should receive pleasure - but to hurt myself and enrich a set of low, mercenary Wretches, Lawyers, whom I detest, and with reason, I think is too bad.62

Politics could be used as a means of securing additional income on the one hand, yet on the other it could devour huge sums in this pre-reform age. We have already seen that the Duke of Newcastle greatly reduced his fortune as a result of a lifetime of politics. The Duke of Portland spent great sums in his political battles with Lowther, who later became Earl of Lonsdale, especially in the general election of 1768. Lowther, who controlled nine seats, was one of the great politicians of the century and won the nickname of "the bad Earl" in Cumberland. By the Standing Order of 1701 the Commons declared it in infringement of their privileges for a noble to attempt to influence an election to the House of Commons. The Order was completely ignored, for the losing faction in these political struggles sometimes carried their animosity so far as to complain to the Commons about noble interference in elections, as was the case with the Duke of Chandos.63

The social life of the nobles consumed vast amounts of money. Their style of life was high, and continuous rounds of entertainment consumed much of their time and money. The men's political and social clubs, such as White's and Brook's where gambling was a major pastime in Georgian England, led to the ruin of some estates. The stakes were often extremely high, for as Hervey reported to Henry Fox in 1736, "I hear the Duke of Marlborough is ruining himself at Bath, though he won 4,600 pounds upon one card at basset." In 1781, gambling was still a popular vice but appears to have declined somewhat from previous years; as reported by George Selwyn, the only steady punter at Brook's was "that idiot the Duke of Rutland." Since most of the wealth of the noble class was in real estate they were often short of ready money and were characteristically the borrowing class. Sums could be borrowed from lawyers, merchants and what contemporaries called 'the monied interest.' In order to secure the means to pursue an active life, including gambling, to meet current expenses or provide marriage portions for daughters, many of the nobles encumbered their estates by mortgages, although often the power to do so was partially limited by the strict settlement.

64 Ilchester, Hervey, p. 258. Hervey to Henry Fox, December 4, 1736.
65 Carlisle Manuscripts, p. 544. George Selwyn to Lord Carlisle, December 3, 1781.
67 Ibid., pp. 9-11.
peculiar, for he was to inherit the estates at his father's death according to the provisions of the strict settlement which his father had signed before his marriage. Therefore the father had no real control over the actions of his son. The heir was free to sell his annuities from his father's estate; a method by which a person of little immediate worth could borrow large amounts, often on terms which proved burdensome or disastrous. Sums could also be borrowed, undoubtedly at high rates of interest, upon the promise to pay after the death of an heir's father, the post obit. This was in essence a promissory note but undoubtedly better drawn than the most unusual one given by a very foolish person, the Duchess of Bolton, a natural daughter of the Duke of Monmouth and therefore a granddaughter of Charles II. Hers read as follows: "I owe the bearer of this: ______ (pounds), which I promise to pay when I am able."69

The areas of investment in, and income from, ducal participation in the commerce, urban development, and technological advances of the period is a subject into which much research remains to be done. It is probable during the period of this study that such investments provided only a minor source of income for English nobles. As we have seen, most of their capital was not in liquid form and although the general economic position of the landowning class tended to improve

68 Loc. cit.
during the whole century due to agrarian improvements, enclosures, increasing population and a rise in rents, it did not become spectacular until the wars against Revolutionary and Napoleonic France. Thus the average duke would have had only a limited capital to invest in capitalistic enterprises.

The first Duke of Chandos, who had accumulated his great fortune during his tenure of the Paymaster's Office during Queen Anne's wars, was a continuous investor in, and promoter of, schemes of many kinds. He lost a fortune in the South Sea Bubble but this did not ruin him, although he was evidently very short of ready money and credit, for it was reported in 1721 that "the noble Chandos is reduced to be three days borrowing eight hundred pounds."71

In 1720 Chandos purchased the Bridgwater estate near Bristol and hoped to establish a thriving industrial town and to profit from ground leases, construction of buildings and industrial ventures themselves.72 The duke's ventures were all dismal failures but he was always ready for another. In 1725 he established a soap works at Bridgwater but the soap was of poor quality and too expensive and within two years the scheme had ended.73 While the soap scheme was still boiling he hired experts to start a glass factory in 1726 to produce bottles and sheet glass, but this too failed.74 Next, in

72 Baker, Chandos, p. 229.
73 Ibid., p. 230.
74 Ibid., p. 232.
1727, he and others established a distillery which failed in 1731.\textsuperscript{75} Thus the duke’s attempted development of his Bridgwater property was a dismal failure, although his efforts are an interesting example of noble interest in manufacturing and the profits to be gained from it.

Chandos was always optimistic that the next venture would be successful and make him a sizeable amount of money. One of the duke’s main difficulties was his incurable credulity, for regardless of how patently absurd a scheme was, he was ready to invest. He had invested money in oyster fisheries on the coast of England, in the mining of a reported find of excellent pipe clay, and in the development of reported coal, copper and lead deposits. The duke was not only ready to put money into his own schemes, and those of others, but also invested in stock companies of every description. The South Sea Company was only one such investment, for he also held interests in the Mississippi Company, the Africa Company, the East India Company, the York Buildings, Sun Fire Insurance Company, Scottish mining developments and in New York land.\textsuperscript{76} None of the duke’s investments seem to have brought him much money and he apparently died poorer for all of his efforts.

Francis, third and last Duke of Bridgewater, is a notable example of final success for a ducal investor and promoter. The duke took

\textsuperscript{75} Ibid., p. 231.
\textsuperscript{76} Ibid., p. 237 ff.
little part in politics and rarely visited London after the failure of his romance with Elizabeth Gunning. He settled on his property, Old Hall, near Manchester, in order to develop its resources, especially the Worsley coal mines. The price of coal was greatly increased due to the cost of transporting it from the mines. Bridgewater became interested in the building of canals largely because of his collieries. The duke's canal building would not have been possible without the engineering genius of James Brindley. The money of Bridgewater and the brains of Brindley led to the successful completion of the Worsley canal, which opened on July 17, 1761. The success of this venture reduced the price of the duke's coal by one-half. The Worsley canal was but the first of the canals, for the duke and Brindley were soon engaged upon a much larger enterprise, the Liverpool canal. This project nearly exhausted the resources of the duke. In the 1760's he was reduced to living upon 400 pounds a year and often had to send his steward to his tenants to borrow five pounds at a time. The duke is said to have resembled George III to a remarkable degree, but with his financial difficulties his appearance suffered and he went about in tattered clothes which were usually dirty and smudged with snuff. The duke refused to raise money on his landed property, and with reason, but pledged his Worsley canal to Messrs. Child, the London bankers, for twenty-five thousand pounds in order

77 Dictionary of National Biography, VI, 570-71.
78 Loc. cit.
to carry forward the Liverpool canal. The canal was finally com­
pleted and the duke's canal building practically ceased after 1772.
In all, the "Canal Duke" expended over 220,000 pounds on canals
which ultimately brought him 80,000 pounds annually. The rest of his
life he spent superintending his collieries and canals. Pennant,
noting the "felicity of the Duke of Bridgewater to find such a genius
as Brindley," found great improvements in the countryside due to the
existence of the canals. "Miserable thatch" had disappeared from
cottages and they were covered with tiles or slate; formerly barren
fields were rich due to manure "conveyed on the canal toll-free,"
coal was more plentiful and cheaper, and "monopolizers of corn are
prevented from exercising their infamous trade..." 79

Several ducal families owned substantial sections of land in or
near eighteenth-century London, and as the city expanded the owners
profited greatly from the unearned increment in the value of their
property. The place names alone in London indicate the ownership of
some areas, but we do not know at what period these landowners began
to draw a significant part of their incomes from urban property. 80
The Bedfords had great London holdings in the Bloomsbury estate which
they had inherited from the Wriothesleys, Earls of Southampton.

Thomas Wriothesley, fourth Earl of Southampton, built Bloomsbury
Square in the 1660's, the first open space in London so designated.

79 Thomas Pennant, The Journey from Chester to London (London, 1787),
pp. 52-55.
80 Habakkuk, England, p. 5.
The building of such new sections of the city was undertaken as a speculation and many followed the aristocratic lead by building great houses on the squares.\footnote{John Summerson, \textit{Georgian London} (New York, 1946), p. 26.} In 1766 John, fourth Duke of Bedford, proposed the creation of Bedford Square, and after his death in 1771 the Dowager Duchess pushed the project with the help of Robert Palmer, the principal agent of the Bloomsbury estate.\footnote{Ibid., pp. 147-48.} The development of the Bedford property continued into the nineteenth century, when in the 1820's Tavistock Square and Woburn Place were erected.\footnote{Ibid., pp. 174-75.}

Gladys Scott-Thomson, who carried out one of the few systematic researches in the economic history of a noble family, has shown that the Bloomsbury estate yielded a gross return of 3,700 pounds in 1732 and by 1771 yielded about 8,000 pounds, contributing perhaps between a third and a fourth of the family income.\footnote{England, p. 5.} It also appears that the Bedfords had interests in the East India Company and perhaps in other trading ventures. Horace Walpole, who was often ungenerous in his comments on the Bedfords, gave John, fourth Duke, credit for speaking readily "and upon trade, well."\footnote{Walpole, \textit{George II}, I, 186.} The Dukes of Portland also held extensive London property and undoubtedly profited as did the Bedfords, although no study has been made of their urban holdings and returns.
Some of the nobles, such as Bridgewater, the Norfolks and Portlands, developed mineral deposits, especially coal, which they owned. Perhaps few actually undertook mineral developments themselves, but rather leased the mineral rights on long terms to promoters; therefore, the increase in the value of their mineral deposits went to the developer and not to the noble lessor. Habakkuk cited the example of the Windsor family which let its iron deposits on lease in 1749 for ninety-nine years at a rent of thirty-one pounds a year; when the lease expired in 1848, it was renewed at a rent of almost 25,000 pounds a year. 86

The eighteenth century was the great age of the "improving landlord," and many nobles took the lead. The correspondence of the period is full of comments upon agricultural problems and conditions. Lord Rockingham at Wentworth, Lord Egremont at Petworth, Lord Coke at Holkham and the Duke of Bedford at Woburn, among many others, were leaders in agricultural improvements. 87 Many of the nobles, including Bedford, Richmond and Chesterfield, were interested not only in increasing their incomes by introducing better agricultural methods, but also in introducing new crops. Some grew and collected new or exotic plants in their orangeries which had been sent to them from all over the world. The wit and knowledge of the urbane Lord Chesterfield is mixed in many of his letters with reports on the condition

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86 Habakkuk, England, p. 11.
of his melons. Philip Miller, a well-known botanist in the eighteenth century, wrote frequently to the Duke of Bedford and sent him seeds of various kinds which had come from America, Dutch clover seeds, melon seeds and Balm of Gilead fir plants. 88 Bedford was as interested in his trees, especially his pines, as he was in agriculture itself.

The foregoing account of ducal income and expenditure, although incomplete and inexact in many areas, shows some general patterns. In the first instance, it is evident that the main source of ducal income was from landed rents, while that from positions held in the government held a second but important place. The degree to which capitalistic investment contributed to ducal incomes is at present unknown, but it can safely be conjectured that it was not great within this period. It is also evident that most of the dukes had sufficient incomes to maintain their titles although the incomes of the families varied greatly. The expenditures of the major portion of the incomes of the dukes went toward maintaining their position in the society of the day. Large amounts were also used to provide annuities for relatives dependent upon the head of the family, for services of stewards, lawyers and retainers of various kinds. Some of the dukes spent great amounts in political struggles, these appear to have been relatively few. The responsibilities connected with

88 Bedford Correspondence, I, 19-20. Philip Miller to Duke of Bedford, March 1, 1734.
land ownership, for land taxes and for a dependent tenantry, consumed portions of the gross income, while in some families interest and capital payments on inherited indebtedness must have claimed a large share of the income. The noble class did not, in fact could not, touch or liquidate the landed property which was the major source of their incomes.
CHAPTER VII
The Dukes: Other Aspects of Ducal Life

The dukes in the English nobility were as favored by history, landed wealth and social status as any group could wish to be. Yet they were more than politicians, agriculturalists, leaders in society and dilettanti; they were heirs to the same concerns, fears and tensions, as well as hopes, desires and pleasures, as those less favored by birth.

Decisions had to be made concerning the education of the heir to a title, and of other children: should they be instructed at home, should they be sent to a public school, should the university follow or should the students return home to learn their responsibilities at first hand; or should they go on a tour to erase some of their rustic manners and to learn a little of the great world? As a result of whatever education the noble children received, it is interesting and of value historically to see if any displayed continued intellectual interests after the end of their formal education.

Whatever the decision regarding education and the result, the next logical step in the life of the young adults was to think of marriage. This question was of utmost importance in many families, for a proper marriage could mean wealth and great alliance, a matter of deep concern to the whole family. The problem of finding a wife for an heir to a title was closely allied with the status of a family in the peerage itself. Some of the families were more famously
descended, more honorably connected and wealthier than others. Thus the family conception of its status, and what others conceived the family status to be, had a great deal to do with the contracting of a "suitable" marriage. Ordinarily, individuals marry within their own social and economic class and marriages are a usual test of group consciousness or solidarity. An examination of the marriages of the dukes to see if they married within the noble class should make it possible to indicate the degree of cohesiveness of the group.

In every social, economic or political group, even among theoretical equals, the problem in human relations of "getting along" with one's peers is present and often troublesome. The dukes were no exception to this statement, for they faced the same social pressures and lived by the same mores, as all others of their aristocratic class. Although individuality is a prized concept, and supposedly easier to support when at the head of a hierarchy, the dukes more or less conformed to the expectations of their social group. Naturally, they, as well as other members of the aristocracy, helped to form the patterns of behavior to be followed; but few individuals were consciously innovators. The dukes followed their personal inclinations as to whether they supported the turf or the opera, or spent time in fox hunting or in gambling, but they largely stayed within the accepted pattern.

From a survey of the attitudes of the dukes, and their duchesses, which have been reported in correspondence or ducal papers, we should get a picture of the effect of the holding of such a high title upon them as individuals. Did it make them haughty and insolent? What of a feeling of corporate unity among the dukes as the highest of peers?
Were they a separate and distinguished group due to their exalted rank? We are also concerned with how the dukes spent their leisure time in social activity, cultural pursuits and in sports and recreation.

The education of the English nobility in the eighteenth century came in for some very sharp remarks by persons living at the time. Jonathan Swift, in his "Essay on Modern Education," began his remarks with the postulate "that education is always the worse in proportion to the wealth and grandeur of the parents..." and continued that if this be accepted, "...it behoves me to dread, and keep far from scandalum magnatum."¹ Swift is writing almost entirely in regard to formal education as taught in the schools or by tutors. He stated his premise very succinctly:

He is taught from the nursery that he must inherit a great estate, and has no need to mind his books, which is a lesson he never forgets to the end of his life. His chief solace is to steal down and play at span farthing with the page or young blackamoor or little favorite footboy, one of which is his confident and bosom friend.²

Swift asks the question why the nobility do not hold more of the "competent parts of public management" which are entrusted to commoners, and he, of course, feels the reason to be that they lack the necessary education which is "requisite to those, who by their birth or fortune are called to the making of the laws."³

² Ibid., p. 162.
³ Ibid., p. 165.
That the feeling existed that the noble did not need a great amount of formal education cannot be denied, for his place in the scheme of things certainly did not usually require a highly trained intellect. Daniel Defoe, in the Compleat English Gentleman, guessed that not two hundred eldest sons of noblemen and gentlemen of estate were to be found in both of the Universities, but one would find ten times that number of younger sons. His figures were undoubtedly exaggerated, but he went on to state that the oldest is "bred at home." The story is in the form of a dialogue between elder and younger: Elder: "They are bred like gentlemen." Younger: "Yes, yes, they are bred like gentlemen and taught like gentlemen, that is, taught nothing." The remarks of Defoe may have been meant seriously or in jest but that some truth can be found in them could hardly be denied. Yet both Defoe and Swift take a far too bookish view of the education necessary for a noble; the young noble was not looking forward to the life of a university don and the noble parents probably had a more complete idea of the needs of their oldest son than did the tutor.

In general the educational program of the nobility was begun in the home, and the strongest early influence came from the servants and family retainers. The formal education was often in charge of the domestic chaplain who doubled as a tutor for the children in the

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family. This training was in many cases preparatory to a boarding school where writing, arithmetic and languages were taught. The great Public Schools provided further education for many noble children. From the Public Schools many went on to the University, and after a time spent there, the Grand Tour of Europe finished the educational program. It was for younger sons that education was of greater importance in order to prepare them to enter the church, the navy or the army. In the eighteenth century, as today, the profession which a son was to follow was of interest to the parents. An excellent eighteenth-century case in point is that of Lord Gower’s son, Dick Leveson. The boy was very averse to the law as a profession, and the father asked the boy’s uncle, John, Duke of Bedford, to find something for him to do. Bedford suggested the boy take a captain’s commission in his regiment; the boy liked the idea very much, but not the father. “Lord Gower’s old dislike of an army life got the better of all these reasoning.” Thus, the Duke felt that there was only one field left open, and he wrote to Mr. Thomas Villiers at Berlin, requesting that he take Dick Leveson in “as an apprentice of sorts to learn the diplomatic business,” otherwise, “there is no other system of life for him to pursue, but an idle one, or le métier d’un ministre aux cours étrangères, which though like a banishment, is preferable to idleness.”5 Thus not only by university life could a son of a noble be fitted for a role in life.

In spite of the remarks by Swift and many others on the deficiencies of noble education, it appears that nobles' sons could not have been ignorant of the duties and responsibilities of the station in life to which they had been born. They were brought up from childhood to be rulers and politicians. The sons were educated from their earliest days in the practice of politics; they saw much of it in operation at election times and must have heard endless political discussion from fathers and guests, if the remarks in their correspondence are a guide. They lived a great deal of their lives on the family estates and must have learned the arts of management from land stewards and parents. Thus by the time they reached maturity they had been immersed in the observation of the practical workings of affairs political and economic for many years. Unpolished the sons and heirs may have been indeed, but the grand tour would remedy that deficiency; scholars they were not, but many gave employment to scholarly clerics to select their libraries and to attempt to instill some formal education into them.

It is not surprising to find, realizing the general attitude toward formal education, that information concerning the education of dukes is difficult to find and impossible adequately to appraise. The sources used in this study give no evidence concerning the education of thirty-five of the eighty-one dukes. It can only be assumed that they were privately educated in their homes by chaplains and tutors; or that they were uneducated completely, but since we have no evidence of illiteracy among them the former must be assumed.
One institution which aided in the formal education of the dukes were the great public schools. It became increasingly popular as the century progressed to send sons to these institutions. In number, twenty-eight of the dukes attended these schools. Westminster was the most popular for ducal sons, for thirteen attended, while Eton received nine, Winchester four and St. Paul's two.

Not all of the dukes who attended the public schools went on to the universities; yet some went to the universities who had not attended these schools. The universities provided education for twenty-six of the eighty-one dukes noticed by this study, according to the alumni records. The University of Oxford matriculated fifteen; the University of Cambridge ten; and the University of Leyden one.

It is probably a healthy sign that such a small number attended the universities, for they were largely asleep and did little in the way of educating, except in the classics and in classical languages. These subjects were of value in many ways; at least as examples, for the speeches in the House of Lords often show allusions to persons and events in classical antiquity. Henry, third Duke of Beaufort, inherited his title from his father when only seven years of age. He attended Westminster School and then University College, Oxford. He had as a governor, for he was a minor, Mr. Dennison of University College. The young duke, seventeen, evidently did little studying but enjoyed himself in high living while at college. Dr. William Stratford of Oxford reported that the duke had been very ill. "It
came through extravagant drinking after hard exercise, and young as he is, he will drink and swear with any cocker in England...It is owing entirely to the company he is brought into by his tutor, who ought to be hanged for it. College life perhaps has changed little in the intervening years, but it was perhaps at Oxford that the Duke learned the Tory credo to which he held throughout his life. He received no positions, honorary or lucrative, from the Whigs. In 1745 Lord Chesterfield rather liked Beaufort's opposition, for it tended to strengthen the Whigs. He wrote to Newcastle, "I don't much mind the Duke of Beaufort's opposition, which singly as his, and a few red hot absurd Tories, might rather do good than hurt."7

Attendance in the Universities was only haphazard; neither students nor professors took their academic duties very seriously, although there were exceptions in both cases. The sons of nobles had special privileges and college discipline had little effect upon them. Peers and peers' sons, as well as the sons of baronets and knights, could wear distinctive headgear and the gown varied in adornment according to rank and might be of any color that pleased the noble scions, although all others had to be black.9 After the reforms

in the university in 1770 peers and peers' sons could wear any color they liked, including black, and the gown could be ornamented with gold lace. The mortarboard sported gilded "tufts" (tufts)."

"In silk gay the Lords the streets parade, Gold tassels nodding over head." The distinctions in academic dress were not finally abolished until 1870.\(^\text{10}\)

At Oxford, Christ Church College was by far the most popular with the dukes, while at Cambridge, Trinity College was favored. Noblemen were allowed honorary degrees after a period of residence of about two years, and probably could obtain degrees without such qualification if they wished.\(^\text{11}\) Many of the dukes later in life had honorary doctorates conferred upon them by the universities. Examinations were largely a matter of form and degrees were conferred almost automatically.

An examination for a degree at Oxford was in my time a farce. I was examined in Hebrew and history. "What is the Hebrew for the place of a skull?" I replied "Golgotha." "Who founded University College?" I stated, though, by the way, the point is sometimes doubted, that King Alfred founded it. "Very well, sir," said the examiner, "you are competent for your degree."\(^\text{12}\)

It is interesting to note that all of the Tory dukes of Beaufort attended Oxford and each duke was created DCL, Henry, third Duke,

\(^{10}\) Ibid., p. 167.
\(^{11}\) Albert Mansbridge, The Older Universities of England, Oxford and Cambridge (Boston, 1923), pp. 112-123.

Many of the dukes completed their education by taking the grand tour accompanied by a governor or tutor and other companions. Many of the volumes of correspondence of the century contain great numbers of letters referring to the tours which sons of noble families were engaged upon. Nearly every tour included France and Italy and some the states in Germany and Austria, as well. The greatest mine of source material regarding the grand tour is Chesterfield's Letters, especially those to his son. Nearly every conceivable subject is mentioned in the letters and from them we can get the most complete picture of what a young man of rank should gain from his continental travels.

The peripatetic Englishman should first gain a knowledge of the country in which he is stopping, its politics, political leaders, and its political practices, its military and naval affairs, its language and its history as well as its geography. The second aim of the tour, although it undoubtedly came first in the mind of many a young man, was to learn fencing, riding, music and dancing from the best masters. That is, the young English gentleman should be able to display "the Graces" when he returned home. The Grand Tour was often a very practical part of the duke's education, for it partially fitted him to play the part in national and international policy which he was supposed to play. The nobles often knew personally their official counterparts in France, Austria, and the smaller powers, due to their acquaintanceships formed on tour or on other visits to the continent.
They and their counterparts formed an international society which was agreed upon proper modes of political behavior and set standards of personal integrity.

Information on ducal education states that nine of the eighty-one were educated privately. This undoubtedly means that they were educated either at home or abroad by tutors. For some of the dukes the names of their tutors are available, as in the case of William, second Duke of Portland, who had as a tutor John Achard, a Swiss gentleman. The family library, which was a usual ornament of a noble household, would have made even advanced education at home easily possible.

Purely intellectual interests were not high for the nobility as a whole. England produced no noble salons in the French manner and noble authors are rare. Some contributed to periodical literature, such as Chesterfield, but his chief claim to fame is his remarkable correspondence. Horace Walpole was a literary dilettante; his "Gothic" novel helped to introduce the Romantic movement in literature and his work in art is deserving of attention.

There is little evidence to make us think that a single duke seriously pursued or was primarily interested in intellectual pursuits, even as an avocation. The only exception would be John Sheffield, made Duke of Buckingham and Normanby by Queen Anne. He was the author of poems and of an "Essay on Poetry," and an "Essay on Prose," as well as an Account of the Revolution which were edited...
by Pope. He showed his versatility by rewriting Shakespeare's "Julius Caesar" into two plays, *Julius Caesar* and *Marcus Brutus* in order to correct its defects.\(^{13}\) John Macky, who wrote accounts of the leading men in England for the Electress Sophia of Hanover, mother of George I, gave Buckingham credit for his learning, but for little else. "He is a Nobleman of Learning, and of good natural parts, but no principles."\(^{14}\) Johnson included him in his *Lives of the Poets* but gave him scant praise, "a writer that sometimes glimmers but rarely shines, feebly laborious and at best but petty."\(^{15}\)

There is reason to believe that the general intellectual level of the nobility as a whole improved as the century progressed. The period of the Enlightenment aroused interest and we know that the philosophes were widely read. Ducal education continued to be largely based on the classics, the grand tour to Italy to see the ancient monuments is good evidence of this.

"The Graces" were considered a part of gentle education and the general improvement of manners was noted by many authors. Contemporary comment upon the persons of the dukes is often upon their polished or unpolished quality; this may or may not refer to intellectual qualities. It probably refers more to the outward evidence of good breeding and social accomplishment, such as manners, wit

\(^{13}\) *Dictionary of National Biography*, s.v. "John Sheffield."
and repartee, than to intellectual accomplishments. The qualities of William, the fifth Duke of Devonshire, were wittily reported at the time of his marriage to Georgiana Spencer, daughter of Earl Spencer, as being worthy but unpolished in the social area. "The Duke's intimate friends say he has sense and does not want merit — to be sure the jewel has not been well polished; had he fallen under the tuition of the late Lord Chesterfield, he might have possessed less graces, but at present only that of his dukedom belongs to him." 16

The young Duke of Hamilton and Brandon, Douglas, eighth Duke, was educated at Eton College and then continued his studies on a tour of Europe under the direction of Dr. Moore. It was the usual practice for the tutor to keep in correspondence with the parents of his charge in order to report on his whereabouts, his plans, educational program, and his progress. These letters are an excellent source of information on the education of the nobility. Many times the tutors attempted to be as diplomatic as possible with the parents but Dr. Moore was frank in his reports but said so much with such a great amount of grace. Dr. Moore reported to the mother of the duke, "He converses on subjects which he understands with grace, and on those which he does not understand with plausibility. He is not fond of the company of his superiors either in rank or understanding. The first put him

under restraint, and the others offend his amour propre.¹⁷ The young duke could evidently converse on any subject but the tutor's remark leaves it doubtful with whom he could or would converse.

The importance of languages in the education of the nobility of the eighteenth century was very great. The society of which the English nobility was a part was international, and French was the international language. Thus French was one of the subjects which had to be perfected on the tour, while to get some acquaintance, at least a reading knowledge, of Italian and sometimes German was to be desired. Lord Chesterfield repeatedly stressed the necessity of knowing a language well and of being able to speak it as it was spoken in the country. In order to impress this upon Lord Huntington, Chesterfield used the first Duke of Richmond, son of Charles II and Louise de Keroualle, Duchess of Portsmouth, as an example. "The late Duke of Richmond (whom I well remember) was very near a wit in French, and very near a fool in English."¹⁸ The bastard son of Charles was undoubtedly reared by his mother and probably accompanied her to France when she left England to reside permanently in France in 1688, and that would account for his language problems, which at first sound strange for an English duke.

The dukes appear to have been interested in securing the

¹⁸ Chesterfield Letters, IV, 1785, To Lord Huntington, September 11, 1749.
chancellorships of the universities for themselves. It was a distinct honor for them and it provided the university with powerful aristocratic support. Throughout the period the dukes intrigued to secure the position; even to anticipating the death of a chancellor; for in 1748 the Duke of Newcastle wrote to Bedford to thank him for his support in "our university affair" for the Duke of Somerset's death was in prospect and the king fully approved of Newcastle as chancellor. In 1765 the Duke of Bedford, who had been Lord Lieutenant of Ireland in 1756, was elected chancellor of the University of Dublin by the Provost and senior fellows to succeed the late Duke of Cumberland. This honor pleased Bedford a great deal.

Upon the death of the Duke of Newcastle, the University of Cambridge elected the Duke of Grafton Chancellor, and John, Duke of Bedford, accompanied Grafton to his installation. The fact that the dukes desired to be associated with the universities did not mean that they were interested, as such, in the learning activities of the colleges. The chancellorships carried prestige and influence in university affairs.

20 Ibid., III, 320. Dr. Andrews, Provost, to Duke of Bedford, November 11, 1765.
At the end of the period of their education, or of the grand tour, the young duke or heir to a dukedom was expected to marry. Marriage usually came at a relatively early age. The parents sometimes planned marriages which were suitable for their children, while others evidently were permitted to follow their own desires. Lord Pembroke repeatedly reminded his son that marriage was expected at the end of his tour. In June, 1779 he asked the son to keep a journal of his travels and to give it to him when "your travels end in repose, and a rich wife at home, sans quoi you, and I and company, shall end in Newgate." If the rich wife did not materialize, the Earl evidently wanted something interesting to read in debtor's prison. The Earl reminded his son again in September, 1779 that he would be a "parliament man" by the time he returned, "...and soon after married, I hope, to some Miss, as beautiful as you please, and as rich as Croesus." But child marriages were the exception, such as that of the first Duke of Cleveland and Southampton, natural son of Charles I, who was married at the age of nine in 1671 to an heiress aged seven. The "marriage" lasted nine years until her death in 1680.

A study of the marriage patterns of the dukes yields much valuable information relative to the nobility generally and of the dukes

23 Ibid., p. 282. September 30, 1779.
In particular. In any society, the marriage patterns are an excellent index of group attitudes in many areas; as a test of group consciousness, as a factor in status relationships, as indices of the values or value orientation, and as evidence of the sense of essential unity of the group.

In the English nobility there was no rule or law against marriage outside the peerage and a noble was free to marry in any social or economic class. Yet where law would likely have been ineffective, social pressure clearly tended to foster marriage between social equals. A certain sign of this is the fact that "low" marriages were commented upon in the generally gossipy correspondence, and in the diaries of the period. For example, the Earl of Egmont in 1745 confided to his diary, "This has been a lucky season for low people's marrying, for I am told that since the Duke of Chandos' marriage with the innkeeper's maid near Slough, the Duke of Ancaster has married his kept mistress, and the Duke of Rutland will own his kept mistress, the Earl of Salisbury married his steward's niece - Miss Keate, daughter of a barber and shewer of the tombs in Canterbury, and the Earl of Bristol his late wife's maid, and the Duke of Bridgewater his tutor's niece."24

The Earl of Egmont was only partially correct in the stories which he had heard. True, his facts about the Dukes of Chandos and Ancaster were correct, although it was a second marriage in each case, while it is at least doubtful if the Duke of Rutland's marriage was to his mistress, for he married the only daughter and heiress of Robert Sutton, Lord Lexington; the remarks concerning the young Duke of Bridgewater were incorrect, for he died a minor and unmarried in 1748. In fact, "low" marriages were very unusual for the dukes for every facet of their being and station militated against it. It would have taken even a brave duke to have broken the generally accepted mores of his day. The English dukes not only married largely within their own social class, they almost unanimously married their fellow countrymen. Only two dukes married foreign women during the period. The Duke of Shrewsbury who died in 1718 when the title became extinct, married an Italian woman, Adelhida, daughter of the Marquis Palleotti of Bologna in 1705 and he wrote to Robert Harley to inform him of his "...marriage to a widow lady I was acquainted with at Rome who, though an Italian, I am thoroughly persuaded will be not only a good wife but a good Protestant."25 The Duke of Kent, Henry Grey, married the daughter of the Earl of Portland, who was actually Dutch, and this was only technically a foreign marriage.

This was noted in the correspondence of the day by Lady Erwin, who humorously reported the fact to Lord Carlisle in 1728. "The Duke of Kent, I write my sister word, was to be married to Lady S. (Sophia) Bentinck, who is daily expected over for that purpose. The joke about town is that the Duke's marriage is the only foreign treaty that has took effect in some years."\(^26\)

It is of significance in understanding the social structure of eighteenth-century England to see that the dukes tended to marry within the peerage, that is daughters or widows of peers, only slightly more than outside it. The eighty-one dukes who are the historical figures of this study contracted in all one hundred and two marriages and of these marriages fifty-three were with peers' daughters while forty-nine married commoners, which is certain proof that the dukes in no sense made up a caste.

Marriage alliances between the ducal families themselves are so few as to be comparatively rare. It had been thought that direct connections between them were the common occurrence, but all information available concerning the relationship of ducal wives, and it is complete, shows that only twelve of the one hundred and two marriages to the dukes were with daughters of other dukes, while two were with sisters of persons who had inherited ducal titles from other than

their fathers. This is indicative that much more than family background was taken into account in eighteenth-century ducal marriages.

The principle factor which was determinant in eighteenth-century marriages was money; if both family and money came together all the better, but money without a long lineage was just as welcome. The feelings of the older and wiser man toward the feelings of youth concerning matrimony could not have been more plainly stated than Sir William Musgrave stated them in 1768:

There is a young gentleman, very plain in his person, ...who has a very great commoner's estate, that had communicated his admiration of Lady Betty,...with the approbation of...of his family, but Lady Betty is at present so young as to think of beauty in a husband, and does not seem to relish this overture. I think she ought not to be teased into it,...though I cannot keep wishing she had a few years' more experience, when she would be the more readily sensible that after the first year or two a large fortune and good settlement are necessary and almost the principle ingredients in the marriage happiness.27

The expectation of inheritance presumably played a part in many of the ducal marriages for more than one-third (forty-two of the one hundred and two marriages) of the marriages of the dukes were with heiresses. Early in the century it was noted, in regard to a ducal marriage, that family and riches made the best alliance regardless of other factors, for certainly romantic love was seldom the important or

deciding factor. The marriage of Henry, Lord Carnarvon, only son of the first Duke of Chandos, who was well known for his ugliness, to Mary, daughter of the Earl of Ailesbury, who was also very ugly, took place in 1728 and caused a torrent of comment from Mrs. Pendarves. 

"...(they are) the ugliest couple this day in England; but then there's riches and great alliance, and that is the first to be considered. Beauty, sense, and honour are things not required; if thrown into the bargain, why, well and good, but want of them will not spoil a match now-a-day..."\textsuperscript{28} Thus marriage alliances were then, as now, a favorite topic of conversation and made fine ingredients in familiar correspondence. The dukes did not escape censure and comment on their marriages, in fact, theirs were more likely to be commented upon. Lord Hervey, in writing to the Duke of Richmond who kept a menagerie at Goodwood, his country seat, stated, "The marriages of your bears, tigers, wolves and monkeys would certainly do for a representation of half the conjugal performances in England," for only humans of different species mate, "or if you told us in delineating the Duke and Duchess of Manchester that one of your she-tigers was mated with a jackass, people would immediately see that the account was feigned in order to satirize these people..."\textsuperscript{29} The wife of the

\textsuperscript{28} Mrs. Delany, I, 182. Mrs. Pendarves to Mrs. Anne Granville, December 5, 1728.

Daks was the eldest daughter of John, Duke of Montagu and the two must have made a most unusual pair, if the witty Hervey is to be believed.

As has been shown the marriage alliances between the sons and daughters of ducal families were rather unusual in the same generation. The Manchester-Montagu alliance was one which caused comment, but not because it was an alliance of families. The marriages between the greatest ducal families, as in the case of the marriage of the Duke of Marlborough and the daughter of John, Duke of Bedford, was considered to be a prime alliance. The Duke of Cumberland, uncle of George III, wrote to the Duke of Bedford to congratulate him on the engagement, "Nor am I at all surprised at the joy both you and the Duchess feel on this occasion, to have so amiable and so good a daughter married not only to the richest man of quality, but to a man whose character promises her the happiness she so much deserves." The alliance was a means of uniting two great families which had played an important part in the Revolution and in the politics of the nation and perhaps this helps to account for the Duchess's sobriquet of "the proudest woman in England." Ducal marriages at times were made between related branches of the same family. The marriage of the third Duke of Portland, a Bentinck, to Dorothy Cavendish, daughter of the

30 Bedford Correspondence, III, 95. Duke of Cumberland to Duke of Bedford, August 20, 1762.
fourth Duke of Devonshire, in 1766, formed an alliance between the Chatsworth and Welbeck Abbey branches of the Cavendish family; the Duke of Portland's mother was Margaret Cavendish, the only daughter and heiress of the second Earl of Oxford. The Duke of Portland's grandmother, Lady Oxford, in her will stipulated that he should assume the name of Cavendish in addition to Bentinck and should also assume the Cavendish arms.31

Although the dukes tended to marry peers' daughters only slightly more than commoners, the feeling for their own class was strong and monetary factors appear to have been largely responsible for marriages outside the aristocratic class, for the wives whom the dukes chose outside of the peerage were nearly all in "gentle" families, that is, from the county gentry. Surprisingly few of the dukes married non-gentle women, that is, tradesmen's daughters, actresses or mistresses. Only five of the one hundred and two marriages of the dukes can be placed in this category. The Dukes of Chandos appear to have had a penchant for marriages outside their class, for James, the first Duke, married a middle-class widow with 40,000 pounds as his third wife. Henry, the second Duke, married Ann Jefferys, his mistress, as his second wife, while James, the third Duke, married a middle-class heiress of 150,000 pounds as his first wife and the widow of a commoner, who was presumably an heiress, as his second

wife. The marriage of the second Duke to his mistress, Ann Jefferys, in 1745 brought forth hopeful remarks from Mrs. Delany. "The Duke of Chandos' choice is a most extraordinary one," but she is certain that this is "a strong proof of virtue" for she "would have scarcely been raised to this rank" had she "not been virtuous; and as virtue is now more scarce in the world than nobility, I can't help rejoicing at every instance of it." Her hopes for virtue in Ann Jefferys, if her statement was not designed to be ironic, were not realized for she is reported to have had an exceedingly bad character. Still, in 1777 the correspondence of Mrs. Delany contains remarks on the Chandos family, for the third Duke had married a widowed commoner as his second wife. "methinks this Chandos family delights in puddles - tho not always so thick as the hostler's sweepings can make it - but, more or less, 'tis always far removed from the clear stream of noble or gentle blood." In spite of eight marriages for the three dukes, largely motivated, it appears, by financial needs to keep their princely home Canons intact, the title became extinct in 1789.

In the social structure of the eighteenth century, marriage was for life with very few exceptions, for only in a very restricted number of instances would the church countenance an end to a valid marriage. Divorce in the eighteenth century was a long and expensive process which took the litigants first to the ecclesiastical courts,

33 Mrs. Delany, II, 2nd Series, pp. 296-297.
which could grant a decree of separation; *mensa et thoro*, with no second marriage; while only an Act of Parliament could grant a full divorce with the privilege of re-marriage. This was the law until the passage of the Divorce Act of 1857. Thus even for persons of the highest rank divorce was extremely rare; only three of the one hundred and two ducal marriages ended in divorce. Social and religious pressures caused marriages to remain unbroken even under very difficult circumstances, although separations were condoned.

The fact that divorces were extremely rare did not mean that all marriages were happy ones. The result of the arranged marriages of the day was sometimes incompatibility, but the mores of the day did not condemn the gentleman who kept a mistress, who might supply some of the happiness and pleasure which he did not find in his own home. In many cases illegitimate children were born into these illicit unions and they were often recognized and provided for by the father, although they could not inherit at law. Such alliances were frowned upon by many, and especially by King George III, who was an extremely moral man, and although married to a quite homely German *haußfrau*, Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, did not repeat his grandfather's pattern of behavior. In 1764 the Duke and Duchess of Grafton had separated and the Duke gave her 4,000 pounds a year for herself and the children. The Duke had no objection to his wife's conduct, but preferred to live alone since they could not live happily together. The Duke spent his time with his mistress, Nancy Parsons, and the
Duchess lived quietly with the children. The marriage was ended by divorce in 1765 and it was reported in the press the following year that he intended to marry his mistress, also known as Mrs. Haughton, and George III asked the Duke about it. The Duke is reported to have replied that there was no truth in it, although nothing would make him so happy. The king forbade Grafton to speak to her again, and after this the two did not appear in public together. The new tone of family life set by the king perhaps had an influence on lessening the open disregard of the marriage vows.

The importance of the family in the social structure of eighteenth-century England, and especially in noble families, made marriage a very important matter. Nearly all of the dukes married at least once and many three times; only eight of the dukes died unmarried and three of the eight were minors. Horace Walpole noted in 1762 that "It is odd, that there are now seventeen English and Scotch dukes unmarried..." The dukes were Argyll, Beaufort, Bolton, Bridgewater, Buccleuch, Chandos, Cleveland, Devonshire, Gordon, Hamilton, Kingston, Manchester, Marlborough, Portland, Roxburghe, and

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35 Correspondence of Emily, Duchess of Leinster, 1731-1814, ed., Brian Fitzgerald (Dublin, 1949), I, 438. Lady Holland to Marchioness of Kildare, March 15, 1766. Hereafter cited as Leinster Correspondence.

Batlasd and Somerset. This was indeed unusual and rightly called for comment; it was probably the best matrimonial year of the whole period. Only one of the dukes, Francis, third Duke of Bridgewater, the "Canal Duke" appears to have been a real misogynist, for after a bad love affair with Elizabeth Gunning, one of the beautiful Gunning sisters, in which he failed to win her hand, he refused to have anything further to do with women, even to the point of refusing to have female servants in the house. His refusal to marry caused the title to become extinct at his death in 1803.

The marriage patterns of the dukes in the eighteenth century show that the group was only fairly cohesive. The marriages were with daughters of peers only slightly more than with commoners, although the commoners tended to come from the social aristocracy of the counties, or from the higher middle class. That is simply to say that the dukes almost universally married within the "gentle" rank or in the rank which was aspiring toward this social class; thus the highest rank in the English nobility was in no sense a closed caste.

The nobility of England in the eighteenth century never doubted its social priority. Its history was so much a part of the nation's history, of parliament's and of the Revolution which so largely created Georgian England, that it was ever mindful of its unique position. Persons of ducal rank in the peerage received almost princely deference from non-peers, and indeed they would have been popularly termed princes in foreign nations, as they were formally
styled in England, as "Most High, Potent (or sometimes Puissant) and Noble Princes."

The title of duke was one eagerly sought by many lesser nobles but it was difficult to achieve in any period and nearly impossible under George III. The small number of the dukes made the title envied, and certainly set a goal toward which nobles strove by intrigue or any other means. Once the title was achieved it was naturally felt necessary to have heirs to whom the lofty title could descend. The lack of children was a source of worry to nobles and their families. As Lady Caroline Fox worried over and recounted the necessity for her sister-in-law, the Duchess of Richmond to have children, yet noted to her sister, the Countess of Kildare, future Duchess of Leinster, that "I don't think it signifies much whether there are many masters and Miss Conallys," for the Kildares' daughter, Louisa, had married a commoner, Mr. Conally.37 To a great house like that of the Marlborouh's the birth of a son was a great event and led to cake-baking and long congratulations to the mother and father. In 1739 upon the birth of George, the future fourth Duke of Marlborough, great celebrations were held. When, Sarah, the Dowager Duchess, was informed she reportedly replied to the new ducal father who was hard pressed for money due to Sarah's longevity, that

37 Leinster Correspondence, I, 236. June 22, 1759.
"to complete his joy she was very ill, though in reality she was very well." 38

The high social position of the dukes undoubtedly fostered haughtiness in some of them, and the usual deference shown them made it always expected. Few of the dukes had nicknames which could be taken to reflect upon their self-conception, unless it was the "Proud Duke of Somerset," and the very fact that he was so nicknamed is indicative of the general absence of offensive ego on the part of the dukes as a whole. The danger for young nobles in this regard was especially great and Dr. Moore, the tutor, and companion of the young Duke of Hamilton and Brandon was not slow in reporting such tendencies to the boy's mother, the Duchess of Argyll.

One of the greatest dangers the Duke runs, is his choosing a too obsequious set of companions. The Duke is fitted for the best company in every sense (sic) of the word - among such he is Polite, Modest and Judicious. But with the other class his behaviour may be construed as self-sufficient, arrogant and capricious. When he respects the company he himself is always respectable. 39

In the theory of the peerage all ranks are equal in quality, all being peers. But nevertheless it is of value to undertake to see if the dukes, as the highest rank in the peerage, displayed a sense of corporate unity. That the dukes were conscious of their exalted rank there can be no doubt, for they were constantly aware of it due to

38 Historical Manuscripts Commission, Hare Manuscripts (London, 1895), p. 243. Francis Hare, Bishop of Chichester to Francis Naylor, February 26, 1739.
their precedence. There were also certain privileges which set them above other peers; such as the right to a fifteen-gun salute when embarking on, or leaving a naval vessel, while other nobleman received only thirteen.\textsuperscript{40} The dukes evidently possessed the privilege, perhaps exclusive, of dancing with the royal princesses, for Lady Irwin reported that at the Prince of Wales' birthday in 1733, "there was not a Duke to dance with the Princesses at night, which had not been known in the records of a birthday before,"\textsuperscript{41} due to extensive illness at the time.

There is little evidence of a feeling of unity among the dukes themselves. They were not attacked as a group and their security made it unnecessary for them to develop a cohesiveness. The dukes seldom if ever, except perhaps at a coronation, all assembled together. We have seen that the ducal marriages certainly did not show a sense of unity among them. The ducal rank was so seldom enlarged that little, if any, feeling developed against "new" men. The only example of a feeling against a new man was the Irish feeling against the Earl (later Duke) of Northumberland, and this was the result, as has been shown, of his great display of wealth in Ireland as Lord Lieutenant as much as to the fact that he was a


\textsuperscript{41} Carlisle Manuscripts, p. 98. Lady Irwin to Lord Carlisle, January 23, 1733.
newly-created peer. The vagaries of the Countess, the future Duchess of Northumberland, must have presented a hilarious sight in eighteenth-century England, for her actions were anachronistic in the extreme. Horace Walpole, who gave her credit for being generous and friendly in spite of her peculiarities, painted a full picture of her love of display and of her attempt to recreate the middle ages in her own day:

The Countess of Northumberland was a jovial heap of contradictions. The blood of all the Percies and Seymours swelled in her veins and in her fancy... Shows, and crowds, and junketing, were her endless pursuits. She was familiar with the mob, while stifled with diamonds; and yet as attentive to the most minute privileges of her rank, while almost shaking hands with a cobbler. Nothing was more mean than her assiduity about the King and Queen, who she termed her Master and Mistress; and yet, though indirectly reprimanded by the latter, she persisted in following her Majesty to the theaters with a longer retinue of domestics than waited upon the Queen herself. She had revived the drummers and pipes and obsolete minstrels of her family; and her own buxum (sic) countenance at the tail of such a procession gave it all the air of an antiquated pageant or mumming.42

The persons created dukes already possessed land, wealth and connections enough to give them just pretensions to that title. The correspondence and memoirs of the period are full of comments on and reference to the dukes, their activities, estates, and characters, but in no instance was the title itself abused. It must be remembered

that the criticisms and comments we have on the dukes came from their own social and political circle, and that purely objective views of them are impossible to obtain.

The Bedfords, as one of the greatest ducal families, provide a picture of a family which had a great sense of its position in the state. Its wealth we have already seen as well as some of its activities, and through a closer study of its affairs we should receive a good representation of the life of a ducal family.

The greatest of the eighteenth-century Bedfords was John, fourth Duke, who held the title for thirty-nine years, from 1732 to 1771. He was a leader of one of the Whig factions, the "Bloomsburg Gang," and held several important offices in the government as well as being ambassador to France in 1762 to negotiate the Treaty of Paris. He had hosts of enemies within his party and without, as well as some staunch friends. Due to his ducal title, his great wealth, his political position, and his varied interests, he was often mentioned in the correspondence of that day.

Bedford married, as we have seen, Diana, daughter of the Earl of Sunderland and granddaughter of Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough. She died in 1735, and, although her character was often painted in glowing terms, Lord Hervey pictured her otherwise: "She was vain to a degree that exhausted flattery, more ambitious than any man, as dissatisfied and restless as any Spencer, and as avaricious and uncaring as any Churchill."43

The Duke was disconsolate at the death of his young wife but did not remain too long single. As his second wife he married Gertrude, daughter of Earl Gower, and a granddaughter of the Duke of Kingston. John and his second wife appear to have been extremely well-matched and loved each other dearly. The general feeling appeared to be that the Duke was really ruled by his strong-willed Duchess, and Horace Walpole felt that if one wanted something from the Duke, or something to be gotten through his influence, he should not apply to the Duke "but to those who govern him, to the Duchess, or to those who govern him through her."\(^44\) The Duchess was often mentioned in correspondence but seldom with much praise, for she was at times pictured as haughty, insolent, stingy and grasping. An example of the insolence, or thoughtlessness of the Duchess was her remark to Lady Mary Coke at a party where many duchesses were present, "the Duchess of Bedford turned to me, and asked if I did not feel myself ashamed not to be a duchess. Considering who some of them were, I had no great reason in being only a Duke's daughter to be ashamed."\(^45\) If Lady Mary's answer had been preserved we might have a deeper view into the personal relations within this tightly knit group. All we can see is that the Lady did not appreciate the remark and did not love the Duchess.

\(^44\) Walpole, Correspondence, IX, 210. Walpole to George Montagu, June 2, 1757.
\(^45\) The Letters and Journals of Lady Mary Coke (Edinburgh, 1889), I, 158. February 27, 1767.
The Duke was never a strong figure with the public; he too often stood on the unpopular side of public issues and was usually obdurate in his opinions. Bedford much preferred to be at his vast estate at Woburn than to be any place else. When his duties in office would permit, and reportedly sometimes when they would not, he returned to Woburn. In 1750 he was Secretary of State for the Southern Department and Lord Chesterfield wittily remarked when Bedford left London, "our English atlas has carried our part of the globe with him to Woburn ou il s'ebourdit, et se dalecte." 46

Both of the Bedfords were considered to be very close with their money even though they had so much of it. The Duke gambled at times for it was one of the main pastimes of his class, but evidently not for very high stakes. When at Bath to take the waters in 1746 the Duke corresponded with his Duchess regularly and kept her informed of his activities. "I am grown a great gamester at whist, and play to win or lose 20 or 30 pounds a day; hitherto I am a winner. When I came here I did not design to play at all, but without (it) there is no possibility of knowing how to employ one's time..." 47 The Duke kept himself busy at Woburn traveling over his acres, parks and forests, for he was a good agriculturist.

The Bedfords had a full social life, especially during the

47 Bedford Correspondence, I, 93. Duke to Duchess of Bedford, Bath, May 4, 1746.
London season, and then in receiving guests at Woburn. The Duchess was described "as yellow as a kite's foot, and very stately in her own drawing room, though at other times very condescending, and will go to anybody that will give her cards and supper." The Bedfords continued their love of card playing while the Duke was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland and found themselves called to account by a mob for playing publicly on Sunday. Lady Caroline Fox felt that people were more serious than usual in 1760 for they knew the Prince of Wales to be very religious.

The general attitudes to the Bedfords and their life at home are seen displayed very well in a description of them written by Lady Caroline Fox after she and Henry Fox had spent some time as guests at Woburn:

Regular hours, no cards 'til 9, supper at 11 P.M. The Duchess and I had a vast deal of conversation together; how agreeable she is! The Duke was exceedingly jolly and good humored. I must do them all the justice to say that when I see them en famille I like them the better; and wonder why people in general should have the very bad opinion of them they have.

The Bedfords at home certainly put on a different appearance from that they displayed in public, and it is regrettable that more of the truth of the Bedfords' way of life was not known. In public matters they drove home every advantage and the prizes secured caused

48 Mrs. Delany, III, 572. Mrs. Delany to Mrs. Dewes, November 3, 1759.
49 Leinster Correspondence, I, 275. Lady Caroline Fox to Countess of Kildare, March 1, 1760.
50 Ibid., I, 296. Lady Caroline Fox to Countess of Kildare, October 5, 1750.
endless jealousy. The hauteur of the Bedfords was great enough, but when Lady Caroline Russell, the Bedfords' daughter, along with Lady Jane Stewart, the Earl of Bute's daughter, as the only outsiders, were invited to a private ball given by the royal family in the Queen's honor, Lady Sarah Lennox could not resist writing, "only think how the B's (Bedfords) will toss up their heads," and they probably did just that.51

It is extremely rare to find references to noble blood in the correspondence of the period, but one such case is that used by the Earl of Bute in offering his congratulations to Bedford after his negotiations which led to the Peace of Paris. Bute wrote highly formal letters, in the following style:

> Permit me to congratulate you, my dear Lord, on the noblest and most essential service ever performed by a subject for his king and country...Yes, my Lord, you have acted a great and noble part, worthy of your blood, worthy of a Russell..."52

The majority of the nation was certainly not of the same opinion as Bute in regard to the peace or to Bedford's part in it. It seems likely that Bute knew his man and felt that compliments upon his blood and family would be a great reward for the Duke and would flatter the Bedfords' ego. The Peace, Bute and Bedford all became unpopular as a result of the ending of the victorious war for the Empire.


52 BedfordCorrespondence, III, 152. Lord Bute to Duke of Bedford, November 10, 1766.
The Duke could retire to his estates and escape from public view when he so desired. He spent his time agreeably to his own inclinations, and when in the country he did not doff his treasured symbol of his Knighthood of the Garter. He wore a miniature blue ribbon and a tiny St. George in his buttonhole, which must have been unusual in that day, for it was compared to the French order which was worn in the same manner, the Croix de St. Louis. The Duke kept a journal for a short period and we have his activities for 1768, when he was nearly 58 years old. He continued his life-long loves even at this age:

1768 - April 16 (Bath) Bathed, evening went to play, "The Conscious Lovers", April 23 (Dined in company) Went to play "Beggars Opera". April 28 Finished sitting for my two pictures by Gainsborough. May 1. Dined at the Dilittanti Society. May 5 and 6 (Woburn) Went through all the grounds, marked timber in the park...gave directions for planting cedars...May 22 Whitsunday - Went to church and received the Holy Communion.

The Duke also visited some of his property during this year, for he wrote on July 31:

I went in the morning to Berwick Place, where my ancestors last lived in Doretshire. It is a fine farm, but a dismal place. From thence I went by the sea-side, through Kingston Russell farm to Mr. Hardy, my tenant's house where I dined...(and) after a very good farmer-like dinner, and a hearty welcome, I set out for Blandford.

53 Walpole, Correspondence, X, 235. George Montagu to Horace Walpole, December 10, 1766.
54 Bedford Correspondence, III, Introduction, LXXVI, the Duke of Bedford's "Journal."
55 Ibid., III, Introduction, "Journal", LXXX.
While the Duke was enjoying his rural pleasures and duties during his declining years, he died in 1771; the Duchess appears not to have mellowed with age but rather to have become more crabbed. She was very unpopular with the Dowager Countess of Gower, whose granddaughter had married the third Duke of Grafton in the year 1769. The Duchess of Bedford evidently had criticized the new Duchess of Grafton and this brought forth the ire of the Dowager of Gower:

The Dss of Grafton, I'm told, is not in ye least degree intoxicated with her prefermt. I believe it for ye Dss of Bd says she, "wants dignity" wch emplies she wants insolence!56

The animosity between the two women continued for years, even after the death of the Duke of Bedford, and it may have been quite true, if the following quotation can be taken to mean what it implies, that the Duchess of Bedford ruled her husband before his death and his circle of friends after it. The Dowager Countess of Gower again gives us a picture of Gertrude at her worst: "The old hoyden ye Dss of Bedford didn't go to Lord Stanley's fete nor let any of the others go, tho' all ye Bloomsbury-gang was invited. Since she repents, since she heard how fine, charming and elegant it was. Cd,have been silent, people might have thought she had commenc'd a desency suitable to her age."57 Thus the pretensions of the Duchess helped to make the

56 Mrs. Delany, I, 2nd Series, 250. Dowager Countess of Gower to Mrs. Delany, November 29, 1769.
57 Mrs. Delany, II, 2nd Series, p. 4.
family generally unpopular.

The Church of England in the eighteenth century was quiet and wholly subservient to the state. The century as a whole was not irreligious; the English simply did not use the sword to settle disputes respecting Christian doctrine and church organization as they had done in the seventeenth century. Toleration became a fact in practice, due in part to Locke's argument that it was both expedient and just; and the Church of England itself was largely infused with latitudinarianism and preached morality, reasonableness and common sense as the center of religion, rather than theological dogma. Few were avowed skeptics, and Deists were likened to atheists by "respectable people." The great Wesleyan Methodist movement appealed, and was largely directed toward, the lower classes. Few of the aristocrats, save the Countess of Huntington and her circle, espoused the "enthusiasm" of the Methodists. Unitarianism appealed to some of the upper classes and it had a forceful leader in the person of Joseph Priestly.

The Established Church was naturally the church to which the vast majority of the ruling class gave their allegiance. Although nearly all of the dukes were associated with the Anglican Church, they reflected the religious attitudes of the period; some appear to have been active communicants of the church, for example, the Duke of Newcastle attended two services a day, while others attended merely as a matter of form and of habit. The Dukes of Norfolk were nearly all Roman Catholic, as has been noted, and as a result took little
part in affairs during the period. The Duke of Grafton, Augustus Henry, was a Unitarian in his religious convictions. The correspondence and papers of the period have little directly to say regarding the religious practices of the dukes; and this silence testifies that they were by convention connected with the Church of England. No evidence appears in the sources used for this study that any duke became associated with the Methodists.

The English nobility took its recreation more seriously than it took its religion and perhaps even more seriously than it took its politics. The dukes largely followed the eighteenth-century pattern in their recreation and social life. Outdoor sports competed with the amusements of the drawing room for the nobles' time, and the gentleman was expected to be equally at home in either place.

The outdoor sports of riding, shooting, and hunting were especially important for the eighteenth-century noble, and were a part of his training, as Lord Pembroke informed his son "I wish you to be attached to ruralitys (sic)." 58 The fox hunt was a regular part of the rural recreation of the dukes and nearly all of them kept packs of hounds, and the success or failure of the hunts were often a part of the conversations and correspondence of the nobles. 59

humorous account of Sir Thomas Robinson's experiences hunting with the Duke of Grafton, in order to impress him with his interest in such things, is given in the Carlisle Manuscripts:

Poor Sir Thomas underwent a terrible fatigue last Thursday, which he still feels, in order to make his court to the Duke of Grafton either as a sportsman or a minister, he attended him a-hunting at Croyden, it proved a very wet day; he rise (sic) at four a clock (sic) in the morning, rid (sic) about 30 miles, saw no sport, was wet to the skin and returned like a draggled post. However he is satisfied he has showed his mare, who was much commended, and proved his love of hunting by the great fatigue he underwent to procure it; he is much out of order, and is now paying for the reputation he gained upon Epsom Downs. 60

Not only field sports but also organized athletic games were popular in the century. The Duke of Bedford was very fond of cricket matches and Horace Walpole insinuated that Bedford's fondness for Lord Sandwich was partly due to his willingness to play cricket, and that this was one reason why Bedford procured the Admiralty for Sandwich in 1748. 61

Gambling was an almost universal pastime of the nobles. Wagers would be laid on nearly anything from the turn of a card or the result of a horse race to life expectancy itself. Horse racing was a popular sport, from the regional gatherings in the provinces, to the national meeting at Newmarket. Charles II had patronized Newmarket, and he, and nobles including Godolphin, had imported Arab and Barb mares and stallions to improve the breed of English racing horses. 62 Many

nobles in the eighteenth century were interested in racing, particularly Lord Pembroke; for the gentleman, horsemanship was an art in which he had to be proficient.

Both men and women spent hours at the card tables in such games as Loo or Basset in their homes, at the famous watering places, or at their clubs. Under George II card playing was a daily occurrence in the palace as Lord Hervey's Memoirs testify. The sums won or lost in gambling, or gaming, as it was often referred to in the eighteenth century, were often reported in the correspondence. "All the Royal family lost, which was a right decision of fortune," Lady Irwin reported in 1733 along with the sums won by the nobles who were playing with the royal family. Under George III gambling in the royal residences came to a halt, although it continued at a great rate in other places. George refused to give offices in the palace to gamblers, "...I do not chuse (sic) to fill my familly (sic) with professed gamesters," he reported to Lord North. The king was not the type to chance hundreds of pounds in play, or in other ways, and he and the Queen were considered to be quite miserly in their mode of life. The Prince of Wales differed from his parents to a marked degree in this regard.

63 Carlisle Manuscripts, p. 95. Lady Irwin to Lord Carlisle, January 9, 1733.
64 The Correspondence of King George III with Lord North, from 1763 to 1783, ed., W. B. Donne (London, 1867), I, 237. March 27, 1775.
The pleasures of the table and of the bottle can be considered as a part of the recreational life of the dukes. Drinking was widespread and was considered to be a universal vice among all classes. Hard drinking and over-eating of rich food stuffs helped to cause the gout to be prevalent among the richer classes of the population. The celebration of the King's Birthday was an occasion for many toasts and resultant inebriation. The celebration in 1735 of the Birthday, as reported by Sir Thomas Robinson, was very alcoholic, for so many of the nobles were drunk that there were hardly enough for a ball at night. "...at the Duke of R. (Richmond's) out of eighteen people only four went (to the ball). I was among the unfortunate fourteen... I was never so demolished in my life."65 The Jacobite Duke of Wharton, who lost his position in England by Bill of Attainder in 1729, was known for his excesses in all fields, and at his death in 1731 his life was termed, "despicable and extravagant."66 He was certainly mentally unbalanced and performed no service which entitled him to his preferment in the peerage.

The fourth Duke of Ancaster was a great drinker and rioler. He had been in the Army and had served under General Clinton in America as an aide in 1778. He returned home and died the following year. Lord Pembroke, who possessed a penchant for stating facts simply and often humourously, remarked to his son, "The Duke of Ancaster died

66 Ibid., p. 83. Lady Lechmere to Viscountess Irwin, Paris, July 11, 1731.
last night. Poor fellow! He has indeed drank (sic) up his beer very quick.\^\textsuperscript{67}

The menus of eighteenth-century meals appear enormous when compared to twentieth-century ones, for not only were large amounts of food served but the variety was very great. Many persons over-ate at all times. Charles, second Duke of Grafton, was famous as a great eater. Hervey remarked in 1734, when recounting the general exodus of people from the court to Bath, stated "The Duke of Grafton, who eats an ox a day is going there to enable himself to eat two."\^\textsuperscript{68} Walpole remarked that Grafton had "a lofty person, with great dignity...understood the court perfectly, and looking upon himself as the Blood Royal, he thought nothing ought to affect him, but what touched him..."\^\textsuperscript{69} The Duke was Lord Chamberlain and Walpole had a great respect for him, though, "he contrived to be generally thought a fool" he was actually very keen-witted.\^\textsuperscript{70}

Although the dukes were not, as we have seen from their educational backgrounds, greatly interested in intellectual pursuits, some were active as patrons of literature, the theatre and the arts. The patronage system in the eighteenth century was the chief means

\^\textsuperscript{67} Pembroke Letters, p. 202. Lord Pembroke to Lord Herbert, June 21, 1779.
\^\textsuperscript{68} Ilchester, Hervey, p. 205. Hervey to Henry Fox, September 1, 1734.
\^\textsuperscript{69} Walpole, George II. I, 180-181.
\^\textsuperscript{70} Loc. cit.
of livelihood for authors and playwrights in spite of its glaring weaknesses and easy corruptability. The Earl of Chesterfield, himself an author as well as a patron, gave a full condemnation of the practices which flowed from it long before Sam Johnson's famous letter to the Earl. Abject flattery of patrons was the chief vice of the system, for if noble senators were not flattered by an author, they became his enemy:

...for no adulations can be too gross for these idols, who, puffed up with windy titles and glaring equipage, think themselves something more than the rest of mankind, when, indeed, they only make themselves less by it. How often have I seen that worthless, ill-natured pigmy Buckingham (John Sheffield, first Duke) strut, look big, and fancy himself a giant, because the poor poet Mr. Dryden (while he lived) was pleased to carry His Grace upon his shoulders and yet common porters in the streets were better paid!71

Buckingham was an author himself and supposedly received some help in his work from Dryden, according to Johnson, who found little which could claim merit in his poetry.72 The patronage of Buckingham evidently was continued by his wife, or some friend of his, for after his death a pamphlet appeared in 1729 entitled A Character of John Sheffield, late Duke of Buckinghamshire, which attempted to paint a fine picture of the man. The author took each reported vice of the Duke and attempted to disprove it. "...reportedly not good natured

(false) treated servants well; thought not to be a good husband
(false) three marriages...thought to be too saving in money matters
...really not true - paid the Duchess her Pin-money to a day. Really
neglected money matters and lost a great fortune through indolence
and unwillingness to visit his estates at some distance from London,
in the space of forty years.73 The unknown author of this pamphlet
answered Chesterfield's criticisms of Buckingham almost to a point.
This pamphlet was probably written at the widow's request, for she
continued her interest in the Duke's literary efforts by having his
papers collected by Pope.

The practice of subscribing to books which authors hoped to pub-
lish was a method which became increasingly popular in the eighteenth
century. Many nobles subscribed to volumes which they wished to add
to their libraries and at the same time helped the authors. Laurence
Sterne in 1765 claimed to have the largest and most splendid list of
subscribers, "which even pranced before the book, since subscriptions
came into fashion."74 It was not actually the largest list but it
did include some great names, the Duke and Duchess of Ancaster, the
Marquis of Granby, Lord Shelburne, the Marquis of Tavistock, and
others.75

73 A Character of John Sheffield, late Duke of Buckinghamshire
(London, 1729), Pamphlet, author unknown, Rare Book Purchase, Univer-
sity of Missouri Library.
p. 239, Sterne to Robert Foley, April 15, 1765.
75 Loc. cit., note 3.
A very popular interest of the eighteenth-century nobility was in the theatre, opera and musical areas. Many of the families performed plays at their estates with the nobles themselves as amateur actors, as well as supporting the theatre in London and elsewhere with their money and presence. The Italian opera was the height of fashion during the century and great sums were spent in order to hire Italian singers. The Duke of Rutland was reported "trembling for his money" in 1743 when the opera was bankrupt with a debt of 1,600 pounds, for his name was on every contract. Walpole stated that Charles, second Duke of Dorset, had a passion for directing operas, that he wasted huge sums on them and was repeatedly sued for payment of salaries. One of the greatest patrons of music was James, first Duke of Chandos, who had a musical organization of twenty-four performers at his famous seat, Canons, in Middlesex, and he spent great sums on music, Italian musicians, and musical instruments. He is best known as the patron of Handel, and at Canons Handel composed anthems for the ducal chapel and completed his first English oratorio, "Esther."

76 Bedford Correspondence, I, 12-13. Mr. Brand to Duke of Bedford, June 3, 1743.
77 Walpole, George II, I, 98.
The English dukes in the period under consideration led lives which were largely similar to the pattern of the aristocratic class as a whole. Differences were largely matters of emphasis in particular areas of interest.

In formal education the dukes were probably on a par with the noble class as a whole; that is, higher education was not greatly valued as a preparation for the life they were to lead. In wider intellectual interests the dukes were in no sense leaders, and were undoubtedly far behind the clergy and the upper middle class in this area. Their education and interests were highly practical and untheoretical. The practice of collecting libraries on the part of the nobles and the gentry, said to have been begun by the first Earl of Anglesey, who died in 1686, was common in the eighteenth century, but cannot be taken as an indication of wide intellectual interests; libraries were often only showpieces which were expected to be found in noble households.

The marriages of the dukes indicate that the group was only roughly cohesive, for they married commoners almost as often as they married women closely related to the peerage. Nearly all of the wives were English and were or had strong claims to gentility. The expectations of financial gain through marriage alliances was so common as to be almost universal; William Hogarth's series, "Marriage a la Mode," was scarcely an exaggeration of the actual

practices involved in the preliminaries for a marriage contract among the upper classes.

The possession of ducal titles set men apart to a degree, but they did not conceive of themselves, nor were they treated, as a separate group within the peerage. In the case of the Bedfords it appears that the Duchess was largely responsible for the widespread belief that they felt themselves better than others in the peerage; yet at home they reportedly were quite civil and contented and conformed to the expected pattern of behavior. Some of the dukes and duchesses apparently took their exalted station more seriously than others, but on the whole they do not appear to have been insolent or overbearing. The "Proud Duke" of Somerset and the eccentric Duchess of Northumberland, his daughter, appear to have been almost humorous exceptions. In social and recreational interests the dukes followed the common pattern for the gentle class in the century. Their interests were as diverse as those of the group as a whole. Because of their wealth, some patronized music or the opera to a great extent, but they were following individual preferences in these matters. The dukes fit into no pattern as a class, but reflect the likes and dislikes of their social milieu.

In a formalized hierarchy it was necessary that there be "an apex of the apex," and this the dukes constituted. The mere existence of the supreme ducal rank, as has been abundantly shown, called forth the efforts of the lower orders of the peerage in the attempt to attain it. Achievement of that rank may have inhibited activity
in those who were included in it, for some of the dukes considered
in this study were so inactive that they left little for the histor­
ian to note except that they once lived.
CHAPTER VIII
Summation and Conclusion

This chapter is an attempt at a general summation of the place, activities and contributions of the English nobility, and especially of the dukes, as well as the larger social aristocracy, to English life in the eighteenth century. The particular summations to be found in each of the preceding chapters will not be repeated in detail, but will be brought in as they apply to the general picture being drawn.

The most significant fact about the English aristocracy is that it was the class which held effective political power in both local concerns and in the national government. The political structure of the nation was a reflection of the social fabric; those who possessed social status also held political power. Long possession of landed wealth was the foremost ingredient in social status. Political philosopher and practical politician alike felt that landed property and political power united formed the only stable base for a free government.

The possessors of land were felt to represent the history of the nation which had gone before; they would contribute to the molding of the present, and should contribute to the future development of the state. The English prejudice for old families and landed wealth designated representatives of those families to be gentle and above the mass of ordinary Englishmen. English noble families were not very
old by most continental standards, for most of them could only trace their families with any degree of distinction, from the sixteenth century. Most of the feudal aristocracy had been liquidated in the Wars of the Roses and most of the great eighteenth-century families owed their prominence and their land to the Tudors and their spolia-
tion of the church. The status of the politically effective class was gained not only by the age of the family and from its landed property, but was also based upon the tradition of military leader­ship or ascendancy which had been associated with nobility since the Middle Ages. In the eighteenth century little beyond tradition re­mained of the military function of the English nobility. The nobility and social aristocracy were also intimately connected with the Church of England, not only because it was the established church, but because many of the families had relatives within its priesthood and also controlled the appointment to most livings by right of advowson. Thus the influence of the church in forming public attitudes as to the place and function of the upper classes cannot be over­looked.

The mobility of social, political and economic classes in England was much greater than on the continent. No legal restrictions existed on the buying or selling of land and an individual who had made his fortune in law, government or trade could buy a landed estate and transform himself and his heirs into country gentlemen in due time. England possesses no real urban aristocracy due to this tradi­tional movement to the country, although there were many city families of great wealth.
The relations between the English aristocracy and the middle class did not present a picture of crisis and conflict. This is the case not because the English aristocracy was a plutocracy, for it was not, but rather because of the peculiarities of the English laws of inheritance. Since only the eldest son inherited the title and family land, the younger sons were forced to look elsewhere for careers and livelihoods. They provided the main link between the nobility and other social and economic classes. Not that many appear to have gone directly into trade itself; they rather went into the army, the church, or were provided for by government office, pension or place, but certainly the next generation had lost any real claim to aristocratic protection or preferment. The fact that the younger sons were forced to leave the comfort of the family hearth was no doubt necessary to conserve the wealth needed by the main line of the family to maintain its position and its title.

The relatively close association between the English nobility and other classes was provided secondarily by peerage creations. In the hierarchical social and political structure of England the peerage and the House of Lords were looked upon as eminently representing the land of England. In the eighteenth century the peerage was a very small group but was in no sense a closed caste. From duke to baron it was open to those who were felt to merit the distinction and the avenues toward peerages were many. Several unwritten rules evolved regarding creations for any rank in the peerage. In the first, the person so honored must, with the possible exception of creations from
the legal or other professions, be a representative of the gentle
class and possess a landed income sufficient to maintain the dignity
of his peerage. Secondly, peerage honors came only after service
to the state in some capacity, although the service was often not of
very great importance. Thirdly, in the normal course of events, a
person aspiring to the peerage must have strong political influence
or have friends who possess it, for peerage creations in the eigh­
teenth century were almost wholly political in nature and were made
by the king upon the recommendation of a minister.

The relations between classes in the English body politic ran
smoothly in the third place because the English noble lacked a great
body of exclusive privileges which set him apart from other subjects.
The nobility was privileged to be sure, but the privileges were
largely petty and their areas of operation were extremely narrow.
Most of the privileges were social in nature and existed because of
the prejudices of the English people for gentility or "quality" in
an individual. The political and legal privileges of the nobles were
nearly all derived from their legislative function and only secondly
from their ownership of land. The English nobility did not attempt
to create new areas of privilege, and since their privileges were not
oppressive to other classes in the population, their existence caused
little comment or adverse reaction. In return for the privileges
which the English noble held, he performed governmental functions
which in part made them appear just and right to his contemporaries.
It was the loss of the older feudal privileges, especially the freedom from taxation, which differentiated the English noble from his continental counterpart.

Although the English landed nobility made up a very select class, they were wholly a part of the larger social class of gentlemen from which they received their attitudes and values. One of the main tenets of the class of gentlemen was that each member should possess virtue. Virtue consisted in many things but acceptance of responsibility which went with one's station in life was essential. As the governing class which ruled and administered the nation, the aristocracy accepted in large part the responsibilities which were concomitant with its position. Although they felt themselves to be the only class capable of governing, they did not hold themselves aloof from the common concerns of the people. They were amateurs in government but took their duties and responsibilities seriously. Since they were landed, they lived largely upon their landed estates, knew the common people and their problems and concerns well from mingling with them, and were constantly alive to the welfare of their tenants and dependents. Yet, on the other hand, many were highly cultured and possessed "the Graces" to a degree which would have satisfied Lord Chesterfield. These they gained in the society of London or from the Grand Tour. But the nobility of England was eminently a country nobility rather than a court one. Little was to be gained by attendance upon the sovereign, unless one held an official position at court, for the real power rested with the king's
ministers, and favors were to be sought from them by political orthodoxy, services, family influence or "connections."

In the England of the eighteenth century the ducal title bestowed upon its holder a unique position in society and in the state. By it, a man was in the highest reaches of society and received deferential treatment from those below him in the social structure. Because of it a man was automatically in the House of Lords, and, even if he never wished to be an active politician or aspired to hold high cabinet office, he possessed a forum from which he might speak and perhaps influence national affairs. With the ducal title a man inherited not only social status and political possibilities but also the wealth which could make him independent of crown or ministers. He was one of approximately twenty-five men who held such a title out of a total male population of roughly three and one-half million, and the chances of a fellow subject achieving the rank which he possessed were infinitesimally small.

The ducal title was the highest reward which could be given to a person by the crown. It was rarely bestowed after George I's reign. It was given in reward for service to the crown in several capacities, including that of helping the sovereign to succeed to the throne. It was bestowed also as a political reward to followers of a political party or faction, and was granted following great military service. It could not be gained without political support for the aspirant regardless of the areas of service to the nation. The
crown under the Hanoverians, especially under George I and II, was open to strong Whig political pressures and the Whigs achieved the ducal titles, for nearly all of the Tory dukes were creations of Charles II or of Queen Anne.

The nobles who achieved the coveted ducal rank were on the whole wealthy enough to support the title. Land was evidently granted by the sovereign in some cases to those created dukes, and it can be assumed that all of the bastards of Charles II who were so enobled, received land from the crown. In spite of the general wealth of the dukes they were avaricious for positions of profit at the disposal of the government.

Although every cabinet during the period of this study contained at least one duke, representatives from only eleven of the thirty-one ducal families which existed from 1714 to 1784 held cabinet positions. It is obvious that many of the dukes were not politically active in national affairs. Over two-thirds of the ducal families would have been termed "backwoods peers" in modern English political parlance during the period of greatest aristocratic ascendancy in English history. Thus the possession of a ducal title did not mean that the holder aspired to political office or that he could be politically active. The dukes were individuals and their inclinations and interests were so diverse that they fitted into no set form or pattern in their activities.

In the realm of economic affairs the dukes were all landholders and derived the mass of their incomes from landed rents. Some of
them took a great interest in agriculture and attempted to improve their estates as much as possible. The second source of income for them appears to have been positions in the government itself or positions which were in the gift of the government of the day, in areas of activity in either local or national concerns. Although much research and study has gone into the political interests and activities of the English nobility, very little has been done in order to discover their part in the economic development of Britain. It appears that some were interested in general economic developments with an eye to improving their incomes. Many invested in the great trading companies of their day, invested in capitalistic enterprises, and took part in urban developments, but the extent of their participation and the time at which they began to receive an appreciable income from these activities, is unknown at present. It can be conjectured that few of the dukes looked to industrial and technological developments as major sources of income, but that more were interested in the traditional agricultural phase of their economic activities. The expenditures of the dukes reflect the values and responsibilities of their social class. The mass of their incomes went to maintain their social and political position and to provide for their families and dependents.

The education of the dukes of this period was largely provided by private tutors or chaplains in their homes; many broadened their educations and learned much of the great world as a result of the
Grand Tour. Public education in the grammar schools and at the universities was held to be of little value to a person of such exalted rank. The dukes were certainly educated regarding their duties and rights as landed magnates for many of them took a deep interest in the management of their estates and in the condition of their tenants. Much of the administrative work of the estates was performed by trained and experienced land stewards. The dukes, being agriculturalists and politicians, were not primarily interested in intellectual pursuits, yet many showed a keen interest in the fine arts, in literature, in the theatre and in music.

The ducal rank in the peerage did not display a tight cohesion where it would be expected, in the selection of wives. The spouses of the dukes came from noble blood in a little more than half of the marriages; but the significant fact is that nearly half of the holders of this dignity married commoners, although many of these could claim descent from noble blood. This is important in showing the absence of a class structure within the English nobility. The dukes stayed very closely within the larger social aristocracy, the gentle class, in selecting mates, and only in rare cases did they consort with the lower orders of society.

The English dukes in no sense made up a caste of superior peers, but they were conscious of their exalted stations. They took part in the social and recreational activities of the aristocratic class and established no exclusive areas of activity. There is little
evidence of group feeling among them, except in matters of precedence, and here they insisted upon their dignity. The ducal title itself was respected and envied, although not all holders of the title were either respected or esteemed.

The general conclusion on the place of the dukes in English life in the eighteenth century is difficult to make with clarity and exactness. As we have seen, the dukes served the nation in many capacities. As legislators, the dukes appear not to have taken a very active part in the House of Lords when their whole number is considered. As holders of national political offices their record is far from shining, for fewer than one-third achieved them. As politicians interested in elections, the dukes appear to have been active in their own counties and among the voters in an effort to secure the election to the House of Commons persons of their own political persuasion, even if they did not hold great influence in the councils of the national government. As military leaders, other than their activities in the militia in their home counties, the dukes appear to have added little to the strength or leadership of the nation. In economic matters the dukes were largely traditional supporters and improvers of agriculture as the base of their social and political power. In intellectual pursuits the dukes took little interest, although some were interested in the political affairs of the universities. The dukes made their greatest contribution in the local areas where they lived and owned property, for there, regardless of other factors, they were great men with enormous influence, or, as De Sau-sure stated it, they were "like little kings, according to the good
they do." Thus they helped in a degree to form the English nobility and aristocracy which was dedicated to service to the state which the upper classes so largely controlled. They, as dukes, capped the inherited social structure with titles which were next to those of the princes of the blood royal.
APPENDIX

The Dukes, 1714-1784

The following list includes all of the holders of ducal titles in the years 1714-1784 who are noticed in this study. The title is given, the peerage of which it is a part, the family name and Christian name, and the date at which the holder succeeded to the title and the date of his death.

Aneaster and Kesteven, peerage of Great Britain, family name: Bertie

Robert (I) 1715-1723
Peregrine (II) 1723-1742
Peregrine (III) 1742-1778
Robert (IV) 1778-1779
Brownlow (V) 1779-1809 (Extinct)

Beaufort, peerage of England, family name: Somerset

Henry (II) 1700-1714
Henry (III) 1714-1745
Charles (IV) 1745-1756
Henry (V) 1756-1803

Bedford, peerage of England, family name: Russell

Wriothesley (III) 1711-1732
John (IV) 1732-1771
Francis (V) 1771-1802

Bolton, peerage of England, family name: Powlett, sometimes Powlet or Pavlet

Charles (II) 1699-1722
Charles (III) 1722-1754
Harry (IV) 1754-1759
Charles (V) 1759-1765
Harry (VI) 1765-1794 (Extinct)

Bridgewater, peerage of Great Britain, family name: Egerton

Scroop (I) 1720-1745
John (II) 1745-1748
Francis (III) 1748-1803 (Extinct)
Buckingham and Normanby, peerage of England, family name: Sheffield

John (I) 1703-1721
Edward (II) 1721-1735 (Extinct)

Chandos, peerage of Great Britain, family name: Brydges

James (I) 1719-1744
Henry (II) 1744-1771
James (III) 1771-1789 (Extinct)

Cleveland and Southampton, peerage of England, family name:
Cleveland, Barbara Villiers or Palmer; Southampton, Fitz Roy

Charles (I) 1675-1730 (succeeded as Cleveland 1709)
William (II) 1730-1774 (Extinct)

Devonshire, Peerage of England, family name: Cavendish

William (II) 1707-1729
William (III) 1729-1755
William (IV) 1755-1764
William (V) 1764-1811

Dorset, peerage of Great Britain, family name: Sackville

Lionel (I) 1720-1765
Charles (II) 1765-1769
John Frederick (III) 1769-1799

Grafton, peerage of England, family name: Fitz Roy

Charles (II) 1690-1757
Augustus Henry (III) 1757-1811

Hamilton and Brandon, peerage of Scotland (Hamilton) and Great Britain (Brandon), family name: Hamilton

James (V and II) 1712-1743
James (VI and III) 1743-1758
James George (VII and IV) 1758-1769
Douglas (VIII and V) 1769-1799

Kent, peerage of Great Britain, family name: Grey

Henry (I) 1710-1740 (Extinct)
Kingston upon Hull, peerage of Great Britain, family name: Pierrepont

Evelyn (I) 1715-1726
Evelyn (II) 1726-1773 (Extinct)

Leeds, peerage of England, family name: Osborne

Peregrine (II) 1712-1729
Peregrine (III) 1729-1731
Thomas (IV) 1731-1789

Manchester, peerage of Great Britain, family name: Montagu

Charles (I) 1719-1722
William (II) 1722-1739
Robert (III) 1739-1762
George (IV) 1762-1788

Marlborough, peerage of England, family name: Churchill, later Spencer-Churchill

John (I) 1702-1722
Henrietta (II) 1722-1733 (Not included in this study)
Charles Spencer (III) 1733-1758
George Spencer (IV) 1758-1817

Montagu, peerage of England, family name: Montagu

John (II) 1709-1749 (Extinct)

Montagu, peerage of Great Britain, family name: Brudenell-Montagu

George (I) 1766-1790 (Extinct)

Newcastle upon Tyne and Newcastle under Lyme, peerage of Great Britain, family name: Pelham-Hollis and for Newcastle under Lyme, Pelham-Clinton, II

Thomas (I) 1715-1768 (upon Tyne-extinct-in 1768 while
Henry (II) 1768-1794 under Lyme continues)

Norfolk, peerage of England, family name: Howard

Thomas (VIII) 1701-1732
Edward (IX) 1732-1777
Charles (X) 1777-1786
Northumberland, peerage of England, family name: Fitz Roy

George (I) 1675-1716 (Extinct)

Northumberland, peerage of Great Britain, family name: Percy-Smithson

Hugh (I) 1766-1786

Portland, peerage of England, family name: Bentinck

Henry (I) 1716-1726
William (II) 1726-1762
William (III) 1762-1809

Queensbury and Dover, peerage of Scotland (Queensbury) and Great Britain (Dover), family name: Douglas

Charles (III and II) 1711-1778 (Dover, Extinct)

Richmond and Lennox, peerage of England (Richmond) and Scotland (Lennox), family name: Lennox

Charles (I) 1675-1723
Charles (II) 1723-1750
Charles (III) 1750-1806

Rutland, peerage of England, family name: Manners

John (II) 1711-1721
John (III) 1721-1779
Charles (IV) 1779-1787

St. Albans, peerage of England, family name: Beauclerc

Charles (I) 1684-1726
Charles (II) 1726-1751
George (III) 1751-1786

Shrewsbury, peerage of England, family name: Talbot

Charles (I) 1694-1713 (Extinct)
Somerset, peerage of England, family name: Seymour

Charles (VI) 1660-1748
Algernon (VII) 1748-1750
Edward (VIII) 1750-1757
Edward (IX) 1757-1792

Wharton, peerage of Great Britain, family name: Wharton

Philip (I) 1718-1729 (Attainder) (Extinct)

1 This listing of the holders of ducal titles is taken from The Complete Peerage, VIII, Appendix A, "The Ducal Title in Great Britain," p. 721 ff.
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AUTOBIOGRAPHY

I, Ray Alden Kelch, was born in Logan, Ohio, September 13, 1923. I received my secondary education in the public schools of Logan, Ohio. My undergraduate training at The Ohio State University was interrupted by military service in the United States Army from 1943 to 1946. While in service I attended the University of Oregon and Shrivenham American University, Shrivenham, England, for special training. Upon my discharge from the army I returned to The Ohio State University and received the degree Bachelor of Science in Education in 1947. From The Ohio State University I received the degree Master of Arts in 1949. During the summer of 1949 I did graduate work at the University of Oxford, England. While in residence at The Ohio State University completing course work for the doctorate I acted in the capacity of assistant to Professors Warner F. Woodring, Eugene E. Roseboom, Foster R. Dulles and Lowell Ragatz, and later taught survey courses in European history. In the summer of 1953 I taught at Muskingum College, New Concord, Ohio. In September 1953 I became an instructor at Stephens College, Columbia, Missouri. I have held this position for two years and during that time I have completed the requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy.