The History of Parliament Trust

REVIEW OF ACTIVITIES 2015-16

THE HISTORY OF PARLIAMENT
British Political, Social & Local History
Objectives and activities of the History of Parliament Trust

The History of Parliament is a major academic project to create a scholarly reference work describing the members, constituencies and activities of the Parliament of England and the United Kingdom. The volumes either published or in preparation cover the House of Commons from 1386 to 1868 and the House of Lords from 1603 to 1832. They are widely regarded as an unparalleled source for British political, social and local history.

The volumes consist of detailed studies of elections and electoral politics in each constituency, and of closely researched accounts of the lives of everyone who was elected to Parliament in the period, together with surveys drawing out the themes and discoveries of the research and adding information on the operation of Parliament as an institution.

The History has published 21,420 biographies and 2,831 constituency surveys in ten sets of volumes (41 volumes in all). They deal with 1386-1421, 1509-1558, 1558-1603, 1604-29, 1660-1690, 1690-1715, 1715-1754, 1754-1790, 1790-1820 and 1820-32. All of these articles are now available on www.historyofparliamentonline.org. The History’s staff of professional historians is currently researching the House of Commons in the periods 1422-1504, 1640-1660, and 1832-1868, and the House of Lords in the periods 1603-60 and 1660-1832. The three Commons projects currently in progress will contain a further 7,251 biographies of members of the House of Commons and 861 constituency surveys. With what is now published and in progress, the History covers 414 years of the history of the House of Commons. In addition, the House of Lords projects are currently working on 693 biographies covering 1660-1715, and 458 covering 1603-1660.

Since 1995, the History has been funded principally by the two Houses of Parliament. It is based close to its original host, the Institute of Historical Research, University of London. It was founded before the Second World War, the brainchild of Josiah Wedgwood MP, a Labour parliamentarian and minister, and revived after the war when a number of the greatest British historians of the day, including Sir Lewis Namier, Sir Frank Stenton and Sir John Neale, were involved in its re-establishment. The project is governed by its Trustees, who are mainly Members and Officers of both Houses of Parliament. The quality of the project’s research and writing is monitored by an Editorial Board of historians. For further details see the History’s website at www.historyofparliamentonline.org.

Cover image: One of the images taken for our ‘Agincourt’ project (see below, p. 14): the tomb of Thomas of Lancaster, duke of Clarence (d.1421), in Canterbury Cathedral. Clarence, the second son of Henry IV and brother of Henry V, was born in 1387 and knighted on the eve of his father’s coronation in 1399. Despite his youth, he served intermittently as his father’s lieutenant in Ireland for much of the reign, but was reprimanded by the royal council for neglecting his duties by spending much of his time in England. In 1412 he was given a better opportunity to prove himself, as put in command of an expeditionary force to France in support of the Armagnacs against the Burgundians. His successful raid enhanced his reputation, and as his brother prepared for the invasion of France in 1415 he undertook to serve with the massive retinue of 240 men-at-arms and 720 archers, the largest retinue of any lord. As it transpired he did not fight at Agincourt, for he was invalided home with dysentery from the siege of Harfleur. In later campaigns, however, he fought with distinction until March 1421 when, recklessly and against the advice of his captains, he gave battle against a superior French force and was killed at Baugé in Anjou. Picture by Robert Morris.
Review of activities in the year 2015-16

HIGHLIGHTS

Research

- 221 new articles completed; two projects now well into their revision stages, with over 800 articles revised for publication during the course of the year.
- Lords 1660-1715 project completed and sent to the press for publication in July 2016.
- Former Members oral history project continues, with 132 interviews now completed.

Dissemination

- ‘Story of Parliament’ book published with St James’s House, as part of a sponsorship arrangement.
- Website continues to attract high number of visitors.

Outreach and Engagement

- Assistance with ‘Parliament in the Making’, a series of events to mark the 800th anniversary of Magna Carta and the 750th anniversary of Simon de Montfort’s parliament.
- Project funded by the Agincourt 600 Fund to photograph tombs of Members of Parliament who fought at Agincourt.
- Followers of the Twitter account now number over 4,000, and we tweet daily with news from the History and references to our articles based on anniversaries or current events, and publish between one and two posts on our wordpress blog each week on various aspects of parliamentary history.
With several of our projects now well into their revision phase, checking articles for final publication, the overall output of the History in terms of new articles and draft articles has gone down; but revision of pieces which in many cases were written a long time ago remains a substantial exercise. Altogether, the History’s staff and some external authors compiled 221 new articles, containing over a million words, and revised almost 800 old ones, as well as compiling the Introductory Survey for the House of Lords, 1660-1715 project. Below we describe some of the work that has emerged from each of the projects.

The House of Commons, 1422-1461

The project is steadily working its way through the revision process, which should be completed within the current year, leaving the survey to be compiled thereafter. 621 articles were revised over the course of the year, and two new articles were completed. Project staff are Linda Clark (Editor), Hannes Kleineke, Charles Moreton and Simon Payling.

The House of Commons, 1640-1660

This project is also in its final stages, steadily working through revision. The process is currently concentrated on articles written right at the beginning of the project’s life, which means that much often has to be done to bring them up to current standards. Over the year, 195 articles were revised. Project staff are Stephen Roberts (editor), Andrew Barclay, Vivienne Larminie, Patrick Little and David Scott.

The House of Commons, 1832-68

The project is now around seven years old, and with 1,451 articles now completed in draft, is very close to its half way point. Although now operating with only four staff, a growing number of external contributors are producing an increasing number of articles. Most of them have already been added to the online preview website, where they are widely available to view on application to the project staff. Over the year, a further 159 articles were completed, totalling over 436,000 words. The following very brief summaries of a small number of the articles written over the course of the year give some idea of the emerging picture of the Victorian House of Commons.

- **Benjamin Lee Guinness (1798-1868)**: one of the most important figures in this famous brewing dynasty, Guinness was a noted philanthropist and one of the richest men in Ireland. Driven into politics by his aversion to Fenianism, he sat as a ‘Liberal Conservative’ for Dublin from 1865-8, but was always something of a reluctant politician and a poor attender.

- **Samuel Dickson (c. 1776-1850)**: for almost a quarter of a century Dickson tenaciously pursued a seat in parliament for his native county of Limerick. To Daniel O’Connell, he was ‘a very honest man’ who had ‘one very great and defective peculiarity, an idea that he was fit to be a member of Parliament’. He finally attained his goal in 1849 at the age of 74, only to die after a single session at Westminster.

- **John Bramley-Moore (1800-1886)**: a forceful personality, considered ‘highly obnoxious’ by some, best known for pioneering the dramatic extension of the Liverpool docks in the 1840s. During his time in the Commons, he campaigned for the government to improve its diplomatic relations with Brazil, where he was a successful merchant.

- **Quintin Dick (1777-1858)**: immensely wealthy but ‘mean and vilely shabby’ in appearance, Dick was better known for his lavish political dinners in Mayfair than his activities in the Commons. He became a staunch opponent of Peel on commercial
and religious questions after 1843, but never gained the respect of Disraeli, who thought him 'supercilious' and once remarked that he looked like a 'stale lemon'.

- **John Hodson Kearsley (1785-1842)**: dubbed the 'Walking Beer Barrel', Kearsley, a Conservative brewer who had sat for Wigan in the pre-Reform House, returned to the Commons from 1835-37. He became renowned for his 'drunken antics' in the chamber, where his caustic observations on opposition MPs provoked much mirth, but also earned him rebukes.

- **James Wilson (1805-60)**: 'a cockney political economist' and former hat manufacturer, Wilson, the founder editor of the *Economist*, rose to become one of the leading financial figures of his day.

- **Renn Hampden (1791-1852)**: a Barbados plantation owner and a leading figure on its legislative council, who successfully oversaw the first prosecution of a white planter for killing a slave in 1826, but was defeated at Lyme in 1837, when his own record as a slave-owner told against him.

- **William McCormick (1801-1878)**: a self-made man, McCormick rose by his own talents and energy to become the 'architect of his own fortune' as a railway contractor. Responsible for realising the ambition of Londonderry's businessmen to make the city a regional hub for the north-west of Ireland, he was returned for Londonderry in 1860.

- **Benjamin Whitworth (1816-1893)**: described by the Irish viceroy, Lord Kimberley, as a shrewd linen manufacturer 'who drops his h's and speaks with a Lancashire burr', Whitworth became a major figure in the temperance movement, once remarking that he would 'vote for the Bluest Tory if he were only right on this question'. At the end of his life he was celebrated as 'the last of a type' of Irish Member, which had by then become 'as extinct as the dodo'.

- **John Ireland Blackburne (1783-1874)**: a Lancashire landowner, whose increasingly inconsistent voting habits as MP for Warrington from 1835-47 eventually cost him his seat, with one local newspaper quipping that he was trying to turn his single-member borough into a double-member constituency by being 'two gentlemen at once' and 'voting on both sides of every question'.

- **William Alexander Mackinnon I (1784-1870)**: a wealthy West India proprietor and the head of his Scottish clan, Mackinnon was an active backbencher, considered an 'ass' by Disraeli. He loyally backed Peel before gravitating towards the Liberals, and pioneered legislation to reform turnpike trusts, patent and copyright laws, improvements to burial practices and public health, earning him offers of titles from Peel and Palmerston, which he declined.

- **William Alexander Mackinnon II (1813-1903)**: son of the above, Mackinnon was elected as a Liberal for Rye in 1852, but unseated for bribery following a well-publicised scandal about money being left behind a sofa at the 'Red Lion'.

- **Charles Knightley (1781-1864)**: 'one of the finest horsemen that ever got into a saddle', Knightley represented Northamptonshire South from 1835-52, a dyed in the wool back bench protectionist, who would have 'melted his last tankard for Church and King', as well as a skilled cattle breeder and celebrated huntsman.

- **Rainald Knightley (1819-1895)**: best known for his role in the cross-party alliance that helped to defeat the 1866 Liberal reform bill, Knightley clocked up forty years on the Tory backbenches as an independent country gentleman. Part of the aristocratic faction of 'Old Believers' who maintained a deep distrust of Disraelian Conservatism prior to 1868, he was also a noted whist player, who codified the laws of the game with fellow Old Believer and founding member of the Turf Club, 'Big Ben' Bentinck.

- **John Charles Spencer, Viscount Althorp (1782-1845)**: renowned for his role in the passage of the 1832 Reform Act, Viscount Althorp was chancellor of the exchequer and leader of the Commons between 1832 and 1834. His devotion to public service, and the relative inactivity of his cabinet colleagues in the Commons, meant that he bore the brunt of the Grey ministry's ambitious reform agenda, pushing his
parliamentary skillset to the utmost of its limits before he succeeded, with visible relief, to his father’s earldom.

- **Frederick Thomas Arthur Hervey Bathurst (1833-1900):** a noted athlete and cricketer, Bathurst joined the Grenadier Guards in 1851 and served in the Crimea, seeing action at Balaclava and Inkerman. In 1861 he was brought forward for a vacancy in Wiltshire South, which his father had declined. He sat as a loyal but inconspicuous Conservative until 1865, when he was defeated in third place. Thereafter he resumed his cricket, playing for Hampshire.

- **James Bell (1818-1872):** Surrey’s first Quaker MP and a qualified architect, Bell was the younger son of a pioneering and highly successful London pharmacist. Elected for Guildford in second place in 1852, he sat as an advanced Liberal until 1857, when his votes against the ministry’s handling of the Chinese war cost him his seat. His speeches included professional criticism of the stone materials and methods being used to complete the new Houses of Parliament.

- **Ernest Augustus Charles Brudenell Bruce (1811-1886):** one of the Victorian Commons’ ‘characters’, Bruce’s tendency to ‘snore prodigiously in his place below the gangway’ and chat with those around him in ‘stentorian tones’, owing to his ‘acute’ deafness, on more than occasion forced the Speaker to call him to order. An independently-minded backbencher, he clocked up 46 years sitting for his family’s pocket borough of Marlborough after 1832, gravitating from Peel to the Liberals, but often confounded the party whips.

- **William Edward Forster (1818-86):** best known for the 1870 Education Act, which established England’s national system of elementary schools, and for the 1872 Ballot Act, Forster sat for Bradford from 1861-86 and served as a Liberal minister in 1865-66, 1868-74 and 1880-82. His achievements in office have inevitably overshadowed his early career on the back benches, where he took an independent line. An effective and highly ambitious critic of the Palmerston ministry, he became a key figure in 1865-66, urging Liberal ministers to try to pass a reform bill. In 1867 his marshalling of Radical support for the Conservative reform bill helped influence its terms and passage.

- **Sidney Herbert (1810-1861):** best remembered for sending Florence Nightingale to the Crimea, for a while Herbert ranked alongside Gladstone as the leader of the Peelites and was widely touted as a future prime minister. MP for Wiltshire South from 1832-61, he served as war secretary under Aberdeen, 1852-55, and later on under Palmerston, 1859-61. The workload associated with the handling of the Crimean war and subsequent military reforms took its toll on his health, however, and he died shortly after accepting a peerage in 1861.

- **Austen Henry Layard (1817-94):** renowned for his excavations of ancient Nineveh and knowledge of the middle east, Layard sat for Aylesbury from 1852-7 and Southwark from 1860-70. Initially an outspoken, almost subversive, critic of the Aberdeen ministry’s appeasement of Russia and handling of the Crimean War, he became a leading figure in the Administrative Reform Association. Following his defeat in 1857 and return to the Commons in 1860, however, he accepted office as under-secretary for foreign affairs, a post in which he passionately (and often intemperately) defended the foreign policy of the Palmerston and Russell ministries from 1861 until 1866.

- **Guildford James Hillier Onslow (1814-1882):** one of the leading supporters of the notorious Tichborne claimant, whose ‘private parts’ he claimed to recognise on account of an ‘unmentionable malformation’, Onslow was later fined for contempt of court for his role in the most famous inheritance scam of the period. The soldier son of a former MP for Guildford, he sat for the same borough from 1858-74 as a loyal supporter of Palmerston, Russell and Gladstone, mainly speaking on military matters and foreign policy. His involvement in the Tichborne case eventually cost him his seat.
Among the constituency articles completed were the following:

- **Boston**: Lincolnshire’s main town and a struggling port, Boston retained its pre-reform reputation as one of the most venal and violent constituencies in England. When the captain of one Dutch vessel arrived during the 1837 contest, he thought a ‘revolution’ had broken out. The throwing of local fish, usually laced with stones, remained a staple of most hustings scenes, and few candidates, invariably rich Londoners sent up to empty their purses, escaped without injury.

- **Berwick-upon-Tweed**: with an electorate dominated by freemen until 1852, corruption and bribery remained an intrinsic part of Berwick’s political culture, the true extent of which was eventually exposed by a commission of inquiry in 1861. Elections were fiercely contested and invariably followed by a petition, some of which were then withdrawn as part of murky compromises.

- **South Shields**: a new single member seat created by the 1832 Reform Act, South Shields was a port on the mouth of the Tyne dominated by the shipping industry. Maritime issues played a key role in its colourful elections, which witnessed hoax candidatures, Chartist campaigns and even a duel, but the shipping interest was never guaranteed success, particularly when they backed a Conservative candidate, as in 1852.

- **Marlborough**: a former ‘pocket borough’, Marlborough’s electorate failed to expand as anticipated under the 1832 Reform Act, leaving it the fourth smallest English borough to elect two MPs. Despite an attempt by local reformers to secure one seat in 1832, the borough’s representation remained firmly under the control of the Brudenell Bruce family, it being said that they could have returned ‘a poodle dog and a black servant’ if they chose. Marlborough’s elections continued to be regarded as ‘farcical’ until the 1867 Reform Act, which expanded the electorate and reduced the borough to a single seat.

Project staff throughout the year were Philip Salmon (editor), Kathryn Rix (assistant editor), Stephen Ball. During the year James Owen left us for the USA, and we were joined by Martin Spychal, the previous holder of an AHRC collaborative doctoral award at the Institute of Historical Research sponsored by the History of Parliament.

Work is also proceeding with our web developers based at the Institute of Historical Research, Martin Steer and Janos Bodony, on building a ‘Voting Explorer’ tool for the 1832-68 project. This is based on the division lists which were digitised by us some time ago, and which have been enhanced by academics based at the LSE and at Harvard University, Arthur Spirling and Andy Eggers. The division lists cover a broader period (1836-1910) than the section, and the aim is to create a web interface which will provide an efficient and user-friendly way of interrogating the lists – enabling one both to see, at a glance, how any individual MP voted, but also to compare his voting record with any other MP.

Examining the votes of elected representatives has long been a fundamental component of modern political analysis, informing the work of historians and political scientists alike, most notably in the US, where historical and contemporary ‘roll-call’ studies have become highly sophisticated and influential. Similar work on Westminster, and especially the pre-1945 Commons, has by contrast been more limited, hindered by the sheer amount of data in the official records, the limited availability of the division lists, and above all the lack of a fully digitised dataset. Once complete and available online the UK voting explorer could enhance and even transform the study of British politics in a similar fashion to pioneering projects carried out US Congressional votes, 1789-1998.
The House of Lords, 1603-1660

The four members of the section produced 60 biographies totalling over 311,000 words. The following are brief summaries of a small number of the articles written over the course of the year:

- **Thomas Cecil, 2nd Lord Burghley and 1st earl of Exeter (1542-1623):** disappointing eldest son of the great Elizabethan statesman, William Cecil, 1st Lord Burghley, whose last years were overshadowed by the accusation that his second wife had committed incest with his grandson Lord Ros, and plotted to murder Lady Ros.

- **William Cecil, 16th Lord Ros (1590-1618):** spent much of his adult life abroad mixing with Catholics and emptying his purse. He once taunted Dutch Protestants by exposing himself in public. He performed two ceremonial embassies, and in 1617, after his marriage broke down, he fled to Italy, where he died a year later.

- **Robert Pierrepont, 1st Viscount Newark and 1st earl of Kingston-upon-Hull (1584-1643):** a Nottinghamshire landowner who lived economically, Pierrepont ploughed his income into purchasing property, becoming wealthy as a result. His riches inevitably attracted the attention of the Crown, and he was pressured into purchasing a peerage in 1627 and an earldom in 1628. A royalist commander in the Civil War, he was killed by friendly fire in July 1643.

- **Ralph Eure, 3rd Lord Eure (1558-1617):** already an experienced administrator on the Borders by the accession of James, Eure was kept from appointment as president of the North in 1603 by a clash with his Yorkshire neighbours. He acquired the presidency of Wales and the Marches in 1606, but his hopes of a substantial profit were disappointed because of changes to the council's jurisdiction, and he sold his position to Thomas, 1st Lord Gerard in March 1617.

- **Tobie Matthew, archbishop of York (1544/6-1628):** Matthew's reputation as a preacher and administrator made him a strong contender for the highest office, but he was not a successful politician: twice passed over for Canterbury, and embarrassed by the conversion of his eldest son to Rome, he was nevertheless promoted from Durham to York in 1606. He used his authority to proceed vigorously against northern Catholics, and promoted the careers of many puritan ministers.

- **Gervase Clifton, 1st Lord Clifton (c.1569-1618):** a prominent Huntingdonshire landowner, Clifton acquired his peerage through the marriage of his only daughter to a cousin of James I. The bargain proved a poor one, for the baron's heavily-indebted Stuart kinsmen systematically stripped him of most of his assets, relying on their royal connections to win a series of legal battles over the terms of the marriage settlement. Reduced to penury, and now dependant on his daughter's charity, Clifton eventually stabbed himself to death with a penknife.

- **Robert Dormer, 1st Lord Dormer (1551-1616):** a wealthy Catholic squire, Dormer publicly conformed to the Church of England, and held a minor office at Court, as keeper of the royal hawks. He declined, in 1611, to purchase a baronetcy, but was persuaded four years later to buy a barony, the first occasion when James I openly sold a title. The controversial new peer died the next year without ever sitting in the Lords.

- **Francis Norris, 2nd Lord Norreys and 1st earl of Berkshire (1579-1622):** wealthy but extremely short-tempered, Norris inherited substantial Berkshire estates as a minor, yet struggled throughout his life to obtain high office. A noted duellist, he killed a man during a scuffle in 1615, allegedly in self-defence, and was imprisoned six years later for assaulting a fellow peer in the House of Lords. He committed suicide not long afterwards by shooting himself in the face with a crossbow.

- **Robert Rich, 3rd Lord Rich and 1st earl of Warwick (1559-1619):** the largest landowner in Essex, Rich was sympathetic to presbyterianism and a leading patron of nonconformist clergy. His lengthy absences from the first two sessions of the first
Jacobeans were probably attributable to the fact that his wife, who divorced him in 1605, was conducting an openly adulterous affair with the 1st earl of Devonshire. He lived only seven months to enjoy the earldom which he purchased in 1618.

- **Robert Rich, 2nd earl of Warwick (c.1588-1658):** a puritan like his father, the 3rd Lord Rich, Warwick was the greatest aristocratic shipping magnate of his age, leading a privateering expedition against the Spanish in 1627. Initially a friend of the royal favourite, Buckingham, he initiated the York House Conference (1626) in the hope of detaching the duke from the Arminians. When this failed he supported, indirectly, Buckingham’s impeachment, for which he was punished, and also opposed the Forced Loan. Following Buckingham’s death he recovered the king’s favour, but lost it again by opposing forest fines and ship money.

- **Christopher Villiers, 1st earl of Anglesey (1593/4-1630):** a lecherous drunk, and somewhat dim, Villiers arrived at Court in 1617 on the coat tails of his elder brother and royal favourite, George, duke of Buckingham. His unappealing character made marrying him off to a wealthy heiress exceptionally difficult, and eventually, despite royal disapproval, he wed his own first cousin.

- **John Villiers, 1st Viscount Purbeck (1591-1658):** elder brother to the royal favourite, Buckingham, Purbeck initially served as master of the wardrobe to Prince Charles and helped Buckingham to manage his business. However, he suffered from periodic bouts of insanity which resulted in the loss of office, private seclusion and estrangement from his wife, who sought solace in the arms of Sir Robert Howard. Unable to participate in the parliaments of the 1620s, he nevertheless sought the aid of the Lords in 1626 to prevent his wife claiming parliamentary privilege, she having refused to do penance for her adultery.

Project staff are Andrew Thrush (editor), Ben Coates, Simon Healy and Paul Hunneyball.

**The House of Lords, 1660-1715**

This project is now very close to completion. The year was spent finalising the text, entering the data into our database, producing (and reading) proofs, and compiling the Introductory Survey. Caroline Delph was largely responsible for entering the text into the database. Substantial work was done by our developers at the IHR on the creation of the database, based on the existing database used for our Commons 1604-29 and 1820-32 volumes, and for the legacy text on the website. They also reworked the methodology for exporting the text from the database to XML and then transforming that into Adobe InDesign pages. The work was then typeset by Emily Morrell and Ellen Matthews. The work will be published in 5 volumes by Cambridge University Press in July 2016.

The main project staff during the year were Ruth Paley (editor), Robin Eagles, Stuart Handley, Matthew Kilburn and Charles Littleton. Ruth retired at the end of October, and Matthew left us at the end of November. Ruth and Robin drew attention to the imminent publication at the North American Conference on British Studies in November 2015, with a panel highlighting various aspects of the research that has emerged from the project.

**Oral History: The Members Project**

The History began working with volunteer interviewers on creating an oral history of parliament and parliamentarians in late 2011. The project, a collaboration with the British Library, will create a sound archive of people involved in politics at national and constituency level, and will provide a unique record of post-2nd World War British political history. The project’s aim is to interview as many former Members of the House of Commons as possible, focusing on how people came to be Members, how they worked within the
constituency and in Parliament for their constituency and for the particular causes in which they were interested, and what were their impressions of parliament and political life. The interviewers are volunteers, many of them historians of contemporary British politics, all of them trained by the British Library in the techniques of oral history interviewing. The project is being managed by a volunteer, Dr Priscila Pivatto.

During the year, we held a feedback session at the British Library in February, which was chaired by Dr Rob Perks, Lead Curator, Oral History and Life Stories, and was attended by some of our most experienced interviewers. We were also pleased to have obtained help from Hansard reporters at the House of Commons: Hansard has been helping to produce some summaries of our interviews, and a number of Hansard staff attended one of our training days at 18 Bloomsbury Square, and will join our team of volunteer interviewers.

By the end of 2015-16 we had invited 310 former Members to participate in the project. 182 had agreed to be interviewed, and our volunteer interviewers have completed a total of 132 interviews, with 112 of these now archived and accessible in the British Library. The interviews average 3 hours and are usually recorded over 2 sessions, or sometimes more. A section on The History of Parliament website, provides short biographies of the interviewees, a complete summary of each interview and sound clips. We are enormously grateful to Priscila and to all of those who have undertaken interviews for the project. Those who have contributed four or more interviews are: Emme Ledgerwood, Henry Irving, Alex Lock, Richard Stowell, Mark Wilson, Kevin Jeffreys, John Barry, Andrea Hertz, Philip Aylett, Isobel White, Dean White, and Emma Peplow.

Children campaigning for Michael Foot in the 1959 election campaign at Sutton and Devonport: From the collections of Plymouth City Council (Arts and Heritage) / © Western Morning News
A presentation on the project was given by Priscila and Emma Peplow at the July 2015 conference ‘Making Constitutions, Building Parliaments’, where they shared a session with Don Ritchie, the former Historian of the US Senate, and other oral history specialists.

Oral History: From the Grassroots: Community Politics in Devon

Our HLF-funded oral history project on local political life in Devon, ‘From the Grassroots: an oral history of community politics in Devon’, came to an end in June 2015. The aim of the project was to extend the scope of our oral history of politics beyond MPs to those involved in politics at a local level, matching our work in our other research on constituencies, as well as on individual members of Parliament. We worked closely with partners in the region (the Devon Heritage Centre at Exeter, the Plymouth and West Devon Record Office, and the Universities of Plymouth and Exeter); our project co-ordinator, Dr Kayleigh Milden, was based at the Devon Heritage Centre, Exeter.

Overall, we recorded 70 interviews with 71 people active in local politics, which we sought to balance, as far as possible, by party, gender, geographical area and age. The interviews, which have been archived locally, produced fascinating insights into Devon’s political life, covering the reasons why some people become politically active and the changing nature of political campaigning and the importance of grassroots activists on a local and national scale. The following short extracts provide some flavour of the interviews:

- [I remember] 1945 working as a runner – that’s from the polling booth to the committee room of the Labour party which was in our house… We used to go chanting as children – that was the way of broadcasting who the candidate was. Groups of you would go round [shouting the candidate for a particular party’s name], invariably they’d give you a lollipop or something. [Chester Long, Labour Councillor]
- Malcolm [Prowse] was probably my first real, true, introduction into politics. Malcolm was of course so involved, and he was always producing the odd leaflet or stickers that we used to wear. So that was the first introduction. Malcolm’s mum was Lilian Prowse, Jeremy Thorpe’s agent, and of course Jeremy was often at Lilian’s house, and as National Leader the house was full of all sorts of people. You’d bump in to David Steel or Jo Grimond or various people, which at the time, I think when you’re sixteen-seventeen, and the people on the television was quite impressive really and probably did make a difference. [David Butt, Liberal Democrat Election Agent]
- [During the 1959 Torrington by-election] meetings were held on the town hall where the candidates spoke and it was a packed house, a lot of heckling, time spent questioning the people. When it came to the election Mark Bonham-Carter [the Liberal candidate] won, to our horror and shock, and we…were really quite put out by the whole thing…The Young Conservatives were going out every night canvassing…people took time off work and went as tellers…People went out in cars to fetch the people who hadn’t voted. It was a big organisation and it worked very well. [Mary Warman, Conservative activist]

We relied on 28 volunteers, and offered 45 training places were taken up during the project, in workshops on oral history skills, digital storytelling, careers in the heritage sector and political archives. We held six events to disseminate the results of the project, including an exhibition which toured the county, and participation in the ‘Election Fever’ event at Plymouth University in the run-up to the 2015 General Election.

A dedicated website for the project (www.historyofparliamentonline.org/from-the-grassroots) includes archive video, audioclips from the interviews, biographies of interviewees and larger, thematic articles based on the material, as well as an interactive ‘community’ section.
which allows members to share their own memories and comment on other articles. The website also includes a schools section, with materials for the Key Stage Three citizenship curriculum based on our oral history recordings. There are lesson plans and supporting materials for two topics, the 1945 general election and ‘motivations to activism’, written with the support of an educational consultant.

We were enormously grateful to our volunteers, interviewees, partners on the project (and particularly Brian Carpenter of Devon Heritage Centre, David Thackeray of Exeter University and Kevin Jeffrey of Plymouth University), and especially to Kayleigh Milden, who worked enormously hard to bring the project to a successful conclusion. The project has provided valuable experience and a springboard for a national project for which we are currently developing a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Parliamentary Proceedings of 1624

The History began work in January 2012 on the completion of the Yale Center for Parliamentary History’s project to publish the parliamentary proceedings of the 1624 Parliament. The 1624 Parliament is the only Parliament of the early seventeenth century whose proceedings have not been edited and published by the Yale Center. When it was wound up, the Center sent the History of Parliament Trust its remaining funds and research materials relating to the 1624 project, on which work had been undertaken in the 1970s. The History committed itself to completing the edition on the basis of this material, and successfully bid for a Leverhulme Foundation Grant of £97,000 in order to do so. Philip Baker was appointed research assistant for the project and commenced work in January 2012. The staff of the History of Parliament’s 1603-60 House of Lords project have also been heavily involved, led by Dr Andrew Thrush.

The project has taken longer than originally envisaged as we discovered that there were gaps in some of the material inherited from Yale, and that electronic texts were missing and some texts mistranscribed. Work continued up to the end of 2014-15 thanks to funding provided by the Friends of the Yale Center for Parliamentary History (the Jack Hexter grant), and a grant of £10,000 from the Mercer’s Company. This also enabled us to publish the bulk of the text of the Commons’ proceedings (up to the end of April 1624) online through British History Online (BHO), a web library of sources for British History developed by the Institute of Historical Research and the History of Parliament Trust (see http://www.history.ac.uk/no-series/proceedings-1624-parl).

Since 1 April 2015 work has continued on the project at a much slower rate, funded from the History’s own reserves. Philip Baker, working on a freelance basis has now completed all but the last three days’ proceedings, and we hope that this last portion will be available through BHO during the summer.

DISSEMINATION

History of Parliament Online

Since 2010, the History of Parliament’s publications have been freely available on its website, www.historyofparliamentonline.org. Our website viewing figures have levelled off from their peak in early 2015, with sessions running at around 48,000 a month, compared to an average of 49,000 during 2014-15. We have been pleased by the growing use of our schools pages, following the release in January 2015 of new materials for Key Stage Three. During the April-June quarter there were 6,012 visits to the schools pages; the pages remained popular over the summer, with over 4,000 visits between July and September.
Our developers at the Institute of Historical Research, Martin Steer and Janos Bodony, continue to maintain and develop the site. Work on the 1836-1910 ‘Voting Explorer’ is described above, under the 1832-68 project.

Social Media and Blogs

The History maintains a wordpress blog, a twitter account and Facebook page. In addition, the 1832-68 section manage their own blog and twitter account. We passed 5,000 ‘Twitter’ followers in the course of the year, and we continue to have a small but active following on Facebook. Our blog averages between 2,000 and 2,500 views a month. Anniversaries were also marked, such as the parliamentary delegation to Buchenwald concentration camp in 1945 (guest blog from Dr Myfanwy Lloyd); Waterloo (Philip Salmon) and the Gowrie conspiracy (Andrew Thrush). We marked the anniversaries of Magna Carta and Montfort’s parliament with a series of guest blogs on the impact of these events throughout the centuries. This included guest posts from Dr Paul Cavill (Cambridge), Professor George Garnett (Oxford) and Dr Alexander Lock (British Library). During the election campaign we published a series of blogs on historic elections. These included blogs from Professor Elaine Chalus on 18th Century political women; Kathryn Rix on 19th century campaigning and Philip Salmon on the difficulties in predicting election results in the 19th century. One popular blogpost was published after the election itself: Paul Seaward questioned whether Mhairi Black was actually Britain’s youngest MP since the 17th century. Kathryn Rix continued to commemorate every MP who died fighting in World War One with short biographies posted on the blog, and Stephen Roberts began a thoughtful series of posts on the process of writing parliamentary biographies, taking individual examples to explore particular methodological issues. We marked the publication of the 1624 diaries with a series of blogposts and tweeted quotations from the diaries (selected by Philip Baker) on each day the parliament sat, which were well received.

The Victorian Commons blog edited by the 1832-68 section is growing in popularity with viewing figures of 1,000-1,500 views a month. Their ‘MP of the month’ series has included merchant princes and the financier who inspired Trollope, and they have published other blogs on politicians’ family connections and the rebuilding work on the Palace of Westminster. Martin Spychal wrote his first post for the blog: ‘A family affair: the Knightleys and Northamptonshire South, 1832-1868’, which explored the influence of local families in the electoral politics of the constituency.

‘The Story of Parliament’

A collaboration with publishing, marketing and PR company St James’s House to mark the 2015 anniversaries resulted in an attractive book, ‘The Story of Parliament’, that was launched at Westminster Abbey cloisters in June. The book was published in two versions: a hardback containing ‘advertorial’ articles by companies and organisations, which was distributed widely by St James’s House, and a paperback, without these articles, which is available for sale through the Parliamentary Bookshop and its website. We received sponsorship of £125,000 from St James’s House for our participation in the project, as well as the income from sales of the paperback version of the book. The main text of the book tells the story of Parliament from the tenth to the twenty-first century, and is attractively illustrated with images, many of them from the parliamentary works of art collection or from the parliamentary archives. The text was written by History of Parliament staff and other invited external scholars.

We learned a great deal from our relationship with St James’s House and are currently considering a second collaboration, based around the planned ‘Vote 100’ exhibition in Westminster Hall in the summer of 2018.
OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

Competitions

As previously, we ran education competitions during the year for students at Key Stage 3, A Level and undergraduate level. Our KS3 competition, on Victorian Reform was unsuccessful, possibly because schools were focussing on competitions surrounding the Magna Carta anniversaries or the election instead, and we did not award a prize. Our A level competition was more promising. Again we asked entrants to write an essay on British or Irish political history. The competition was judged with help from the Historical Association and a secondary school teacher. Josh Travers from St Ambrose College, Altrincham was chosen as the winner with an essay on Gladstone and Disraeli entitled ‘Bill and Ben the Battling Statesmen: Gladstone vs. Disraeli’. The judges were impressed by his creative approach and gripping writing style. Our undergraduate competition also brought out some very good entries. The competition, seeking the best undergraduate dissertation on a subject related to British or Irish parliamentary or political history, was judged by History of Parliament’s own staff. We awarded the prize to Christopher Rowe (Cambridge University) for his essay on ‘The Liberal Party, Free Trade and the 1841 Election’. Christopher impressed all with his bold and innovative dissertation and striking conclusions that challenge some long-standing assumptions of current historiography. Christopher attended this year’s lecture to receive his prize.

Parliamentary activities

The year was dominated by the celebrations to mark the anniversaries of Magna Carta and the De Montfort Parliament. Work over the previous year in assisting with the development of several of the parliamentary events associated with the anniversary bore fruit in the exhibition displayed in Westminster Hall, ‘The Beginnings of that Freedome’, and the interactive digital arts project Democracy Street.

We received a grant of £7,000 from the Agincourt 600 committee in order to mount a small exhibition of members of Parliament and peers who fought in or were associated with the battle in October 1415. The grant went on commissioning professional photography of their tombs and monuments commemorating, and obtaining a small number of other images. The text for the exhibition was written by the 1422-61 section. Parliamentary Printing Services designed and produced the exhibition ‘pop-up’ panels and a small booklet to accompany the exhibition. The exhibition was displayed in Westminster Hall over three days around the anniversary of the battle where it was viewed by 1,000 people. It was also displayed at Westminster Abbey on the day of the Agincourt anniversary service. The text and images were also displayed on our website. In addition, on 19 November, Dr Hannes Kleineke gave a lecture in the Jubilee Room on Parliament and Agincourt as part of Parliament Week.

This year’s History of Parliament annual lecture was given on Wednesday 4 November in the Attlee Suite, Portcullis House, by Dr John Maddicott (Jesus College, Oxford), on ‘Parliament and the People in Medieval England.’

Academic collaborations

In the summer we hosted the 66th annual conference of the International Commission for the History of Representative Institutions (ICHRPI): ‘Making Constitutions, Building Parliaments: Constructing Representative Institutions, 1000-2000’. Organised by Emma Peplow, The conference was held between 30 June and 3 July 2015, at King’s College London, Royal Holloway, University of London, and Portcullis House, Palace of Westminster. We received support (both in-kind and direct funding) from KCL, Royal Holloway, UK Parliament and the Magna Carta 800 Committee. Professor Adam Sutcliffe welcomed us to
King’s College at a reception in the Old Rolls Chapel (now part of the Maughan Library, KCL) to open the conference; Professor Jonathan Philips welcomed us to Royal Holloway with a reception on the hottest day of the year following David Carpenter’s lecture. On Thursday, Professor Lord Norton of Louth welcomed us to Parliament at a reception in the Speaker’s House by kind permission of Mr Speaker (and we were lucky enough to have an impromptu talk from Pugin expert Rosemary Hill). We are most grateful to Mr Speaker, and to the staff of Parliament, KCL and Royal Holloway for all of their help in setting up the conference.

The conference took the anniversaries of Magna Carta in 1215 and de Montfort Parliament of 1265 as a starting point for an exploration of the initiation and development of political institutions from the early Middle Ages onwards, and an assessment of their role in state formation or national building. It considered the significance of foundational documents and events such as Magna Carta and the de Montfort Parliament and how these – and the historiography of Parliaments – became so important in the subsequent history of Parliament and political institutions. In total 190 delegates attended the conference. 105 speakers gave papers and a further 24 academics took part in five round table sessions. Speakers came from Europe, the US and Latin America and the conference was held in the languages of the Commission: English, French and German. We held two keynote lectures, which were open to the public. Professor David Carpenter (KCL) spoke on ‘Simon de Montfort, Magna Carta and the development of Parliament’ at Royal Holloway and Professor Colin Kidd FBA (University of St Andrews) spoke on ‘Founding myths and their Discontents: the British and American Constitutions compared’ in Portcullis House.
The year saw the completion of the **Digging into Linked Parliamentary Data** (DiLiPaD) project, funded by JISC. This project, which the History initiated and in which it is a partner with the IHR and the Universities of Toronto and Amsterdam and Kings College London, is designed to link speakers to available biographies of members of parliament and government in specialized biographical databases, as well as the Wikipedia / DBpedia / Linked Open Data cloud, and to deliver a common format for encoding parliamentary proceedings appropriate for the UK, Dutch and Canadian Hansards; a joint dataset covering all three jurisdictions; a ‘workbench’ with a range of Natural Language Processing tools for the comparative, longitudinal study of parliamentary data; and extensive substantive case studies focusing on immigration and parliamentary language, which will showcase the new research opportunities. Although no financial benefit has come to the History, the project will provide ways in which we can begin to build links between the History’s biographies and the online Hansard data.

The History has now taken over responsibility for hosting the website of the network of European Parliamentary Historians (**EuParl.net**). Partners besides the History include the Montesquieu Institute (a state-funded collaboration between a number of universities in the Netherlands), the Centrum voor Parlementaire Geschiedenis at the University of Nijmegen and the Kommission für Geschichte des Parlamentarismus und der Politischen Partien (Commission for the History of Parliamentarism and political parties), which is funded by and works closely with the German Bundestag, the University of Jyvääskylää in Finland, and the Comité d’histoire parlementaire et politique in France.

We continued to support the work of two doctoral students based at the Institute of Historical Research, supervised by Miles Taylor, in their last year under the AHRC’s Collaborative Doctoral Award Scheme. Martin Spychal is working on ‘The Geography of Power: The Role of the Boundary Commissioners in Shaping the Electoral Representation of Britain’, and Rebekah Moore is working on ‘Space and Power in the New Palace of Westminster’. The 1832-68 project has acted as joint supervisors and mentors for Martin and Becki. We are delighted that Martin has now joined us on a more formal basis as one of the research staff in the 1832-68 project.

The History has continued its involvement in an AHRC-funded project of the University of York and Institute of Historical Research in collaboration with the Palace of Westminster, as a member of the Executive Board for the project. The AHRC-funded project ‘St Stephen's Chapel, Westminster: Visual and Political Culture, 1292-1941’ brings together a team of historians and art historians to research a building which was successively a royal chapel, the House of Commons, and the main entrance to Parliament. The research will feed into a digital reconstruction of St Stephen's in its successive roles, modelled by the Centre for the Study of Christianity and Culture.

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**The History of Parliament**

**June 2016**
NEW ARTICLES COMPLETED 2015-16

(Revised articles are not included in this list)

The House of Commons, 1422-61

Members completed

Alexander Appleby, John Somerset (d.1454).

The House of Commons, 1832-68

Members completed

George Hamilton Chichester, earl of Belfast (1797-1883): James Molyneux Caulfeild (1820-
Edward Wingfield Verner (1830-1899): John Beatty West (1790-1841): Henry White (1787-
Benjamin Whitworth (1816-1893): Robert Alexander Shafto Adair (1811-1886): Robert
Baynes Armstrong (1785-1869): John Ireland Blackburne (1783-1874): David Carruthers (c.
Hon. James Lindsay (1815-1874): George Marton (1800-1867): Patrick Maxwell Stewart
(1819-1895): John Charles Spencer, Viscount Althorp (1782-1845): John Poynitz Spencer,
Bingham Baring (1804-1869): Frederick Thomas Arthur Hervey Bathurst (1833-1900):
Augustus Charles Brudenel Bruce (1811-1886): Henry Currie (1798-1873): Thomas Vesey
Sir Thomas Fraser Grove (1823-1897): Sidney Herbert (1810-1861): Austen Henry Layard
McCann (1796-1873): Thomas Barnewall Martin (1786-1847): Francis Jack Needham,
Viscount Newry and Mourne (1815-1851): Guildford James Hillier Onslow (1814-1882):
Jonathan Richardson (1804-1894): Jonathan Joseph Richardson (1815-1876): David Robert
Ross (1797-1851): James Yorke Scarlett (1799-1871): Lord Henry Frederick Thynne (1832-
Denis Browne (c. 1799-1862): Samuel Dickson (c. 1776-1850): Sir Thomas Esmonde (1786-
1868): Richard Samuel Guinness (1797-1857): Arthur Wills Blundell Sandys Hill, earl of
Hillsborough (1812-1868): Brownlow Villiers Layard (1804-1853): Sir Edmund Charles
(1780-1855): Thomas Henry Pakenham (1826-1913): Christopher St. George (1810-1877):
John Henry Somerset, marquess of Worcester (1792-1853): John Bramley-Moore (1800-
John Fort (1793-1842); Peter Greenall (1796-1845); John Turner Hopwood (1828-1900);
Edmund George Hornby (1799-1865); John Hodson Kearsley (1785-1842); Richard Potter (1778-1842);
Charles Strickland Standish (1790-1863); Ralph Thicknesse (1768-1842);
Ralph Anthony Thicknesse (1800-1854); Peter Rigby Wason (1797-1875); Mathew Wilson (1802-1891);
Henry Woods (1822-1882); Rowland Alston (1782-1865); John Bonham Carter I (1788-1838);
James Caulfield (1785-1852); Richard Rice Clayton (1797-1879); William Robert Clayton (1786-1866);
Renn Hampden (1791-1852); Ralph Neville (1817-86); Frederic Theisger (1794-1878);
Charles Henry Wyndham Ashe A'Court (1819-1903); James Charles Herbert Welbore Ellis Agar, Visct.
Somerton (1818-96); Edmund Antrobus (1818-99); Edward Baker (1774-1862);
Thomas Barnard (1830-1909); George Frederick Boyle (1825-1890); John Somers Cocks, Visct. Eastnor (1788-1852);
Thomas Somers Cocks (1815-1899); James Howard FitzHarris, Visct. FitzHarris (1807-1889);
Granville William Gresham Leveson Gower (1838-95); Benjamin Lee Guinness (1798-1868);
William Hackblock (1805-58); James Hans Hamilton (1810-63); Robert Ingram (1793-1875); James Lamont (1828-1913);
Sir Massey Lopes (1818-1908); Sir Ralph Lopes (1788-1854); Daniel O'Donoghue (1831-89);
Richard More O'Ferrall (1797-1880); John Hungerford Penruddocke (1770-1841);
Frederick Polhill (1798-1848); Henry Stuart (1804-1854); William Stuart (1825-1893);
Thomas Edward Taylor (1811-83); John Twizel Wawn (1801-59); Samuel Whitbread (1830-1915);
James Wilson (1805-60).

Constituencies completed

The House of Lords 1603-60

Members completed