Political Alignment of the Early Royal Society: 1662–1703

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ABSTRACT

The thesis's goal was to identify the political alignment of the presidents of Britain's most important scientific organisation, the Royal Society of London for Improving Natural Knowledge ('The Royal Society'), in its early period (1662–1703) to determine whether the institution was politically aligned. What started in the year of the Restoration after 12 'founder fellows' obtained the patronage of King Charles II became the Royal Society to express its Royalist alignment. The king gave it two royal charters of incorporation in 1662 and 1663; the second named him as 'founder and patron' and the two named Royalist fellow of the Royal Society (FRS) Viscount William Brouncker as its first president. In addition to being its internal manager, the president acted as the Royal Society's 'face', specifically, its representative, before Parliament, Crown and the Church of England. In the early years 13 FRSs were elected president, 11 of whom accepted. However, the Royal Society's minutes of its ordinary scientific meetings and administrative council meetings provide no information identifying the political alignment of presidents or the Royal Society itself. This is apparent in almost all writings by historians specialising in the society's early years, a case of possible 'methodological oversight'.

To remedy this situation, historical biographical analysis was employed to identify the political alignment of the 13 FRS elected presidents. Though rarely identified in biographical sources such as the *Dictionary of National Biography* or the *Dictionary of Irish Biography*, it was in standard biographies of three of the early presidents. However, given that all 10 presidents who accepted election from 1677 to 1703 were a Member of Parliament (MP), the thesis was made possible thanks to *History of Parliament*: *British Political, Social and Local History*. This specialist research project provides accurate, in-depth data that identify the political alignment of all MPs from 1660 to 1715, their performances in the House of Commons and, if elevated, the House of Lords and details of all government and other offices held. The findings from applying historical biographical analysis revealed that the eight presidents after Brouncker had been, were or would be Royalist or Tory MPs, the last two were Whig MPs and four of the 10 were elevated to the House of Lords. This suggested that the institution itself was Royalist aligned from 1662 to 1680, Tory aligned from 1680 to 1695 and Whig aligned from 1695 to 1703, and these changes expressed the Royal Society's adaptation to changes in political control of Parliament for its survival, benefit, and patronage. The conclusion is the early Royal Society was not an apolitical institution, as is presently accepted by the Royal Society and most historians specialising in its early history, and it continued to elect politically aligned presidents well after 1703.

DECLARATION

I certify that this thesis:

1. does not incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university

2. and the research within will not be submitted for any other future degree or diploma without the permission of Flinders University; and

3. to the best of my knowledge and belief, does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

Signed: *M Govier*

Date: 14 June 2024

ETHICS CLEARANCE

Dr Hendryk Flaegel, Manager Research Ethics, Compliance and Integrity at Flinders University confirmed that no ethics approval was required as the research data were based on documentary analysis.

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2. Thanks also to Rupert Baker, Royal Society Librarian, who answered queries.

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PUBLICATIONS DURING THESIS

See Appendix.

1. Govier, M A 2021, ‘Allegiance and supremacy: religion and the Royal Society’s 3rd charter 1669’, *Annals of Science*, vol. 78, no. 4, pp. 463–83, DOI: 10.1080/00033790.2021.1949040

2. Govier, M A 2024, ‘The political alignment of presidents of the early Royal Society of London’, *Journal of Management History*, DOI: 10.1108/JMH-11-2023-0112

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

The thesis investigates a hitherto neglected area of research into the history of the British scientific organisation the Royal Society of London for Improving Natural Knowledge (hereafter 'the Royal Society') and the political alignment of its presidents and the institution in its early period (defined as 1662 to 1703). The Literature Review presents evidence that the political alignment of presidents, and the institution, was not included in the records of the early Royal Society or considered of interest by academics focusing on its administration. The Literature Review questions the validity of the accepted presentations and interpretations of the early Royal Society's governance and place in London, specifically, that it was an apolitical institution. First, the Literature Review examines the apolitical nature of the Royal Society's historical records in its *Journal Book Original*, *Council Minutes Original* and official histories, revealing that the source was its apolitical recording methodology since 1660. Second, by examining the contents of six major history of science journals from 1980 to 2023 and the work of the most important historian of the early Royal Society, Michael Hunter, it confirms the exclusion of the political alignment of the early presidents, and the institution, suggesting that this is most likely a byproduct of an unofficial restriction or lack of interest in the matter, namely, methodological oversight. The Findings begin by outlining historical biographical analysis, which is the method that was used to identify the best information on each president from a variety of reputable sources: the biographies of five fellow of the Royal Society (FRS) elected presidents, the *Dictionary of National Biography*, the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, the *Dictionary of Irish Biography* and *History of Parliament*: *British Political, Social and Local History*. The Findings identify the political alignment of the first president of what this thesis author calls the 'proto-Royal Society', the organisation before its 1662 and 1663 charters of incorporation, and the subsequent 13 FRS elected presidents from 1662 to 1703, 10 of whom were (before, during or after) elected as a Member of Parliament (MP). The Findings establish that before 1680 all presidents were Royalist aligned, from 1680 to 1695 Tory aligned and from 1695 to 1703 Whig aligned. The Discussion and Conclusion demonstrate that in this politically discordant era the Royal Society adapted to the changing control of Parliament by Royalists, Tories then Whigs by FRSs electing politically aligned presidents for its survival, benefit, and patronage.

Context

After Oliver Cromwell's death in 1659, the demise of the Puritan Commonwealth, the Restoration of the Stuart monarchy and the return of exiled Charles II, the proto-Royal

Society started at a meeting of 12 ‘founder fellows’ (as they are now referred by the Royal Society) at Gresham College, London, on 28 November 1660. Their aim was to create an institution of science in London, including a rural section devoted to horticulture (gardening), funded by the king (or state). Charles II’s non-financial backing was quickly obtained through the efforts of a military officer close to him: Royalist and Presbyterian Scot Sir Robert Moray (1608/9–1673), FRS 1660. Through Moray the two royal charters of incorporation in 1662 and 1663 forming the Royal Society were passed. Though Moray had been elected president of the proto-Royal Society, the two charters appointed another Royalist, Irishman Viscount William Brouncker (1620–1684), FRS 1660, as president, an office he held until 1677. A council of 20, Parliamentarians and Royalists, was named as its governing body. To emphasise the role of president, Brouncker made his oath of office to the lord chancellor and the council made their oaths to him; thereafter, all were elected. In the Royal Society’s first decade Brouncker liaised often with ‘founder and patron’ Charles II, answered his scientific queries, designed him a yacht and organised the failed opposition to the imposition by Parliament of the anti-Catholic oaths of allegiance and supremacy on presidents (and those they appointed vice president) in its 1669 third royal charter (Govier 2021).

Unlike the Parisian *Academie des Sciences* (formed 1665), a state enterprise supported by Louis XIV providing salaries to scientists of note, whose meetings were initially held in his royal library, Charles II did not similarly assist. Furthermore, no FRS, often men in influential offices and, in some instances, possessing great wealth thought it prudent to contribute sufficient funds for an independent college devoted to scientific research. Instead, the early Royal Society survived by admitting new FRSs, requiring the payment of (not insubstantial) regular fees and receiving the occasional bequest in the estates of deceased FRSs. It remained (apart from late 1666–1673, after the Fire of London) a non-paying guest at declining Gresham College until it purchased a property at Crane Court, London, in 1710. Nonetheless, during this early period it made critical contributions to the development of the new science in Europe. Its ordinary meetings sometimes saw papers of scientific note presented. Further, experiments and demonstrations of new scientific apparatus, such as the air pump of Robert Boyle (1627–1691), FRS 1660, president of the proto-Royal Society 1662, occurred. Its secretaries established correspondence networks with continental royalty, science organisations and scientists and from 1665 Henry Oldenburg (1619–1677), FRS 1663, published *Philosophical Transactions*, the world’s first scientific periodical. The early Royal Society also published under its own imprimatur scientific books, in particular, the 1687 *Principia Mathematica* of Isaac Newton (1642–1727), FRS 1672, president 1703 to 1727. During the 18th century, the Royal Society gradually declined as an institution of science, to such a degree that in 1751 the Royal Society president Martin Folkes (1690–

1754), FRS 1714, president 1741 to 1752, who was simultaneously president of the Antiquarian Society from 1750 to 1754, discussed merging them (Haycock 2000). After the death of the president Sir Joseph Banks (1644–1820), FRS 1766, president 1778 to 1820, who admitted too many non-scientists, creating a club-like system around himself, a rejuvenation process started in the 1830s. Best explained by Marie Boas Hall in *All Scientists Now: the Royal Society in the 19th Century*, this enabled the Royal Society to become what it is today: a scientist-only institute, with very few exceptions (Hall 2002). In the current era, it publishes nine specialist scientific journals and one historical journal, awards prizes for scientific achievement (such as the Rumford Medal), disburses government money for scientific research and, since 1963, is a registered charity (Charity Commission, https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/). The title Fellowship of the Royal Society (FRS) is the most important British scientific honour (Royal Society, 2015).

Relevancy

To prevent the thesis being categorised as the pursuit of historical minutia, it is necessary to substantiate that the political alignment of presidents, and the institution, was relevant to the early Royal Society, and, indeed, to the later Royal Society. To do this, I refer to the case of Sir George Stokes (1819–1903), physicist, mathematician, evangelical Christian, FRS 1851, president 1885 to 1890 and Conservative MP for Cambridge University 1887 to 1892. Stokes' election to the House of Commons caused such concern among FRSs the matter was covered by an editorial in the prestigious British scientific journal *Nature* and accompanied by letters to the editor. Continuously published since 1869, *Nature's* aims were outlined in its 20 January 1870 issue:

> First, to place before the general public the grand results of scientific work and scientific discovery, and to urge the claims of science to a more general recognition in education and in daily life; and secondly, to aid scientific men themselves, by giving early information of all advances made in any branch of natural knowledge throughout the world. (Quoted in *Nature* 1969, p. 424)

However, the 17 November 1887 Nature edition contained a distinctly political editorial: 'M.P., P.R.S.'. PRS is an acronym for president of the Royal Society (*Nature* 1887, pp. 49–50). Stokes was the last president elected as an MP, either before, during or after he was president. Since then, a number of presidents have received lifetime peerages, elevating them to the House of Lords. For example, Australian population biologist Robert May (1936–2020), FRS 1979, president 2000 to 2005, was made Baron May of Oxford in 2001 (Search Past Fellows).

In addition to criticising Stokes for politicising the office of president, the *Nature* editorial presented a concise description of the external role of the president in approximately 1887:

> The President is the organ and mouthpiece of the Council of the Royal Society—a body which has frequent and important relations with the Government; and, as such it may often be his business to represent to the Government the conclusions at which the Council arrives. It is therefore highly important that the freedom of the President's intercourse with Ministers should in no way be trammelled by his political relations … It does not appear that Prof. Stokes has obtained or sought the sanction of the Council or the Society at large for his departure from precedent. (*Nature* 1887, p. 49)

One of the letters later published by Nature, is supportive of the position outlined by its editorial. Stokes, the Fellow of the Royal Society and MP wrote:

> For Heaven's sake let us keep the Royal Society, if not above, at least just distinctly apart from, all political contentions; and, in order that we may do this, let its President, who has now become a professed party politician, either vacate the chair, or make it absolutely clear that on the floor of Parliament he will not presume to speak with any kind or degree of authority in the name of the Society. (*Nature* 1887, p. 104)

This late 19th century acknowledgement of the implications to, and significance for, the Royal Society of a president who was simultaneously an MP having a confirmed political alignment repudiates any suggestion that the thesis was a pursuit of minutia. Further, this 'incident' with Stokes was not simply an isolated case of a late 19th century president breaching unofficial and unwritten codes of the Royal Society. There was nothing in its charters or statutes prohibiting this. Instead, the thesis suggests that Stokes' dual election was the end of the direct politicisation of the Royal Society, as an institution, that began with its royal charters of 1662 and 1663.

Presidents of the Royal Society from 1662 to 1703

The Findings present evidence, in the form of concise political biographies, identifying the political alignment of the 13 FRS elected president from 1662 to 1703, plus Royalist Moray because of his role in creating the Royal Society. The following is a list of the 13 FRS elected presidents from 1662 to 1703, including their political alignment at the time of election:

- Royalist Viscount William Brouncker (1620–1684), FRS 1660, president 1662 to 1677; Royalist Sir Joseph Williamson (1633–1701), FRS 1663, president 1677 to 1680;
- Royalist the Honourable Robert Boyle (1627–1691), FRS 1660, elected president 1680—refused;

- Tory Sir Christopher Wren (1632–1723), FRS 1660, president 1680 to 1682;
- Tory John Evelyn (1620–1703), FRS 1663—refused election 1682, 1690 and 1693;
- Tory Sir John Hoskyns (1634–1705), FRS 1663, president 1682 to 1683; Tory Sir Cyril Wyche (1632–1707), FRS 1663, president 1683 to 1684;
- Tory Samuel Pepys (1633–1703), FRS 1665, president 1684 to 1686;
- Tory John Vaughan (1639–1713), 3rd Earl of Carbery, FRS 1685, president 1686 to 1689; Tory Thomas Herbert (1656–1733), 8th Earl of Pembroke, FRS 1685, president 1689 to 1690;
- Tory Sir Robert Southwell (1635–1702), FRS 1663, president 1690 to 1695;
- Whig Charles Montagu (1661–1715), Earl of Halifax, FRS 1695, president 1695 to 1698; and Whig John Somers (1650–1716), Baron Somers of Evesham, FRS 1698, president 1698 to 1703.

Summary

The thesis investigates a neglected area of research: the history of the early Royal Society and the political alignment of its presidents and the institution. That this was not the pursuit of minutia is confirmed by the article ‘M.P., P.R.S.’ published in *Nature* in 1887. The Literature Review questions the validity of the accepted presentations by the Royal Society and the interpretations by academics specialising in its history that exclude the political alignment of presidents and the institution. The Findings use historical biographical analysis to identify the political alignment of all elected president, and the Discussion and Conclusion demonstrate that the Royal Society adapted to the changing control of Parliament by Royalists, Tories and Whigs by electing politically aligned presidents for its survival, benefit, and patronage.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

The Royal Society

Archives

Journal Book

The Royal Society's most important and relevant archives are the minutes of its ordinary (scientific) meetings, *Journal Book Original*, 1660 to 1703, and the minutes of its administrative council meetings, *Council Minutes Original*, 1662 to 1703. The belief of the 12 'founder fellows' in the historic 'destiny' of their project was evident from the first meeting on 28 November 1660, when minutes were written down by an attendee in a special 'journal minutebook'. The desire for hired minute-takers was evident at the second meeting, on 5 December 1660, when 'Mr Croone be desired to looke out for some discreet person skilled in short-hand writing, to be an amanuensis' (Weld 1848, Vol. I, p. 67). At the third meeting, on 12 December 1660, when the rules for the new organisation were being compiled, the section 'Concerning the Officers and Servants of the Society' states that 'there be likewise two servants belonging to this Society, an Amanuensis, and an Operator' (Weld 1848, Vol. I, p. 70). Minutes for ordinary and council meetings did not always reflect the actual content: matters discussed but not recorded at one meeting sometimes appeared in later meetings referring back to the original meeting. On rare occasions minutes have been lost or written later but for the wrong date. The Royal Society keeps two manuscript copies of the ordinary meetings: *Journal Book Original* and the *Journal MinuteBook Copy*. The latter was started in the early 18th century and backdated. The online *Journal Book Original* was initially planned to cover many years; however, its last entry is on 6 April 1664 (Royal Society, https://royalsociety.org). There are 57 hardcopy volumes, officially covering the years from 1823 to 1827, although ordinary meetings ceased in 1826. The entry 'JBO in Search Results' in the online *Journal Book Original,* under Royal Society*,* states:

> The Journal MinuteBooks series contains recorded minutes of the ordinary, special and anniversary meetings of the Society. The nature of the information recorded varies somewhat over time but typically set out the following: person in the chair; notice of proposed Fellows, elections to the Fellowship and Council; non-Fellows given leave to be present; books and rarities presented to the Society; committees formed; information reported or desired by Fellows and their contacts; experiments and investigations carried out or designated to be carried out by Fellows. By the 18th century far fewer experiments and demonstrations were carried out at meetings themselves … Minutes do not include a register of Fellows present at meetings, nor is such a register to be found in any surviving records of the Society. (Royal Society, https://royalsociety.org)

In the absence of the online *Journal Book Original* after 6 April 1664, a perennial problem for anyone based in Australia, Thomas Birch's *The History of the Royal Society of London*, Vols I–IV is often used because it contains a selection of minutes from ordinary and council meetings and papers presented at Royal Society meetings from 1660 to 1687 (Birch 1756–1757).

Council Minutes

Council meetings officially began on 13 May 1663 after the Royal Society's incorporation. The *Council Minutes Original* are minutes recorded by hired minute takers. The entry 'Council Minutes Original in Search Results' under the Royal Society states:

> Council is concerned with the business and administration of the Royal Society. Minutes record discussions of all matters relating to the Society's constitution, activities, awards, funds, bequests, buildings, and staff. A business meeting for the election of Fellows, Foreign Members and Honorary Fellow takes place after the Council meeting in May. Minutes for these election meetings are held within the *Council minutes* … From 1832 the minutes were printed for distribution to Council members, and sets retained by the Society. These form the series 'Council Minutes Printed'. (CMP 1832–1997; Royal Society, https://royalsociety.org)

In addition to these hardcopy volumes, there is an online *Council Minutes Original* that continues until 24 November 1791, which is fortunate for Australian researchers (Royal Society, https://royalsociety.org). After this, the minutes are only available in hardcopy until the very partial online resumption on 12 February to 2 July 2009 (Royal Society). *Council Minutes Copy* 1663 to 1822 were compiled at the end of the 18th century and exist in hardcopy only. All references to council minutes in the thesis refer to the online *Council Minutes Original*.

Content of Ordinary and Council Meetings

From the initial meeting of the proto-Royal Society, on 28 November 1660, the recording of minutes immediately adopted an apolitical (and non-religious) approach. Hired amanuenses were instructed by the 'founder fellows', then FRSs, on what to include and exclude. In his essay on Sir Robert Moray (1608–1673), FRS 1660, D C Martin states:

> Some historians suggest that the Royal Society rule to exclude religion and politics from its discussions and the taking of an oath by the President to further the objects of the Society was influenced by similar rules in respect of Masonic Lodge meetings. (Martin 1960, p. 245)

The ‘rule’ to which Martin refers does not occur in the charters or the 1663 statutes that state that ‘the business of the weekly Meetings shall be, To order take account, consider, and discourse of Philosophical Experiments, and Observations’ (Sprat 1956, p. 145). Instead, he may be referring to an unofficial or unwritten ‘rule’, such as the male-only admission to the Royal Society policy that persisted until 1945 (Mason 1992). Such a ‘rule’ excluding politics (and religion) was sensible given that the Royal Society’s creation followed civil wars, regicide, the Puritan dictatorship and the Restoration. However, it is also quite possible that the ‘founder fellows’, and later the Royal Society Council, sought to focus solely on the practice and promotion of science, for the sake of science. Either way, the minutes in *Journal Book Original* and *Council Minutes Original* separate the organisation and its activities from the political (and religious) events that often afflicted later 17th century London, with rare exceptions. Three examples illustrate what was acceptable and what was not. The minutes of the ordinary meeting on 11 November 1663, quite typical of the era, states:

> Sir Robert Moray presented from Prince Rupert to the Society, an Instrument of his Highnesses Inven-tion, for casting any platforme into perspective … The Operator was ordered to have a Dogge ready aginst next day, to cut off a peice of his Skin. Curators appointed for it, Dr Croon and Mr Hook. (*Journal Book Original*)

Prince Rupert (1619–1682), a cousin of Charles II, was made royal FRS in 1665 (Search Past Fellows). However, when Williamson, president 1677 to 1680, was imprisoned on 18 November 1678 for political reasons during the Popish Plot, it was not mentioned in *Journal Book Original*, nor at the next council meeting on 26 December 1678. The latter states an order that ‘…the Treasurer to repay Mr Hooke the £5 paid by him to Mr Crawley for working on the Weather Clock, and also his salary for half a year at Christmas as voted by ballot’ (*Council Minutes Original*). An even better example occurred in the days leading up to the 1688 Revolution, when the council meeting on 21 November made no mention of its decision to suspend holding the anniversary meeting, or why (*Council Minutes Original*).

Official Histories

1.The Royal Society’s first official history, *The History of the Royal Society of London for the Improving Natural Knowledge*, by Thomas Sprat (1635–1713), FRS 1663, later Bishop of Rochester 1684 to 1713, was published in 1667 (Sprat 1956). Sprat was brought into the Royal Society by ‘founder fellow’ John Wilkins (1614–1672), FRS 1660, who proposed him for membership then commissioned him to write the history (Search Past Fellows). The book opens with a dedication to Charles II, ‘Of all the Kings of Europe, Your Majesty was the first, who confirm’d this Noble Design of Experiments, by Your own Example and by a Public

Establishment', followed by an ode by Abraham Cowley (1618–1667), FRS 1661, 'To the Royal Society' (Sprat 1956). In his article on Cowley, Lindsay confirms Cowley as a Royalist (*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*) (Major 2020). Part 1 is a survey of the history of scientific inquiry, as far as this was known at the time. Part 2 is composed of two sections. The first is a history of the formation of the Royal Society and concludes by mentioning visitations by, and connections to, nobility and scientists from England and other European nations; the patronage of Charles II and other members of the royal family; the royal charters of incorporation; and 'An Abstract of the Statutes of the Royal Society' issued 1663. The latter contains the duties of the president and vice presidents:

> The President shall preside in all meetings, regulate all debates of the Society, and Council; state and put Questions; call for reports, and accounts from Committees, curators and others; summon all extraordinary meetings upon urgent occasions; and see to the execution of the Statutes. The Vice-President shall have the same power in the absence of the President. (Sprat 1956 p. 146)

The second section consists of replies to scientific queries, proposals and a selection of experiments conducted by FRSs (Sprat 1956, pp. 158–319). Part 3 is a lengthy defence of the Royal Society and experimental science (Sprat 1956, pp. 321–438).

Given that Sprat's *History* was published four years after the issue of the society's 1663 second royal charter, it is not a history, *per se*, rather a version of the history of what led to the Royal Society's creation. Further, given that its ultimate aim was to defend and promote the new Royal Society, it can also be understood as an early example of a corporate history, one serving the interests of the organisation but, as these two examples illustrate, without the need to admit or address serious institutional problems. First is patronage. In 1663, the Royal Society invited Charles II to attend a special demonstration of its scientific prowess at Gresham College. The council minutes for 6 July 1663 state, 'The King's entertainment being taken into consideration (for which the meeting of the Council on this day was appointed) it was ordered' (*Council Minutes Original*). Discussion of the event continues until 7 December 1663, on which the council minutes state, 'Following further discussion of providing Experiments for his Majesty's reception' (*Council Minutes Original*). However, the event was not held, most likely because the king may have gathered that the underlying aim was to obtain royal or state financial support. This was not included in the *History*. Neither does it acknowledge that the king had not provided any financial support by 1667, which E S De Beer (1960a, p. 44) confirms in his article for *Notes and Records of the Royal Society* (hereafter *Notes and* Records), the Royal Society's historical journal. Second, by 1667, many FRSs were losing interest; some were not paying their subscriptions, leading not so

much to institutional bankruptcy but a nagging sense of abandonment (Lyons 1938b, p. 75). Yet, though it cannot be considered a work of history, Sprat's *History* is very successful as an official (corporate) history to the extent that it remains a standard text for study of the early Royal Society.

2. As with other institutions, whatever the variety, there exists no legal (or moral) obligation for the Royal Society to present its institutional history, in official, commissioned, or corporate format, in a critical or analytical manner. This remains the responsibility of historians. Charles Weld's 1848 official history, *A History of the Royal Society with Memoirs of the Presidents Compiled from Authentic Sources*, is its most important official history (Weld 1848). Weld (1813–1869) was hired in December 1843 as the Royal Society assistant secretary and librarian. Weld's (1848) *History book* consists of two volumes covering the period up to 1830, a few years before the start of the process of reform from the 'club' it became during the presidency of Sir Joseph Banks to the scientist-only organisation it is today—in addition to royal FRSs, such as William (1982), Prince of Wales, FRS 2009, the rare election of 'honorary FRSs', such as historian Lisa Jardine (1944–2015), FRS 2015, and (under the now defunct Statute 12 system) British prime minister Margaret Thatcher (1925–2013), FRS 1983 (Fellows Directory; Search Past Fellows). It is to be expected that Weld's *History* is a carefully edited version of the past, given that the aim was to create the most favourable opinion of the Royal Society with its prospective audience: the educated reading public of Victorian England. Weld (inevitably) conformed to the standards of his time, omitting matters previously acceptable, such as the Royal Society's institutional involvement in the 17th century slave trade (Govier 1999). Given Weld's position at the Royal Society, McConnell refers to his 'lowly status'. Decisions on what to include and exclude (as with amanuenses) would have been influenced by senior FRSs overseeing his work, specifically, the Royal Society's Secretary Peter Roget (*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*). Roget (1779–1869), FRS 1815, was vice president 1849 to 1850 (Search Past Fellows). However, despite these limitations, Weld's inclusion of the *Memoirs of the Presidents* recognised for the first time the historical importance of the presidents; in fact, his memoirs of the 11 presidents who accepted their election from 1662 to 1703 (two did not) and the first proto-Royal Society president, Moray, established the basis from which to begin investigating their political alignment. The quality of the memoirs varies. For example, Weld (1848) states that Somers (president 1698–1703) was:

> An ardent lover of literature and science, he had, as a Fellow, long been in the habit of frequenting the Meetings. As President, he now regularly attended, presiding over the Council and ordinary Meetings, and doing all in his power to extend the reputation and usefulness of the Society. (Vol. I, p. 345)

Reality: Somers was elected in absentia as an FRS and president the same day and afterwards had almost no direct contact with the Royal Society (*Journal Book Original* 1698). Another example is Vaughan. Weld states that 'he passed the greater part of his life in retirement, but very little of him appears to be known' (Weld 1848, Vol. I, p. 317). As Naylor and Jaggar state in their article on Vaughan in *History of Parliament*, he was well known in London as a literary patron, played an active role in the Commons from 1660 to 1686 and in the Lords from 1689 to his death (History of Parliament). Of greater significance to the thesis is Weld's identifying eight of the 11 presidents as MPs. He even identified some of the seats won by five: Williamson: Rochester, Kent (Weld 1848, Vol. I, p. 265); Hoskyns: Hereford, Herefordshire (Weld 1848, Vol. I, p. 283); Wyche: Kellington, Cornwall (Weld 1848, Vol. I, p. 285); Pepys: Harwich, Essex (Weld 1848, Vol. I, p. 297); and Somers: Worcester, Worcestershire (Weld 1848, Vol. I, p. 341). His only identification of political alignment was Somers: Whig (Weld 1848, Vol. I, p. 347). He did not question why the Royal Society elected so many presidents who were, or had been or would be, MPs.

3. Later official histories pay far less attention to the early presidents than Weld. They do not mention seats held in the Commons or identify their political alignment and contain far less information on their lives. *The Record of the Royal Society of London* has four editions. The dates of publication and the editor(s) are:
1897: Michael Forster (1836–1907), FRS 1872, and A W Rucker (1848–1915), FRS 1884; 1901: Foster and Rucker; 1912: Archibold Geikie (1835–1924), FRS 1865; and 1940: Sir Henry Lyons (1864–1944), FRS 1906.
The 1897 edition was 224 pages long, containing the following information: an 18-page history, copies of the three royal charters, a history of the statutes, benefactors, trusts, publications, library, and senior offices (including president) since 1662 (Foster & Rucker [eds] 1897). Given the addition of a chronological and alphabetical list of all FRSs from 1662, the 1901 edition grew to 427 pages (Foster & Rucker [eds] 1901). The 1912 edition was 483 pages, including a 48-page history and a list of the grants and committees the Royal Society controls (Geikie [ed.] 1912). By 1940, the fourth edition was 579 pages (Lyons 1940). In 1992 a supplement covering the years 1940 to 1989, *The Record of the Royal Society of London: Supplement to the Fourth Edition for the Years 1940–1989*, contained no information on the early period. It was published and edited by J S Rowlinson (1906–2018), FRS 1970, and Norman H Robinson, the latter being author of *The Royal Society Catalogue of Portraits*, published 1980 (N H Robinson 1980; N H Robinson & Rowlinson 1992).
Lyons, foreign secretary from 1928 to 1929, treasurer from 1929 to 1939 and vice president from 1928 to 1939, was responsible for creating *Notes and Records*, which is still published. Baigent (2004) considers Lyons:

> largely responsible for the (1940) edition of the Royal Society's *Record*. In 1940, although displaced from his house and library by bombing and increasingly crippled by arthritis, Lyons began his book *The Royal Society 1660–1940: a History of its Administration under its Charters*, which was published posthumously in 1944. (*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*; Lyons 1944)

Search Past Fellows states that Lyons was 'Lieutenant, Royal Engineers (1884–retirement in 1904); Director General, Geological Survey of Egypt (1896–1898); served in the Great War (1914–1919); Director and Secretary, Science Museum (1920)'. Dale sums up Lyons' legitimacy to write *The Royal Society, 1660–1940*:

> His work as Treasurer, as Editor of *Notes and Records*, and as Chairman of the Record Revision Committee, had given Lyons a steadily growing interest in the Society's history, and especially in the history of its administration under its charters, of the changes of its Statutes with successive revisions, and of the corresponding changes in the structure and the activities of the Society. (Dale 1944, p. 806)

By including the 110 years after the end of Weld's *History*, *The Royal Society, 1660–1940* remains a useful work for its internal administrative history from the point of view of a scientist and senior FRS. As with the four *Records*, it contains very little on the lives of most early presidents who, unless they were Brouncker and Wren, who had scientific credentials, were dismissed irrespective of their important contribution to the Royal Society's governance during often very politically unstable times. Lyons does not refer to the presidents' political alignment, nor that of the institution, nor the changing external political realities of London and how this affected the early Royal Society.

Notes and Records of the Royal Society of London

The Royal Society in 1938 began publishing *Notes and Records*, having Lyons as its first editor, initially as a biannual journal (later becoming a quarterly), aiming to include material on contemporary administrative matters, such as elections, honours, occasions, and council meetings, as well as a little on the institution's history. Lyons' first editorial states:

> The suggestion that the Fellows should be kept more fully informed of the activities of the Society was approved by Council a year ago, and resulted in the publication of Occasional Notices. It is now considered that such a periodical might usefully include information of historical interest which would not be printed in either *Philosophical Transactions* or *Proceedings*. Consequently, the title of the periodical has been changed to *Notes and Records of the Royal Society of London*, and the format made similar to that of *Proceedings*. (Lyons 1938a, p. 3)

Of relevance, in 1946 *Notes and Records* published its first article on the presidents: 'Officers of the Royal Society in the House of Commons', a two-page article by J.D.G.D. containing a list alleging it named all presidents elected to the Commons: 'The first twelve Presidents of the Society, two were Peers (one Irish), and nine sat as members of House of Commons, usually before or after their tenure of the Presidency, but in a few cases at the same time' (J.D.G.D. 1946, pp. 36–7). J.D.G.D.'s list omitted Herbert, president from 1689 to 1690, and Southwell, president from 1690 to 1695. In his article on Herbert, Ferris states that he was elected Tory MP for Wilton, Wiltshire, on 10 February 1679, 23 August 1679 and 17 February 1681 (Govier 2024). In their article on Southwell, Cruickshanks, Handley and Hayton (eds; 2002) state that he was elected Royalist MP for Penryn, Cornwall, in 1673 and 1679 and Tory MP for Lostwithiel, Cornwell, in 1685 (History of Parliament). Of the eight early presidents, J.D.G.D. (1946) acknowledges that they identified seat(s) and date(s) elected presidents but not their political alignment, or if this altered over time (pp. 36–7).

Notes and Records gradually ceased to include the Royal Society's current affairs, focusing instead on the history of science, its own administrative history and past FRSs of note, often covering aspects of their lives or their contribution to science and mostly omitting political alignment, if known. In terms of administrative history, Douglas McKie's (1960) *The Origins and Foundation of the Royal Society of London*, published 1960, identifies the political alignment of 'founder fellows' such as parliamentarian Wilkins and Royalist Brouncker, adding:

> Of these forty-one nominees of the meeting of 28 November 1660, thirty-one are either described in the *Dictionary of National Biography* as Royalists or they belonged to known Royalist families or they received honours after the Restoration or they supported the Restoration, and all thirty-one accepted the invitation to join the Society … The Royalist structure of the Society can scarcely be doubted. (p. 33)

However, McKie did not include the external role of the office of president, specifically, representing the Royal Society before Parliament, Crown and the Church of England. *Notes and Records* has published articles on specific early presidents: Moray, Brouncker, Wren and Pepys, for example, P Robinson's (2008) 'A "very curious Almanack": the gift of Sir Robert Moray FRS, 1668', Hartley and Scott's (1960) 'William, Viscount Brouncker, P.R.S. (1620–1684)', Asit K Biswas's (1867) 'The automatic rain-gauge of Sir Christopher Wren, F.R.S.' and Norman Thrower's (2003) 'Samuel Pepys FRS (1633–1703) and the Royal Society'. However, they do not identify their political alignment. The exception is Rebekah Higgitt's (2005) 'President, Patron, Friend and Lover: Charles Montagu's Significance to the History of Science'. In passing, Higgitt identifies Montagu's Whig political alignment and that

he was an MP, but in terms of Montagu's 1695 election as president she employs an apolitical interpretation, attributing this to his relationship with Newton (Higgitt 2005, pp. 157–9). This is discussed in more depth in Montagu's concise political biography in the Findings. In 1976, *Notes and Records* published Hunter's (1976) 103-page 'The Social Basis and Changing Fortunes of an Early Scientific Institution: An Analysis of the Membership of the Royal Society 1660–1685'. Expanded, this was published as a book in 1682: *The Royal Society and its Fellows 1660–1700: the Morphology of an Early Scientific Institution*. These are dealt with in Section 1.2.2, which is dedicated to Hunter (Hunter 1982b). Finally, D Miller's (1998) 'The "Hardwicke Circle": The Whig Supremacy and its Demise in the 18th-Century Royal Society' analyses the Whig domination of the Royal Society after the death of Newton, making a useful contribution to the thesis by identifying the Whig political alignment of a number of presidents to 1778, as is seen in the Conclusion.

Other Royal Society Sources

'Biographical Memoirs' is not relevant to the thesis. It was first published from 1830 in *Proceedings of the Royal Society,* presenting biographies of FRSs who died from 1830 onwards, and since 1955 has been renamed 'Biographical Memoirs of Fellows of the Royal Society'. The online source *Search Past Fellows* contains short biographical information on all deceased FRSs since 1660. *What is in the Royal Society Catalogues* defines the *Past Fellows Database*:

> A list of all past Fellows and Foreign members of the Royal Society providing basic https://historyofparliamentonline.org/ biographical information … The records contain information including: Fellows' full name and titles, dates of birth, death and election to the Society, category of membership, offices held, Society medals won and lectures delivered. They may also include details of a Fellow's education, career, membership of other societies, references to further biographical sources and a list of Royal Society archives associated with the Fellow. (Royal Society)

Currently, if FRSs had been elected as an MP, this is generally included, but very rarely is there any indication of their political alignment, despite this information being available in *History of Parliament* (History of Parliament, https://historyofparliamentonline.org/). An exception is the entry for Vaughan under 'Career', which states that he was 'Whig politician and supporter of Charles II' (Search Past Fellows). As discussed in Vaughan's concise political profile in the Findings, he was a Royalist MP from 1661, then a Tory MP in 1679 until he succeeded his father as Baron Emlyn in 1686, the year he was elected president. Vaughan changed political alignment to Whig some years after the revolution. *Search Past Fellows* entries for Montagu and Somers state that these two were MPs in the 1690s but not

Whig MPs or members of the Whig junto; they only refer to their Whig credentials through their membership to the Kit-Cat Club. For example, Montagu's entry states that he 'was a member and patron of the so-called Kit-Cat-Club, which brought together various literary Whig men' (Search Past Fellows). *Search Past Fellows* is online, so entries can and sometimes are changed (updated) with no record remaining of what had previously existed and what was added. Such changes often depend on external influences. This most noticeably occurred as a result of the British Black Lives Matter campaign, which gradually led to a more widespread acknowledgement of investment in the trafficking of slaves, the ownership of slaves or the administrative roles in colonies that used slaves by many otherwise highly respectable British organisations, including the Royal Society, businesses and families (Black Lives Matter; Mohdin & Storer 2021). In recent years this led the Royal Society to add to the new 'General Context' section at the end of *Search Past Fellows* entries, in which the compiler(s) acknowledge FRSs who worked for slave-trading companies, owned shares in the companies, owned slaves or administered colonies using slaves, usually using a short résumé of British involvement in slavery. Royal FRSs such as Charles II and James II are now included. As is dealt with in the Findings, Williamson and Vaughan were involved in slavery, although in different capacities (Govier 1999).

Academic Publications

History of Science Journals

The purpose of this section was to evaluate whether a survey of the contents of six major history of science journals during the years 1980 to 2023 included articles on the early Royal Society presidents, identified their political alignment in any article or identified the political alignment of the institution. The six are *Isis*, *Annals of Science*, *British Journal of the History of Science*, *Social Studies of Science*, *Past and Present* and *History of Science*.

Isis

Isis is published by the University of Chicago Press. Its website states:

> Since its inception in 1912, *Isis* has featured scholarly articles, research notes and commentary on the history of science, medicine, and technology and their cultural influences … An official publication of the History of Science Society, *Isis* is the oldest English-language journal in the field. (*Isis*)

Published quarterly, *Isis* contains lead articles, 'Critiques and Contentions', 'Notes and Correspondence', 'News of the Profession' and 'Reviews'. *Wikipedia* states:

> The journal was established by George Sarton and the first issue appeared in March 1913. Contributions were originally in any of four European languages (English, French, German, and Italian), but since the 1920s, only English has been used. Publication is partly supported by an endowment from the Dibner Fund. (*Wikipedia* https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isis_(journal)

From 1980 to 2023, *Isis* published a few articles that in part dealt with the early Royal Society, including James R and Margaret C Jacob's (1980) 'The Anglican Origins of Modern Science: The Metaphysical Foundations of the Whig Constitution' and L Mulligan's (1980) 'Puritans and English Science: A Critique of Webster'. However, no material identifies the political alignment of presidents or the Royal Society from 1662 to 1703.

Annals of Science:

The 'Aims and Scope' on the *Annals of Science*'s website states that it:

> launched in 1936, publishes work on the history of science, technology and medicine, covering developments from classical antiquity to the late 20th century. The journal has a global reach, both in terms of the work that it publishes, and also in terms of its readership. (*Annals of Science*)

From 1980 to 2023, the quarterly published one article on a former president, Sir Archibald Geikie (1835–1924), FRS 1865, president 1908 to 1913 (Oldroyd 1997).The *Annals of Science* journal has published one article focusing on religion and the Royal Society, 'Allegiance and Supremacy: Religion and the Royal Society's 3rd Charter of 1669' (Govier 2021). However, there is no material focusing specifically on the political alignment of presidents or the Royal Society from 1662 to 1703.

British Journal of the History of Science

The website of the journal states:

> Founded in 1947, the *BJHS* is Britain's largest learned society devoted to the history of science, technology and medicine … This leading international journal publishes scholarly papers and review articles on all aspects of the history of science. History of science is interpreted widely to include medicine, technology and social studies of science. (*British Journal of the History of Science*)

From 1980 to 2023 the quarterly published no material focusing specifically on the political alignment of presidents or the Royal Society from 1662 to 1703. However, in 2019 the journal (vol. 52, no. 2) published a special edition, 'London 1600–1800: Communities of Natural Knowledge and Artificial Practice', which included two articles on the early Royal

Society: Noah Moxham's (2019) 'Natural Knowledge, Inc.: the Royal Society as a Metropolitan Corporation' and Jim Bennett and Rebekah Higgitt's 'London 1600–1800: Communities of Natural Knowledge and Artificial Practice' (Moxham 2019). Neither contain material covering the political alignment of presidents or the Royal Society from 1662 to 1703.

Social Studies of Science

The journal's website states:

> Since 1970 *Social Studies of Science* has been a central journal for the field of Science and Technology Studies, serving as a venue for the articulation and development of key ideas and findings in the field from its early years to the current day. The journal is multi-disciplinary, welcoming contributions that advance our understanding of science, technology and medicine as social and material activities. (*Social Studies of Science*)

From 1980 to 2023 *Social Studies of Science*, a quarterly, published a number of articles about the Royal Society, including G Mulligan and Mulligan's (1981) 'Reconstructing Restoration Science: Styles of Leadership and Social Composition of the Early Royal Society' and Bryce Allen, F W Lancaster and Jian Qin's (1994) 'Persuasive Communities: A Longitudinal Analysis of References in *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society, 1665–1990*'. It also published Hunter's (1982a) 'Reconstructing Restoration Science: Problems and Pitfalls in Institutional History: Responses and Replies', in which he states:

> The Presidency was so much an honorary position at this time (1689–1703) that at least one President never attended a meeting during his term, while two others had to be elected Fellows on the same day they became President. (pp. 452–3)

His conclusion does not explain why. All articles dealing with or referring to the early Royal Society contain no material on the political alignment of presidents or the Royal Society from 1662 to 1703.

Past and Present

First published in 1952 by Oxford University Press for the Past and Present Society, a group of Marxist historians, this journal was originally subtitled *A Journal of Scientific History*. Its website states that it is:

> widely acknowledged to be the liveliest and most stimulating historical journal in the English-speaking world. The journal offers: A wide variety of scholarly and original articles on historical, social and cultural change in all parts of the world … a forum for

> debate, encouraging productive controversy; the examination of particular problems and periods as well as wider issues of historical change. (*Past and Present*)

From 1980 to 2023 this quarterly contained a few articles focusing on the early Royal Society, specifically, Barbara Shapiro's (1968) 'Latitudinarianism and Science in 17th Century England' and L Mulligan's (1973) 'Civil War Politics, Religion and the Royal Society', as well as 'Science, Politics and Religion' (Shapiro 1975). However, all articles dealing with or referring to the early Royal Society do not cover, discuss or identify the political alignment of presidents or the institution from 1662 to 1703.

History of Science

The website for this journal states that it:

> publishes analytically oriented articles that combine original research and critical engagement with up-to-date secondary literature in the history of science, technology and medicine. The journal also publishes articles that focus on relevant historiographical issues and matters related to teaching the history of science, technology and medicine. (*History of Science*)

The quarterly was first published in March 1962, and from 1980 to 2023 published a few articles relevant to the thesis. Before this, J R Jacobs' 1975 article 'Restoration, Reformation and the Origins of the Royal Society' disagreed with the view of some historians that the Royal Society was detached from the politics of the Restoration, suggesting instead that it was part of it. Jacobs does not acknowledge that the society's initial political alignment was enshrined in its 1662 and 1663 charters that named Royalist Brouncker as president. Brouncker took his oath of office before Royalist Edward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon, the lord chancellor, confirming the royal Society's relationship to the state. In 1980, *History of Science* published Jacob's 'Restoration Ideologies and the Royal Society', which examines 'the polemical use to which the science of the Royal Society was put by Tory pamphleteers during the last decade of Stuart rule 1678 to 1688' (Jacob 1980, p. 25)—but not the continuous election of Royalist then Tory presidents.

Professor Michael Hunter

Hunter is arguably the most significant and knowledgeable historian of the administration of the early Royal Society, adding a precision and depth previously unknown. Through four books, as well as many articles in various history of science journals, he created what is accepted by many as the best version of the Royal Society's early history, specifically, the institution's administrative history. Surprisingly, Birkbeck College, at which he is currently Emeritus Professor of History, only states that he 'is the world's foremost expert on Robert

Boyle, the 17th century scientist who was one of the founding members of the Royal Society' (Birkbeck College). Hunter's four books were examined to see whether he identifies the political alignment of presidents and the institution.

The Social Basis and Changing Fortunes of an Early Scientific Institution: An Analysis of the Membership of the Royal Society, 1660–1685 *(1976);* The Royal Society and its Fellows 1660–1700: the Morphology of an Early Scientific Institution *(1982)*

The Social Basis … of the Royal Society, 1660–1685 contains a 'Catalogue of Fellows' and an analysis of the institution's workings. The catalogue presents information on each FRS elected from 1660 to 1685, including name, title and date of birth; date elected; brief biographical note and principal source; offices held in the Royal Society; activities as seen in minutes; payment of subscriptions; 1670s lists; expulsion/resignation; and death (Hunter 1976). There is no criteria for identifying the political alignment of FRSs, where known, and hence that of the presidents, which is known. Hunter's accompanying analysis similarly contains no mention of the political alignment of presidents or the institution. *The Royal Society and its Fellows* extends the end date to 1700. The new catalogue does not identify the political alignment of FRSs and hence that of the presidents. The accompanying analysis similarly contains no mention of the political alignment of presidents or the institution.

Science and Society in Restoration England *(1981)*

In Hunter's introduction, he states that 'The aim of this book is thus to use a close reading of manuscript and printed sources to show how Restoration science related to contemporary society in terms of support and apathy, facilities and impediments, motivations, and reservations' (Hunter 1981, p. 6). He classifies Moray and Wren as 'intransigent opponents' of the parliamentary regime. There is no further comment on their political alignment after the Restoration (Hunter 1981, p. 115). The only other presidents mentioned are 'sometime President' Hoskyns while Vaughan 'became President … in the 1680's' (Hunter 1981, pp. 66, 171). There is no discussion of the changing political alignment of presidents, or what this said about the Royal Society. The years before the revolution are mentioned, but not how it affected the Royal Society, nor how the revolution eventually led to a significant long-lasting change in its institutional political alignment. The Whig-Tory political duopoly is mentioned:

> It was in the 1680's, when England came closer to absolutism than at any other time in this period in the reaction that followed the failure of the Whigs, that natural philosophy came nearest to achieving the 'established' position that English scientists had desired ever since the Restoration. (Hunter 1981, p. 127)

Yet the ‘desired’ position to which he refers was financial support from the king or state to create an institute of science, which did not occur. He later adds that ‘if scientists veered in a Tory direction during the Exclusion Crisis, they moved towards the Whigs in the 1690’s. Their loyalty was always to those in government’ (Hunter 1981, p. 135). However, how many FRSs in the 1680s, let alone the 1690s, could be legitimately identified as ‘scientists’, even including horticulturists? The answer is very few; at best, many were a virtuoso or dilletante. Further, in the 1690s, despite the Whigs attaining power in Parliament, most senior FRSs, such as Evelyn (who refused election as president three times) and former presidents Wren, Hoskyns, Pepys and Herbert, plus Southwell, remained Tory and the political alignment of presidents Williamson and Wyche in the 1690s is disputed by different authorities in *History of Parliament*, as is seen in the Findings. Interestingly, Hunter chose not to mention the Royal Society’s involvement in one of the Restoration’s most lucrative business activities: the slave trade. For example, when Chelsey College was sold in 1682, he states that Charles II ‘paid the Society £1,300, which was invested in the East India Company stock’ (Hunter 1981, p. 128). As is clearly stated in numerous entries in *Journal Book Original* and *Council Minutes Original*, the investment was split with the Royal African Company (RAC) and this was held until 1699 (Govier 1999).

Establishing the New Science: the Experience of the Early Royal Society *(1989)*

In Hunter’s introduction, he states:

> The essays in this book are concerned with the institutionalisation … of science in later 17th century England. They deal exclusively with one institution, the Royal Society of London … the Royal Society represented a new type of institution, a public body devoted to the corporate pursuit of scientific research. (Hunter 1989, pp. 6–7)

However, there is no discussion of the importance of the political alignment of the office of president during the Restoration, and after. Similarly, there is no mention of whether the Royal Society had a political alignment. Regarding internal governance he states:

> All commentators seem to have been happy with the basic constitutional structure of the Society … Thus the desirability of having a President who acted not only as a titular head but also as a ‘moderator’, of the Society’s proceedings was propounded. (Hunter 1989, p. 210)

The era’s political parties, Royalist, Tory and Whig, are not mentioned. Hunter often discusses the first president, Brouncker: his attempt to obtain an ‘endowment’ of land for the Royal Society (Hunter 1989, p 4); his office as ‘Navy Commissioner’ (Hunter 1989, p. 30); his being ‘arguably more important in directing the Society’s affairs’, though his ‘political

views are on the whole rather shadowy' (Hunter 1989, p. 58); his being asked by council to speak to Charles II about 'raising a college' (Hunter 1989, p. 162); and his 1677 'ouster' (Hunter 1989, p. 197). Neither Brouncker's political alignment, that of a committed Royalist, nor the Royalist alignment of the institution when he was president are acknowledged. Wren, as president, is mentioned a few times: in 1681 the 'then newly elected President' proposed a plan for 'a series of committees'. However, his Tory alignment is not (Hunter 1989, p. 198). Herbert is mentioned as president, 'never attending a meeting during his term', in a footnote, but not his Tory political alignment (Hunter 1989, p. 341, Footnote 11). Montagu and Somers are referred to as president and FRS once, in the same footnote, but not their Whig political alignment: 'while two others had to be elected on the day they became President' (Hunter 1989, p. 341, Footnote 11).

Science and the Shape of Orthodoxy: Intellectual Change in Late 17th Century Britain *(1995)*

In Hunter's introduction, which he subtitles 'Fifteen Essays and a New Theory of Intellectual Change', he states:

> This book presents fifteen studies of interconnected aspects of intellectual life in late 17th century Britain … They throw light on such themes as the nature of the new science in the late 17th century and the impact of it on institutionalisation … Cumulatively, they offer a coherent view of intellectual change and its milieu in England and Scotland in the late 17th century. (Hunter 1995, p. 1)

He later states:

> It is striking how many of the most active, senior and hence influential Fellows in the 1690's had belonged to the Society for twenty years … These included scientists like Robert Hooke or John Wallis, or, among the lesser Fellows who contributed much to the vitality of the institution, figures like Sir John Hoskyns, Sir Robert Southwell, John Evelyn and Abraham Hill. (Hunter 1995, p. 153)

In addition to Hill, 'founder fellow' 1660, the other five mentioned were elected in 1663. Hunter's labelling of the Royal Society's failed plan for a college dedicated to science as 'grandiose' is not necessarily correct (Hunter 1995, p. 153). The plan was feasible, had England been politically and religiously stable, which it was not. However, to build a college on land owned by a Catholic aristocrat had very serious implications, which is why the Royal Society decided not to proceed (Govier 2021). Hunter's only mention of political parties are his comments on Le Grand's *An Entire Body of Philosophy, According to the Principles of the Famous Renate Des Cartes*, specifically, its list of 'benefactors':

> Above all, the list is full of the names of prominent members of the landed establishment, many of them Members of Parliament and holders of national or local office … these represent a spectrum of differing political affiliations, from staunch Whigs to no less passionate Tories. (Hunter 1995, p. 162)

Summary

Despite covering in fine detail the inner workings of the early Royal Society, specifically, its administration, Hunter's work does not acknowledge the political alignment of presidents, or the implications of such alignment for the institution from 1662 to 1703.

The Diaries of Pepys and Evelyn

Last are the private diaries of two Royalist (later Tory) FRSs, Pepys and Evelyn, both of whom were elected president, although Evelyn declined on three occasions.

The Diary of Samuel Pepys

This is based on the contents of Pepys' diary, written in code, covering the dates 1 January 1660 to 31 May 1669 (Pepys 1977). Pepys ceased duties because of concerns it was exacerbating problems with his eyesight that were later resolved. In his will, he left some 3,000 books and manuscripts, including the diary, to Magdalene College, Oxford. These are now held at the Pepys Library (Magdalene College). Deciphered, the diary was first published in two volumes in 1825, excluding Pepys' entries on his sexual activity, which were included in later 20th century versions. Knighton states that the diary:

> is properly acclaimed as an astonishingly vivid and disciplined exercise in self-analysis, a historical document of the first rank, and a literary classic. The diary is naturally the single most important source of knowledge about Pepys himself and his relationships, and his public reputation derives largely from the image he projects of himself during the diary years, 1660–69 … However much his later life is examined, it is the diary which has made him famous, and from which he will be judged. (*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*)

Pepys' few comments on his 1665 election as an FRS and views on the Royal Society have little relevance because they do not include his years as a Royalist then Tory MP, his election as president nor his demise after the revolution.

The Diary of John Evelyn

Evelyn lived a family life of inherited wealth; hence, *The Diary of John Evelyn* is devoid of the visceral material that contributes to making Pepys' diary so popular (Evelyn 1901). Chambers states that what was later published as Evelyn's diary:

> contains both his personal reflections and what is more like news reporting. It exists in essentially two forms: a work called *De vita propria* which covers the period from 1620 to 1644 and another called the *Kalendarium* which covers his life from 1620 to 1697. (*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*)

First published in 1818 to 1819, Evelyn's diary provides an observant recounting of his life and times. Later entries are sometimes made on or close to the dates on which the events occurred. Of particular relevance to the thesis are his entries covering his association with the Royal Society from 1663; his views on the Restoration, Charles II and other royals, the succession of James II, and the revolution; and horticulture (gardening), which Evelyn and the Royal Society considered a legitimate scientific activity. Though adding occasional important insights into the workings of the Royal Society, including his refusal of election as president, Evelyn's diary lacks the continuous focus required to construct accurate concise political biographies of presidents.

Summary

Starting with the first meeting on 28 November 1660, the Royal Society's minutes of its ordinary and council meetings were recorded in an apolitical (and non-religious) format. Matters of external discord that impinged on the Royal Society were, with very few exceptions, excluded from the minutes in *Journal Book Original* and *Council Minutes Original*. Reasons for the adoption of this format are possibly 'Masonic' carefulness following the civil wars, Protectorate and the Restoration or a decision by 'founder fellows' to create an institution solely dedicated to the practice and promotion of science. Indisputable are the 1662 and 1663 charters that name Royalist (and Anglican) Brouncker as president of the Royalist-aligned institution of science that called itself the Royal Society. Apart from aspects of Weld's (2011) *History* (the *Memoirs*) and Higgitt's (2005) article on Montagu in *Notes and Records*, there is very little direct information emanating from within the Royal Society identifying the political alignment of presidents or the institution. Separately, a similar scenario occurs within the confines of historians of science and their journals. However, there is no evidence to indicate that this is the result of a conscious decision to adopt or emulate the recording decisions of the 17th century Royal Society. Instead, this is likely part of an unofficial and unwritten decision of what should be, and what should not be, considered part of the discipline of the history of science. An apt and diplomatic way of labelling this is 'methodological oversight', a concept suggested by Professor Adela McMurray at a Teams meeting on 12 February 2024. Methodological oversight in this case entails ignoring or failing to notice the relevance and importance of the political alignment of the early Royal Society's presidents and the institution itself. Investigating the reasons for

this is outside the scope of this Masters thesis but could begin with submitting questionnaires on the subject to appropriate staff at the Royal Society, including past and present editors of *Notes and Records*, as well as editors of the history of science publications cited.

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

The paucity of information available in the sources cited in the Literature Review on the political alignment of the early presidents, and hence the institution itself, either through the recording methodology of the early Royal Society or the 'methodological oversight' of history departments, historians and editors of history journals, means that far more evidence is required to construct a viable thesis. This can be remedied by employing historical biographical analysis, not to be confused with historical biographical criticism, which is:

> a form of literary criticism where the life, beliefs and experiences of the author are used to better understand and interpret their work. It's a way of seeing literature through a different lens—one that's got the author's fingerprints all over it. (Understanding Biographical Criticism: a Comprehensive Guide)

Historical biographical analysis may be defined as a form of 'triangulation', which, for the thesis, entails examining, comparing and analysing the content of a selection of reputable biographical sources to best identify the political alignment of those elected president: first, reputable biographical dictionaries (*Dictionary of National Biography: 1885–1900*, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* and *Dictionary of Irish Biography*); second, the biographies of three presidents who accepted their election—Wren, Pepys and Somers—and the two who did not—Boyle and Evelyn; third, and most importantly, given that 10 of the 11 FRSs who accepted their election as president from 1662 to 1703 were MPs, *History of Parliament: British Political, Social and Local History*. Given that the historical records and aspects of the workings of the 17th century English state are not necessarily complete, this may lead in a few cases to approximation or disputes between experts over changes in the political alignment of presidents. Despite this, historical biographical analysis is a legitimate step towards clarity when compared with the abnegation of the political alignment of presidents and the institution as practised by the Royal Society and the 'methodological oversight' of historians specialising in its early history.

Biographical Dictionaries

Dictionary of National Biography: 1885 to 1900

Published by Smith, Elder and Company, the first volume was issued in 1885, and its complete 63 volumes contain concise biographies of 29,000 British historical personages its editors deemed notable. A second edition was published in 1908 to 1909, as well as 12 further supplements covering the years 1901 to 1990, including the biographies of those deemed notable but who died after 1900. Given that the president is the Royal Society's

most high-profile, public-facing office, all presidents elected are included. It makes no mention of the political alignment of Moray, Brouncker, Williamson, Boyle, Wren, Hoskyns, Wyche, Pepys, Vaughan and Southwell. However, Stephen's article on Evelyn confirms that he was Royalist (*Dictionary of National Biography: 1885–1900*, Vol. 18, pp. 79–83), and Barker's fails to mention Montagu's Whig alignment. In addition to his dealings with Swift, 'Halifax seems, however, to have made some effort to retain Swift's services on the whig side in 1710' (*Dictionary of National Biography: 1885–1900*, Vol. 38, p. 222) while Somers' Whig alignment is made clear by Rigg (*Dictionary of National Biography: 1885–1900*, Vol. 53, pp. 221–9).

Oxford Dictionary of National Biography

In the 1990s Oxford University Press took over publishing the *Dictionary of National Biography*, and in September 2004 the first *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* was published in hardcopy at a price of £7,500, in 60 volumes, including over 60,000 entries containing whomever its editors deemed most worthy (*Wikipedia*). It was also made available online for a subscription (Raven 2007). In terms of the online version (which was the only source I had access to), as with any other online presentation, biographical or not, content can be (and sometimes is) altered without notice, and no record remains of what has been added or deleted or why it was changed. The online version contains a section titled 'Presidents of the Royal Society (1662–2020)', which has biographies of each in order of election (*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*). The following list identifies the author of each biographical article on Moray and the 13 FRSs elected president from 1662 to 1703. Alan identifies Moray as Royalist aligned, McIntyre identifies Brouncker as Royalist aligned, Marshall mentions that Williamson was considered a Tory, Hunter does not identify Boyle's political alignment but states that his father was a Royalist army officer, Downes does not identify Wren's political alignment, Chambers identifies Evelyn as a Royalist, McIntyre does not identify Hoskyns' political alignment, McGrath does not identify Wyche's political alignment, Knighton indicates that Pepys was Tory aligned, Baston does not identify the political alignment of Vaughan, Bucholz identifies Herbert as a Tory, Barnard does not identify the political alignment of Southwell and Handley, who wrote the biographies of Montague and Somers, identifies them as Whigs.

Dictionary of Irish Biography

The result of a research program of the Royal Irish Academy and 'launched in 2009 after many years of research by hundreds of contributors, the DIB's online edition now features nearly 11,000 lives and continues to grow' (*Dictionary of Irish Biography*). The original hardcopy version contains 11 volumes and is sold for approximately £1,300, and the online

version is accessible for free through Amazon and titled The Dictionary of Irish Biography. The online content for Southwell, Wyche and Boyle generally echoes that contained in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* but adds an Irish perspective; however, there is no entry for Brouncker.

Biographies of Presidents Elected from 1662 to 1703

Of the 11 FRSs who accepted their election as president, three are the subject of 20th and 21st century biographies: Wren, through his fame as an architect, Pepys, through the fame of his diary, and Somers, through his role in the government. Earlier biographies of Wren are somewhat eulogistic and focus on his architectural work. More recent biographies, such as Adrian Tinniswood's (2001) *His Invention So Fertile: A Life of Christopher Wren* and Kerry Downes' (1971) *Christopher Wren*, cover aspects of his political life, such as his election to the Commons, to varying degrees. Of special relevance is Lisa Jardine's *On a Grander Scale: The Outstanding Life of Sir Christopher Wren* (Jardine 2002) because it investigates his intimate involvement in the formation, and later governance, of the Royal Society. Jardine wrote other biographies relevant to the history of the Royal Society, including (with Stewart) *Hostage to Fortune: the Troubled Life of Francis Bacon* (Jardine & Stewart 1998). The Royal Society owes much to Bacon through his philosophical writings and his utopian fable, *New Atlantis* (Bacon 1937). Jardine (1944–2015) was made an honorary FRS months before her death, a very rare case of a historian receiving the honour (Search Past Fellows). Of all the presidents in the era, Pepys received the most biographies, including Claire Tomalin's *Samuel Pepys: the Unequalled Self* (Tomalin 2003), Richard Ollard's *Pepys: a Biography* (Ollard 1984) and Stephen Coote's *Samuel Pepys: a Life* (Cootes 2001), though their primary focus is inevitably the era covered in his diary, with less emphasis on his years as an MP and his involvement in the Royal Society. William L Sachse's biography on Somers, *Lord Somers: a Political Biography* (Sachse 1975), and Alexander Robertson's *The Life of Sir Robert Moray: Soldier, Statesman, Man of Science (1608–1673)* (Robertson 1922) contain significant information on their political lives. Added to this are the biographies on the two FRSs who refused election: Boyle and Evelyn. Given that Boyle (unlike, for example, Newton) wrote relatively accessible books on his scientific research and was deeply involved in promoting the Protestant religion, there are a number of biographical works (and many articles). These include R E W Maddison's *The Life of the Honourable Robert Boyle* (Maddison 1969) and Hunter's *Robert Boyle Reconsidered* (Hunter 1994). Interpretations of aspects of his life can vary. There are many editions of Evelyn's diaries but few biographies. Of these, Gillian Darley's *John Evelyn: Living for Ingenuity* (Darley 2006) and Jeanne

Welcher's *John Evelyn* (Welcher 1972) provide useful information on his political alignment and his involvement in the Royal Society.

History of Parliament: British Political, Social and Local History

The information required to compile concise political biographies of 10 of the 11 presidents for the Findings was ultimately reliant on *History of Parliament*, a vast, ongoing historical research project. Its website states that it was started in 1940 by Josiah Wedgwood (1872–1942), MP for Newcastle-Under-Lyme from 1906 to 1942, minister in Ramsay Macdonald's Labour government and recipient of the title Baron Wedgwood in 1942. *History of Parliament's* website (under 'governance') states that it:

> is a registered charity … Since 1951 it has received public funding, originally from the Treasury. It is now funded principally through two sets of Grant-in-Aid provided by the House of Commons and the House of Lords, currently in the proportion 67:33. (History of Parliament)

That is, the institution of Parliament, but not any particular political party, is responsible for its existence, content and continuation. 'About the History of Parliament Trust' defines it as:

> a research project creating a comprehensive account of parliamentary politics in England, then Britain, from their origins in the thirteenth century … It consists 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. (History of Parliament)

Relying on parliamentary documents—including records of debates and voting, laws passed, attendance, biographical information on MPs and Lords from various sources, and details of all constituencies, including histories and the results of elections—*History of Parliament* provides the most accurate (as far as 17th century to early 18th century English politics can), in-depth information on all MPs and Lords from 1660 to 1715. In addition, there are three series of volumes on the Commons and the Lords, covering the period from 1660 to 1715. First is the three-volume *History of Parliament: The House of Commons, 1660–1690*, containing 2,040 biographical articles and 269 constituency articles (Henning [ed.] 1983). *History of Parliament* states:

> [the] volumes deal with a period of monarchical reconstruction after the Civil War and Interregnum, and the political conflict of the Exclusion Crisis of 1678–81, the Tory Reaction which followed it, and the beginnings of a remarkable transformation of the

> British political system in the aftermath of the Revolution. (History of Parliament/node/66790)

Second is the five-volume *History of Parliament: The House of Commons, 1690–1715*, containing 1,982 biographical articles (Cruickshanks, Handley & Hayton [eds] 2002). *History of Parliament* states:

> definitive studies of the major politicians—among them the Tories Robert Harley and Henry St John, and Whigs like the 'Junto' members Charles Montagu, Thomas Wharton and John Somers … or those whose involvement in politics was really peripheral to their activity in other spheres, as lawyers, perhaps, businessmen or as ordinary country gentry—and the occasional household name like Sir Christopher Wren or Sir Isaac Newton. (History of Parliament/node/66791 <https://www.historyofparliamentonline.org>

Last is the five-volume *History of Parliament: The House of Lords 1660–1715* (Paley [ed.] 2016). *History of Parliament* states:

> The period is one of the most important in the history of the House of Lords. Over the half century or more after 1660, the Lords was the stage on which some of the critical confrontations in English and British constitutional and political history were played out. These volumes show how the peers as politicians engaged with and sought to influence the central issues of the day. (History of Parliament/node/69027)

History of Parliament provides an overview of each of the seats the 10 presidents who were MPs occupied, how they obtained and held these seats, how they performed in the Commons, their political alignment before and during their time in office, whether these changed and, finally, if elevated to the Lords, how they performed. Presenting the political alignment and activity of 10 of the 11 presidents adds to appreciation of their social identity in London, a matter that has otherwise been very much neglected by the Royal Society and historians specialising in its early history.

Summary

Given the Royal Society's apolitical recording methodology and the 'methodological oversight' of historians and editors of historical journals, historical biographical analysis provides a practical means of obtaining sufficient accurate information from a variety of biographical sources to identify the political alignment of Moray and each Royal Society president elected from 1662 to 1703. Although no doubt imperfect in a theoretical sense, historical biographical analysis combines and compares relevant political information contained in *History of Parliament* with the often-background biographical information in

Dictionary of National Biography: 1885–1900, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* and *Dictionary of Irish Biography* and the more in-depth material in the biographies of Moray, Boyle, Wren, Evelyn, Pepys and Somers, enabling the construction of concise political biographies. In fact, without historical biographical analysis and *History of Parliament* the thesis would not exist.

CHAPTER 4 FINDINGS

Using the evidence obtained from historical biographical analysis, the Findings identify the political alignment of Moray and the 13 FRSs elected to the office of president from 1662 to 1703. The Findings for each elected president consist of two parts. Part 1 is Royal Society involvement: their social position (Mr, Sir, Baron, the Honourable, Viscount or Earl), how and why they were elected president, their performance (if accepted) and their contribution (if any) to science. Part 2 is a concise political biography: their parents' social position and political alignment (where known), education, patrons, political alignment and offices of government held. In the cases of the 10 elected MPs this also includes their attempt(s) to enter Parliament, their election to Parliament, the political group to which they were aligned before the Popish Plot, whether they were Whig or Tory from 1680, the seats they won and how long they held them, their achievements (if any) in Parliament, their achievements (if any) in the Lords, for the four elevated, and whether they were MPs or Lords before, during or after being elected president. The following timeline (see Table 4.1) provides a brief overview of changes within the Royal Society and the relevant political changes in England.

Table 4.1: Timeline

Date	Royal Society Changes	Relevant Political Changes in England
1660	Proto-Royal Society first meets, obtains Charles II's patronage.	Charles II returns to England after exile. Lords reinstated after 1649 dissolution. Williamson appointed undersecretary to secretary of state. Pepys given office in navy under James, Duke of York.
1661	Presbyterian Royalist Moray elected first proto-Royal Society president, courtier, military officer.	Cavalier Parliament (1661 to 1679) begins. The Commons dominated by Royalist MPs. Bishops return to the Lords. Corporation Act enforces conformity to Anglican religion. Religious staff required to swear the anti-Catholic oaths of allegiance and supremacy and take Anglican communion. Royalist Vaughan elected MP. Royalist Wyche elected MP.

Date	Royal Society Changes	Relevant Political Changes in England
1662	First royal charter passed, naming Anglican Royalist Brouncker president from 1662 to 1677, courtier, government official and mathematician. All presidents from 1662 to 1703 were Anglican.	Charles II issues Declaration of Indulgence for Catholics and non-conformist Protestants. Rejected by Commons.
1663	Second royal charter passed. Charles II named ‘founder and patron’, refuses to attend a special Royal Society occasion planned for him. Financial problems because of non-payment of dues recognised by council.	–
1664	Charles II does not financially support Royal Society or its plan for college.	Conventical Act bans unauthorised religious meetings. FRS Southwell appointed clerk to privy council.
1665	Charles II and brother James, Duke of York, become royal FRSs.	–
1666	Fire of London forces Royal Society out of Gresham College. Catholic aristocrat Henry Howard elected FRS.	Some blame Catholics for the Fire of London.
1667	Royal Society moves into Howard’s Arundel House and plans to build a college there using FRS funds. It applies for third charter to obtain (1) Chelsey College owned by Charles II and (2) authority for president to appoint any number of vice presidents.	–

Date	Royal Society Changes	Relevant Political Changes in England
1668	Plans to build college dropped. Royal Society protests imposition of (1) oaths of allegiance and supremacy on presidents and vice presidents and (2) non-alienating of Chelsey College in third charter.	James, Duke of York, privately converts to Catholicism.
1669	Third royal charter passes. Royal Society receives Chelsey College. Brouncker takes new oaths.	FRS Williamson elected Royalist MP.
1670	Royal Society accused of ‘popery’ for residing at Arundel House.	–
1671	–	–
1672	–	Charles II issues second Declaration of Indulgence to suspend penal laws against Catholics and non-conformist Protestants. This is rejected by Commons.
1673	Royal Society accepts invitation to returns to Gresham College despite its declining state. It rejects Howard’s protests.	Test Act. Civil and military staff must swear oaths of allegiance and supremacy and take Anglican communion; James refuses and is forced to resign as lord high admiral. FRS Pepys elected Royalist MP. James marries Catholic Mary of Modena. FRS Southwell elected Royalist MP.
1674	–	FRS Williamson becomes secretary of state.
1675	–	–
1676	–	–

Date	Royal Society Changes	Relevant Political Changes in England
1677	Brouncker forced to resign as president. Royalist Williamson elected from 1677 to 1680.	–
1678	Williamson falsely accused of pro-Catholic actions and is convicted to the Tower. He is released the same day by Charles II.	Popish Plot, a bogus plot to kill Charles II and replace him with James. Many arrested. Second Test Act. MPs and Peers (but not James) to declare against transubstantiation.
1679	FRS Pepys falsely accused in Popish Plot, imprisoned from May to July 1679.	Beginning of Tory and Whig party system. Charles II prorogues Parliament to block Exclusion Bills. FRS Williamson loses secretary of state office and is re-elected Royalist MP. Herbert elected Royalist MP. FRS Pepys elected Royalist MP and loses navy office; he does not stand at later election. FRS Southwell resigns as clerk to privy council; he does not stand in election. Vaughan elected Royalist MP.
1680	Catholic FRS William Howard beheaded because of false accusations in Popish Plot. Royalist Boyle refuses election as president. Tory Wren elected president from 1680 to 1682, scientist, architect.	Charles II again prorogues Parliament, stopping Whig Exclusion Bill.
1681	–	Charles II dissolves the Oxford Parliament after one week and rules alone for remainder of his life. Herbert elected Tory MP. Vaughan elected Tory MP. FRS Williamson elected Tory MP. FRS Wyche elected Tory MP.
1682	The Royal Society sells Chelsey College back to Charles II and buys shares in slave trade with some of the proceeds. Tory Evelyn refuses election. Tory Hoskyns elected president from 1682 to 1683, government official, lawyer.	Tory support for Charles II increases, as does reaction against Whigs.

Date	Royal Society Changes	Relevant Political Changes in England
1683	Hoskyns resigns. Tory Wyche elected president from 1683 to 1684, government official, lawyer.	Rye House Plot to assassinate Charles II and James fails. Many are executed. Whig FRS Locke goes into exile. Tory Herbert succeeds his father as earl and enters the Lords.
1684	Wyche resigns. Tory Pepys elected president from 1684 to 1686, navy official.	Charles II gives FRS Pepys special office in navy.
1685	The Royal Society does not acknowledge the death of Charles II in records. It does not apply for James II's royal patronage. Tory Herbert elected FRS. Tory Vaughan elected FRS.	Charles II dies a Catholic. James II succeeds, supported by Tories. Monmouth plot to remove James II put down. James II prorogues Parliament, rules alone. FRS Hoskyns elected Tory MP. FRS Pepys elected Tory MP. FRS Southwell elected Tory MP. FRS Vaughan elected Tory MP. FRS Williamson elected Tory MP. FRS Wren elected Tory MP. FRS Wyche elected Tory MP.
1686	Pepys resigns. Tory Vaughan elected president from 1686 to 1689.	James II starts to lose Tory support, increases size of army, promotes Catholic officers. FRS Vaughan succeeds his father as baron, later enters the Lords.
1687	Tory Vaughan ceases attending the Royal Society's council meetings after 14 December 1687.	James II issues Declaration of Indulgence, removes penalties for Catholics and non-conformist Protestants, dissolves Parliament. Huge opposition.
1688	Whig Charles Montagu applies to become FRS and does not proceed. The Royal Society does not meet after 21 November before the revolution.	James II christens his new son Catholic and is deposed in the revolution led by Dutch Protestant William of Orange.

Date	Royal Society Changes	Relevant Political Changes in England
1689	The Royal Society resumes meetings on 17 April. Tory Herbert elected president from 1689 to 1690 and does not attend. The Royal Society does not apply for William III's royal patronage.	Convention Parliament creates dual monarchy of William III and his English wife, Mary II. Start of Nine Years War with Catholic France. FRS Pepys loses seat in Parliament and is arrested for suspected treason. Montagu elected Whig MP. FRS Newton elected Whig MP. Somers elected Whig MP. FRS Wren elected Tory MP.
1690	Evelyn again refuses election. Tory Southwell elected president from 1690 to 1693, government official.	Whigs do well at 1690 election. FRS Pepys again arrested, later released; he does not sit again. Montagu elected Whig MP. Somers elected Whig MP. FRS Williamson elected Tory MP. FRS Wren elected Tory MP.
1691	–	–
1692	–	–
1693	Southwell resigns. Evelyn refuses election for last time. Southwell re-elected president from 1693 to 1695.	Rise of the Whig junto. Two are Montagu and Somers. Somers promoted to speaker in the Lords.
1694	–	Junto power increases. Montagu made chancellor of exchequer and plays important role in establishing Bank of England.
1695	Whig Montagu elected FRS and president on same day, the first time this occurs; he holds office from 1695 to 1698, acts as patron and very rarely attends. Tory Hoskyns, vice president, presides over most council meetings.	FRS Montagu oversees recoinage and is elected Whig MP. Williamson elected MP, differing opinions whether Tory or Whig.
1696	–	–

Date	Royal Society Changes	Relevant Political Changes in England
1697	–	End of Nine Years War. Somers elevated to baron and made the lord chancellor.
1698	Whig junto member Somers elected FRS and president on the same day, the last time this occurs. He holds office from 1698 to 1703, acts as patron and very rarely attends. Tory Hoskyns presides over most council meetings.	FRS Montagu elected Whig MP. FRS Williamson elected MP, differing opinions on whether he was Tory or Whig.
1699	–	FRS Somers implicated in Captain Kidd piracy scandal.
1700	–	FRS Montagu elevated to Baron Halifax. FRS Somers dismissed as the lord chancellor.
1701	–	Act of Settlement precludes future Catholic monarchs. FRS Newton elected Whig MP. FRS Williamson elected MP, differing opinions on whether he was Tory or Whig. FRS Wren elected Tory MP.
1702	The Royal Society does not apply for Queen Anne's royal patronage.	William III dies. Tory Queen Anne succeeds. Whig junto's eclipse. Loss of authority for FRS Montagu and FRS Somers. FRS Wyche elected as Whig MP.
1703	Whig Newton elected president from 1703 to 1727, scientist, master the mint, Arian. He regularly attends.	–

Concise Political Biographies of Elected Presidents

Sir Robert Moray, President of the Proto-Royal Society 1661 to 1662—Royalist

Part 1: Royal Society Involvement

It is accepted that Moray played an essential role in the creation of the Royal Society (Weld 1848, Vol. I, pp. 104–6). At the first meeting of the proto-Royal Society, on 28 November 1660, *Journal Book Original* does not mention that Moray went to seek the king's patronage. However, at the next meeting, on 5 December 1660, *Journal Book Original* states that 'Sir Robert Moray informed the meeting the King had been acquainted with the designe of the meeting, approved of it, and would be ready to give encouragement to it' (*Journal Book Original*). Given Moray's influence with the king, and enthusiasm, he was elected first president of the then unnamed and unchartered organisation on 6 March 1661 (*Journal Book Original*). *Journal Book Original* records that Wilkins (a parliamentarian) was elected president on 23 October 1661 and Boyle (a Royalist) was named as president on 25 June 1662 and on 23 July 1662; however, Moray was re-elected on 10 April 1661 and named as president on 4 September 1661, 11 June 1662 and 2 July 1662 (*Journal Book Original*). Being a sir, not a viscount, a Presbyterian not an Anglican, and devoid of any formal scientific credentials, Moray was not appointed Royal Society president in the 1662 and 1663 charters. Yet his importance in the formation of the Royal Society was made clear in a *Journal Book Original* entry on 13 August 1662:

> the Letters Patents for the Incorporation of the Society were read by Mr Oldenburg … My Lord Chancelor is to bee thanked likewise, and Sir Robert Moray for his concern and care in promoting the constitution of the Society into a Corporation. (*Journal Book Original*)

Council Minutes Original records that Brouncker appointed Moray (along with Dr Jonathan Goddard, FRS 1660) vice president on 20 May 1669, and his *Search Past Fellows* entry states that he was appointed vice president from 1672 to 1673. *Journal Book Original* and *Council Minutes Original* records attest that Moray was one of the most active FRSs in the Royal Society's first decade. Elected to its council from its inception on 13 May 1663, he regularly attended until his death. Though not a scientist like Boyle or Wren, he presented far more papers at ordinary meetings, mostly in accordance with his knowledge or understanding of 'applied science' matters. Some were published in *Philosophical Transactions*, including 'A Relation of Some Extraordinary Tydes in the West-Isles of Scotland, as It Was Communicated by Sr. Robert Moray' (Moray 1665). It is reasonable to suggest that without Moray's influence and organisational abilities, what was essentially the 'Gresham College science club' would have become another Oxford Philosophical Society,

eventually fading. Moray died in 1673 and was buried at the king's expense in Poet's Corner, Westminster Abbey.

Part 2: Concise Political Biography

Though Moray is not overly prominent in English and Scottish history, his name appears in various records and histories of the era. Alexander Robertson's 1922 biography, *The Life of Sir Robert Moray: Soldier, Statesman, Man of Science (1608–1673)*, establishes his staunch Royalist political alignment and activity (Robertson 1922). *Notes and Records* contains apolitical articles on him (Martin 1960), and *Dictionary of National Biography: 1885–1900* and *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* provide limited information.

Moray was the eldest son of Sir Mungo Moray of Craigie, Perthshire, and his wife, a daughter of George Halkett of Pitfirran, Fife. Unlike the other 11 'founder fellows', he was a military officer who had years of active service. In 1633, he fought for the French in the army of Louis XIII. Cardinal Richelieu, leader of the French government, promoted him to lieutenant colonel. In 1640, he was appointed quartermaster-general in the Scots Army that invaded England. Stevenson defines the role: 'as well as assigning quarters and supervising the supply of weapons and provisions, quartermasters-general were responsible for laying out and fortifying camps on the march, and this clearly demanded technical knowledge' (Stevenson 1984, p. 407). Knighted in 1643 by Charles I, he again fought for the French. He was captured by the Germans and released in 1645 for a large ransom of £16,500 paid by his Parisian banker cousin (Martin 1960, pp. 240–1). Moray left French service in 1650, returning to Scotland to support Charles II in his battle to retake the crown of England. In approximately 1650, he married Sophia Lindsay (1624–1653), daughter of David Lindsay, first Lord Balcarres, cementing his position within the Royalist Scottish establishment. In 1651, Charles II appointed him lord justice clerk and a lord of session in Scotland, but, after Cromwell's defeat of Royalist forces, he went into hiding, then into exile in 1655, following the king to Cologne in 1656, then to Bruges. From 1657 to 1659 he lived in Maastricht, and he returned to London in August 1660. Charles II granted Moray, a trusted courtier, a two-room apartment in Whitehall where he tended to the king's laboratory. In 1661 he was appointed Scottish privy councillor, resumed his office of lord justice clerk, acted as an advisor to Charles II on Scottish affairs and was granted a yearly pension of £300. Clerke adds that 'he was also a lord of exchequer for Scotland, and became deputy-secretary on 5 June 1663. Thenceforward, down to 1670, the government of that country was mainly carried on by Lauderdale, the king, and himself' (*Dictionary of National Biography:1885–1900*, Vol. 39, pp. 401–2). In 1670, he participated in the failed discussions of the king's plan for a union of Scotland and England.

Viscount William Brouncker, President 1662 to 1677—Royalist

Part 1: Royal Society Involvement

Brouncker was named Royal Society president in the 1662 and 1663 royal charters and was elected continuously until 1677. His *Search Past Fellows* entry contains links to numerous written material by him or to him held by the Royal Society, including his participation in scientific experiments conducted under its auspices (Search Past Fellows). Brouncker had three articles published in *Philosophical Transactions*, including 'The Squaring of the Hyperbola, by an Infinite Series of Rational Numbers, Together with its Demonstration, by that Eminent Mathematician, the Right Honourable the Lord Viscount Brouncker' (Brouncker 1668). Apart from Wren, he is the only FRS of scientific disposition who accepted election as president from 1662 to 1703. As president, his commitment to the functioning of the institution in the 1660s was exemplary. In 1663 he presided over 31 of the 32 council meetings; in 1664, 36 of the 38; in 1665, 13 of the 14; in 1666, 16 of the 22; in 1667, 22 of the 23; and in 1669, all 12 (*Council Minutes Original*). However, Charles II's interest in the Royal Society soon waned, which was made evident by his lack of financial support and failure to attend the special event planned for him at Gresham College, as mentioned previously (see Literature Review: Official Histories). The records of the first meeting of the council on 13 May 1663 states: 'The collecting of arrears being thought necessary an order was drawn up concerning it, which ordered that all persons that have been elected or admitted into the Royal Society, do pay their whole arrears until 13 May 1663' (*Council Minutes Original*).

Brouncker and the council accepted that the king was not going to pay for a college. After the managers of Gresham College, the Mercers Company and the City of London ejected the Royal Society from Gresham College after the Fire of London, it moved to Arundel House, the London mansion of Catholic aristocrat Henry Howard, FRS 1666. From 1667 to 1668, encouraged by Howard, the Royal Society sought to build its college within the grounds of Arundel using money promised by some FRSs. The council minutes for 10 August 1668 state: 'Resolved that the building of the College to be deferred until spring' (*Council Minutes Original*). The matter was never mentioned again in the journal minutebook or council minutes. The most likely reason is the implications of permanent residence on Catholic property (Govier 2021; Hunter 1984). Under Brouncker, the Royal Society finally obtained something of value from the king: its 1669 third charter gave it Chelsey College, a non-alienable run-down property owned by the king. Given that the council lacked the competence to renovate or administer it, the property was later sold back to the king in 1682, when Wren was president. As stated in the council minutes for 22 November 1682, some of the £1,300 proceeds were used to purchase shares in the slave-trading RAC, whose governor was the Duke of York, royal FRS 1665 (*Council Minutes Original*; Search Past

Fellows). Brouncker thus presided over a stymied institution facing ongoing problems resulting from the king's failure to provide financial support, falling membership, FRSs not paying their fees and a reliance on the Mercers Company and the City of London for use of Gresham College. Towards the end of Brouncker's presidency, plans were concocted to replace him. Breathnach states: 'John Aubrey was "desired to spread the Designe of choosing a new President" and he "undertook for correspondence with the [contrary] cabal". Hooke visited Sir Christopher Wren and "discoursed about his presidentship"' (Breathnach 2006, p. 226). By 1677 Brouncker was rarely seen at ordinary meetings, attending only one of the four council meetings held that year (*Council Minutes Original*). Scott and Hartley conclude that 'it was a sad ending to the long Presidency from which the Society derived great benefit' (Hartley & Scott 1960, p. 155).

Part 2: Concise Political Biography

There is little information on Brouncker, though he appears in records for the Restoration Navy. A few articles on him are present in *Notes and Records*, such as Jacqueline Stedall's 'Catching Proteus: the Collaborations of Wallis and Brouncker. I. Squaring the Circle' (Stedall 2000) and Hartley and Scott's biographical essay 'William, Viscount Brouncker (1620–1684)' (Hartley & Scott 1960). These focus on his mathematical work or his contribution to the Royal Society. Weld is useful, as are *Dictionary of National Biography: 1885–1900* and *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Though he was born in Ireland, there is no entry for him in *Dictionary of Irish Biography*.

Born in County Dublin, his father, Royalist Sir William Brouncker, gentleman of the privy chamber to Charles I and vice-chamberlain to Charles, prince of Wales, purchased the titles Baron Brouncker of Newcastle in the province of Munster and Viscount Brouncker of Lyons in the province of Leinster on 12 September 1645. The peerage cost £1200 and William 'swore the same day he had not 12d left to pay for his dinner'. He died two months later (Breathnach 2006, p. 223). In November 1646, Brouncker became the 2nd Viscount of Lyons, which entitled him to sit in the Irish House of Lords, but not the English one. Similarly to his father, Brouncker was an Anglican Royalist. Sent to England to study aged 16, he remained, graduating from Oxford University with a doctor of physick in 1647, though he did not practice. During the Interregnum, he pursued intellectual interests, and in 1653, under the pseudonym 'A Person of Honour', he wrote an annotated translation of Descartes' first book, *Musicae Compendium*, about experiments on musical instruments, and pursued mathematics (*Dictionary of National Biography:1885–1900*, Vol. 6, p 470). Similarly to many Royalists, Brouncker kept a low profile, avoiding the worst of the financial and other penalties inflicted on those who openly opposed the Protectorate.

On the Restoration, he returned to public life. Some biographical sources allege that he signed the 'remarkable declaration' favouring General Monck and was elected MP for Westbury, Wiltshire, in the Convention Parliament of 1660 (Hartley & Scott 1960, p. 150; *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*; Search Past Fellows). Henning (1983) in his article for *History of Parliament* on MP William Brouncker (1620–1680), of Erlestoke, Wiltshire, states that they confuse him with 'a distant cousin of Henry Brouncker and of the 2nd Viscount, who has been wrongly identified by most authorities as the Member for Westbury in the Convention' (History of Parliament). Given his close family connection to the Stuarts and his Royalist alignment (McIntyre refers to him as 'a loyal royalist'), Brouncker received trusted offices after the Restoration (*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*). In 1662 he was appointed chancellor to Queen Catherine of Braganza (1638–1705), wife of Charles II, receiving a yearly salary of £50 and £4 a year for livery, and keeper of her great seal, which were retained until his death. He often visited Charles II to discuss various matters, scientific and otherwise, and commissioned a pleasure yacht for the king that he assisted in designing. In 1664 his career in the navy began with his appointment as a commissioner of the admiralty under James, Duke of York, lord high admiral, leading to a friendship with Pepys, then clerk of the acts of the navy. McIntyre states that from December 1666 to December 1679, Brouncker was an assistant comptroller to the treasurer of the admiralty, a form of auditor. Losing the office during the Popish Plot, he was reappointed in 1681 to 1683 (*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*). *Search Past Fellows* differs, stating that he was commissioner of the navy from 1664 to 1679, comptroller of the treasurer's accounts from 1668 to 1669 and lord of the admiralty from 1680 to 1683 (Search Past Fellows). *Wikipedia's* 'List of Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty' states that he was appointed lord of the admiralty on three occasions: 19 February 1681, 20 January 1682 and 22 August 1683 (Wikipedia). Either way, his roles as the queen's chancellor and keeper of her great seal confirm his proven Royalist political alignment.

Sir Joseph Williamson, President 1677 to 1680—Royalist

Part 1: Royal Society Involvement

Williamson was elected president on 30 November 1677. At the next council meeting on 19 December 1677, the council minutes state: 'All letters to the Secretaries to be henceforth inclosed in a paper to the president Sir Joseph Williamson, his Majesty's principal Secretary of State' (*Council Minutes Original*). In fact, this was more than likely a major reason for becoming an FRS in 1663 because the Royal Society obtained a licence under its 1662 and 1663 charters permitting foreign correspondence. From 1663 to 1677 foreign correspondence was administered by secretary Henry Oldenburg (1619–1677), FRS 1663. Bluhm states:

> Arlington, the Secretary of State and Sir Joseph Williamson, the Under-Secretary, were well aware of the nature of Oldenburg's extensive foreign correspondence, which was not as exclusively scientific as might have been imagined, and fully appreciated its value as a source of foreign news. Oldenburg, it appears, had for many years made a practice of collecting 'civil' as well as 'philosophical' news from his correspondents abroad, and he used (or abused) his position as Secretary to spread his net widely over Europe … Incoming foreign letters for Oldenburg were delivered at Williamson's office, whence Oldenburg collected them and copied out any 'civil' news, which he returned to Williamson. (Bluhm 1960, pp. 185–6)

During the second Dutch War from 4 March 1665 to 31 July 1667, Oldenburg was arrested and sent to the Tower. McKie cites the two warrants issued for his arrest on 20 June 1667, both of which were signed by Williamson (McKie 1948, pp. 29, 31, 46). McKie and Bluhm consider it likely that Oldenburg wrote something that irked the king. Bluhm states the correspondence 'cannot now be traced' (Bluhm 1960, p. 186). Oldenburg was released on 26 August. Williamson was arrested while in office during the Popish Plot on 18 November 1678. He was the only president to have been arrested during his tenure. At the time he was secretary of state, as is explained below. Twelve days later, he was re-elected president and again in 1679. Marshall states that Williamson:

> was chosen president more for his court connections than any scientific abilities and he rarely attended the society's meetings … Williamson also had interests in literature, heraldry and antiquarian ideas—his private papers show endless workings out of the ages of the early biblical prophets and kings of Israel. (*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*)

Williamson attended nine of the 26 council meetings held during his tenure, five at his house (*Council Meetings Original*). His resignation was probably due to his new residency in Ireland, following the loss of the secretary of state office.

Williamson and Slavery

Similarly to a number of FRSs, Williamson participated in the administration of the West African slave trade and was also an investor. As is well known, the English had practised low-level slave trafficking since Elizabethan times, corporately with the Senegal Adventurers in 1588 and the Ginny Binny Company in 1618. On the Restoration, realising the financial benefit to England and the royal family of buying slaves in Africa to sell to plantations in the American colonies, Charles II issued the first Charter of the Royal Adventurers into Africa. The second was issued 1663, formally licensing the 'selling bartering and exchanging of for, or with any negroes' slaves good wares merchandises whatsoever to be vented or found at

or within any of the cities etc' (Carr 1913, p. 180). Williamson was twice named a Royal Adventurers assistant: from 1664 to 1668 and from 1670 to 1672. On the company's 1672 failure, a new RAC was formed. Of the 24 names in its most important first level, five were or became FRSs. The second level names Williamson (Carr 1913, pp. 187–8; Govier 1999, p. 208). He was appointed a RAC assistant in 1673 and in 1675 to 1677. He was also a stockholder (K Davies 1957, p. 390). As a result of the British Black Lives Matter movement, organisations benefitting from Williamson's stockholding, such as Queens College, Oxford University, now state the following on their websites: 'Two significant benefactors, Sir Joseph Williamson and Lady Elizabeth Hastings, both benefitted financially from investments in the RAC, the largest company trading in enslaved peoples in the history of the Atlantic slave trade' (Queens College Oxford).

Part 2: Concise Political Biography

As was made evident in the Methodology, all presidents from 1677 to 1703 had been, were or would be MPs. Given that Williamson was an MP from 1669 to 1681, from 1685 to 1687 and from 1690 to 1701, *History of Parliament* contains considerable information on his political alignment and activities. Given that Williamson was secretary of state from 1674 to 1679, the National Archives contains information on his duties and list: Secretaries of State: State Papers Domestic, Charles II and State Papers Domestic: State Paper Office: Williamson Collection.

Williamson was born into a relatively low socioeconomic background. In her article on him, Cruickshanks, Handley and Hayton (eds; 2002) describes Williamson's father as the 'poor' Anglican vicar of Bridekirk, Cumberland (History of Parliament). To succeed he had to strive, requiring the favour of many patrons. First was Richard Tolson (1622–1689), MP for Cumbria from 1646 to 1648 and Cockermouth in 1660. Helms describes Tolson as a Presbyterian who conformed on the Restoration and 'applied to Joseph Williamson, once his clerk, for a revenue post, and he acted as Williamson's election agent at Morpeth in 1666' (History of Parliament). By 1650 Williamson was servitor to the provost at Queen's College, Oxford, graduating with a bachelors degree (BA) in 1654 and a masters degree (MA) (by diploma) in 1657. In 1658 he received a fellowship. Sir Edward Nicholas (1593–1669) hired Williamson as his Latin secretary. Baron and Thrush state that Nicholas was MP for Winchelsea, East Sussex, in 1621 and 1624 and Dover, Kent, in 1629. Further, he was secretary of state from 1641 to 1662 (History of Parliament). In 1660 Charles II authorised Queen's College to grant Williamson leave to accept the office of undersecretary to Nicholas, secretary of state for the south. In 1661 he obtained two further offices: keeper of the king's library at Whitehall and organiser of the state paper office. When Nicholas was

replaced in 1662 by Henry Bennett, the1st Earl of Arlington, he retained Williamson as his undersecretary. Williamson's abilities quickly led him into the espionage side of the office, as Marshall states:

> The eagerness to control administrative activities also led Williamson into other areas, among them the gathering of intelligence to counter the innumerable plots of the early 1660s and to supply information for the foreign policy decisions of the 1670s. This activity included intercepting the mail at the Post Office, as well as examining and interrogating suspects, and employing spies and informers. Williamson was in effect the de facto head of the Restoration government's intelligence system. (*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*)

In 1672 he was knighted and appointed clerk of the privy council. In 1674, when Arlington was pressured to resign the office of secretary of state for the north, Williamson purchased it for £6,000, retaining it until 1679. He was also appointed to the privy council from 1674 to 1679.

Eager to enhance his power, Williamson sought a seat in the Commons, which took him three years, possibly because of the low social status. In 1666 he contested a vacant seat at Morpeth, Northumberland, a two-seat borough that had a small number of voters. In her article on Morpeth, Hampson states that the number of voters was '90 in 1695' (History of Parliament). Hampson adds, '(Charles) Howard, now Earl of Carlisle, promised Lord Arlington to nominate his ambitious undersecretary, Joseph Williamson, for the vacancy. The townsmen were ill-disposed to elect another stranger, and preferred Carlisle's son' (History of Parliament). This was Royalist Edward Howard (1646–1692), Viscount of Morpeth. In January 1667 Williamson contested a vacant seat at Dartmouth, a two-seat borough in Devon. In his article on Dartmouth, Ferris states that Williamson received none of the 37 votes tendered (History of Parliament). In March 1668 Williamson was again unsuccessful for a vacant seat in the two-seat borough of Appleby, Cumbria, defeated by Thomas Tufton, the grandson of the countess of Pembroke. In October 1669, with Arlington's assistance, he was finally elected (unopposed) to a vacancy in the two-seat borough of Thetford, Norfolk. In her article on Thetford, Cruickshanks, Handley, and Hayton (Eds; 2002) states that the number of voters was 13 (History of Parliament). He was re-elected to Thetford in March 1679, October 1679 and 1681 and from 17 June 1685 to 1687. Cruickshanks summarises his early years in Parliament:

> A moderately active Member of the Cavalier Parliament, he was appointed to 73 committees, including the committee of elections and privileges in seven sessions. In his first session he was among those ordered to receive information about seditious

> conventicles … Opposition writers listed him among the government supporters, describing him as 'formerly a poor servitor, now secretary to the Lord Arlington; receiver and writer of the King's private letters; worth thousands'. (History of Parliament)

Cruickshanks adds that he acted as an 'official spokesman in the Commons, in which capacity he delivered some 250 speeches and 20 messages from the King … his counter-intelligence activities were highly successful' (History of Parliament)

In 1677 Cruickshanks states that Williamson was denounced as 'thrice vile' by Anthony Ashley Cooper, Lord Shaftesbury, leader of the Whigs in the Exclusion Parliaments of 1679 to 1681 (History of Parliament). Cooper was elected an FRS in 1663 and to council in 1664, 1667 and 1673. Similarly to a number of FRSs, he was a member of and shareholder in the RAC (Search Past Fellows). On 18 November 1678 a document was produced in the Commons revealing that Williamson had countersigned 60 commissions to Irish Catholic officers absolving them from taking the oaths of allegiance and supremacy. He protested his innocence but, despite support from some MPs, was arrested and sent to the Tower. Released the same day by Charles II, he did not attend the rest of the parliamentary session and was forced to resign the office of secretary of state for the north, selling it for £6,000 to Robert Spencer, 2nd Earl of Sunderland (1640–1702), FRS 1662, who assumed the office on 9 February 1679 (Search Past Fellows). Nonetheless, Williamson was returned to Thetford on 24 February 1679, along with Whig William Harbord, (1635–1692). In 1678 Harbord had pressed for Williamson's removal from the Commons for countersigning the commissions for the Catholic officers. In 1679 he presented false allegations to the Commons that Pepys was a Catholic who had given naval secrets to the French. In her article on Thetford, Cruickshanks describes Harbord as a 'violent Whig' (History of Parliament). Williamson voted against exclusion. Handley states that he 'retained royal favour, King Charles readily agreeing to the Duke of Ormond's request that since he had come to reside in Ireland in 1680 he should be appointed to that kingdom's privy council', which he was in 1681 (History of Parliament). On 26 March 1685 Williamson lost Thetford to Tory Henry Heveningham (1651–1700) but unseated him on 17 June that year. For opposing James II's Catholic policies, he was removed from the Irish privy council in 1685 and then fell into further disfavour by refusing to support the repeal of the Test Act. Handley concludes that 'Williamson was a Tory opponent of James II's religious policies' (History of Parliament).

Little is known of Williamson's response to the revolution, and he failed to be elected to Thetford for the 1689 Convention Parliament. At the 1690 election he was returned to Thetford and the two-seat navy borough of Rochester, Kent; he chose the latter. As to his political alignment then, Handle states that Williamson's:

> long-term associate Lord Carmarthen (Sir Thomas Osborne) classed him as a Tory and a Court supporter … His essentially Tory outlook was demonstrated in his speech of 24 Apr. when he spoke against admitting counsel for the city of London's Whig-dominated common council. (History of Parliament)

Cruickshanks, the co-editor of the House of Commons in 1690-1715, disagrees, stating that 'he was successful again for his old borough [Thetford] in 1695 and 1698, but from 1690 to his death he sat for Rochester as a court Whig' (History of Parliament). What is indisputable is that Williamson was a Royalist MP when president and a Tory MP until the revolution. Williamson is an excellent example of England's 'rotten borough' parliamentary system that persisted well into the 19th century. After being returned simultaneously to Thetford and Rochester again in 1695, he vacated Thetford in 1696 for Whig James Sloane (1655–1704), brother of Sir Hans Sloane (1660–1753), FRS 1685, president from 1727 to 1741. In his article on Rochester, Handley states that Williamson contested some elections for Rochester by post while living in Ireland and he was simultaneously elected to the Irish Parliament as MP for County Clare from 1692 to 1695 and for Portarlington and Limerick City from 1695 to 1699 (History of Parliament). Williamson was reappointed to the Irish privy council in August 1694 and to the English privy council in 1696, holding both until death.

The Honourable Robert Boyle, Refused Election as President 1680—Royalist

Part 1: Royal Society Involvement

On 30 November 1680 Robert Boyle was elected president in absentia. It seemed a reasonable choice. First, the problems of electing a high-profile government official such as Williamson in politically dangerous times were self-evident. Second, Boyle was the Royal Society's most important scientist before Newton, a Royalist who had been named president of the proto-Royal Society on 25 June 1662 and 23 July 1662 (*Journal Book Original*). Over the years, he published important books on science, such as *The Sceptical Chymist* (Boyle 1661) and *The Origin of Forms and Qualities* (Boyle 1666). After the Royal Society's 1662 and 1663 incorporation, he had 'Fellow of the Royal Society' printed on the title page of his scientific books. Boyle could have been an aristocrat but preferred to be known as 'the Honourable'. He chose not to be an MP or hold a senior government office and, because of his inherited wealth, he lived a socially rarefied life. This suggests that the Royal Society wanted to present itself to London, through its president, as an exclusive scientific organisation, one compliant with the Royalist regime. However, Boyle refused, and this rejection proved to be the first rejection in the Royal Society's history. An important factor was Boyle's health. Boyle suffered a severe stroke in 1670 and by 1680 rarely attended the Royal Society. He personally attended the council meeting on 8 December: 'Present at the meeting: Sir Christopher Wren; Mr Abraham Hill; Mr Daniel Colwall; Dr Plott; Mr Perry; *Mr*

Robert Boyle; Dr Gale; Mr Robert Hooke' (*Council Minutes Original*). No reason for Boyle's attendance is given, but it was probably to give his refusal in person. Boyle did not attend the other five council meetings held that year, had not attended any of the 13 held in 1679 and did not attend any of the 16 held in 1681 (*Council Minutes Original*).

The generally accepted reason for Boyle's refusal, first presented by Weld, is the letter to Robert Hooke, FRS 1663, dated 18 December 1680, 10 days after the two attended the council meeting. In it Boyle cites his fear of taking the oaths of allegiance and supremacy:

> Though, since I last saw you I met with a lawyer who has been a member of several Parliaments, and found him of the same opinion with my Council in reference to the obligation to take the test and oaths you and I discoursed of … His reasons I have not now time to tell you, but they are of such weight with me, who a great (and perhaps peculiar) tenderness in point of oaths, that I must humbly beg the Royal Society to proceed to a new election. (Weld 1848, Vol. I, pp. 272–3)

Yet there was no 'test' (taking the Anglican sacrament), just swearing the oaths. He had done both many times before, for example, in 1673 with Oldenburg (Govier 2021, pp. 479–80; Hall 2008, pp. 290–1). However, 1680 was the era of the Popish Plot, the height of the Exclusion Crisis, and hence a highly unfavourable time for the frail Boyle to consider accepting election as president. Fulton provides another possible reason:

> It sometimes happens in the life of a man that he suddenly wakes to find himself famous. And so it was with Boyle, for in 1665 on the death of Dr Meredith he was invited by the King to become Provost of Eton—one of the 'old boys' who had entered just 30 years before at the age of eight. This honour was promptly declined, since acceptance would have involved taking holy orders … All other titles proffered before, then and thereafter, he also refused—and he died the youngest and only male member of the Boyle family without title. (Fulton 1960, p. 132)

Part 2: Concise Political Biography

Given Boyle's fame as a scientist, the relative accessibility of his scientific works (for example, compared with Newton's *Principia Mathematica*) and the plentiful records of his religious beliefs and proselytising, there are biographies covering almost all aspects of his life, ranging from Maddison's *The Life of the Honourable Robert Boyle* (Maddison 1969) to Hunter's *Robert Boyle Reconsidered* (Hunter 1994).

Born in 1627, Boyle was the fourteenth and youngest child of the wealthy Protestant landowner Richard Boyle, 1st Earl of Cork, and his second wife, Catherine Fenton, daughter of the principal secretary of state for Ireland who died when she was three. With his brother

Francis, later Viscount Shannon (1623–1699), Boyle attended Eton and toured Europe. On returning to England in 1644, he stayed with his sister Katherine, Lady Ranelagh. Intent on enlisting in the Royalist army, Lady Ranelagh convinced him not to (Di Meo 2015, p. 23). Boyle was a religious zealot, using some of his wealth to publish works promoting the Protestant religion, such as *Excellency of Theology, Compar'd with Natural Philosophy* (1674) which can be viewed at https://name.umdl.umich.edu/A28966.0001.001, and paying for the translation of the Bible into Arabic and several other languages (1685–1686). Boyle was also governor of the Corporation for the Spread of the Gospel in New England (1661–1689) and, in his will, founded the Boyle Lectures for the Defence of Christianity against Unbelievers. Hunter states that the revolution:

> clearly had some impact on Boyle, though, as with other political events of his mature years, we have few hints of his attitude either to the Revolution itself or to the regime of James II that it ousted. His approval is clear, however, from a letter in which he spoke of 'the lways ng & happy Revolution, which I heartily wish may be as piously acknowledged, as tis justly admir'd'. (Hunter 2009, pp. 225–6)

In 1668 he permanently moved to London, residing with Lady Ranelagh. She died on 3 December 1691, and he died on 31 December 1691. They were buried beside one another at St Martin in the Fields, London.

Sir Christopher Wren, President 1680 to 1682—Tory

Part 1: Royal Society Involvement

The FRSs quickly elected another Royalist who had scientific credentials, vice president Wren, surveyor-general. Wren officially became president at the council meeting on 12 January 1681: 'Sir Christopher Wren sworn President. Sir Christopher Wren deputed Sir John Hoskins Vice President for the next year. Sir John Hoskins sworn Vice President' (*Council Minutes Original*). 'Founder fellow' Wren had been active in the Royal Society since 1660. Downs states that in the 1660s 'he was younger than most; he published little. He did not adopt and monopolize one specialism; he discarded any problem he knew how to solve, and his attention span was short' (*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*). Hunter states that Wren (FRS no. 12) was elected to council in 1662, 1666, 1669, 1673, 1676 to 1689, 1691 to 1693, 1695, 1698 and 1699, adding that 'after 1661 fourteen years arrears paid in 1674 and irregular but persistent thereafter (half exempt)' (Hunter 1982b, pp. 162–3). Wren attended 31 of the 35 council meetings held during his tenure, leading a campaign to either regain unpaid fees or expel non-compliant FRSs. Lyons gives a short account of the arrears problem:

> Taking the first fourteen years, 1663 to 1676, the average yearly receipts amounted to about £290, while the average yearly expenses were about £236, leaving the Treasurer with a balance which varied from £98 to £5, the yearly average being about £54. All this time the total of unpaid subscriptions was mounting up; beginning with £158 at the end of 1663, the arrears had risen to about £1,000 by November 1667, and to about £2,000 in 1674. (Lyons 1938b, p. 75)

From 27 July 1681 to 1 November 1682, arrears appeared at 14 of the 22 council meetings held (*Council Minutes Original*). For example, on 27 July 1681 council 'resolved, that a legal course shall be taken to recover the arrears of the Society; and that the President be asked to speak with Mr Ballard in order to have it dispatched forthwith' and on 7 December 1681 'The President asked that the Statutes concerning the payment of the members of the Society and also concerning the causes of ejection, might be transcribed into a paper for the next Council to consider and debate' (*Council Minutes Original*). The Royal Society's sale of Chelsey College back to the king for £1,300 improved the financial position. The money was invested in shares in the East India Company and RAC, a matter raised at 15 council meetings from 23 March 1681 to 8 August 1682 (*Council Minutes Original*).

Part 2: Concise Political Biography

As stated in the Literature Review, Wren's fame as an architect led to a proliferation of biographies, often covering, to some degree, his political activity. There are also apolitical articles on him in *Notes and Records* and other historical journals. As an MP, his political alignment and activities are known through *History of Parliament*.

Wren came from a Royalist background. His father, also called Christopher, was a doctor of divinity and from 1635 Anglican dean of Windsor. His mother, Mary, was daughter of Robert Cox, a Wiltshire landowner. In 1642 the family was forced to flee the Windsor Deanery when parliamentary soldiers removed the treasury of the Order of the Garter. Handley states:

> As the son of a clergyman, and nephew of the Bishop of Ely (who was incarcerated in the Tower for 18 years for his Laudian beliefs), Wren was probably at home in the Anglican circles which eventually gave rise to the Tory party. (History of Parliament)

In 1650 Wren entered Wadham College, Oxford, as a 'gentleman commoner', joined Wilkins' Oxford Philosophical Club and graduated with a bachelors degree (BA) in 1651 and masters degree (MA) in 1653, receiving a fellowship at All Souls College that year. Downs states that in 1657 he was appointed professor of astronomy at Gresham College, 'apparently on the recommendation of Wilkins to Oliver Cromwell, whose widowed sister Wilkins had recently married. Cromwell intervened personally in the appointment' (*Oxford Dictionary of National*

Biography). In 1661 Wren succeeded Bishop Seth Ward (1617–1689), FRS 1663, as Savilian chair of astronomy at Oxford University. According to Wren's *Search Past Fellows* entry, he was appointed 'Assistant to Sir John Denham (FRS 1663), Surveyor-General of the King's Works (1661)' (Search Past Fellows). Downs disagrees, stating that Wren 'is often stated to have become Denham's deputy in 1661 … but he did so only during the last weeks of Denham's life', specifically, in 1669 (*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*). Denham (1615–1669) fought for the Royalists in the Civil War and was a Royalist MP for Old Sarum, Wiltshire, from 1661 to 1669. Ferris states that in 1660 Denham was confirmed (after much difficulty) as surveyor of the works 'in accordance with a patent obtained in exile, though his knowledge of architecture was purely theoretical' (History of Parliament). Just before Denham's death, Kelliher states that his 'last official act, on 6 March 1669, was to ensure the appointment of Wren as his successor in the surveyorship' (*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*). Wren's architectural work began with designing the Sheldonian Theatre, Oxford, in 1662, but after the 1666 Great Fire of London he sought to design and rebuild some of the many damaged churches. Tinniswood states that on 12 November 1673:

> A warrant announced the appointment of a Royal Commission for the Rebuilding of the Cathedral Church of St Paul, as impressive a collection of the great and good as you could wish for … and of course the Surveyor-General of the King's Works … By the terms of the warrant Wren was finally appointed as official architect to St Paul's. (Tinniswood 2001, pp. 190–1)

Two days later, he was knighted.

To pursue his architectural goals, Wren sought a seat in the Commons. As Handley suggests, 'it seems probable that Wren had a specific reason for seeking a seat, namely the influencing of parliamentary opinion over the planning and financing of St Paul's and related projects' (History of Parliament). In 1667 Wren contested a vacancy at two-seat Cambridge University, Cambridgeshire, but was narrowly beaten by another Royalist, Sir Charles Wheler (1620–1683). In their article on Cambridge University, Edwards and Jaggar suggest that 'the great architect failed by only half-a-dozen votes, a clear indication of Wheler's unpopularity' (History of Parliament). In 1674 Wren next contested two-seat Oxford University, Oxfordshire. In his article on the borough, Naylor states that he lost 125 votes to 203 to Thomas Thynne (1640–1714), FRS 1664. Thynne's *Search Past Fellows* entry states that he 'held a lifelong interest in manuscripts and coins and acquired the manuscript collection of his teacher William Burton' (Search Past Fellows). Thynne was groom of the bedchamber to the Duke of York from 1666 to 1672 and envoy to Sweden from 1666 to 1669. In his article on Thynne, Naylor adds:

> Not yet noted for the high Anglican piety of his later years, he kept ‘an open table for the masters for a week or ten days, and went to the coffee houses to court stinking breaths and to the common chambers’, and was able to beat Wren, who ‘was not so expert this way’. (History of Parliament)

On 20 April 1685, at the first election since 1681, Wren was elected Tory MP to the two-seat borough of Plympton Erle, Devon. In her article on Plympton Erle, Crossette states that the number of voters was 40 and ‘two Tories, Strode and Sir Christopher Wren, nominated mayor and freeman respectively under the new charter, were returned’ (History of Parliament). Richard Strode (1638–1707) was mayor of Plympton Erle from 1684 to 1685. Crossette describes him as ‘an inactive Member of James II’s Parliament’ (History of Parliament). In the election Wren and Strode defeated two sitting Whigs, Sir George Treby (1642–1700) and John Pollexfen (1638–1715). Treby held the seat in 1677, March 1679, October 1679 and 1681 and, after the revolution, in 1689 and 1690 to 1692. In their article on him, Crossette and Henning (https://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1660-1690/member/treby-george-1642-1700) state that ‘shortly after the dissolution of the Oxford Parliament Treby attended a meeting of the Green Ribbon Club at which Shaftesbury allegedly argued for making the Duke of Monmouth king’ (History of Parliament). Pollexfen held the other seat in October 1679 and 1681 and, after the revolution, in 1689 and on 26 April 1690. Wren was appointed to 15 committees and on 22 June to the committee for the rebuilding of St Paul’s. Handley states that he ‘was not dismissed from any of his posts by James II, and was obviously considered sufficiently malleable to be recommended in 1688 as a Court candidate for Plympton’ (History of Parliament). Wren did not stand at the election for Plympton Erle on 11 January 1689 but was elected Tory MP to two-seat New Windsor, Berkshire, on 14 May 1689, voting with those who did not consider the throne vacant. His victory was annulled, and the seat was won on 23 May by Whig Sir Algernon May (1625–1704). In their article on New Windsor, Naylor and Jaggar state that ‘May claimed that Wren had been returned only by the mayor’s voting twice, and his return was declared void by 107 votes to 72’ (History of Parliament). Wren contested New Windsor again on 6 March 1690 with Whig Baptist May (1628–1697), initially defeating two Tories, Sir Charles Porter (1631–1696) and William Adderley (died 1693), who successfully appealed on 17 May 1690. Handley states that ‘Lord Carmarthen (Sir Thomas Osborne) classed him as a Tory and probable Court supporter’ (History of Parliament). During a long absence from Parliament, Wren was occasionally summoned for his opinion on architectural matters, including the condition of Parliament’s ceiling and roof from 1691 to 1692. On 26 November 1701, he was returned to the four-seat borough of Weymouth and Melcombe Regis, Dorset, with two other Tories, Charles Churchill (1656–1714), brother of John

Churchill, Earl of Marlborough, and George St Loe (1655–1718), commissioner of the navy at Plymouth, and a Whig, Maurice Ashley (1675–1726), brother to Anthony Ashley, 3rd Earl of Shaftesbury. Wren retired in 1702 and did not stand again, though he retained the office of surveyor general. However, as Handley states, 'after George I's accession, the office of surveyor-general was placed in commission, and he eventually lost his titular post to William Benson' (History of Parliament). Benson held the office from 1718 to 1719. In her article on Benson, Sedgwick suggests that he had an impressive reputation for dishonesty and was elected Whig MP for the two-seat borough of Shaftesbury from 3 May 1715 to April 1718 and re-elected on 21 November 1718, losing on petition on 24 January 1719 (History of Parliament).

John Evelyn, Refused Election as President 1682, 1690, 1693—Tory

Part 1: Royal Society Involvement

When Wren resigned in 1682, the FRSs sought to elect another Tory of scientific disposition: Royal Society stalwart and horticulturalist (gardener) John Evelyn, FRS 1663. Similarly to Boyle, Evelyn refused, commenting in his diary:

> I was exceedingly endangered and importuned to stand the election having so many voices, but by favor of my friends, and regard of my remote dwelling, and now frequent infirmities, I desired their suffrages might be transferred to Sir John Hoskins, one of the Masters of Chancery; a most learned virtuoso as well as lawyer, who accordingly was elected. (Evelyn 1901, Vol. II, p. 172)

By 'exceedingly endangered', Evelyn no doubt was referring to his fear of occupying a prominent, public-facing office, especially in the midst of political discord. As is discussed later, he refused election as president on two further occasions, 1690 and 1693. Evelyn is also remembered by the Royal Society for convincing Henry Howard, FRS 1666, to donate his valuable Arundel Library in 1667. His *Search Past Fellows* entry states that he was elected secretary in 1672, appointed vice president in 1698 and elected to council in 1662, 1700 and 1702 (*Search Past Presidents*). Evelyn had three articles published in *Philosophical Transactions*, one of which gives insight into his gardening interests: 'An abstract of letter from the worshipful John Evelyn Esq; sent to one of the secretaries of the R. society concerning the lways to his gardens by the preceding Winter' (Evelyn 1684).

Part 2: Concise Political Biography

As stated in the Literature Review, there is a significant amount of information about Evelyn's life in biographies and his diary. There are also articles on him in *Notes and*

Records and other historical journals, as well as useful profiles in *Dictionary of National Biography:1885–1900* and *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

Chambers summarises the source of the Evelyn family wealth: 'From his great-grandfather John, who first brought the invention of gunpowder into England, his grandfather George (1526–1603) inherited the patent for its manufacture that descended in the family until the outbreak of the civil war' (*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*). He was the second son and fourth child of Royalist Richard Evelyn (1590–1640), who owned 700 acres of land worth approximately £4,000 a year, and his wife, Eleanor Stanfield (1599–1635). Evelyn was born at the family estate of Wotton, Surrey, went to Oxford University in 1637, matriculated but, similarly to many from wealthy backgrounds, left without a degree. In 1641 he escorted the princess royal, Mary Henrietta Stuart (1631–1660), on her journey to Holland to marry William II of Orange. She was the mother of William III, future king of England. In 1643, during the Civil War, Evelyn went to France and Italy, remaining for four years. On leasing a 200 acre estate at Sayes Court, Deptford, in 1652, he became interested in gardening and started his compendium *Elysium Britannicum*. This was published in 2001 (Evelyn 2001). Regarding offices of state, E S De Beer (1960) clarifies the records by providing the following information:

> He did not stand for Parliament, and appears not to have wanted permanent office at Court; he was however willing and interested to serve on various commissions: among others, in 1662 for London street-improvements … and in 1666 for the provision of salt-petre … From 1671 to 1674 he was a member of the Council for Foreign Plantations (later Council of Trade and Foreign Plantations), which was mainly concerned with colonial affairs (pp. 232–3)

As the Restoration drew near, Evelyn (2019) wrote fervent Royalist pamphlets. In his introduction to *An Apologie for the Royal Party* (1659*)* book, Keynes states that 'Evelyn was by conviction an ardent royalist, but by temperament he was peaceable, and the publication of this pamphlet was a courageous act on his part, involving considerable risks' (Evelyn 1951, p. i). A later pamphlet, *A Panegyric to Charles the Second*, published on the day of Charles II's coronation, on 23 April 1661, reveals the deeply held Royalist sympathies that never quite left him:

> When our Temples lay in dust, our Palaces in desolation and the Altars demolished; when these Citie Gates were dashed to pieces, Gibbets and Executions erected in every Street, and all things turned into universal silence and solitude, behold now the change of this daies glorious scean; that we see the Churches in repair, the sacred Assemblies open'd, our Cities re-edified, the Markets full of People, our Palaces richly furnished, and

> the Streets proud with the burden of their Triumphal Arches, and the shouts of a rejoycing multitude … I have seen *Englands* Restorer, Great *CHARLES the II.* RETURN'D, REVENG'D, BELOV'D, CROWN'D, RE-ESTABLISH'D. (Evelyn 1951, pp. 15–16)

Evelyn eventually became disillusioned with the Stuarts family. The decadence of their court, the disclosure that Charles II died a Catholic, James II's acceptance of Louis XIV's revocation of the Edict of Nantes and his political attempt to re-Catholicise England led to a gradual softening of his erstwhile harsh attitude towards non-Conformists. Nonetheless, he accepted a minor office under James II, a commissioner of the privy seal (1685–1687), receiving £500, 'paid quarterly, for no more than half a morning's work a week' (Darley 2006, p. 271). Evelyn accepted the revolution, yet his faith in the Restoration and Charles II persisted, as this entry in his diary confirms:

> 29th May 1692. Though this day was set apart expressly for celebrating the memorable birth, return, and restoration of the late King Charles II, there was no notice taken of it, nor any part of the office annexed to the Common Prayer Book made use of, which I think was ill done, in regard his restoration not only redeemed us from anarchy and confusion, but restored the Church of England as it were miraculously. (Evelyn 1901, Vol. II, p. 320)

Sir John Hoskyns, President 1682 to 1683—Tory

Part 1: Royal Society Involvement

Hoskyns can be considered the first 'caretaker' president (the other being Wyche), elected when no Tory FRS holding any of the following specifications apparently wanted the office or was available: superior social status, holding an important government office or having scientific credentials. Hoskyns resigned after one year only, the shortest period any president held the office. He was an active president, attending 11 of the 14 council meetings held during his tenure (*Council Minutes Original*). His reliability as a long-term vice president was impeccable. As vice president he chaired almost all council meetings during the tenures of Montagu (1.13) and Somers (1.14; Search Past Fellows). As to his more general involvement in the Royal Society, McIntyre correctly states that:

> while he was not known to have participated in many meetings, he attended regularly, recruited many new members, and occasionally used his knowledge of the law to the society's benefit … His researches were mainly horticultural: he was particularly interested in the art of grafting and searched for ways to preserve plants against the cold. (*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*)

It is worth briefly noting that Hoskyns was president during the Rye House Plot, an attempt to murder the king and Duke of York on 1 April 1683 because they were expected to pass Rye House returning from the Newmarket horse races. The races were cancelled, the royals returned earlier, one of the plotters sold details to the authorities and many were arrested. Some plotters were hung, drawn and quartered, one was burnt at the stake, and John Locke (1632–1704), FRS 1668, fled to the United Provinces (Search Past Fellows). Locke's principal patron had been Whig Lord Shaftesbury, FRS 1663. He was Shaftesbury's physician and the tutor to his son and grandson.

Part 2: Concise Political Biography

Not a great deal is known about Hoskyns. He held no senior government office, was not a lord or a courtier, did not write diaries that were later published and made no contribution to science. However, given that he was an MP (like his grandfather and father), he is covered by *History of Parliament*. There are also entries in *Dictionary of National Biography:1885–1900* and *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

Hoskyns' grandfather, John Hoskyns (1566–1638), was a lawyer and MP for Hereford, Herefordshire, in three Parliaments during the periods of: 1604 to 1638, 1604, 1614 and 1628. Aubrey states that he died of gangrene after 'a massive lways fellowe trod on his toe … His toes were first lw-off' (Aubrey 1950, p. 170). Hoskyns' father, Sir Bennet Hoskyns (1609–1680), was MP for Wendover, Buckinghamshire, in 1640, Hereford in 1645 and 1654 and Herefordshire County in 1656 and 1659. Rowlands states that his father was 'a Presbyterian, served for the same constituency (Hereford) as a recruiter until Pride's Purge and again under the Protectorate. He withdrew from public life at the Restoration, but was created a baronet (of Harewood and Morehampton Park) in 1676' (History of Parliament). Hoskyns trained as a barrister and was called to the bar in 1653, though he did not practice. He held the office of commissioner for assessment for Herefordshire from 1665 to 1680 and 1689 to 1690. When his father was made baronet in 1676, he was knighted and appointed one of the 12 masters in chancery, an office somewhere between clerk and judge, which he held until 1703. Bryant provides a useful description of the office:

> They were required to know the common law of England, the civil law or jus gentium and the canon law … In addition to the obligations of preparing writs, passing upon them, sitting on the court and advising the chancellor, they also had other public functions to perform … Because of their skill in writing they were required to compose patents and grants and letters to be written by the king … They were also the officers who passed upon the question of securities and drew bonds for the releasing of persons and ships taken for the king. (Bryant 1954, pp. 499–500)

On the death of his father in 1680, Hoskyns became the 2nd Baronet of Harewood and Morehampton Park.

In his article on Hoskyns for *History of Parliament*, Rowlands states that he 'helped to present a loyal address from Herefordshire approving the dissolution of Parliament in 1681, and attended a meeting of the Tory gentry at Holme Lacy in the following year' (History of Parliament). In 1680 to 1681 the two seats were held by Whigs: Edward Harley (1624–1700) and John Scudamore (1650–1697), the 2nd Viscount Scudamore of Sligo. Harley held Herefordshire in 1646, 1656, 1660, 1661, 1681, 1689, 1693 and 1695, and Scudamore held Herefordshire in March 1679, October 1679 and 1681. The two voted for exclusion. In his article on Herefordshire, Ferris states that at the 1685 election 'it is probable that the Tory candidates, Morgan and Hoskyns, were returned unopposed' (History of Parliament). Sir John Morgan (1650–1693) was elected MP for Herefordshire in 1685, 1689 and 1690 but was dismissed from his offices by James II for opposing the repeal of the Test Act. In his article on Hoskyns, Rowlands states:

> He was a very active Member of James II's Parliament … His 23 committees included the committee of elections and privileges … He was also concerned with four measures of legal reform … There is no indication that he attended the turbulent second session, and he does not seem to have stood again. (History of Parliament)

Sir Cyril Wyche, President 1683 to 1684—Tory

Part 1: Royal Society Involvement

Wyche may be considered the second 'caretaker' president. He was elected in 1683, most likely for similar reasons as Hoskyns: no Tory FRS of superior social status or holding an important government office or having scientific credentials apparently wanted the office or was available. Wyche and his brother Peter (1628–1699) were elected FRSs in 1663. Peter was elected to council in 1663 to 1664 and 1671 (Search Past Fellows). Of the 13 council meetings held during Wyche's equally short tenure of one year, he chaired eight (Hoskyns attended eight). Wyche was also a member of the Dublin Philosophical Society, founded in 1683 by William Molyneux (1656–1698) and his brother Thomas (1661–1733). The two were elected FRSs in 1686 (Search Past Fellows). Bergin states that in 1684 to 1685 Wyche 'took part in the affairs of the Dublin Philosophical Society and, from 1693 (when the Society was revived) until he left Ireland in 1695, he was again one of the most active members' (*Dictionary of Irish Biography*). He was President of the Dublin Society in 1693. Wyche's *Search Past Fellows* entry states that he was appointed vice president in 1682, 1686, 1690, 1695 and 1703 to 1704.

Part 2: Concise Political Biography

Given that Wyche spent 26 years as an MP between 1661 and 1705, there is a significant amount of information in *History of Parliament*. Further, because he was secretary to the lord lieutenant of Ireland in 1676 to 1685 and 1692 to 1693, a member of the Irish privy council in 1676 to 1685 and 1692–death and MP to Trinity College, Dublin, from 1692 to 1693, he appears in many records and books on 17th century Irish history and in *Dictionary of Irish Biography*.

The second son of Sir Peter Wyche (d. 1643) and Jane, daughter of Sir William Meredith of Stansty (d. 1660), Wyche was born in Constantinople and named after his godfather, Greek Orthodox patriarch Cyril I (1570/2–1638). In 1627 his father was appointed ambassador to the Ottoman Porte, representing English merchants. In her article on Wyche's father, Saunders states:

> He also had to protect the community against Ottoman reprisals for naval action by the English adventurer Sir Kenelm Digby, whom the Ottoman authorities accused of piracy. Wyche had to intervene to win the release of his consubl and a number of merchants from that community in the wake of Digby's actions. (*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*)

Digby (1603–1665), FRS 1663, was the son of Sir Everard Digby (1578–1606), who was beheaded for his part in the Gunpowder Plot (Search Past Fellows). From Christ Church, Oxford, Wyche obtained a bachelors (BA) in 1653 and a masters (MA) in 1655. He entered Gray's Inn in 1657, became a Doctor of Civil Law in 1665 and was called to the bar in 1670. From 1662 to 1675 he was a six clerk in chancery. *Records of Equity Side: the Six Clerks* provides a useful description of the office:

> In origin the clerks subordinate to the master of the rolls in matters dealing with the preparation and safe-keeping of Chancery enrolments … by the early seventeenth century there were separate offices handling their previous duties of filing affidavits and bills and answers—they managed to maintain and increase their bureaucratic functions in Chancery. In particular, the six clerks kept their notional responsibility for examining and conducting all process in equity suits, and derived huge fees because of the ostensible need to supply excessively verbose and elaborate copies of all proceedings to litigants and the court. (National Archives https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C605)

Thanks to his brother-in-law, Royalist John Granville (1628–1701), Earl of Bath (1661), Wyche was knighted in 1660 in the Hague. Backed by another Royalist, Sir John Coryton (1621–1680), MP in two-seat Callington, Cornwall, in 1660 and 1679, Wyche was elected

MP for Callington in 1661. In her article on Callington, Watson states that Coryton nominated 'two outsiders, the lord chancellor's crony Allen Brodrick, and Sir Cyril Wyche, the lord lieutenant's brother-in-law, who were returned unopposed by the illiterate mayor on separate indentures'. The number of voters was 'about 30' (History of Parliament). Crook states that Wyche 'was not an active Member of the Cavalier Parliament, which appointed him to 41 committees. He took no part in the Clarendon Code', adding that, similarly to many Royalists, in 1677 he was marked 'doubly vile' by Shaftesbury (History of Parliament). Wyche did not stand for the two elections of 1679 but in 1681, this time with the backing of Charles Sackville, the 6th Earl of Dorset (1638–1706), FRS 1699, was elected to the two-seat borough of East Grinstead, Sussex. He opposed exclusion. In his article on East Grinstead, Crook states that 'in 1681 Powle was duly returned with Sir Cyril Wyche, one of Dorset's more respectable friends and a firm believer in "moderate counsels" and a "perfect understanding between the King and his Parliament"' (History of Parliament).

In 1685 Wyche was elected to the two-seat borough of Saltash, Cornwall. Once more, Tory Granville played an important role. In her article on Saltash, Cruickshanks, Handley and Hayton (2002) states:

> A loyal address was produced on the occasion of James II's accession. With a plethora of seats at his disposal from his successful campaign against the west-country corporations, Bath was able to nominate two strangers in 1685, his brother-in-law Sir Cyril Wyche and the veteran poet and wit Edmund Waller I. (History of Parliament)

Waller (1606–1687) was FRS 1663. *Search Past Fellows* describes him as a 'Politician, Poet' who was MP for Ilchester, Somerset, in 1624; for Chipping Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, in 1626; for Amersham, Buckinghamshire, in 1628 and 1640; for St Ives, Cornwall, in 1640 to 1643; and for Hastings, Sussex, in 1661. Stater states that Granville 'campaigned tirelessly in the West for Tory candidates in the election of 1685' (*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*). McGrath states that Wyche even though opposing James II's Catholic policies, 'continued to serve in the house as a court supporter' (*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*). After a long absence, Wyche was again elected in 1702 for the two-seat borough of Preston, Lancashire, in Queen Anne's first Parliament. Crook states that he stood as a Whig (History of Parliament). Others differ. Harrison in his article on Wyche states that 'Wych's star appeared to be on the rise following Anne's accession' (History of Parliament). Cruickshanks and Erskine-Hill (2004) in their article on Preston state:

> Wych was eventually returned, though beaten into second place. Gower's inability to command votes at this election is indicated by the refusal of the postmaster of nearby

> Garstang … to vote for Wych. The postmaster instead opted to vote for the Whig candidates Molyneux and Stanley, an action that led to calls for his dismissal. (History of Parliament)

What is not in dispute is that before Wyche was elected president, and until the revolution, he was a Tory. In 1705 Wyche was not included as a candidate for Preston and did not stand again.

Samuel Pepys, President 1684 to 1686—Tory

Part 1: Royal Society Involvement

Pepys was elected president months after his rehabilitation by Charles II, as discussed later. Otherwise, it is difficult to conceive of why Pepys wanted to stand or why the FRSs chose to elect him. Similarly to Wren, he remained president for two years. Of the 27 council meetings held during his tenure, he attended 11 (*Council Minutes Original*). There are a number of matters of relevance that occurred during his tenure. First, the breach between Charles II and the Royal Society led to its failure to acknowledge the death of its 'Founder and Patron' in 1685 whereas the death of his father, Charles I, in 1649 had been officially remembered by the Royal Society until 1684 (Govier 2021, p. 461). Second, despite James II being Pepys' patron, there is no evidence that the Royal Society, or Pepys, sought or discussed applying for his royal patronage. Third, it was Pepys who licensed Newton's *Principia Mathematica* in 1686, giving him a special place in the Royal Society's corporate memory. Yet, because of ongoing problems, made worse by the costs of printing *De Historia Piscium*, a book by Francis Willoughby (1635–1672), FRS 1663, containing costly illustrations of fish, it was Edmond Halley (1656–1742), FRS 1678, and not the Royal Society, who paid for the printing of *Principia Mathematica* (Cook 1991, p. 136). *Search Past Fellows* states that Pepys was later appointed vice president (by Vaughan) in 1686 and 1695 (by Montagu) and elected to council in 1691, 1693, 1695 to 1696 and 1699 (Search Past Fellows).

Part 2: Concise Political Biography

As the Literature Review states, a great deal has been written on Pepys, though most focuses on the years of his diary. Biographies cover, to varying degrees, aspects of his life as an MP, which began in 1673, but *History of Parliament* identifies his political alignment and describes his activity in Parliament. Finally, given his many years as senior navy administrator, there is a significant amount of information in navy records and in books on the navy during the Restoration, such as A Davies and Davies' (1991) *Gentlemen and Tarpaulins The Officers and Men of the Restoration* and J D Knighton's *Pepys and the Navy* (Knighton 2003).

Born in London, Pepys' father, John Pepys, was a tailor. His mother, Margaret Kite, was a butcher's daughter. They had 11 children. He was their fifth child and second son. Knighton adds that his father's brother:

> owned an estate at Brampton, Huntingdonshire, which Pepys eventually inherited. Of more immediate importance was the marriage of John Pepys's aunt Paulina to Sir Sydney Montagu of Hinchingbrooke; their son Edward Montagu (later Earl of Sandwich) … was the agent for Pepys's advancement into public service. (*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*)

Edward Montagu (1625–1672) was elected an FRS in 1663, two years before Pepys, and to council in 1668 (Search Past Fellows). Though Montagu's father was a Royalist, he fought for Parliament in the first Civil War. From 1645 to 1657 he was MP for Huntingdonshire, Cambridgeshire, which was held by his father, who died in 1644. Montagu played an important role in the Protectorate. A supporter of Cromwell, he was a member of the English council of state from 1653 to 1659 and general at sea from 1656 to 1660. After Cromwell's death, he worked for the return of Charles II, was elected on 23 April 1660 as MP for the two-seat Dover, Kent, with Royalist Arnold Braemes (1602–1681) but left the Commons on 24 July when elevated to 1st Earl of Sandwich. Henning (1983) states that Montagu:

> favoured uniformity, just as he had always favoured monarchy, because they were conducive to an ordered society. He was well rewarded for his part in the Restoration; to support the dignity of his earldom he was granted lands and fee-farm rents worth £4,000 p.a. (History of Parliament)

By 1644 Pepys lived with relatives in Huntingdonshire, attending the Huntingdon Grammar School, but in 1646 returned to London to attend St Paul's school. In 1650 he was admitted as a sizar at Magdalene College, Oxford, obtaining a scholarship in 1651, a bachelors degree (BA) in 1654 and a masters (MA) in 1660. Hampton states that 'his upbringing was Puritan and as an adolescent he welcomed the execution of Charles I, but Pepys's experience of the disorders during the Interregnum converted him to Anglicanism and royalism long before the Restoration' (History of Parliament). On returning to London, Pepys received employment and lodgings from Montagu. In March 1660, now Montagu's secretary, when Pepys accompanied him to Holland to return Charles II to England, he met James, Duke of York, lord high admiral. Soon after, Montagu arranged for Pepys' appointment as clerk of the acts at the navy board, a responsible, well paid office, under James. *Military-History.Fandom.com* gives a useful overview of the office:

> Originally known as the Keeper of the King's Ports and Galleys, (the Clerk of the Acts) was a civilian officer in the Royal Navy and a principal member of the Navy Board. The office was created by King Charles II in 1660 and succeeded the earlier position of Clerk of the Navy (1546 to 1660). The Clerk was responsible for the organisation of Navy Office, processing naval contracts and coordinating the administrative and secretarial side of the Navy Board's work. The Clerk of the Acts' official responsibilities were: As head of the Navy Office staff, administering and processing of all Naval contracts, coordinating the secretarial side of the Navy Board's work, framing and writing answers to letters, orders and commands from the Board of Admiralty, Management of Navy Board records, processing of petty cash payments, provision, equipment and victualing of all ships, superintending and organizing the business of the Navy Board. (Military-History.Fandom.com: Clerk of the Acts)

To further the navy's position, Pepys sought to obtain a seat in the Commons. His first attempt was in 1669, for the two-seat borough of Aldeburgh, a navy town in Suffolk. In her article on Aldeburgh, Watson states:

> The cost of defence made the little town susceptible to admiralty influence, and the Howards, as lords of the manor, claimed the right to nominate one Member. In 1660, however, the lunacy of the 5th Duke of Norfolk and the Roman Catholicism of his heir disqualified this interest and Aldeburgh was represented in the Convention by two local landowners, Robert Brooke and Thomas Bacon. (History of Parliament)

Henry Howard, FRS 1666, nominated Pepys. Watson adds that in July 1669:

> the Duke of York wrote to Howard, who had been raised to the peerage, on behalf of Samuel Pepys, the junior member of the Navy Board. It was reported, however, that 'the corporation is generally dissatisfied with the person the Duke has named, as being wholly a stranger to them'. (History of Parliament)

Despite written support from MPs William Coventry (1627–1686), FRS 1661, and Matthew Wren (1629–1672), FRS 1663, it was the death of Pepys' wife that prevented him from campaigning properly. The winner was John Bence (1622–1688). Watson in her article on Bence states that he was later elected to Aldeburgh in October 1679, 1681 and 1685 and was assistant to the Royal Adventurers into Africa in 1663 to 1672 (History of Parliament). The *Search Past Fellows* entry for Pepys indicates that he was a shareholder in Royal Adventurers into Africa and the RAC, though it does not give any details.

Pepys' next attempt was for the two-seat borough of Castle Rising, Norfolk, in 1673. In her article on Castle Rising, Watson states that it was 'a pocket borough of the Howard family, though they were usually content to nominate to a single seat'. The number of voters was

‘about 30’ (History of Parliament). When the sitting member, Sir Robert Paston (1631–1683), was elevated to the Lords, Henry Howard nominated Pepys (as promised to the Duke of York) in the by-election. Opposed by Robert Offley, a lawyer, the costs to win the campaign exceeded £600, rather than the £60 expected. Ranft suggests that it cost Pepys as much as £700 (Ranft 1952). Offley petitioned for the result to be declared void, which was upheld, but his own election was also declared void. Watson concludes that the Commons ‘pursued the red herring of Popery with such gusto that they never reached any decision on the election, and the sitting Member (Pepys) was not further challenged’ (History of Parliament). In her article on Pepys, Hampson states:

> His connexion with the Duke of York, now an open Catholic, and his admiration for the splendours of the Roman mass and for the French Court put him on the defensive in the House of Commons, where his method of argument based on the relentless accumulation of facts won him few friends among the country gentlemen … He made over 70 speeches in the Cavalier Parliament, almost all on naval matters but he was not an active committeeman, serving on 24 committees at most. (History of Parliament)

Hampson adds that his Royalist alignment earned him a ‘thrice vile’ assessment by Shaftesbury in 1677 (History of Parliament). When the Cavalier Parliament was dissolved in January 1679, Pepys initially intended to contest Castle Rising again but, because of persistent rumours that he was a Catholic, did not. In her article on Castle Rising, Watson states that ‘fortunately the Admiralty interest provided him (Pepys) with a cheaper seat at Harwich’ (History of Parliament). Harwich, Essex, was a two-seat navy town.

In their article on Harwich, Hampson and Jaggar state:

> The Members in the first Exclusion Parliament were two high Admiralty officials, Deane and Samuel Pepys. They were returned, according to the latter, after a ‘free, speedy, and almost charge-less election … with a unanimity and excess of courtesy hardly to be equalled in the case of two (both of court dependence) within the whole kingdom’ … [the number of voters for Harwich was] 32 in 1660–84, 1689; 24 in 1685. (History of Parliament)

In 1664 Pepys appointed Sir Anthony Deane (1633–1721), FRS 1681, master shipwright at Harwich dockyard, and from 1668 to 1675 Deane was navy commissioner at Portsmouth. *Search Past Fellows* states that Deane was elected to council in 1682, 1686 and 1692 (Search Past Fellows). In 1678 Deane was backed by the Duke of York for the seat of New Shoreham, West Sussex. In his article on Deane, Crook states that ‘he was duly returned, and marked “doubly vile” on Shaftesbury’s list; but he was not an active Member of the Cavalier Parliament’ (History of Parliament). Deane voted against exclusion and was later

re-elected for Harwich with Pepys in 1685. He did not contest elections after the revolution. In April 1679 Pepys was falsely accused by Whigs in the Commons of sending Deane to France in 1675 with naval secrets to aid the Popish Plot, again accusing him of popery. He was forced to resign his office of secretary of the navy and the two were imprisoned in the Tower from 20 May to 9 July but were exonerated on 30 July. In October 1679 Pepys did not seek re-election for Harwich, despite electoral support. However, following Charles II's decision to act as his own lord high admiral, on 10 June 1684 Pepys' position in the navy and London society was redeemed when the king created an office only he could hold: secretary for the affairs of the admiralty of England.

On 16 April 1685, seven days before James II's coronation, Pepys (and Deane) again contested Harwich. In their article on Harwich, Hampson and Jaggar state that 'Albermarle earmarked a seat for his secretary and kinsman, Arthur Farwell, but at Sunderland's request in 1685 he nominated Pepys, who was duly elected with Deane' (History of Parliament). Given that James II wanted Pepys for the two-seat Sandwich, Kent, he was simultaneously elected to both. He attended the king's coronation as baron of Cinque Ports but ultimately chose Harwich. In his article on Pepys, Hampson states:

> He was a very active Member of James II's Parliament, being named to 19 committees … In the second session he was one of the Members appointed to draw up the address against the employment of Roman Catholic officers. In the debate on the 26 November he spoke of a thousand men daily at work in the shipyards, and assured the House that there was not one officer in the fleet who had not taken the Test. (History of Parliament)

When James II was unable to force Parliament to accept removing the Test Act and retain Catholic army officers, he prorogued Parliament a number of times, dissolving it on 2 July 1687. Pepys' political career effectively ceased when his private promise to vote for the repeal of the Test Act became known in 1688. After the revolution, he again contested Harwich in the Convention Parliament but was defeated on 16 January 1689 by Whig John Eldred (1629–1717). Hampson and Jaggar state that Pepys obtained only six of the 53 votes: 'As an intimate of the exiled King, with his days of office obviously numbered, Pepys could scarcely have expected a better fate; but it may have been some consolation that his election bills totalled a mere £8 5s. 6d' (History of Parliament). On 20 February Pepys resigned his office of secretary for the affairs of the admiralty and played no further part in Parliament or the navy. He was briefly detained (with Deane and one other) from 5 May to 15 June 1689 for suspected treason and in 1690 was imprisoned from 25 June to 14 July when the French fleet appeared off the English coast. As Loveman concludes, 'Pepys

remained loyal to James throughout the events of 1688 and after, for he refused to take the oath of allegiance to William and Mary' (Loveman 2012, pp. 51–2).

John Lord Vaughan, President 1686 to 1689—Tory

Part 1: Royal Society Involvement

Pepys resigned as president in 1686. As always, no reason is given in the journal book or *Council Minutes Original*. Possibly the FRSs preferred Vaughan. After his father died in 1686 he was elevated to the 3rd Earl of Carbery and 2nd Baron Vaughan of Emlyn. In his article on Vaughan for the *History of the Lords*: *1660–1715* publication, Robin Eagles states that his father died in June 1686 (Paley [ed.] 2016, Vol. IV, p. 748) whereas Naylor and Jaggar in *History of Parliament* state that it was on 3 December 1686 (History of Parliament). The council minutes suggest that the former is correct. At his first attendance at a council meeting on 9 December 1685 Vaughan is referred to as 'Lord Vaughan' whereas at the meeting on 29 November 1686 he is referred to as 'Lord Carbery' (*Council Minutes Original*). Vaughan was elected an FRS on 21 January 1685, though he was previously elected to the proto-Royal Society on 20 March 1661. His *Search Past Fellows* entry states that he 'was not officially re-elected FRS of the incorporated Royal Society until the date stated above. Vaughan is therefore not considered an original Fellow of the Royal Society' (Search Past Fellows). He was not a practitioner of any science but had a genuine interest. A decade before his 1685 election, Baston states that 'he corresponded with Henry Oldenburg, secretary to the Royal Society, while in Jamaica, and thereby kept up with all the latest scientific developments in London' (*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*). During Pepys' presidency, Vaughan was elected to council on 30 November 1685, attending 11 of the 16 meetings held before his election as president (*Council Meetings Original*). It is worth noting that Vaughan was the first president eligible to sit in the Lords. In their article on Vaughan, Naylor and Jaggar describe him as 'a man of some culture, he wrote verses, patronized the arts and interested himself in mathematics, science, and navigation' (History of Parliament).

Within a year of Vaughan's election, much of London's erstwhile favour towards James II had evaporated, leading to widespread reaction. The last council meeting attended by Vaughan was on 14 December 1687, an unprecedented event. Of the 15 council meetings held during his 1686 to 1689 tenure he attended five. Vice president Hoskyns attended 14 and was chairperson on nine occasions (*Council Meetings Original*). Vaughan's absence included ordinary meetings. He attended only one of the 38 held from 1688 to 1689 (*Journal Book Original*). As the revolution approached, at the last council meeting for 1688, on 21 November, the council minutes state that 'Dr Jo. Adamus Stampfer, Dr Pecklin, and Dr Vieussens were lways n and ordered to be proposed to the Society to be elected' (*Council*

Minutes Original). There is no mention of its decision, there being no other body within the Royal Society able to make such a decision to postpone the anniversary meeting to next year. At the next council meeting on 17 April 1689, the revolution is not mentioned, and neither is the flight of James II or the 11 April crowning of William III and Mary II. The council minutes merely state that 'the Anniversary Election having been adjourned till Aprill 23rd now at hand, the necessary Allterations were ordered to be made in the form of the Lists to be used at the Election'. The chairperson was vice president Hoskyns (*Council Minutes Original*). The FRSs continued Vaughan as president, in absentia.

Part 2: Concise Political Biography

History of Parliament and Paley's *The House of Lords: 1660–1715* identify Vaughan's political alignment and inform about his activity (*History of Parliament*; Paley [ed.] 2016). Given modern academic interest in the history of slavery in Jamaica, Vaughan, governor of Jamaica from 1674 to 1678, appears in various studies, for example, David Galenson's *Traders, planters and slaves: market behaviour in early English America* (Galenson 1986) and K Davies' (1957) *The Royal African Company*.

Eagles opens his article on Vaughan as follows:

> The Vaughan's of Golden Grove had dominated affairs in South Wales since the middle of the sixteenth century and although they had taken the side of Charles I in the civil wars still managed to emerge politically almost unscathed following the king's defeat. Financially they were less fortunate, and although Vaughan's father, the 2nd earl of Carbery (an Irish title), was released from his fines by Parliament, it was left to his successor (John Vaughan) to restore the family's fortunes, first by his ruthless exploitation of his office of Governor of Jamaica and towards the end of his life by his tendency towards parsimony. (Paley [ed.] 2016, Vol. IV, p. 747)

Vaughan was the second son of Richard Vaughan (1600?–86) and his second wife, Frances (1620/1–50), daughter of Sir James Altham of Hertfordshire. Hutton states that Richard Vaughan, a 'royalist army officer, was the principal magnate of south-west Wales during the mid-17th century, and its leading local royalist during the great civil war' (*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*). Richard Vaughan was Royalist MP for single-seat Carmarthenshire County in 1624, 1625, 1626 and 1628, was knighted at the coronation of Charles I in February 1626 and was elevated to the 2nd Earl when his own father, Sir John Vaughan (1574–1634), died. In their article on Richard Vaughan, Bowen and Healy state that he 'represented another generation of the dynasty which assumed a controlling interest in the politics of Stuart Carmarthenshire. Although he succeeded his father in 1634, it was only after the outbreak of the Civil War that he achieved real prominence' (History of Parliament).

In 1643 Richard Vaughan was further elevated to Baron Vaughan of Emlyn, entitling him to sit in the Lords. After the Restoration he was appointed president of the council in the Marches of Wales but 'was dismissed because of a public scandal concerning his alleged ill treatment, extending to physical mutilation, of servants and tenants on his estate at Dryslwyn, Carmarthenshire' (*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*).

Vaughan was educated on the family estate of Golden Grove, Carmarthenshire, matriculated at Christ Church, Oxford, in 1656, was admitted to Inner Temple in 1658 and was knighted at Charles II's coronation in 1661. Naylor and Jaggar state that 'at the general election of 1661 the dominance of Golden Grove in Carmarthenshire was so absolute that Vaughan and his elder brother (Francis) took both seats'. Carmarthenshire County and Carmarthen were both single seats (History of Parliament). Vaughan won the latter, and the author (not stated) of the article on Carmarthen states that the number of voters was 'over 100' (History of Parliament). In their article on Carmarthenshire, it was noted that Vaughan's elder brother Francis (1638–1667) was deputy lieutenant to South Wales and a member of the council in the Marches of Wales. In their article on Francis Vaughan, Naylor and Jaggar state that he was MP for Carmarthenshire from 1661 to 1667 'as his father's heir, but he was not active in the Cavalier Parliament' (History of Parliament). On Francis's death, Vaughan became heir to the Irish and English peerages. He remained MP for Carmarthen until 1679. Thereafter, the seat was first held by his younger brother Altham (1642–1682) from 1679 to 1681 and, after Altham's death, by his cousin, Richard Vaughan (1656–1724). Naylor and Jaggar state that Richard Vaughan held the seat from 1685 to 26 October 1724 (History of Parliament). Baston states that John Vaughan:

> was a fierce promoter of the king's personal interests, especially those involving providing money for Charles. He opposed Lord Chancellor Clarendon's austerity measures, and played a role in Clarendon's impeachment in 1667. Vaughan's activities caused Pepys to declare him 'one of the lewdest fellows of the age, worse than Sir Charles Sedley', and Clarendon described him as having 'as ill a face as fame'. (*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*)

Naylor and Jaggar state that in 1677 Shaftesbury declared Vaughan 'thrice vile' (History of Parliament).

While MP for Carmarthen Vaughan took command of an English regiment serving with the French army in 1673 to 1674, and in 1674 accepted an appointment with a yearly salary of £1,000 as governor of the English colony of Jamaica, whose slaves were provided by the RAC. Three months after his arrival the RAC records for 5 June 1675 state the following: 'Account of sale and lways n of three hundred and fifty one negroes received out of the

ship Dilligence, Captain Thomas Arnold, for the accounts and lways of the Royal African Company of England. Records indicate John Vaughan bought '6 males for £132. Two hundred and three slaves were sold for £4705.16.00' (Galenson 1986, p. 160, Note 6). Vaughan is recorded as making 'the first purchases at three of the nine sales held in 1675–76. In three of the others, this distinction went to the Buccaneer, Sir Henry Morgan, the colony's Lieutenant Governor' (Galenson 1986, p. 89). It is not known whether Vaughan kept his slaves or sold them on. Baston (among others) states that he was accused of selling his Welsh servants, including his clergyman, into slavery while in Jamaica (*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*). In 1678 Vaughan was replaced as governor by Charles Howard, 1st Earl of Carlisle, FRS 1665, on a yearly salary of £2,500. However, facing similar problems, he returned in May 1680. Helms and Cruickshanks state that Howard was a member of the Royal Adventurers into Africa and an assistant in 1670 (History of Parliament https://www.historyofparliamentonline.org).

Vaughan was elected to Carmarthenshire in March 1679, October 1679, 1681 and 1685. During the Exclusion Parliaments he remained a court supporter and did not vote for exclusion. Naylor and Jaggar state that this earned him another 'vile' from Shaftesbury (History of Parliament). However, Robin Eagles suggests that Vaughan's political alignment may have been more complex. He states that after marrying Anne Savile, the niece of Tory courtier and diplomat Henry Savile in 1682, 'having only recently been associated with the most vociferous of the Exclusionists, it was now reported that Vaughan intended to "become Tory". Although this "other party" (Whig) was reported to be "very angry at this match", Vaughan remained thereafter on close terms with his father-in-law Halifax'. He classifies Vaughan's reputation as 'chequered' (Paley [ed.] 2016, Vol. IV, pp. 747–8). When Vaughan's father died in 1686 Vaughan's time as an MP ended. He accepted the revolution, first taking his seat in the Lords on 22 January 1689 and last sitting on 14 February 1712. He was fairly regular in attendance. Indications that he changed political alignment appear during the 1690s. In 1696, following an unsuccessful Jacobite assassination attempt on William III, he signed Whig Somers' 'Association', pledging his loyalty to the king. Eagles states that by the 18th century Vaughan 'was marked as a Whig in a list of party classifications in 1708' (Paley [ed.] 2016, Vol. IV, pp. 751). During the reign of Queen Anne, he was listed as a member of the Whig kit-Cat Club. Other FRS members included Locke, Montagu and Somers.

Thomas Herbert, President 1689 to 1690—Tory

Part 1: Royal Society Involvement

At the postponed 1688 anniversary meeting, held on 23 April 1689, the FRSs elected Thomas Herbert as president in absentia. The 8th Earl of Pembroke and 5th of Montgomery, he was the first English aristocrat elected president. Herbert was elected an FRS on 13 May 1685, was admitted on 26 January 1687 and was elected to council at an ordinary meeting on 16 February 1687 (*Council Minutes Original*). After taking 'the usual oath' he:

> related, that he had read in the *Recherche de la Verite* the story of a child, whose mother having seen a man broke on the wheel, when big, was delivered of it, having as it were, a joint in all those places, where the malefactor had his limbs broken. (Birch 1757, Vol. IV, pp. 525–6)

He was appointed vice president by Vaughan at the ordinary meeting of 13 April 1687. Given his status, 'there was produced a deputation under the hand of the President constituting the Earl of Pembroke vice-president of the Society' (Birch 1757, Vol. IV, p. 531). Weld states that 'he was more devoted to the arts and archaeological pursuits than to natural science. He formed the celebrated cabinet of Coins and Medals, and collected the Marbles at Wilton'. Wilton House was the family's residence (Weld 1848, Vol. I, p. 321). Peter Stewart, professor of ancient art at Oxford University, describes Herbert as:

> The eccentric 8th Earl of Pembroke, who stubbornly 're-baptized' his busts and statues with names of his own choosing … Earl Thomas regarded the sculptures as ancient—some of them among the oldest works of art in existence—but in fact much of the collection is modern and represents the neglected talents of sixteenth-and seventeenth-century artists, restorers and copyists who were inspired by Greek and Roman sculpture. (Stewart 2020)

Herbert did not attend any Royal Society meetings during his tenure, signifying the depth of ongoing problems electing FRSs to the public-facing office of president. Weld put it this way: 'That Lord Pembroke gave little attention to the Society is fairly deducible from the fact, that his name does not appear as presiding, on any one occasion, at the Council or Ordinary meetings' (Weld 1848, Vol. I, p. 322). Vice president Hoskyns chaired all four council meetings held during Herbert's tenure.

Part 2: Concise Political Biography

History of Parliament provides Herbert's (and some of his male predecessors') political alignment and activity, as does Littleton's article on him in Paley's *The House of Lords: 1660–1715* (Paley [ed.] 2016, Vol. III, pp. 336–52).Herbert was appointed to several

important government offices and there is a record of Herbert's work in various archives and in books on the histories of these offices.

Herbert's father, Philip Herbert (1621–1669), succeeded as the 5th Earl of Pembroke and the 2nd of Montgomery in 1650. Smith states:

> The fifth earl sat for Wiltshire in the Short Parliament, and for Glamorgan in the Long Parliament. Like his father he sided with the parliamentarians in the civil wars, and on his father's death he took over his seat for Berkshire in the Rump Parliament. (*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*)

Under Cromwell, the 5th earl was appointed president of the council of state and a military commissioner for South Wales. On the Restoration he reconciled with Charles II, acting as cupbearer at his coronation. He was succeeded by his son, William Herbert (1640–1674), the 6th Earl of Pembroke, who Naylor states was MP for Glamorgan in 1661 to 1669 but 'does not appear to have taken his seat in the House of Lords' (History of Parliament). William Herbert was succeeded by his brother, Philip Herbert (1653–1683), the 7th earl. He had not been an MP, did not sit in the Lords and had a reputation for drunkenness and violence. Smith states that 'on 18 August 1680 Pembroke killed an officer of the watch, William Smeeth, while returning from a drinking binge at Turnham Green … He died on 29 August 1683, aged only thirty' (*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*). Having no male heirs, Philip Herbert was succeeded by Thomas Herbert.

Born in Castle Baynard, London, Herbert matriculated from Christ Church, Oxford, in 1673. In 1676, during his three-year tour of France and Italy, he met FRS Locke, becoming his patron and friend. Locke later dedicated *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* to him. Herbert was elected MP for the two-seat borough of Wilton, Wiltshire, on 10 February 1679, 23 August 1679 and, finally, 17 February 1681. In his article on Wilton, Ferris states:

> In February (1679) Wilton returned 'with unanimous assent and consent' Thomas Herbert, the Earl of Pembroke's heir, and Thomas Penruddock (1649–1698) … The borough was quick to present addresses approving the dissolution of these Parliaments and abhorring the Rye House Plot. (History of Parliament)

Bucholz states that Herbert 'was elected on his own interest as a moderate Tory MP for Wilton (1679–1681). He sat on no committees, made no speeches, and was absent from the division on the Exclusion Bill' (*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*).

On succeeding as the 8th Earl of Pembroke and the 5th of Montgomery in August 1683, Herbert was appointed lord lieutenant of Wiltshire in 1683 to 1687 and principal justice of the

peace of Glamorgan from 1683 to 1728 and Pembrokeshire from 1683 to 1715. He first sat in the Lords on 19 May 1685 and last sat on 25 May 1732. At the start of James II's reign, similarly to most Tories, Herbert was favourably inclined, bearing the third sword at the coronation, but soon came to disagree with the king's religious policies. James II sought to entice him with offices, should he be willing to convert to Catholicism, but he was not. Littleton states:

> Pembroke declined the honour as 'he then should be thought obliged to vote in Parliament as he was directed, when he would preserve a liberty to himself of giving his vote there according to his judgement and conscience' … Pembroke was consistently listed among those peers who opposed the king's policies to repeal the Test Acts and Penal Laws. (Paley [ed.] 2016, Vol. III, p. 338)

In 1687 he disobeyed James II, refusing to ask the 'three questions': whether office holders and gentry in his county of Wiltshire, should they be elected, would vote for repeal of the Test Act and Penal Laws, vote for candidates who promised to repeal them and accept people who held different (non-Anglican) religious views (Walker 2010). Herbert was relieved of his office of lord lieutenant of Wiltshire, replaced by a more agreeable Tory, William Paston, 2nd Earl of Yarmouth (1654–1732). In their article on Paston, Watson and Henning state, 'Initially a non-juror after the Revolution, he was twice imprisoned, but in 1696 he made his peace with the new regime and took his place in the Upper House' (History of Parliament https://historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1660-1690/member/watson-hon-lewis-1655-1724). Herbert was reinstated as lord lieutenant of Wiltshire in 1688 following James II's departure holding it until death. Nonetheless, Herbert remained loyal to James, offering to assist should William of Orange invade. Bucholz adds that 'during the revolution of 1688–1689 Pembroke played the ambiguous role of a moderate Tory: though in correspondence with the prince of Orange, he offered his services to King James upon the Dutch landing' (*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*). Though initially opposing the revolution and the transfer of the crown to William and Mary, Herbert quickly conformed, bearing the third sword at their coronation. As Littleton concludes, 'throughout his long political career—he was not once out of high office between 1689 and 1709—he served an important role as the exemplary court Tory whose moderation and efficiency in office could offend neither party' (Paley [ed.] 2016, Vol. III, p. 337). Important offices Herbert held include privy councillor 1689–death and lord privy seal (1692–1699; History of Parliament). By 1708 his involvement in the Lords was curtailed, and from 1714 he took no part in the new Hanoverian regime, though supporting it.

Sir Robert Southwell, President 1690 to 1695—Tory

Part 1: Royal Society Involvement

At the 1690 anniversary meeting, Evelyn, now aged 70, was elected president for the second time, probably for a similar reason as why he was elected in 1682. Darley states that he 'was nominated ("by 21 voices") to be president of the Royal Society on St Andrew's Day 1690, he knew it was a politically exposed post and refused the honour "in this ill Conjuncture of publique affairs"' (Darley 2006, p. 279). Evelyn's diary records the following: '1st December 1690. Having been chosen President of the Royal Society, I desired to decline it, and with great difficulty devolved the election on Sir Robert Southwell, Secretary of State to King William in Ireland' (Evelyn 1901, Vol II, p. 307). Southwell was elected, and Evelyn attended five of the 17 council meetings held during what turned out to be a five-year tenure: 16 January 1691, 25 November 1691, 28 November 1692, 13 November 1695 and 19 November 1695 (*Council Minutes Original*). In 1693 Southwell resigned the office and Evelyn, now aged 73, was elected for the last time. His diary entry for 30 November 1693 states, 'Much importuned to take the office of President of the Royal Society, but I again declined it. Sir Robert Southwell was continued. We all dined at Pontac's as usual' (Evelyn 1901, Vol. II, p. 323). Southwell attended 16 of the 17 council meetings held during his two tenures. Southwell had two articles published in *Philosophical Transactions* before his death. One concerned his horticultural interests: 'Several Experiments Concerning the Preserving of Flowers, Fruits, &c. Communicated by the Right Honourable Sir Robert Southwell, F.R.S.' (Southwell 1698). *Search Past Fellows* states that he was elected to council in 1670, 1674 to 1676, 1678 and 1680 to 1681 and appointed vice president in 1695 and 1698. Southwell was the last Tory president until the election of Sir Joseph Banks (1744–1820), FRS 1766, president 1778 to 1820, a matter examined in the Conclusion (Evans 2009, p. 353; Gascoigne 1998, p. 44). Southwell was the Royal Society's third Irishman elected president after Brouncker and Boyle.

Part 2: Concise Political Biography

History of Parliament identifies Southwell's political alignment and activity, and *Dictionary of Irish Biography* provides further information on his life. In 1690 William III took him on his Irish military campaign and appointed him secretary of state for Ireland 1690 to 1702 and Irish privy councillor from 1690–death. Consequently, he appears in books and articles on aspects of late 17th century Irish history.

Southwell's Protestant family migrated in the 16th century from England to Ireland where it accumulated significant property. Cruickshanks, Handley and Hayton (eds; 2002) state that his father, also called Robert:

> was a Protestant who defended Kinsale against the Irish rebels in the first Civil War but was heavily fined for helping to victual Prince Rupert's royalist fleet in 1648. He made his peace with the Protectorate, serving as commissioner of security and 'sovereign' of Kinsale, and received a grant of forfeited lands at the Restoration. (History of Parliament)

His father was pardoned by Charles II in April 1661 and appointed deputy vice admiral of Munster in 1665. By 1670 he was vice admiral and a member of the provincial council. Born near Kinsdale, Robert Southwell, similarly to Brouncker, was sent to Oxford University. He matriculated in 1653, obtained an undergraduate degree (BA) in 1655, then, between 1659 to 1661, travelled in France, the Netherlands, Central Europe and Italy, becoming fluent in French and Italian. Thanks to the family's patron, James Butler, Duke of Ormond, lord lieutenant of Ireland, he obtained his first office, secretary to the commission of prizes from 1664 to 1667 and 1672 to 1674. The *National Archives* (https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C142) states that 'the Prize Court ruled on disputed prize cases and either condemned the ship, cargo or both as lawful prize or found in favour of the owners of the prize as neutral or friendly, and therefore "not lawful prize"' (*National Archives*, High Court of Admiralty). Maxwell states:

> Sir Robert is as well known for his relationship with Ormond as for his service as an official. The duke liked the elder Southwell, but after the latter's death (1677), the bond that developed between Ormond and the son became one of close friendship. Sir Robert not only kept the lord lieutenant well informed about affairs at Whitehall, a service for which the duke expressed his appreciation, but he also assisted in more personal affairs. (*Dictionary of Irish Biography*)

In late 1664 Southwell purchased one of the four clerkships to the privy council for £2,000 with yearly remuneration of £450, granting access to the inner realms of government. In 1665 he was knighted, assuming the clerkship, which he retained to 1679. Meanwhile, another patron, Lord Arlington, dispatched him to Portugal on a diplomatic mission to negotiate a peace with Spain and obtain the remainder of the dowry of Catherine of Braganza. Other diplomatic missions followed. In their article on Southwell, Cruickshanks, Handley and Hayton (eds; 2002) state that 'he was rewarded for these successes with a seat on the excise board at a salary of £500 p.a., and in September 1671 he took part in the royal progress through Norfolk' (History of Parliament). In 1671 he was appointed commissioner for excise from 1671 to 1681, and on 12 March 1675 'it was ordered that Sir Robert Southwell … should "constantly attend" the Committee for Trade and Plantations as its Secretary' ('Committees of the Privy Council for trade and plantations 1675–96').

Southwell was first elected MP for the two-seat borough of Penryn, Cornwall, on 20 January 1673. In her article on Penryn, Cruickshanks, Handley and Hayton (2002) states that he 'was returned unanimously on the recommendation of Sir William Godolphin who leased the manor from the bishop'. The number of voters was '24 in 1685' (History of Parliament). Godolphin (1640–1710) was elected MP to the two-seat family borough of Helston, Cornwall, on 30 October 1665 and 8 February 1679. In her article on Godolphin, Cruickshanks states that he was marked 'thrice vile' by Shaftesbury in 1677 and 'vile' again in 1679 for voting against exclusion. He did not sit again (History of Parliament). Southwell's election was declared void on 6 February, but he was re-elected on 13 February. In their article on Southwell, Cruickshanks and Erskine-Hill (2004) state that he was:

> An inactive member of the Cavalier Parliament, he was appointed to 17 Ies, lways ng the committee of elections and privileges in two sessions, and made seven recorded speeches … He continued to figure in the government list of the court party. (History of Parliament)

Similarly to Williamson and Pepys, Southwell was dragged into the Popish Plot. Re-elected in 1679, he opposed exclusion and was falsely accused by a Catholic informant, Stephen Dugdale (?1640–1683), of concealing aspects of the information he provided to Parliament. In his article on Dugdale, Marshall states that Marshall's:

> supposed gentlemanly background ensured that he was one of the best-paid of the informers of the day, netting some £475 from the government in 1678–9; in 1681 his expenses bill came to £251 15*s*. 6*d* … a minor informer and an example of the opportunists whom the plot scare pushed to the forefront of political life. (*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*)

Southwell defended himself in both houses, was exonerated but did not seek re-election, and in December 1679 he sold his office of clerkship to the privy council for £2,500 to Royalist MP Francis Gwyn (1638–1734). In his article on Gwyn, Henning describes him as a Tory (History of Parliament).

On the accession of James II, Southwell was elected in absentia to the two-seat borough of Lostwithiel, Cornwall. In their article on Lostwithiel, Cruickshanks and Henning state:

> An address was sent to congratulate James II on his accession … The general election followed, in which two strangers were returned. Sir Robert Southwell, an experienced official temporarily out of employment, recognized that he enjoyed his seat 'by favour of my Lord Bath' … [the] number of voters was '24'. (History of Parliament https://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1690-1715/constituencies/lostwithiel)

Stater states that Granville 'campaigned tirelessly in the West for Tory candidates in the election of 1685' (*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*). By 1687 Southwell was concerned that James II's policies were encouraging Catholic claims on some of his Irish lands. He opposed the repeal of the Test Act, was removed from the County Bench and did not stand for Parliament again.

Charles Montagu, President 1695 to 1698—Whig

Part 1: Royal Society Involvement

Montagu was first approved for membership of the Royal Society at the council meeting on 30 May 1688 though did not proceed (*Council Minutes Original*). His name next appears at the council meeting on 13 November 1695: 'proposed by the President (Southwell) and approved for Election' (*Council Minutes Original*). At the anniversary meeting, Southwell resigned, and Montagu was elected an FRS, then president, the first time this occurred. The journal minutebook entry for 30 November 1695 states:

> Mr Montague took ye oath of President … The President was pleased to continue Sir John Hoskyns, Sir Cyrill Wyche and Mr Henshaw his Vice Presidents, and add to them Sr Robert Southwell and Mr Pepys, who were Sworn accordingly. (*Journal Book Original*)

Reasons for Montagu's election formally begin with Weld. Quoting Sir David Brewster, he states that it was from 'a feeling of gratitude to Mr. Montague (for making Newton Warden of the Mint), as much as from a regard to his talents, that this able statesman was elected President' (Weld 1848, Vol. I, p. 333). Montagu knew Newton while a student at Cambridge University. Higgitt states that he 'remained sufficiently connected to Trinity College to become friends with Newton … Their alliance had become close enough by early 1687 for Newton to describe Montagu as his "intimate friend"' (Higgitt 2005, pp. 158–9). Higgitt's reason for Montagu's election echoes that of Weld:

> Men like Montagu were undoubtedly invited to become PRS as a compliment to them and in the hope that they would lend their prestige to the Society … However, it seems that it was less his Presidential position and more his personal connection to Isaac Newton that indirectly favoured the Society. (Higgitt 2005, p. 158)

Montagu did not attend any of the 10 council meetings held during his three-year tenure. They were chaired by vice president Hoskyns (*Council Minutes Original*).

Part 2: Concise Political Biography

Given that Montagu was an MP from 1689 to 1700 and thereafter sat in the Lords, *History of Parliament* and Paley's *The House of Lords: 1660–1715* identify his political alignment and

activity (Paley [ed.] 2016, Vol. III, pp. 830–48). Given that his father and three brothers were MPs, *History of Parliament* includes material on each. There is information on his role as chancellor of the exchequer from 1694 to 1699 and the currency recoinage he oversaw in state records, in addition to a significant amount of material on his role in the creation of the Bank of England. Given that Montagu arranged the office of warden of the mint for Newton and had a relationship with Newton's niece, Catherine Barton, he is present in Newton biographies.

Thrush states that Montagu's grandfather, Henry Montagu (1563–1642), was elected MP for Higham Ferrers, Northamptonshire, in 1593, 1597 and 1601 and for London in 1604 and 1614 (History of Parliament). Henry Montagu also held important offices, including recorder of London from 1603 to 1616, lord chief justice from 1616 to 1621 and lord keeper of the privy seal from 1628–death. In 1620 James, I elevated him to Baron Montagu of Kimbolton and Viscount Mandeville. Charles, I elevated him to Earl of Manchester in 1626. George Montagu (1622–1681), the father of Charles, was the fifth son of his final marriage. George Montagu inherited little but, because of family machinations, in 1640 was elected to the two-seat borough of Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire, aged 18. He held this until 6 December 1648. On the Restoration, George Montagu once more contested Huntingdon but was unsuccessful. However, when his cousin, Edward Montagu (1625–1672), FRS 1663—the same Edward Montagu who enabled Pepys to enter the service of James, Duke of York, in 1660—was elevated to 1st Earl of Sandwich, George Montagu was elected MP for his former navy seat for two-seat Dover, Kent. He was re-elected in 1661. George Montagu, Helms and Henning state that he was declared 'thrice vile' by Shaftesbury. He died 1681 (History of Parliament).

Charles Montagu, in addition to brothers Edward (1649–1690), Irby (1656–1704) and James (1666–1715), was an MP. In 1681 Edward Montagu was first elected to the two-seat borough of Seaford, East Sussex, followed in 1685 and 1689 by his election to the two-seat borough of Northamptonshire County. Henning (2017) states that he was 'a trimmer in politics … when William of Orange landed, he took up arms for the Revolution, at the personal cost, he alleged, of £2,000 … Montagu was returned unopposed to the Convention, in which he was probably inactive' (History of Parliament). Irby Montagu was elected Whig MP for Maldon, a two-seat borough in Essex from 1695 to 1701. As is explained, this seat was passed to him by Charles, who had held it from 1689 to 1695. Irby participated in the revolution, serving in Irish campaigns, including the Battle of the Boyne. James Montagu was first elected Whig MP for the two-seat Tregony borough, Cornwall, from 1695 to 1698; to two-seat Bere Alston, Devon, on 30 December 1698 to 1700; and, finally, to the two-seat

borough of Carlisle, Cumbria, from 1705 to 1713. In their article on James Montagu, Cruickshanks and Hill (2004) state that 'Montagu's political convictions were staunchly Whiggish, and he became a loyal supporter of the Junto, of which his elder brother was a leading member' (History of Parliament).

In 1675 Charles Montagu attended Westminster School and on 8 November 1679 was admitted to Trinity College, Cambridge, obtaining a masters degree (MA) in 1682. In 1683 he was elected fellow. Handley states that this was 'following Charles II's order to the college to confer the next fellowship upon Montagu notwithstanding any statute or custom to the contrary' (*Oxford Dictionary National Biography*). Given his small £50 yearly inheritance, Montagu appeared destined for the life of a university don. Knights points out:

> A precocious talent for verse quickly marked him out for higher things, however. One composition written at the time of the Popish Plot, when he was still at school, not only showed the vehement anti-Catholicism that shaped his maturer views, but may also have sparked the beginning of his lifelong friendship with Sir John Somers, who was himself writing on similar themes and lived at the Middle Temple where Montagu was lodging. (History of Parliament)

Through his poem, 'On the death of... Charles II', he came to the attention of Charles Sackville, 6th Earl of Dorset, FRS 1699, who brought him to London. In 1687, with his friend Matthew Prior, Montagu wrote a satirical response to 'The Hind and the Panther', a work by Poet Laureate (1668) John Dryden (1631–1700), written in 1687 to celebrate his conversion to Catholicism. Their response was 'The Hind and the Panther Travers'd to the Story of the Country-Mouse and the City-Mouse: Much Malice Mixed with a Little Wit'. Montagu fought in the revolution at Northampton and, with the support of Sackville, was elected Whig MP for the two-seat borough of Maldon, Essex, on 17 January 1689, defeating sitting Tory MP Sir John Bramston. M J K states that the number of voters was '286 in 1693' (History of Parliament). In February 1689 Montagu, assisted by George Saville, Marquess of Halifax (1633–1695), purchased a clerkship to the privy council for £1,500 and on 6 February 1690 was re-elected to Maldon. In his article on Montagu, Knights states that he:

> must have quickly come to the conclusion that control of the nation's revenue was the key to parliamentary power, since his ambition for a place in the Treasury soon became apparent … Montagu, realizing that he could only rise through his own efforts in Parliament rather than by means of influence at court, therefore gave a dazzling display of his talents. (History of Parliament)

He was appointed 1st lord of treasury from March 1692 to May 1694, to the privy council from May 1694 to March 1702 and chancellor of the exchequer from 1694 to 1699. He also played a role in the creation of the Bank of England and oversaw the successful recoinage of the debased currency.

Montagu worked closely with three other Whigs, Edward Russell, Earl of Orford (c. 1652–1727), John Somers (1651–1716) and Thomas Wharton (1648–1715). Together they comprised the Whig junto. In his article on the junto, Handley states:

> These men complemented each other to form a formidable political partnership: Somers was a talented lawyer; Montagu a financial expert; Wharton an indefatigable (and wealthy) electioneer; and Russell a naval hero. They were all very able parliamentary debaters. Although the junto never succeeded in obtaining complete domination of the whig party, they were marked out from their contemporaries by their exceptional organization and cohesiveness. (*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*)

As previously mentioned, in 1695 Montagu passed his Maldon seat to his brother Irby, seeking one much closer to the centre of power which is the two-seat borough of Westminster, Middlesex. In his article on Westminster, Perry Gauci describes it as:

> a prestigious constituency with a plebeian, often violent, electorate. Encompassing the seat of both monarch and Parliament, the borough was frequently contested by ministers, who recognized its potential impact on elections throughout the country, and took advantage of the Court's influence over local tradesmen and victuallers … Despite the presence of these powerful patrons, the voters acted in a very independent manner, and the candidates displayed little control over their supporters when assembled at Tuttle-Fields, where the elections often degenerated into pitched battles … [the] number of qualified electors: about 14,000. (History of Parliament)

On 29 October 1695 Montagu was elected to Westminster along with moderate Tory Sir Stephen Fox (1627–1716), who then worked with him in the treasury. At the 1698 election Montagu and his new running partner, Whig James Vernon (1646–1727), later privy councillor and secretary of state, defeated their Whig rival, Sir Henry Dutton Colt (1646–1731). Colt had previously been elected for a seat in two-seat Newport Isle of Wright, Hampshire, in 1695. In her article on Newport Isle of Wright, Watson states that Colt was 'a Court supporter and Whig' (History of Parliament). In his article on Colt, Hayton states that he later won a seat at Westminster from 1701 to 1702 and 1705 to 1708 (History of Parliament). Gauci describes the 1998 election:

> Vernon and Montagu arrived with a troop of several thousand horsemen, a formidable force which contrasted with the 'great number of the rabble on foot' who came to support Colt … Violent scenes again ensued, with Vernon delighting to note that his supporters had 'run down his [Colt's] men at a strange rate, and cudgelled them into ditches full of water, and yet we say they were the aggressors' … at Tuttle-Fields a Colt supporter had died from wounds inflicted by a cavalry charge of rival voters, some of whom were off-duty grenadiers. (History of Parliament)

On 13 December 1700, Montagu was elevated to Baron Halifax and entered the Lords, but on 14 April 1701 Handley stated:

> he was impeached by the House of Commons in an indictment containing six articles, most of which referred to the procurement of grants, but which included as the most serious charge his role in the first partition treaty, which James Vernon had communicated to him in August 1698. The case collapsed and the impeachment was discharged in June 1701. (*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*)

After William III's death in 1702, Queen Anne dismissed Montagu from the privy council, and in 1703 he was accused by the Tory-dominated Commons of failing to adhere to standard accounting methods when chancellor of the exchequer. After Queen Anne's death, Montagu was appointed one of George I's regents until the king arrived in England and after accession in August 1714 regained some of his earlier importance. In September he was restored to the privy council and in October appointed 1st lord of treasury and made Earl of Halifax. He died May 1715. Montagu was a member of the Whig Kit-Cat Club.

John Lord Somers, President 1698 to 1703—Whig

Part 1: Royal Society Involvement

On 30 November 1698 Montagu in absentia resigned and fellow Whig junto member Somers, also in absentia, was elected an FRS and president the same day, the last time this occurred. As the lord chancellor, Somers remains the most politically powerful man elected president. On 7 December, Evelyn's diary records:

> I was named to be of the committee to wait on our new President … his Lordship subscribed his name and took the oaths according to our statutes as a Corporation for the improvement of natural knowledge. Then his Lordship made a short compliment concerning the honor the Society had done him, and how ready he would be to promote so noble a design … and so we took our leave. (Evelyn 1901, Vol. II, p. 343)

Somers is mentioned once in the council minutes, on 25 January 1699:

> Mr Bridgman acquainted the Society that he has lately given my Lord Chancellor an Account of Proceedings of the Councill who approved thereof and was pleased to say that he should be lways ready by his Presence or otherwise to give all the encouragement he could to the Society. (*Council Minutes Original*)

Vice president Hoskyns chaired all but two of the 30 council meetings held during his tenure. As is properly examined in the Discussion, Somers (and Montagu) held some of the most powerful offices of state when elected president and is best understood as a patron-president. Thus, after 15 years of unstable, sometimes absent or reluctant Tory presidents, London knew the Royal Society had changed political alignment and was under Whig patronage.

Somers and Montagu are generally dismissed as Royal Society presidents by historians. This is most obvious in the work of noted Newton biographer Westfall:

> Somers demonstrated his devotion by attending a meeting, at which he presided, the following August; and during the five years he served as president, he attended two other meetings, at one of which he presided, and summoned the Society to attend him on one occasion. Somers had succeeded Montague, who bore the title of president of the Royal Society for three years (1695–1698), during which he performed equal prodigies on its behalf. (Westfall 1981, p. 630)

Adams states that 'the heroic days of the organisation, chronicled by Bishop Sprat, were over and Somers had no Baconian ideas or aspirations. He was not an experimenter, but a random collector at best, a virtuoso' (Adams 1980, pp. 176–7). In his biography of Somers, Sachse adds:

> The Society was in a flagging condition at the time; the number of Fellows had declined steadily for twenty years, and its financial arrangements were so informal that after 1677 no reports were made for nearby forty years … Perhaps he would have stepped down earlier if Sir Isaac Newton, who succeeded him, had been willing … Nevertheless, the Society thought well enough of him to issue three of the annual volumes of its *Philosophical Transactions* in his honour. (Sachse 1975, pp. 205–6)

Part 2: Concise Political Biography

Given that Somers was an MP and later sat in the Lords, *History of Parliament,* and Paley's *The House of Lords: 1660–1715* identify his political alignment and activity (Paley [ed.] 2016, Vol. IV, pp. 460–82). There are biographies of Somers, specifically, William Sachse's *Lord Somers: a Political Biography* (Sachse 1975), as well as historical works on late 17th to early 18th century English government in which he played an important part.

Somers was the only son of John Somers (1620–1681), an attorney who fought for Parliament in the Civil War, and Catherine (c. 1625–1710), daughter of John Severne of Powick, Worcestershire. He had four sisters, two of whom married Whig MPs. Mary (b. 1653) married Charles Cocks (1646–1727), Whig MP for Worcester (1694–1695) and Droitwich (1695–1708). In his article on Cocks, Handley states that he 'was listed with the Whigs … He remained a Whig, as is shown in an analysis of early 1708, and the election was in general something of a Whig triumph' (History of Parliament). Elizabeth (1655–1745) married Sir Joseph Jekyll (1661–1738), Whig MP for Eye, Suffolk (1697–1713), Lymington, Hampshire (1713–1722), and Reigate, Surry (1722–1738). In their article on Jekyll, Watson and Wynne state that he was 'a Whig rather than a Court Whig, and indeed the contemporary historian Cunningham noted that during the 1708 Parliament Jekyll often voted against the Court' (History of Parliament). Somers attended Trinity College, Oxford, matriculating in May 1667. He was admitted to Middle Temple in May 1669, called to the bar in May 1676 and had chambers at Pump Court by 1677. His entry into politics started during the Exclusion Crisis when he used his legal knowledge to pen Whig pamphlets. Handley states:

> One of these, *A Brief History of the Succession* (1681)**,** was a defence of the Exclusion Bill using historical precedents to reassure conservative thinkers that parliament's altering the succession was not a revolutionary action, but a way of proceeding sanctioned by ancient parliamentary rights going back to Saxon times. (*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*)

In 1683 he was part of the team defending Whigs arrested for rioting in London. Resuming a lucrative legal practice, Rowlands states that he is said to have earned as much as £700 a year in 1686 (History of Parliament). However, as the movement against the religious policies of James II grew, Somers returned to politics, rising to prominence for delivering an important short speech as a junior fourth counsel for the defence of seven bishops. The case was an accusation of seditious libel, specifically, that they permitted their petition to James II opposing his order to read his Declaration of Indulgence in all Anglican churches to be distributed as a pamphlet. 'American Law and Legal Information' states:

> At trial both sides argued over the issue of sedition … Four judges presided at the trial. In giving their opinion on the law to the jury, they divided equally over whether the bishops had committed seditious libel. Boldly, the jury ruled against the Crown. (Law Library)

At the election of 1689 Somers was elected with another Whig, William Bromley (1656–1707), to the two-seat borough of Worcester, Worcestershire. In their article on Worcester, Rowlands and Jaggar state that 'outside court circles Bromley and Somers, "who was one of

the counsel for the bishops", were the only candidates mentioned, and they were duly returned to the Convention in the Whig interest'. The number of voters was 'over 1,000' (History of Parliament). In his article on Somers, Handley states:

> A very active Member of the Convention, he was appointed to 85 committees, in nine of which he took the chair, and made thirteen recorded speeches … He was the only eminent Whig lawyer to declare that the revenue lapsed with a demise of the crown. (History of Parliament)

On 31 October 1689 Somers was knighted and his legal and parliamentary acumen was such he was appointed solicitor general in 1689. He held the office until 1692 when he was appointed attorney general. At the election on 4 March 1690 Somers and Bromley were returned for Worcester without contest. During the 1692 session of Parliament Handley stated that:

> [Somers'] most important function in the House was to chair the committee of supply and ways and means. This involved him in all the major decisions on the estimates of the army and navy, and the consequent fiscal legislation. In all he chaired the committee of the whole on 30 occasions. (History of Parliament)

On 23 March 1693 he was appointed lord keeper of the great seal, which had a salary of £4,000 a year and the possibility of a pension of £2,000 a year on leaving, and a privy councillor, an office he first held until 1702. He was also appointed speaker in the Lords, ending his days in the Commons. Somers was now in a position to involve himself in the selection of candidates for Parliament and patronise those he considered would be of benefit to the Whig cause. Adams suggests that Somers was:

> a leader amongst the 'present set of Whigs' … He wasn't by any means a wild-eyed regicide, he had just reached Selden's old, practical conclusion, that a king was something created by men for convenience sake. The more convenient he made himself, the better Lord Somers was prepared to like him. (Adams 1980, p. 172)

In 1695 Somers refused a peerage, stating that he could not afford it. However, after he was made the lord chancellor on 22 April 1697, he accepted elevation to Baron Somers of Evesham on 2 December 1697, receiving £2,100 a year in fee-farm rents and manors in Reigate and Howleigh. In 1699 Tory questions over the fee-farm rents surfaced. By December Tory pursuit of Somers (and the junto) escalated, which was the result of his involvement with the 1695 scheme of privateer Captain William Kidd (c. 1645–1701) to capture pirates and their stolen goods in the Indian Ocean, take both to Massachusetts or

England, surrender the pirates to authorities and distribute the stolen goods to investors. In his article on Kidd, Ritchie states:

> To obtain the necessary documents and funding Bellomont (Richard Coote, 1st Earl of Bellomont, Governor of New York and Massachusetts Bay 1698–1701) approached his patrons the whig lords who formed the junto administration in London; after listening to the proposal and meeting Kidd they agreed to fund the scheme and obtain the necessary commissions. Kidd, Livingstone, and Bellamont were the openly acknowledged investors and the hidden partners were the Earls of Shrewsbury, Orford and Romney and John Lord Somers. (*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*)

In his article on Coote, an Irish peer and MP for Droitwich, Worcestershire, from 1689 to 1695, Handley states that he was a Whig (History of Parliament). By adding the great seal to the commission in 1697, Somers legitimised it. He also invested £1,000. Instead of going to Madagascar, Kidd first sailed to the Red Sea where he sought to rob a Muslim fleet carrying cargo and pilgrims from Mecca. He then sailed to India where he pirated ships, then to Madagascar where he consorted with the very pirates his commission stated he was to arrest. Kidd was arrested and brought to London, where the Tories encouraged him to testify against Somers and other Whigs. In 1699 in the Commons the Tories raised a complaint against Somers for authorising the commission, but this was not successful. On 10 April 1700 Handley stated that 'a motion for an address to the king to remove him from the royal presence was lost by 167 to 106' (*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*). William III asked for his resignation. When Somers refused, he was dismissed as the lord chancellor. In 1701 the Commons voted to impeach him over another matter, but when the Commons failed to present evidence, he was acquitted on party grounds in the Lords. In 1702 Queen Anne removed Somers from the privy council, denying him access to her presence. Before the first parliamentary election under Queen Anne, Somers was also removed from the list of justices of the peace for Worcestershire. However, Paley and Eagles suggest that his 'importance meant that he was approached by those seeking to influence all aspects of policy, including fiscal initiatives. His reputation was such that he was also approached for advice about pending legislation' (Paley [ed.] 2016, Vol. IV, p. 473). Some considered Somers the junto's most important member. In 1706 an MP referred to the junto as 'the Summerian Whigs' (Holmes 1967, p. 14). By 1708 Somers was again permitted to occupy important positions. On 25 November that year he was reappointed to the privy council, a position he held until death, and appointed lord president, a position he held until 1710. Somers was, health permitting, a fairly regular attendee at the Lords, but his involvement tapered off after a stroke in 1712.

Summary

The Findings provide an examination of each man elected as president, starting with Moray: Part 1: Royal Society Involvement and Part 2: Concise Political Biography. The Royal Society's stable years were 1660 to 1662, the period of the proto-Royal Society under Royalist Moray, followed by its first 15 years under Royalist Brouncker. After the issue of the 1662 and 1663 charters, ordinary and council meetings were held regularly. This enthusiastic commitment by presidents declined or became short term when Brouncker was replaced by Royalist Williamson (MP 1669–1681, 1687, 1690–1701) in 1677. Williamson attended far fewer meetings than his predecessor. A high-profile individual, he was caught up in the Popish Plot, imprisoned in 1678 and then deprived of the office of secretary of state in 1679. Nonetheless, he retained the support of the king and Royalist FRSs and was re-elected in 1678 and 1679, resigning in 1680. After a failed attempt to elect scientist Boyle, the FRSs elected Tory vice president Wren, architect and scientist (MP 1685, 1689, 1690, 1701–1702). Wren meticulously managed the Royal Society for only two years before resigning in 1682. After a second failed attempt to elect a president, this time horticulturalist and Tory Evelyn, the FRSs elected two low-profile 'caretaker' presidents. Each held the office for one year. First was Tory Hoskyns (MP 1685–1687), followed by Tory Wyche (MP 1661–1679, 1681, 1685–1687, 1702–1705). Both were fairly regular in attendance. In 1684 the FRSs elected Tory Pepys (MP 1673–1679, 1679, 1685–1687) after Charles II had granted him a new navy office following years of exclusion after imprisonment and a loss of office during the Popish Plot. His attendance at council meetings was limited. In 1686 the FRSs elected Tory Vaughan (MP 1661–1679, 1679, 1681, 1685–1687), recently elevated to Baron Vaughan of Emelyn. He was the first English Lord to hold the office. Amid widespread opposition to the policies of James II, Vaughan ceased attending council meetings on 14 December 1687, the first time such an absence occurred. As a consequence of the revolution, the anniversary, ordinary and council men recorded history record settings were suspended. The next council meeting was on 17 April 1689. At the anniversary meeting for 1688, on 23 April, the FRSs elected, in absentia, its first English aristocrat, Tory Herbert (MP 1679, 1679, 1681). He did not attend once, the only time this has occurred. In 1690 Evelyn was elected and refused for the second time, recommending the election of former Tory Southwell (MP 1673, 1679, 1685–1687). Southwell regularly attended and resigned 1693. Evelyn was elected, refused for the third time, and Southwell was re-elected. In 1695 Tory control of the Royal Society abruptly ended when the FRSs elected Whig junto member Montagu, chancellor of the exchequer, as an FRS and president on the same day, the first time this occurred according to the records (MP 1689, 1690–1695, 1695–1700). In 1698 the FRSs elected in absentia another Whig junto member, Baron Somers, lord chancellor, as an

FRS and the president on the same day, the last time this occurred in the history records (MP 1689, 1690–1693). The two rarely attended, acting more as powerful Whig patrons.

CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION

The Findings identified the political alignment of Moray and all 13 FRSs elected president from 1662 to 1703, presenting aspects of the political activity of the 10 sitting presidents from 1677 to 1703 who were MPs. The evidence suggests that the election of the presidents of the Royal Society fall into three distinct political periods: Royalist, Tory and Whig.

Royalist, Tory, and Whig

The three distinct political periods are expanded upon in the following paragraphs commencing with the Royalist 1662-1680 period, followed by the Tory 1680 – 195 period and then the Whig 1695 – 1703 period.

Royalist: 1662 to 1680

The Royal Society received its charters in 1662 and 1663, soon after the start of the Royalist-dominated Cavalier Parliament (1661 to 1679). Royalist Brouncker was appointed president in both charters, thereafter he was elected. He held the office for 15 consecutive years during a comparatively stable era in English politics. The election of Royalist Williamson, secretary of state, continued Royalist control of the office of president. Then came the Popish Plot. Williamson was arrested in 1678 and lost his office of secretary of state in 1679. Royalist Pepys was imprisoned during the plot in 1679, losing his office in the navy, and Royalist Southwell left the Commons in 1679 after being falsely implicated in the plot, selling his office of clerk to the privy council. Though not a president, Catholic William Howard, FRS 1665, elected to council from 1666 and 1672 to 1673, was beheaded because of the plot in 1680 (Search Past Fellows). These matters were excluded from the journal book and council minutes, demonstrating the Royal Society's apolitical recording methodology outlined in the Literature Review and the minimalisation or being treated as trivial by the overwhelming majority of historians specialising on the Royal Society's early administrative history, specifically, the result of 'methodological oversight'. When Williamson resigned in 1680, the initial 15-year era of institutional stability under Brouncker, followed by three years of less stability, the result of external political discord, was over. It is important to note that ordinary and council meetings, and publishing, continued.

Tory: 1680 to 1695

The definition of this period as 'Tory' is the result of the creation of the Tory and Whig formations. Boyle's rejection of his 1680 election as president, citing the obligation of presidents and vice presidents to swear the oaths of allegiance and supremacy, was the

Royal Society's first. Tory Wren was instead elected, resigning in 1682. Tory Evelyn was then elected but refused—the first of three refusals—citing that he was 'endangered', leading to the election of two 'caretaker' Tory presidents, who each occupied the office for one year: Hoskyns followed by Wyche. They were replaced in 1684 by the newly 'redeemed' Tory Pepys, who held the office until 1686. He, in turn, was replaced by Tory Baron Vaughan, the Royal Society's first president eligible to sit in the Lords. He was elected during the latter positive days of James II's rule. As opposition to James II's policies grew, Vaughan last attended council on 14 December 1687. As a consequence of the revolution, ordinary and council meetings were suspended from December 1688 to April 1689. Vaughan was re-elected in absentia until 1689 and replaced by the Royal Society's first English aristocrat elected president, Tory Thomas Herbert. Elected in absentia, he did not attend once. In 1690 Evelyn was again elected. On Evelyn's refusal, Tory Southwell was elected, but he resigned in 1693. Evelyn was then elected, refusing for the last time, and Southwell was re-elected. In this period, no Tory FRS wanted to hold the office for any length of time, if at all, though the FRSs may have chosen to replace Pepys because of Vaughan's elevation to the Lords in 1686. Institutional stability was provided by a coterie of dependable Tory vice presidents. Ordinary and council meetings and publishing continued.

Whig: 1695 to 1703

In the early 1680s the Whigs had been decimated by Charles II and his Tory supporters. The Whigs slowly returned during James II's rule, participated in the revolution and returned in force to the Commons in the early 1690s, leading to the formation of the powerful Whig junto. Two of its four members were Montagu and Somers. There is no evidence that in the 1690s the Royal Society's then small number of FRSs known to be Whigs sought the presidency from 1690 to 1695 or that Southwell sought to appoint a Whig vice president, despite the presence of notable Whig FRSs, such as Locke and Sir Hans Sloane (1660–1753), FRS 1685, elected to council from 1690 to 1699, secretary from 1693 to 1713, president from 1727 to 1741 (Search Past Fellows). Without precedent, in 1695 Montagu was elected an FRS and the president on the same day, the first time this occurred. This was followed by the election in 1698 of Somers in absentia, again on the same day, the last time this occurred. The two had very little contact with the Royal Society during their tenures, acting as patron-presidents rather than presidents. Tory vice president Hoskyns chaired almost every council meeting held from 1695 to 1703. The Royal Society continued holding its ordinary and council meetings and publishing.

Analysis

These changes in the political alignment of the Royal Society's presidents from 1662 to 1703 can be interpreted in two ways.

The accepted approach is the president was the Royal Society's internal governor, whose appointment was independent of their political alignment or external political factors. This reflects the apolitical recording methodology in the journal book and council minutes and the 'methodological oversight' of the overwhelming majority of historians specialising in the Royal Society's early administrative history. Under this approach it is assumed that presidents were elected irrespective of political alignment. For example, the case of parliamentarian John Wilkins, FRS 1660, elected president of the proto-Royal Society on 23 October 1661, can be used to substantiate that presidents were elected irrespective of political alignment. (*Journal Book Original*). According to this approach, patronage networks among the FRSs determined who was elected president, not a candidate's political alignment or, until 1669, when the third royal charter introduced religious oaths for presidents and vice presidents, their religious alignment. The goal was to elect presidents who, in addition to being its internal manager, would be impressive to FRSs and to London because of their superior social status, holding of important government office or scientific credentials. This view is expressed in slightly different ways by Weld (1848, Vol. I, p. 333) and Higgitt (2005, p. 158) in terms of Montagu. According to this approach, the Royal Society did not consider the president to be a political office and did not think that the office represented it before Parliament, Crown and the Church of England. As to why there was such difficulty in electing and retaining presidents from 1680 to 1695, but not in presidents appointing long-term vice presidents, Lyons acknowledges the problem but is unable to provide an explanation (Lyons 1940a) whereas Stimson does not acknowledge the problem existed (Stimson 1947). On the period 1689 to 1703, Hunter concludes that 'the presidency was so much an honorary position at this time that at least one president never attended a meeting during his term, while two others had to be elected Fellows on the day they became president' (Hunter 1982a, pp. 452–3). However, he does not explain why it was an 'honorary' position 'at this time', nor why there had been so much difficulty electing presidents from 1680 to 1695 or, within a larger context, why all presidents had been Royalist or Tory from 1662 to 1695.

An addition to the accepted approach that there is an external role for the president: the Royal Society's representative before Parliament, Crown and the Church of England. Its purpose was to signal to London its institutional political alignment which, in an unstable era, was necessary and prudent. To begin, electing parliamentarian Wilkins as president in 1661

was acceptable only because the organisation had no charter. In 1662 and 1663 the two charters specified a Royalist president (Brouncker), confirming the institution's initial Royalist alignment and—despite Wilkins' importance in the Royal Society's formation, his roles in the new institution and his elevation to bishop of Chester in 1668—he was only appointed vice president from 17 June 1663 to 5 November 1666 (*Council Minutes Original*). In their article on Wilkins, Bowen (FRS 1935) and Hartley (FRS 1926) suggest that 'he might well have been its first President, but no doubt politics played some part in the King's nomination of Lord Brouncker' (Bowen & Hartley 1960, p. 50). There is no evidence that prominent opponents of the Duke of York, such as FRSs Locke and Shaftesbury, were ever considered presidential material or appointed vice president.

Though important FRSs were directly affected by the Popish Plot and the Exclusion Crisis, the institution's political alignment did not waver: all presidents from 1680 to 1695 were Tory when elected and, in addition to Vaughan and Herbert (elected in the 1680s), were Royalists when elected FRSs in the 1660s. It is highly unlikely that the cause of difficulties in electing Tory presidents from 1680 to 1695 was the Royal Society's internal financial and other problems, which is confirmed by the ease presidents had in appointing reliable Tory vice presidents. Rather, it is far more likely that the public-facing nature of the office during these politically unstable times was predominantly responsible for the unprecedented series of short-term presidents from 1680 to 1695. Despite the Whigs' rise to power in the early 1690s, the Royal Society continued electing Tory presidents until 1695. There is little doubt that the relationship between Newton and Montagu played a part in the latter's election, as Weld and Higgitt separately suggest (Higgitt 2005; Weld 1848). However, I suggest the failure to acknowledge or make any connection between the abrupt end to 33 years of continuous Royalist then Tory control of the office of president by historians specialising in the early Royal Society is a case of 'methodological oversight'. Further, regarding the virtual absence of Whigs Montagu and Somers at ordinary and council meetings, their appointment of vice presidents, specifically, Tory Hoskyns, to chair council meetings was permissible under the charters (Royal Society Charters).

Yet, irrespective of whether the president was Royalist, Tory or Whig, the Royal Society remained what it had been forced to become when Charles II declined to provide financial support after bequeathing its 1662 and 1663 charters: a self-supporting chartered institution sustained by fees and bequests, pursuing its aim of 'improving natural knowledge' through its ordinary and council meetings and publishing and giving members a (or another) title: FRS. By 1703 the era of short-term and sometimes absent Tory presidents and absent but powerful Whig patron-presidents was over and the 24-year tenure of Whig president Isaac

Newton began. As the journal book and council minutes attest, by then much of the initial experimental impetus so important to the Royal Society's early reputation had declined, which is acknowledged by many sources, including Adams (1980, pp. 176–7) and Sachse (1975, pp. 205–6).

CHAPTER 6 CONCLUSION

As the 1887 *Nature* editorial ‘F.R.S. and M.P.’ quoted in the Introduction indicates, the matter of a president’s political alignment and how this could be understood as a reflection of the political alignment of the institution had long been of concern to the Royal Society (*Nature* 1887, pp. 49–50). Indeed, the *Nature* editorial referred specifically to Newton as MP for Cambridge, stating that ‘it is enough to point out that the House of Commons at the end of the 19th century is a very different body to the House of Commons at the start of the 18th century’ (*Nature* 1887, p. 49). The Literature Review first confirmed that the early Royal Society’s view of itself was apolitical, the result of its methodology for recording ordinary and council meetings and treating the institution and FRS as separate, detached from Parliament, Crown—apart from initial contacts with Charles II and other royals—and the Church of England. That is, its records ignore and exclude the era’s often discordant political problems and their direct impact on a number of FRSs elected president before the revolution and similarly ignore and exclude acknowledgement that FRSs elected two members of the Whig junto as president from 1695 to 1703. The Literature Review then examined a selection of major history of science journals and the work of Hunter, the most important historian of the early Royal Society, revealing that interest in the political alignment of presidents and the institution has been virtually non-existent. It was suggested that this was likely the result of a flaw in current methodology employed by historians examining the early Royal Society, specifically, ‘methodological oversight’. This methodological flaw is based on an unwritten definition of what is, and what is not, part of the history of the Royal Society.

The Findings covered all presidents, Moray and the 13 FRSs elected president of the Royal Society from 1662 to 1703, giving a short presentation of the involvement of each in the Royal Society followed by a concise political biography. Beyond Brouncker, who was not an MP, the concise political biographies gave the alignment of the 10 presidents who were MPs, the seat(s) they held and their activity in Parliament. The same was done for the four MPs elevated to the Lords. The Findings acknowledge that after the revolution one president (Vaughan) changed political alignment and two others (Williamson and Wyche) may have, though this is not agreed by specialists. It identified the government offices, some very senior, held by all presidents who accepted the office before, during or after their election, examining why they were appointed and, in some cases, dismissed or forced to resign because of the Popish Plot or the revolution. The Discussion established that the early Royal Society was a part of the Restoration and post-revolutionary London, and thus not the apolitical, discrete and separate entity created by its own records. This could most likely be

explained because of ‘methodological oversight’ by historians who specialised in the early records of the Royal Society. It then demonstrated the most likely reason: for its survival, benefit, and patronage, it adapted to changing dominant political forces in Parliament, whether Royalist, Tory, or Whig, through the election of politically aligned presidents.

Given the abrupt change in the political alignment of the presidents and the institution from 1695 to 1703 after 33 years of continuous Royalist then Tory alignment, it is important to see whether this was merely a temporary phenomenon or of more lasting significance. In accordance with evidence obtained from *History of Parliament* and the other reliable biographical sources previously cited, it can be reasonably concluded that the political alignment of presidents, and hence the Royal Society, from 1703 remained Whig until 1778 when Tory Sir Joseph Banks was elected president (Evans 2009, p. 353; Gascoigne 1998, p. 44), that is, a combined 83 years from 1695 to 1778. Briefly, this longevity of Whig control was due to the rise of the Whigs in Parliament in the 1690s, the Whig ‘hegemony’ of Parliament from 1714 to 1760 and Whig control of the institution after Newton’s 1727 death by what D Miller (1998) calls the ‘Hardwicke Circle’ (Williams 1962). The following identifies the political alignment of the seven presidents elected from 1703 to 1788.

1. Sir Isaac Newton (1640–1727), FRS 1672, president 1703 to 1727, Whig MP for Cambridge University 1689 to 1690 and 1701 to 1702. While president, he lost the 1705 election for Cambridge. Hayton states:

> His Whiggism, an expression of the violent anti-Catholic prejudice that accompanied his radical brand of Protestantism, was not broadened by reflection … Nevertheless, there were still occasions on which he could be useful to his party, when his intellectual powers were placed at the service of Whig governments and, more exceptionally, when he agreed to put his reputation within his own university to the service of the Whig interest by standing himself as a parliamentary candidate. (History of Parliament)

2. Sir Hans Sloane (1660–1753), FRS 1685, president 1727 to 1741. Neither MP nor Lord, Hawkes (2023) states, Sloane, was born a Presbyterian son of Ulster planters, and was a staunch Whig and loyal to the new Royal Family. Not only was his brother, James, a Whig Member of Parliament, but Sir Hans was a royal physician ((2023)). Moore states that ‘he was a Whig, and in August 1722 was appointed physician-general to the army on the death of Sir Thomas Gibson’ (*Dictionary of National Biography:1885–1900*).

3. Martin Folkes (1690–1754), FRS 1714, president 1741 to 1752. Neither MP nor Lord, Wroth states that Folkes ‘contested Lynn as a Whig in 1747’ but failed to succeed

(*Dictionary of National Biography: 1885–1900*). D Miller (1998) alludes to Folkes' Whig views through membership to the Hardwicke Circle, a group representing:

> something of a 'Whig supremacy' in the Royal Society, carrying on an interest and involvement in its affairs which had been more characteristic of the Whigs than of the Tories in the late 17th and early 18th centuries. The supremacy of the Hardwicke circle in the Society began to waver in the 1760s, essentially in concert with the waning of their power more generally in the political realignments of that decade. (pp. 73–4)

4. George Parker (1697–1764), 2nd Earl of Macclesfield, FRS 1722, president 1752 to 1756. Succeeding his father in 1732, he was the first earl elected since Herbert in 1689 to 1690. Lea states that 'Parker, who was endowed with a lucrative sinecure obtained for him by his father on becoming the Lord Chancellor, entered Parliament as a Whig at a contested election in 1722'. He was MP for Wallingford, Berkshire, from 1722 to 1727 (History of Parliament).

5. James Douglas (1702–1768), 14th Earl of Morton, FRS 1733, president 1764 to 1768. There is nothing to suggest that Douglas was a Tory, and the following suggests that he was most likely a Whig. D Miller (1998, pp. 78–9) states that he was backed by the Hardwicke Circle for president. In the Lords, he was associated with the Whig Newcastle, and Leas states that his father, George Douglas (1662–1738), was Whig MP for Linlithgow Burghs, Orkney and Shetland from 1708 to 1730 (History of Parliament).

6. James West (1703–1722), FRS 1727, president 1768 to 1772, MP for 31 years (St Albans, Hertfordshire, from 1741 to 1768 and Boroughbridge, Yorkshire, from 1668 to 1672). In his article on West, Brooks states that 'for eleven years he served Henry Pelham (Whig Prime Minister, 1743 to 1754; FRS 1746) faithfully, and on Pelham's death transferred his attachment to Newcastle'. Brook quotes from a 1768 letter from West to Newcastle's secretary in which he refers to his 'invariable attachment to Whig principles' (History of Parliament). Further, D Miller (1998) suggests that 'in terms of patronage and clientage West would have to be classed as part of the Hardwicke Circle' (p. 89).

7. Sir John Pringle (1707–1782), FRS 1745, president 1772 to 1778. Payne and Blair both state that 'in politics he was a strong Whig' (*Dictionary of National Biography: 1885–1900*; *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*). In his article 'The Club of Honest Whigs: Friends of Science and Liberty', Crane reveals Pringle's involvement in the Honest Whig Club (Crane 1966).

Summary

Since receiving its 1662 and 1663 charters, the Royal Society has been the London institution of science, later the official British institution of science it is today. It began in the year of the Restoration, with the patronage of Charles II but without financial support, persisting with fees obtained through memberships and bequests. In such an unstable and sometimes violent era, political alignment was necessary. Thus, in the years of Royalist domination (the Cavalier Parliament) its first president was Anglican (as all presidents were from 1662–1703) and, financial and membership problems aside, it began fulfilling its scientific potential. The chaos caused by the feared succession of Catholic James led to the Popish Plot, the imprisonment and loss of office of Williamson and Pepys, and the destabilisation of the office of president, though reliable Tory vice presidents who often administered the institution were appointed. This scenario of short-term occasionally absent Tory presidents persisted through the revolution and the rise of the Whigs in the Parliament of the early 1690s. Suddenly, in 1695 the first Whig was elected as an FRS and the president on the same day, followed by a second in 1698 to 1703, the last time this occurred. These two rarely attended, leaving the administration to Tory vice presidents, an institutional Whig alignment that continued until 1778.

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APPENDIX

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The political alignment of presidents of the early Royal Society of London

Mark Adrian Govier
Department of Business Government and Law, Flinders University, Adelaide, Australia

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