H.T. DICKINSON,

"HENRY ST. JOHN AND THE STRUGGLE FOR THE LEADERSHIP OF THE TORY PARTY 1702-14."

Volume Two.
Chapter Eight.

The Emerging Rival to Harley.

The supreme political skill and management of Harley had engineered the ministerial revolution of 1710, but he had not been able to prevent a large and potentially unruly Tory majority in the Commons. Though Harley had the support, if not the absolute allegiance, of many Tory leaders, including Bromley, Rochester, St. John, and Harcourt, there were already those who opposed his trimming policy. The most important of these was the earl of Nottingham, whose integrity and high Church principles commanded widespread respect in the Tory ranks. Kept out of the ministry he appeared a potential rallying point for those Tories disgruntled with Harley's moderate policy. As early as 28 October 1710 his lieutenant, John Ward, was trying to recruit a party for him and was hoping to enlist Sir Thomas Hanmer. The duke of Shrewsbury warned Harley that many other peers, besides Nottingham, were dissatisfied and he listed Argyll, Rivers, Peterborough, Jersey, Fitzwalter, Guernsey, and Haversham. There were soon reports that the

2 H.M.C., Bath Mss., i, 199. 20 Oct. 1710.
ministers would fall out among themselves. Despite all these manifestations of early trouble Harley pressed on with his plans to reduce faction at home and secure peace abroad. The essential prerequisite was to restore financial confidence, a task more difficult than the Tory backbenchers ever realised. To secure the support of at least some of the monied men he had to be seen to be holding the Tory extremists in check. It was against this background, of unhelpful allies and devious enemies abroad and of determined Whig opponents and dissatisfied Tory supporters, that the struggle for the leadership of the Tory party was contested for the next four years.

The objectives of Henry St. John at this critical stage have always been seen as being diametrically opposed to those of Harley. It is generally argued that he was a factious Tory, who returned to parliament in 1710 determined to lead the high Church Tories in a policy of persecuting the Whigs. It is even possible to

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5 See, for example, Swift's Journal to Stella, 1, 76. 28 Oct. 1710.
cite his own confession:

"I am afraid that we came to court in the same dispositions as all parties have done; that the principal spring of our actions was to have the government of the state in our hands; that our principal views were the conservation of this power, great employments to ourselves, and great opportunities of rewarding those who had helped to raise us, and of hurting those who stood in opposition to us.... The view, therefore, of those amongst us, who thought in this manner, was to break the body of the whigs, to render their supports useless to them, and to fill the employments of the kingdom, down to the meanest, with tories." 6

Though this might be an accurate reflection of the views of St. John and of many Tory backbenchers early in 1711 it is doubtful whether this was the case in the autumn of 1710. St. John himself was simply not in a position to control government policy at this stage nor even to make a serious challenge for greater power. He was peeved at Harley's treatment of him with regard to the post he should be given in the new administration, especially as he had loyally followed Harley into the wilderness in 1708. Yet there was no point in rocking the boat at this juncture. He had to accept that, having accomplished the ministerial revolution of 1710, Harley was very much in control. Harley was the effective prime minister, enjoying the confidence of the Queen and his other cabinet colleagues. It was not

6 A Letter to Sir William Wyndham (London, 1753), pp. 19-22. This work was written in 1717.
until Guiscard put Harley out of action for a few weeks in the spring of 1711 that St. John could assert himself as the second most powerful minister within the cabinet and could even entertain the possibility, should Harley die, of becoming the leading minister.

There was no sign in the autumn of 1710 that St. John had adopted an extreme Tory policy. He was still quite favourably disposed to Harley's brand of moderation, a conviction born of the experiences of 1704-8. His personal ties were still with the more moderate, almost non-party, politicians like James Brydges and Thomas Coke. As soon as he became secretary of state he tried to re-establish cordial relations with his old friends in the army. He offered his friendship to Cadogan, and made sure that Marlborough would hear of his good opinion of him and of his own desire to see the commander on good terms with the ministry. In regulating the affairs of the army Marlborough was supported by St. John. Together they sabotaged the working of the committee of council at the war

office. Contemporaries soon noticed the kind of game St. John was playing. Swift wrote: "Lord Rivers, talking to me the other day, cursed the paper called The Examiner, for speaking civilly of the duke of Marlborough; this I happened to talk of to the secretary [St. John], who blamed the warmth of that lord and some others, and swore that if their advice were followed, they would be blown up in twenty-four hours." This was hardly the policy of the would-be leader of the Tory hot-heads. St. John was an adroit young man!, who was on good terms with Lord Rivers, despite his remarks to Swift.

In the autumn of 1710 St. John did not have any serious difference with Harley. The secretary's major aim was to end the ruinous war with France. In A Letter to the Examiner he wrote of the war: "We engaged as confederates, but we have been made to proceed as principals; principals in expence of blood and treasure, whilst

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9 Dr. I. F. Burton concluded that Harley was determined to combat the commander's influence, while St. John gave Marlborough his backing. 'The Committee of Council at the War Office: An experiment in cabinet government under Anne', Historical Journal (1961), iv, no. 1, 84. Cf. Hanover Mss. 99, f. 40. Kreienborg's dispatch, 2/13 Jan. 1711.
10 Journal to Stella, i, 195. 18 Feb. 1711.
hardly a second place in respect and dignity is allowed to us."\(^{12}\)

All his early letters as secretary of state were full of his desire for a speedy end to the war and full of criticisms of the allies.\(^{13}\) St. John felt sure that Harley too was anxious to negotiate a peace. What he was unaware of was that secret peace feelers had been put out by England and France since the summer. In July 1710, the French had instructed Gaultier to contact Lord Jersey, who put him in touch with some of the incoming Tory ministers.\(^{14}\) At first Harley and Shrewsbury allowed Jersey an extraordinary free hand in these early overtures\(^{15}\) and it was not until mid-January 1711 that Gaultier was sent to Versailles for letters of credence and for clear and direct French propositions.\(^{16}\) Yet even at this stage St. John was still deliberately excluded from these negotiations. It was not until after the Guiscard affair that St. John realised just how far and how

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\(^{12}\) Somers Tracts, ed. Sir Walter Scott, xiii, 72.


\(^{15}\) Ibid., pp. 102-3. Gaultier to Torcy, 7 Oct., and 23 Dec., 1710.

long he had been left out in the cold. His real grievances with Harley over policy and strategy coincided with the opportunity to challenge for the leadership in the cabinet. At the same time developments in the Commons, where many Tory backbenchers were growing increasingly exasperated with Harley’s policies, showed St. John that he might aspire to lead the Tory party out of Harley’s tutelage. Thus, it was not in the autumn of 1710 but in the spring of 1711, that St. John really began to eschew Harley’s moderate policies. A combination of personal and political differences, of favourable parliamentary developments, and of Harley’s absence from the cabinet, made the crisis of March/April 1711 crucial in the relationship between Harley and St. John and in the struggle for the leadership of the Tory party.

In the autumn of 1710 the Tory backbenchers were more anxious than St. John to pursue a policy that was frankly partisan, but even they did not demand the immediate implementation of all their policies. Many were prepared to give Harley a chance, knowing that he faced difficulties in securing sufficient financial support for his administration and in opening peace negotiations. It did not take them long, however, to become irritated with Harley’s moderation towards his Whig opponents. Until December 1710 most of the Tory backbenchers expressed some criticisms of ministerial policy, but did not throw over the traces. By February 1711 they were breaking out
into open revolt. Their increasing dissatisfaction with Harley made St. John reconsider his own line of action. The more he saw Harley's policy of moderation alienating the Tory rank and file the more St. John was tempted to swim with the tide. He always showed a willingness to go for the quick, easy results; he always shied away from the long haul. Harley's temporary withdrawal in March 1711 only encouraged him to strike out for the leadership, which he felt might now be grasped.

Some of the hot-heads among the Tory squires were prepared to reject Harley's moderation at once. This vocal and active minority quickly made its presence felt and by the turn of the year it had sharply increased its representation on the backbenches. From the beginning of the session these Tory partisans began to organize themselves to bring pressure on the Harley administration. They declared policy was to enquire into the supposed abuses of the late Whig ministry. They resisted Harley's efforts to control them and were determined to dominate him. Sir Arthur Kayo, one of the new Tory members, declared: "I am pretty confident yt if none will suffer themselves to be drawn off, tis entirely in their power by keeping

17 Swift's Corr., i, 221. To Archbishop King, 28 Nov. 1710.
18 Ibid., i, 227. To William King, 30 Dec. 1710.
firmly & closely united, to make the ministry in a greater measure come in to us, instead of our depending upon them." 19 He and his colleagues made their presence felt immediately and succeeded in embarrassing Harley and his colleagues. In the address in reply to the Queen's speech some of the Tory backbenchers, with John Hungerford prominent in the debate, launched a bitter attack on the late ministry. 20 They were not pleased, since some of them were Jacobites, to see Harley accepting a Whig amendment that the Queen should not employ anyone hostile to the Hanoverian succession. 21

When Harley began to support the Whigs in one or two disputed elections 22 they exploded angrily and succeeded in inflicting two defeats on the government. The country squires rallied to a place bill and, despite the efforts of Harley 23 and St. John, 24 they passed it by nearly a hundred votes. 25 Harley had to risk further

21 Ibid.

Continued
alienating the Tories by defeating the bill in the Lords. 26 The ministry was even more embarrassed when, two days after passing the place bill, the Tories passed a bill to repeal the General Naturalization Act of 1709, which they held responsible for the influx of poor Palatines that year. Harley compromised himself in the eyes of the Tory zealots by refusing to vote. This decision caused confusion among his supporters in the Lords. Shrewsbury, Argyll, and Queensberry all abstained, while Islay, Mar, and Loudon helped the Whigs to defeat the bill. 27 This set-back did not deter the Tories in the Commons from passing a resolution highly critical of the late administration for encouraging the Palatine refugees to come to England. 28


27 Hanover Mss. 99, f. 111. Kreienberg’s dispatch, London, 6/17 Feb. 1711. Twenty six Tory peers signed a protest. Lords Journals, xix, 215. None of these were loyal to Harley and several of them, Abingdon, Anglesey, Beaufort, and Nottingham, remained hostile to him.

28 Commons Journals, xvi, 598. 14 April 1711. Harley must have been disturbed to see one of his supporters and a placeman at that, John Manley, take a leading part in this resolution. Hanover Mss. 99, ff. 204-5. Kreienberg’s dispatch, London, 17/28 April 1711.
St. John's role in these early manifestations of Tory revolt was equivocal. In some debates, as on the place bill for instance, he supported Harley in trying to restrain the backbenchers. On other issues he seemed to be leading them on. In December 1710 the ministry had sought to mollify the Tories by promoting a qualifying bill for M.P.s. The bill was bound to appeal to the Tory squires for it emphasized the value of land and real estate as distinct from money in the form of funds and stocks. All the evidence suggests that it was St. John who played the leading part in promoting this bill, no doubt to re-establish his credit with the Tory squires. On 20 and 21 December, he supported the bill in debate and also managed to get in some sharp digs at the late ministry. At Oxford Dr. Charlett was no doubt delighted to learn:

"Mr. St. Johns outdid himself they say in speaking & my Coz's Character of him is yt wn he speaks his own thoughts no one speaks better, & noe one worse, others.... Mr. St. John observ'd on Mr. Lechmere, yt unlimited obedience wn talked on to be due to the Crown was an heartburning to him, but wn preach'd up to the ministry of late without doors, and attributed to them in the House, he observ'd it

30 The bill laid down that in future candidates for county seats had to possess land or real estate worth £600 p.a. and those in the boroughs £300 p.a. Though it passed the provisions of the bill were never really effective.
passed yn for unexceptionable doctrine and wt was necessary to carry on busyness & credit."31

Peter Wentworth reported to his brother, Lord Raby, that St. John had also delighted the Tory backwoodsmen by his attack on the moneyed men:

"Mr. St. John's speech was pretty remarkable, for in setting out how necessary this bill was to be enacted he gave some touches upon the late management, as that we might see a time when the money'd men might bid fair to keep out of that house all the landed men and he had heard of Societys of them that joint'd Stocks to bring in members, and such a thing might be an Administration within an Administration, a juncto."32

This was playing upon Tory prejudices with a vengeance. The bill was passed and gladdened the heart of all Tories. It made some even forget their fury at the defeat of the place bill in the Lords.33 For St. John it meant enhanced prestige and popularity. It showed him where he might turn for support and how he might aspire to lead the Tory party. It whetted his already growing ambition and it stimulated his increasing dissatisfaction with Harley's moderate course. This shift in St. John's attitude can be traced in the debates on the conduct of the war in Spain. When an enquiry opened in the Commons, early in December 1710, St. John maintained a profound silence.34

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Since the enquiry mainly dealt with operations in Spain 1705-7, when St. John himself had been secretary at war, he may have been reluctant to play a leading rôle. Over the Christmas recess, however, he appears to have abandoned his reservations. He realised the profound dissatisfaction felt on the Tory backbenches at the apparent neglect of operations in Spain and he saw this greatly exacerbated by the news of Stanhope's defeat and capture at Brihuega, in December 1710. When, on 4 January 1711, the Commons considered the need to retrieve the situation in Spain, St. John strongly seconded General Webb in his criticisms of the efforts made by the late ministry. Robert Walpole, who had just been dismissed as treasurer of the navy, replied by urging the need to consult the allies and by reflecting on the measures taken by the present administration. St. John promptly took him up on this. He accused him of speaking out of private resentment and poured scorn on the idea of consulting the allies, who had supported the Whigs in the summer of 1710: "Those Allys, says he, that were brought in to support, a tottering Ministry I won't call them, but a tottering Faction."

36 Berkshire Record Office. Downshire papers. Trumbull Mss. Vol. liv. Ralph Bridges to Sir William Trumbull, 3 Jan. 1710/11. The main debate was in the Lords where a censure motion was passed on the late ministry. Cobbett's Parliamentary History, vi, 982.
St. John's dissatisfaction with Harley's measures and his desire to stand well with the Tory rank and file received a sharp boost with the appearance of the celebrated October Club. For more than two months the Tory backbenchers had been critical of the ministry's refusal to enquire into the gross financial abuses which they were sure had been committed by the previous administration. On 5 February 1711 they took affairs into their own hands. They passed several resolutions for an enquiry into the abuses in victualling, in the payment of the guards, in the debts of the navy, and in the accounts for 1710, up to the dismissal of Godolphin. Their actions were sufficiently co-ordinated for Mingo Graham to describe the appearance of a new party in the Commons. At first the October Club, as this party described itself, only numbered 70 or 80 members, but within a fortnight it had doubled its size: "This loyal country club is a great disturbance to Mr. Harley, who finds they are past his governing; their Number is increased to a 150. They are most of them young gentlemen of estates that has never been in Parliament before, and are not very close, but declare to everybody that they designe to have every Whig turn'd out, and not to suffer that the new Ministry shou'd

37 Commons Journals, xvi, 481-82.
shake hands as they see they do with the old." The club not only attracted the inexperienced and rash backbenchers. Several of the members, including Thomas Strangeways, Paul Docminique, and Sir William Whitlocke, were over sixty five. Some, like Sir John Pakington and Ralph Freeman, were veterans of many Tory campaigns earlier in Anne's reign. A few, perhaps later recruits, were members of unimpeachable integrity and considerable influence on the backbenches; men like Sir Thomas Hanmer, Sir Justinian Isham, Sir George Beaumont, and Peter Shakerley. With recruits of this calibre the October Club was a major threat to the Harley administration.

The October Club soon created havoc in the Commons with Harley's moderate plans. Its members hindered the voting of supplies by demanding an examination of the debts of the nation. This forced Harley to rely on Whig support to resist these demands. The minister, however, failed to prevent the October Club carrying the

40 There is a list of the October Club in an appendix to this chapter.
disputed Carlisle election for Colonel Gledhill, a Tory friend of
Charles Eversfield, a leading member of the club. Far more serious
was the decision of the October Club to go it alone and investigate
financial abuses. On 17 February one of their number, Sir Simeon
Stuart, proposed that commissioners of accounts should be chosen for
this task. Three October men, Stuart, Eversfield, and Thomas Vernon,
were ordered to prepare a bill to this effect. A fortnight later
the October Club decided to bring in a bill to revoke grants made by
William III. If the October Club had been allowed to continue in
this manner it would have wrecked Harley's plans and wrested complete
control of the Commons out of his grasp. It was a challenge to his
leadership and to his skill in parliamentary management.

Harley and his ministerial colleagues were fully aware of the
need to control these dissident Tories. They believed Nottingham would
be able to control the October Club, since his own policy was very
similar to theirs. Harley, St. John, Dartmouth, and a few others met

43 Auchmar House. Montrose Mss. Box 1, letter G. Mungo Graham to
Montrose, London, 22 Feb. 1711; and Carlisle Public Library.
Bishop Nicolson's diary, 14 and 17 Mar. 1711.
44 Hanover Mss. 99, ff. 130-31. Kreienberg's dispatch, London,
20 Feb./3 Mar. 1711.
45 Commons Journals, xvi, 503.
46 Ibid., xvi, 529.
47 Leicester Record Office. Finch Mss. Political papers, 150.
Draft in Nottingham's hand, written Feb.-Mar. 1711.
Nottingham to discuss the matter, but he insisted that the ministry should prosecute the Whigs. The ministry therefore began a campaign of infiltrating the October Club with Tories of a more moderate and loyal complexion in order to tone down the club's demands. This policy did not go undetected. Peter Wentworth wrote:

"I was told by two or three of this club last Sunday, that they [the ministers] begin to send the old Fellows among them, but damn they won't bite so, and that neither their weesles nor their threats shall bring them under government, what has once been carried by the majority of their club they will stand to a man in the house; they don't care for their telling 'em they will be dissolved for 'tis what they know they dare not do, for they will be all choose again." 49

This process could only be slow and piecemeal. Swift feared the ministry might not survive the journey between the Whigs and dissident Tories: "They are able seamen, but the tempest is too great, the ship too rotten, and the crew all against them." 50 He had reason to be alarmed for St. John was clearly showing signs of joining the rebellion or at least helping the rebels to alter Harley's course. Even the recent demands for an enquiry into the abuses in the treasury had his approval. He told Drummond: "The House of Commons are entering on the examination of frauds committed in the victualling, they will

48 Burnet, vi, 41-42. Dartmouth's note.
50 Journal to Stella, i, 206. 4 Mar. 1711.
proceed afterwards to some others, and I make no question, but that the late applauded administration of the Treasury will appear, before this session concludes, to have been the most loose, the most negligent, the most partial that ever any country suffered by." The tone of this letter and the fact that it was written before the major attacks of the October Club in February and March 1711, would suggest that St. John was not merely agreeing with the October Club demands, but positively inciting them to further action. Harley later claimed that it was in February 1711, when the October Club first made its presence felt, that "there began a separation in the House of Commons, and Mr. Secretary St. John began listing a party, and set up for governing the House."

To meet this threat Harley, Rochester, Shrewsbury, Dartmouth, Poulett, and others called upon St. John. These ministers were all adherents of Harley, even Rochester, who "took much pains" to settle the dispute, but they did not quash St. John nor win him over for "this was the last time Robert Harley was ever invited to Mr. Secretary's House."

Indeed, St. John was encouraged to pursue his dangerous course when an

52 H.M.C., Portland Mss., v, 464. Oxford's account of public affairs, 1710-1714. It is significant that many of those whom St. John hoped would be in his ministry in July 1714 had been in the October Club, viz. Henry Campion, Thomas Strangeways, Sir John Pakington, and Sir William Wyndham.
attempt to assassinate Harley threw the leadership issue wide open.

Antoine de Guiscard, a notorious rake who had fled from France, soon lost the little favour he had won from the English Court. In financial straits he had opened a treasonable correspondence with France, a correspondence which was discovered early in March 1711. On the 8th he was arrested, taken to the Cockpit, and examined by Harley, St. John, Harcourt, Newcastle, Ormonde, and Poulett. There he managed to procure a pen-knife with which he launched a murderous attack on Harley, stabbing him in the chest. Harley survived the attack, but he was incapacitated for some weeks. The attempted assassination did much to revive Harley's sagging prestige among his Tory critics. St. John, who saw that this would endanger his own growing influence with the backbenchers, tried to salvage some sympathy and credit for himself. It could be convincingly argued that Guiscard had more reason to hate the secretary than Harley since it was St. John's warrant which had led to his arrest and St. John who had conducted the investigation at the Cockpit. On this occasion

53 For a more detailed account, see my article 'The Attempt to Assassinate Harley, 1711', History Today (1965), xv, 788-95.
54 There had also been some personal dealings between St. John and Guiscard. It was later asserted that they had quarrelled "about a Mistress, or rather a child which neither of them would own." The Life of Henry St. John, Viscount Bolingbroke (London, 1754), p. 11. Cf. Swift's Corr., i, 243. Archbishop King to Swift, Dublin, 17 Mar. 1710/11.
Guiscard had requested to speak to St. John alone. Did he hope to kill him then or blackmail him? Whatever Guiscard's motives there were enough intriguing possibilities to embroider an account which made it appear that the secretary was the intended victim. This was the work of a party hack, Mrs. Manley, but Swift himself, in The Examiner for 15 March, claimed Guiscard had really hoped to kill St. John. The inspiration for this came from the secretary himself and it smacked of a cheap attempt to deprive Harley of the sympathy he had earned. Harley and his family were naturally peeved and the incident no doubt widened the breach between the two ministers. This was certainly Swift's opinion and Edward Harley even believed that it was from this date that St. John "began to form a party against the Chancellor [of the Exchequer] while he lay ill of his wound. This was carried on under the pretence that some person

55 'A true Narrative of what passed at the Examinations of the Marquis de Guiscard, at the Cock-Pit, the 8th March 1710-11', (London, 1711), Somers Tracts, xiii, 86-94.
56 Swift's Prose Works, iii, 109.
57 Journal to Stella, i, 212 and 245, 9 Mar. and 16 April 1711.
58 R.M. Portland (Harley) papers. Loan 29/166/2. A copy of Abel Boyer's account of the assassination attempt, marked by Harley himself.
60 'Memoirs relating to that Change which happened in the Queen's Ministry in the year 1710', Swift's Prose Works, viii, 128.
should be put at the head of the Church party, who would without reserve comply with all their passions." As we have seen, according to Robert Harley's later testimony, St. John had begun to turn towards the October men before the assassination attempt. Yet the assassination attempt was crucial in the relationship between the two men. It exacerbated the personal hostility, which had just emerged into the open, and it gave the secretary the opportunity to lead the Tories in Harley's absence.

In his first years in parliament St. John had shown that his oratorical gifts and his imperious spirit could sway the Tory squires by showing them 'game'. Now, because of the precarious financial situation which still faced the ministry, St. John was not free simply to offer the October Club a bold lead. Instead he had to use tact to negotiate for support. In trying to achieve Harley's ends without Harley's gifts he bungled the whole affair and saw the October men slip out of his control. These malcontents had been silenced for a couple of weeks by the attack on Harley, but they soon showed their teeth again. On 26 March William Lowndes, secretary to the treasury, introduced a tax on leather, which, to the astonishment of the ministry, was opposed by the October Club. In the division the

tax was defeated by forty votes. St. John was taken completely by surprise and he was not even in the chamber. When he did arrive his speech came too late to retrieve the situation. With some justice Peter Wentworth commented:

"Several Politicians [sic] that could not endure Mr. Harley say they see now there's no man the Court employs has address enough to manage the House of Commons but him; if he had been well he would either have had intelligence of what was intended and so have endeavour'd to have brought them to the house in a better temper, or at least when there he would have seen how 'twould have gone and would have put it off for a fitter opportunity."65

The ministry had been badly mauled, though naturally Harley's reputation soared. The infuriated St. John attempted to salvage something from the wreck. Since the leather tax could not be reintroduced in the same session he had to resort to the expedient of proposing instead a tax on hides and skins. This was brought in the next day, the 27th, when the secretary "harangua la Chambre dans cette Occasion d'une maniere fort vive, menaçant en quelque maniere ceux qui s'étoient opposés à la Proposition de rien moins que du ressentiment

63 Onslow later claimed that St. John had deliberately engineered the whole affair, but this runs counter to all the other more detailed and circumstantial accounts. Burnet, vi, 31n.
de la Reyne et de la Nation. Il n'y eut personne qui fit la moindre difficulté et l'affaire se passa sans aucune contestation."

St. John had recovered well from his carelessness, but unfortunately this was not his only blunder. On 19 March the October Club voted for commissioners of accounts to examine the financial actions of the late ministry and elected seven of its own members. These successes only encouraged the extremists to plan a general onslaught on the previous administration and 'to expose the mask of moderation'. St. John was either unwilling or unable to curb the backbenchers. The Post Office bill was mutilated and, on 20 April, the Commons elected commissioners to examine the grants of land made by the Crown since 1688. Four days later the House went on to examine the accounts of the Godolphin ministry and came to the


67 Commons Journals, xvi, 562. Lockhart and Shippen, though not on Boyer's list, were almost certainly members of the October Club. Clobery Bromley was definitely a member. Hanover Mss. 99, f. 175. Kreienberg's dispatch, London, 23 Mar./3 April 1711.


69 H. M. C., Mar and Kellie Mss., i, 489. Mar to Justice Clerk, Twitenhame, 21 April 1711; and Commons Journals, xvi, 504. 19 April 1711.

70 Ibid., xvi, 606. Six of the seven commissioners were October men; the exception was John Houston. The bill was defeated in the Lords on 3 May 1711, a decision which infuriated the October Club. The Wentworth Papers, pp. 195-96. Wentworth to Raby, 4 May 1711.
astonishing, although erroneous, conclusion that there were
£35 millions unaccounted for. Here indeed seemed to be the
justification for all the accusations of the October Club. St. John
had not expected such a result for, two days before, he had told
Swift that it was not yet possible to provide any proof of past
mismanagements. However, he was not simply embarrassed by the
apparent financial abuses brought to light, but alarmed that he
himself might be implicated in these misdemeanours. Over six of the
missing millions were from the accounts of his old crony, James
Brydges, the paymaster. In earlier years St. John had arranged army
contracts through Brydges, contracts which would not bear close
scrutiny. Now he tried to save Brydges and he succeeded in having
the investigations adjourned for a few days. This defence of
Brydges, 'which was very desperately spoken, and giving up the whole

71 Commons Journals, xvi, 611-613. 24 April. In fact only £4.3
millions were unaccounted for. The rest was before the exchequer
auditors, but had not yet been formally passed. P.G.M. Dickson,
72 Journal to Stella, i, 249. 22 April 1711.
73 'Letters of James Brydges to Henry St. John', ed. Godfrey Davies
and Marion Tinling. Huntington Library Bulletin (April 1936),
no. 9, pp. 130-31.
to [the duchess of Marlborough?], Tuesday evening [24 April 1711].
cause', was taken ill by the rest of the ministers. They had been irritated by the way St. John had tried to curry favour with the October Club in February and aghast at his failure to control its members in March and April. Swift believed that this latest error of judgment might be his last as secretary of state. St. John was not even able to satisfy the October Club when it renewed its inquiry.

The secretary had already admitted that Harley's absence had created problems for the ministry and he became increasingly dejected at his failures. These were even more pointed when Harley, whose peerage was deliberately delayed so that he could get the money bills through the Commons, returned to the helm. In May Harley set the seal on his efforts to solve the ministry's financial problems when he introduced his bill to set up the South Sea Company. The Tories hailed this, prematurely, as the answer to the Whig Bank of England.

75 Journal to Stella, 1, 252-53 and 257. 27 and 29 April 1711.
76 Ibid., 1, 253.
78 Bolingbroke's Corr., 1, 486. To Buys, 23 Mar. 1711.
79 Journal to Stella, 1, 229. 1 April 1711.
81 The company had its work cut out to function at all, and the Bank's support was as necessary for Harley as it had been for Godolphin. P.G.M Dickson, The Financial Revolution in England, p. 71.
Harley became governor of the new company and most of the directors were his personal adherents. The inclusion of St. John and Arthur Moore was a sign that the secretary had not lost all credit with Harley. Nevertheless, the latter's brother congratulated him on confounding his enemies and 'the secret designs of appearing friends'. By the end of the session Harley had indeed emerged triumphant and had reasserted his control over the ministry. At the end of May he was appointed lord treasurer and elevated to the peerage with the title of earl of Oxford. The October Club had not prevented him from passing the necessary supply bills. He had even begun a policy of conciliating members of the club with minor posts, though these did not allow them to wield political power. These tactics could not be used for the replacements for Rochester and Newcastle, who had recently died. The earl of Nottingham had the strongest claim to office for he was the most important Tory not in the ministry. Oxford and his moderate supporters were reluctant to bring in this ambitious and capable Tory peer. Instead, Buckingham

82 The list of directors is in Boyer's Political State, ii, 525-26.
83 B.M. Portland (Harley) papers. Loan 29/143/3. 13 May 1711.
84 Charles Caesar, Sir William Wyndham, Sir George Beaumont, and Henry Bunbury, of the October Club were given minor posts, but so were Harley's relatives, Edward Foley and Lord Dupplin, who had infiltrated the club. Commons Debates, iv, 223-24.
was moved to the presidency of the council and Poulett replaced him as lord steward. 86 Newcastle's post of lord privy seal was left vacant for some months, but in August he was replaced by John Robinson, the bishop of Bristol. 87 As a Tory bishop he could not provoke opposition from the backbenchers, though his appointment surprised many. 88 Like the other appointments of the summer, however, it was a triumph for Oxford. Again he had made sure that potential rivals would be excluded from the cabinet and from important political posts.

Meanwhile, St. John had failed to consolidate his position as a potential leader of the Tory backbenchers. He had irritated Harley, who was as much in control as ever, and his reputation as a man of affairs was sadly dented by his handling of the Commons in March and April. The secretary reacted to this situation by putting the blame on others. He complained to Lord Orrery:

"Mr. Harley since his recovery, has not appeared at the Council or at the Treasury at all, and very seldom in

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the House of Commons. We, who are reputed to be in
his intimacy, have few opportunities of seeing him,
and none of talking freely with him. As he is the
only true channel through which the Queen's pleasure
is conveyed; so there is, and must be a perfect
stagnation, till he is pleased to open himself, and
set the water flowing."89

Nor was the secretary satisfied with the October men, whom he felt
were too anxious for office and too willing to offer themselves for
sale.90 He was probably disgruntled at the success Harley was
having at drawing the teeth of the October Club with a few minor
places. Though he was prepared to admit that Harley deserved his
promotion to lord treasurer and his elevation to the peerage, he
feared that he might not prove loyal to his colleagues, at least to
those of St. John's complexion. With some trace of anxiety he
confessed to Orrery: "The companions of his evil fortune are most
likely to be the supporters of his good; and I dare say he makes
this a maxim to himself; for though he often wants that grace and
openness which engages the affection, yet I must own, I never knew
that he wanted either the constancy or the friendship which engages
the esteem."91

In addition to these blows to his political career St. John

89 Bolingbroke's Corr., i, 216-17. 18 May 1711.
90 Ibid., i, 245. To Lord Orrery, 12 June 1711.
91 Ibid.
was in the midst of personal problems in the summer of 1711. His marriage was now virtually broken beyond any hope of reconciliation and his shameless treatment of his wife shocked many contemporaries, notably Oxford and the Queen. In July, William Stratford told young Edward Harley of a visit to Mrs. St. John in Berkshire: "I met nothing there but sorrow and disorder. That unfortunate gentleman is more irregular, if possible, in his private than [his public] capacities. A sad instance to all young gentlemen of quality, how the greatest parts and expectations may be made useless and be disappointed by the folly of vice — the only way in which that unhappy gentleman will ever be of any use in the world." Such strongly-worded criticisms illustrate the decline in St. John's friendship with the Harley family as well as the disapprobation of his personal conduct. The secretary was also at odds with his old friend Harcourt and he was again quarrelling with his father. To prevent himself becoming ostracised he set up at this time a special club, which included his personal friends like Orrery, Jack Hill, and Sir William Wyndham, and wits like Swift, Prior, and Arbuthnot. Significantly, the lord treasurer was deliberately excluded, a

92 H.M.C., Portland Mss., vii, 39. 18 July. See also, ibid., vii, 28-29 and 35-36. 12 April and 26 June 1711.
93 Ibid., vii, 35. William Stratford to Lord Harley, 25 June 1711.
decision approved by St. John. It was a further sign of the widening breach.

This dispute with Oxford was exacerbated by the secretary's efforts to increase his influence over the ministry's foreign policy. As a secretary of state St. John should have had a considerable say in foreign affairs, but he had been quite deliberately excluded from the major policy making decisions. St. John's first attempt to stamp his presence in foreign affairs was to plan a bold stroke against French power in Canada. He planned the expedition and, in January 1711, he worked hard to convince Harley of the value of an attack on Quebec: "Pray do me the justice to believe that I am not light nor whimsical in this project. It will certainly succeed if the secret is preserved, and if it succeeds you will have done more service to Britain in half a year, than the ministers who went before you did in all their administration. I hope you will support me in it since I have gone so far." Harley had not approved of the project, but, while he was incapacitated after the Guiscard affair, St. John bulldozed the plan through the cabinet. On 25 March the cabinet had met in Harley's absence and the Queen gave her approval for the expedition. For a
time it looked as if Harley and Rochester would still halt the project, but St. John strongly backed his brain-child and he ingratiated himself with the Queen and Mrs. Masham by suggesting that the latter's brother should command the land forces sent to Canada. The success of the venture largely depended upon secrecy, but the whole design was soon public knowledge. St. John, himself chronically incapable of keeping a secret, was not concerned. In the event the expedition failed dismally and St. John could salvage little from the wreckage. The new lord treasurer was unconcerned and perhaps even a little pleased at the failure. He later charged St. John with planning to enrich himself through the contracts for the clothes and supplies for the expeditionary force. At the time it mattered little that the failure was due more to the timidity of the commanders than to the

98 Ibid., iv, 676. To Harley, 19 April 1711.
100 Bolingbroke's Corr., i, 233. To Jack Hill, 29 May 1711.
101 Journal to Stella, i, 376. 6 Oct. 1711.
overall conception. 103

Just as damaging to the Harley-St. John relationship, though perhaps more damaging to the country's interests, was the secretary's discovery that he had been quite deliberately excluded from the ministry's tentative peace negotiations with France. Those had been underway since July 1710, but even as late as March 1711 only an inner group of ministers — Harley, Shrewsbury, Dartmouth, and Rochester — were fully apprized of these developments. St. John had been quite deliberately excluded. 104 Already he had shown himself the most forceful member of the cabinet 105 and he had begun to sympathise with some of the demands of the Tory backbenchers. Harley probably feared that negotiations in St. John's hands would quickly become partisan and would be

103 The Walker Expedition to Quebec, 1711, ed. G. S. Graham (Navy Records Society, 1953), passim. For a defence of the conception see, W. T. Morgan, 'Queen Anne's Canadian Expedition of 1711', Bulletin of the Departments of History and Political and Economic Science in Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, Canada (May 1928), no. 56, p. 17.


twisted into a public attack on the allies or lead to a competing downward spiral of separate peace offers.

Torcy believed that St. John came into the negotiations only as a result of Guiscard's attempt to assassinate Harley, which incapacitated the chief minister. In a memorandum of 21 July 1711 Torcy wrote: "Pendant cette intervalle St. Jean ... s'étoit introduit dans cette affaire, quoique l'intention de ceux qui s'en mestoient n'eut pas esté de luy en donner connoissance. Depuis qu'il a esté intruit il n'a pas esté possible de l'exclure, quoique Harley l'eut désiré. Gaultier assure cependant que St. Jean est bien intentionné." In fact it was not until late in April that St. John learned of the peace negotiations. Shrewsbury had become increasingly ill at ease at the proposals made by the French and he wished to divest himself of responsibility. When these proposals arrived on 22 April Shrewsbury was opposed to keeping the negotiations secret any longer and he suggested that the Queen should bring the whole cabinet into the discussion on these preliminary suggestions. Harley and Dartmouth still wanted to keep the negotiations close, but gave way. On 25 April the cabinet considered the French offers and sent them to

107 P.R.O. Baschet's transcripts. 31/3/197, f. 349v.
Lord Raby, the new ambassador at The Hague. It was only now that 108
St. John was brought into the negotiations. He must have been
furious that Dartmouth had been regarded as more trustworthy and more
important than himself. His irritation was no doubt aggravated by
his failure to dominate the negotiations even after his introduction
to the French offers. Until the autumn of 1711 he had only a very
general grasp of the diplomatic intricacies of the situation. Time
and again Oxford refused to entrust the finer points of diplomacy to
his thrusting secretary of state.

For several months St. John had been at odds with Harley on
a whole range of major topics affecting the domestic and foreign policy
of the ministry. The secretary had failed to emerge as the leader of
the Tories in the Commons, he had seen Harley raised to the peerage and
to lord treasurer, and he had been unable to prevent him strengthening
his own leadership through the new appointments during the summer.
Now, with the failure of his Quebec expedition, he was determined not
to be ignored in the great peace negotiations which he saw opening

of Utrecht 1710-1713', unpublished Cambridge University Ph. D
between France and Britain. Early in August Matthew Prior returned from France with Monsieur Mesnager and the French answer to Britain's preliminary demands. Unfortunately, on landing at Dover, they were arrested by the master of the packet-boats. Although they were quickly released the episode gave rise to all kinds of rumours about the ministry's negotiations with France. The Whigs were prepared to harass the ministry at every stage and the allies were alarmed at the prospect of separate negotiations by Britain. The ministry was heading for its greatest test and St. John was determined to play a major rôle in it.

In the official meetings between Mesnager and the two secretaries of state it was St. John who tried to dominate the discussions, though Dartmouth was officially responsible for relations with France. It was St. John who reported to the cabinet and St. John who was instructed to tell Mesnager of the ministers' decisions. He was also ordered to inform the Dutch that the French had sent an agent to discuss general terms for opening peace negotiations. The discussions with Mesnager threatened to break down on the question of some sort of security for British trading concessions in the Indies.

110 Matthew Prior's History of His Own Time, ed. Adrian Drift, p. 347.
Oxford and Shrewsbury could not decide exactly what their policy should be on any particular point yet they would not allow St. John to make the running. The secretary became so furious at his failure to dominate ministerial policy that he insisted that the Whig duke of Somerset, who was naturally opposed to the peace negotiations, should no longer be allowed to sit on the cabinet council. This was a minor triumph, but he could do little to combat the influence of Oxford and Shrewsbury.

It was at this tense and critical juncture, with the country abuzz with rumours of peace negotiations but with the ministry unable to reach agreement with France, that the disputes between St. John and Oxford, which had been simmering for months, threatened to disrupt the whole ministry. Swift reported: "The Whigs whisper, that our new ministry differ among themselves, and they begin to talk out Mr. Secretary: they have some reasons for their whispers, although I thought it was a greater secret. I do not much like the posture of things; I always apprehended, that any falling out would ruin them,

113 Journal to Stella, i, 322. 13 Aug. 1711; and Swift's Corr., i, 278. To Archbishop King, 26 Aug. 1711. Robethon, the Hanoverian minister, had urged Somerset to attend the cabinet council. R.M. Add. Ms. 9112, ff. 34-36. 23 Aug. 1711.
and so I have told them several times." Swift was well aware of St. John's weaknesses, but he could not see how the ministry could do without him. It would not be easy to replace him in the cabinet and, now that Harley had moved to the Lords, St. John was the ministry's most effective spokesman in the Commons. Nevertheless, Oxford's friends were beginning to think it might be necessary to oust St. John. William Stratford wrote to the lord treasurer's son: "I am very sorry for Mr. St. John's sake, that his behaviour to your father is so much known. Should this end, as it must at last if it continues, in dismissing him from his post, he is undone. I know so much of his present condition, though I am far from being at the bottom of it." More significant was Stratford's belief that St. John was in such bad odour because of his ambition to rival Oxford, by seeking the support of the Tory malcontents: "This is the consequence of that which was instilled into him last winter, by some who took that way to make their Court to him, that he was of capacity enough to stand upon his own legs." Others suspected St. John's friendship with Marlborough and feared he might make common cause with him. The secretary, when taxed by Swift about this and other insinuations, was furious to be so

114 Journal to Stella, i, 346. 27 Aug. 1711.
115 Swift's Corr., i, 279. To Archbishop King, 26 Aug. 1711.
116 H.M.C., Portland Mss., vii, 55. 8 Sept. 1711.
117 Ibid.
suspected.

St. John had now renounced his close ties with Oxford's policies and fortunes. He had now begun to shift for himself. Though he had won few friends in important places he knew he could find a refuge with the high Tories. It was not his intention, however, to be a backbench leader, but to hold great office and to command a ministry. His early ventures in this direction, since February 1711, had been nearly disastrous and he had come close to losing all. The experience taught him several lessons. He needed a greater reputation as a minister, he required more widespread political support, and he would have to rival Oxford's influence with the Queen. Though he set his sights on these targets, his ambition and his temperament prevented him making any surreptitious advance. For the rest of the reign it was increasingly obvious that he was the emerging rival and heir-apparent to Oxford. It was a revelation which damaged the ministry, obstructed its work, and aggravated the problem of the Tories' attitude to the succession. Yet, despite these strictures upon St. John, it must be admitted that Oxford played no small part in the ultimate disaster. His monopoly of the Queen's confidence, his secrecy, and his contacts with the Whigs, were bound

to create jealousy among his Tory ministerial colleagues. Moreover, he offered no solution to the dilemma of the Tories over the succession. At home he continued to resist the Tory demands for a more partisan policy and abroad he worked towards peace by a most tortuous route. Unwilling or unable to get rid of St. John in August-September 1711 he continually thwarted the secretary's efforts to give a clearer, though less honourable, lead in domestic and foreign affairs.

Oxford and St. John grew further and further apart after the autumn of 1711. The lord treasurer wanted to keep the peace negotiations on the level of tentative talks and was still desperately hoping to carry the allies with him. The initial talks should be secret, but bi-partisan, with the possibility of retreat if necessary. Yet his room for manoeuvre was continually diminishing. St. John realised this and was all for determined and decisive action. While Oxford hesitated he began to stamp his vigorous presence on the peace negotiations. At two meetings with Gaultier and Mesnager on 19 and 23 September it was St. John who made the running and who dominated the discussions. After the first meeting he wrote an account of it for the benefit of the Queen and reported personally

120 Bolingbroke's Corr., i, 367-70. To the Queen, 20 Sept. 1711.
to the cabinet. 121 At first he tried to raise new issues that threatened to obstruct the negotiations, but the Queen got Oxford to make him climb down. 122 This was not too difficult because St. John was now intent on peace at almost any price. Though he failed to obtain clear answers from the French on such major issues as commerce, Dunkirk, Newfoundland, and the Indies, he was quite prepared to join with Dartmouth and Mesnager in signing the peace preliminaries on 27 September 1711. 123

The peace preliminaries were not entirely satisfactory, but St. John had no hesitation in defending them and went to greater lengths than Oxford to do so. Within the Tory and ministerial circles there was no shortage of critics. The duke of Argyll, who had gone over to the ministry in 1710 and who had been sent out to Spain, was furious that the ministry had decided on peace. 124 St. John complained bitterly to James Dayrolle, one of Britain's representatives at The Hague, for his outspoken remarks on the peace preliminaries and insisted on his recall. 125 More serious was the attitude of leading

121 Staffordshire Record Office. Dartmouth cabinet minutes, D/742/VI/2. 21 Sept. 1711.
122 H.M.C., Bath Mss., i, 212. 24 Sept. 1711.
123 Bolingbroke's Corr., i, 374-381 n.
124 Journal to Stella, i, 339, 346, 358, and ii, 372; and Swift's Corr., i, 290. To Archbishop King, Windsor Castle, 1 Oct. 1711.
ministers. The duke of Shrewsbury had been getting cold feet about the peace negotiations for some time. He feared, justifiably, that the ministry was laying itself open to a charge of betraying the allies and to a suspicion of being hostile to the Hanoverian succession. As early as August 1711 he was telling St. John of his doubts about the conduct of the negotiations.\textsuperscript{126} By mid September he was so uneasy that the Queen was worried that he might not continue to support the peace preliminaries.\textsuperscript{127} Though he did not directly oppose the preliminaries he did refuse to sign them.\textsuperscript{128} Buckingham, the lord president, who had been deliberately excluded from the peace talks, was even more alarmed at the preliminaries. He was convinced that there must be secret, more advantageous, terms and that therefore his colleagues were embarked on a separate peace.\textsuperscript{129} Among the Tories outside the ministerial ranks there was greater concern and a more serious threat of rebellion. Lord North and Grey was amazed at the vague commercial terms\textsuperscript{130} and Sir Thomas Hanmer spoke openly to

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\item \textsuperscript{126} Bolingbroke's Corr., i, 335-36. 27 Aug. 1711.
\item \textsuperscript{127} Letters and Diplomatic Instructions of Queen Anne, ed. B. Curtis Brown, p. 342. The Queen to Oxford, 19 Sept. 1711.
\item \textsuperscript{128} D. H. Somerville, 'Shrewsbury and the Peace of Utrecht', E.H.R. (1932), xlvi, 646-47.
\item \textsuperscript{129} Berkshire Record Office. Downshire Papers. Trumbull Add. Ms. 136. James to Ralph Brydges, 5 Nov. 1711.
\item \textsuperscript{130} Bodleian Library. North and Grey Mss. b. 2, ff. 100-101.
\end{enumerate}
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Marlborough against the preliminaries. 131 There were even rumours that the October Club, and even the Tories in general, were dissatisfied with the peace. 132 For a lead they might turn to the earl of Nottingham, who had shown no satisfaction with the peace terms communicated to him by Oxford and who resisted all the lord treasurer's overtures. 133

As the new parliamentary session approached St. John worked hard to curb the Whig campaign against the peace preliminaries by arresting several booksellers and publishers who were disseminating Whig pamphlets. 134 At the same time he stepped up the propaganda in favour of peace. He was particularly active in assisting Swift to prepare that writer's most influential pamphlet, The Conduct of the Allies. 135 According to one historian the publication of this

132 Bodleian Library. Ballard Mss. 21, f. 95v. W. Lancaster to Dr. Charlett, 8 Nov. 1711; and H.M.C., Polwarth Mss., i, 2. George Baillie to Lord Polwarth, 13 Nov. 1711.
135 Ibid., ii, 397. 30 Oct. 1711; and Swift's Corr., i, 304. St. John to Swift, 16 and 17 Nov. 1711.
swingeing attack on the allies represented the victory within the ministry of St. John's view that stronger measures were needed to counter the complaints of the opposition. If this were so, Swift had no doubt that he could supply St. John with the ammunition to repulse the Whig attacks. The Conduct of the Allies, published on 27 November 1711, accused the allies of failing to bear a fair share of the burden of the war and yet of neglecting Britain's legitimate interests:

"Our Grievances are, That a greater Load has been laid on Us than was either just or necessary or than we have been able to bear; that the grossest Impositions have been submitted for the Advancement of private Wealth and Power, or in order to forward the more dangerous Designs of a Faction, to both which a Peace would have put an End; And that the Part of the War which was chiefly our Province, which would have been most beneficial to us, and destructive to the Enemy, was wholly neglected."

The rest of the pamphlet went on to substantiate these charges and to cast opprobrium on both the Whigs and the allies. There was a deliberate attempt made to associate in the public mind the

137 "The Whigs are in a rage about the Peace; but we'll wherret them, I warrant, boys"; "We have no quiet with the Whigs, they are so violent against a Peace; but I'll cool them, with a vengeance very soon." Journal to Stella, ii, 374 and 395. 30 Sept. and 26 Oct. 1711.
138 The pamphlet can be seen in Swift's Prose Works, vi, 5-64.
the unjustified complaints of the allies with the factious opposition of the Whigs in order to discredit both. That it met with a good reception from the general public, war weary and fearful that peace might again slip through their fingers, was illustrated by the immense sale of the pamphlet. It ran through numerous editions and became the most famous and most successful pamphlet of the age. It was supported by The Examiner, which, after a lapse of a few months, reappeared on 13 December, to make virulent attacks on the opponents of the peace. 139

St. John was not only active in the propaganda field, where he hoped to rally the Tories and public opinion behind the peace preliminaries. He was also working hard to bully the allies into following the ministry's lead. To accomplish both these ends with one blow the ministry produced two different copies of the peace preliminaries. The first, which the ministry hoped to keep secret for the moment, listed the special advantages for Britain, including Gibraltar, Minorca, and the Assiento. The second, 'the paper for Holland' as St. John called it, outlined the general terms on which the allies were to negotiate, but omitted the most important provisions of the first paper. Both the Dutch and the Austrians were aghast at the vague terms of this second paper. Count Gallas went so far as to

give a copy of it to the Whig *Daily Courant*, which published it on 13 October. The ministry reacted quickly. To mollify English opinion the terms of the first paper were published in a postscript to the *Post Boy* on the same day.\(^{140}\) With the allies St. John was prepared to be quite ruthless. Whereas Oxford hoped to convince Buys that the Dutch would not be deserted, St. John was prepared to accept that they would have to be brow-beaten into accepting Britain's lead.\(^{141}\) Towards the Austrians he was even more hostile. He was furious with Count Gallas for publishing the peace preliminaries, for ordering a spy to follow Peterborough to Frankfurt, for conspiring with the Whig leaders, and for urging Vienna to make her own separate peace.\(^ {142}\) In a letter to the Queen he protested: "Nothing can be more insolent and ungrateful to your Majesty, the great protectress of the Austrian family, more brutal to your servants, nor more villainous in its own nature, in every part."\(^ {143}\) He succeeded in having Count Gallas dismissed from the Court. The Hanovorians had

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\(^{143}\) Bolingbroke's *Corr.*, i, 420. 19 Oct. 1711.
to be handled more carefully. Oxford explained Britain's need for peace while asserting the ministry's loyalty to the Hanoverian succession.\footnote{144} St. John, despite the need for tact, left Kreienberg, the Hanoverian resident, in no doubt that the ministry was determined on peace at any price.\footnote{145} When the Elector sent over a memorial giving his views against the peace St. John may have attempted, in vain, to keep it from the Queen.\footnote{146}

St. John had long been confident that the ministry would secure popular support either for 'pressing roundly' on the allies or for peace with France.\footnote{147} He himself had done everything possible to achieve this end. Yet as the parliamentary session approached the ministry's supporters began to fear that the opponents of the peace might have a majority in the Lords.\footnote{148} Swift believed that the "lord treasurer stands too much upon his own legs. I fancy his good fortune will bear him out in everything; but in reason I should think this ministry to stand very unsteady: if they can carry a Peace, they

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145 Hanover Mss. 107a, ff. 21-23. Kreienberg's dispatch to Hanover, 12/23 Oct. 1711.
147 B.M. Add. Ms. 17677, EEE, f. 322. L'Hermitage's dispatch to the States General, 26 Sept./6 Oct. 1711.
148 Journal to Stella, ii, 426. 1 Dec. 1711.
Two days later he was even more alarmed when he learned that Nottingham had decided to vote with the Whigs in opposition to the peace preliminaries. To make the situation even more dangerous Nottingham was angling for Tory support for his stand. In order to convince the Tories that he had not become a Whig he had extracted a promise from his new allies that they would support an Occasional Conformity bill. He hoped this would persuade the Tories to accept his views of the peace. His own opposition to it was based on a genuine fear of leaving Spain and the West Indies to the French claimant.

The issue came before parliament at the beginning of the new session. On 7 December 1711 the Queen informed the Lords that peace preliminaries had been signed with France and a general congress had been summoned. In the debate on the address Nottingham proposed "that no Peace can be safe or honourable to Great Britain or Europe, if Spain and the West Indies are to be allotted to any Branch of the House of Bourbon." Oxford tried to deflect the blow by

149 Ibid., ii, 429. 3 Dec. 1711.
150 Ibid., ii, 430. 5 Dec. 1711.
153 Lords Journals, xix, 336.
insisting that the Lords could not advise the Queen on a point upon which she had not consulted them. Though this argument helped to dissuade any Tory peer from following Nottingham's lead, his clause was narrowly carried in a full House. Next day the Court made another attempt to have the clause omitted from the address, but failed by a larger majority. This time Nottingham was joined by a few Tories, including Buckingham, the lord president, and Weymouth.154 The embarrassed Queen could only reply lamely: "I should be sorry anyone could think I would not do my utmost to recover Spain and the West Indies from the House of Bourbon."155 This major defeat for the ministry was not reproduced in the Commons, where, on the same day, Walpole proposed a clause similar to that of Nottingham's. St. John tried to justify the ministry's conduct by claiming that the Dutch were satisfied with developments and were in favour of peace. When Sir Peter King denied this, St. John did not at first reply, "mais estant pressé, il dit enfin en colere, que la Reyne mesmo l'avait déclaré sans Discours, ce qui fermeit la bouche à Mr. King."156

155 Lords Journals, xix, 341. 12 Dec. 1711.
According to L'Hermitage these two protagonists dominated the five hour debate and it was St. John who was worsted by King. At the division, however, the amendment was easily defeated by 232 to 106 votes. Eleven Tory rebels voted with the opposition. This was a small but significant rebellion. It is unlikely that all the eleven were simply following Nottingham's lead for only Lord Finch, Nottingham's son and heir, could be classed as one of his personal adherents. The other ten not only made this isolated gesture, but remained critical of the ministry for the rest of its existence. This group may have been the first 'Whimsical' or 'Hanoverian' Tories, the first signs of a defection which was to disrupt the Tory party. These rebels disliked a separate peace and suspected that some of the ministers might not be loyal to the Hanoverian succession. This suggests that the peace negotiations, far from uniting the Tory party, may have reopened the basic division within the party, between those who were, in the last resort, prepared to stand by the Hanoverian succession and those who were not.

In the long run the Hanoverian Tories in the Commons were to be a more serious disruptive force than Nottingham's defection, which inspired few other Tory peers. Yet at the time the situation in the Lords was much more alarming for the ministers. In the Commons the Tory majority accepted the need for peace and launched its own attacks on the opposition. The commissioners of accounts attacked Marlborough for taking a percentage from all government contracts for the army and also took a side-swipe at Walpole for his handling of contracts when secretary at war. There was even an attempt to repeal the General Naturalization Act.\(^{159}\) In the Lords, however, the opposition were able to continue an offensive which threatened to shake or even destroy the whole administration. On 22 December Nottingham carried an address that the British plenipotentiaries should not enter upon any negotiation of peace with France until they had concerted measures with the allies.\(^ {160}\) On the same day the Whigs forced through a motion for the preparation of a bill to secure the precedence of the Hanoverian family.\(^ {161}\) In the middle of this crisis the Court was plagued by a rebellion of the Scottish peers over the Hamilton pecriage case.\(^ {162}\) The opposition

\(^{159}\) Commons Journals, xvii, 15-24.
\(^{160}\) Lords Journals, xix, 351-52.
could use the issue against the ministry, which could not count upon its own supporters since many Tories were opposed to granting British peerages to Scottish peers. No fewer than thirteen Tory peers, in addition to Nottingham, deserted the Court in the division on 20 December. Among them was Dartmouth, a secretary of state. This infuriated the Scottish peers, who demanded Dartmouth’s dismissal and who began to waver in their allegiance to the Court.

Both the ministers and the Tories in general reacted violently to the defeats in the Lords, particularly that of 7 December. There was a general cry for retribution against the many Whigs, who continued to enjoy offices and places under the Crown. The Tory duke of Northumberland wrote: "The World expects ye Queen will forthwith discharge some undutiful servants, & I hope she will, it being ye only way to secure ye Hearts as well as ye Duties of those who have bin so long faithfull under a Cloud and sometimes in Storms and who cannot serve usefully in such company." At least seventeen Whigs, who had

164 Burnet, vi, 89n. The Scottish peers boycotted the Lords until February 1712, when they returned, not because they had been bought off by the Court, but to support the Toleration bill. G. S. Holmes, 'The Hamilton Affair of 1711-12: A Crisis in Anglo-Scottish Relations', E.H.R. (1962), Ixxvii, 272-279.
voted against the government on 7 December, still held office. Oxford had a list of them drawn up as if he planned to dismiss them. Yet once again it appeared that determined action and sweeping changes were to be deferred. This apparent inaction and indecision worried Oxford's friends and ministerial colleagues. On the day of Nottingham's successful amendment Swift had declared that "this has happened entirely by my lord treasurer's neglect, who did not take timely care to make up all his strength, although every one of us gave him caution enough." Next day Swift feared that the Queen might desert her ministers for the Whigs and he urged Oxford to secure the dismissal of Marlborough and other opponents of the peace negotiations. He assured Stella that he had warned the ministers of just such a reversal and "the secretary [St. John] always dreaded it." St. John believed the situation could still be saved if the ministry and the Court would place greater confidence in the Tory party. His temperament, so different from Oxford's, made him less calm in a crisis and more prone to taking decisive, though sometimes ill-judged, action. At this stage he was urging dependence on the Tory majority in the Commons:

"The whole turns on the Queen's resolution; if she has vigour and firmness enough to assert her own dignity,

166 Journal to Stella, ii, 434. 8 Dec. 1711.
167 Ibid., ii, 432.
168 Ibid., ii, 433-35. 8 Dec. 1711.
she will unite the bulk of the nation in her interest, and leave the faction nothing but impotent malice, wherewith to torment themselves, but not to hurt her, or those who serve her. It is inconceivable how much mankind is alarmed at Bothmar's memorial, and at his conduct; once more, if she is true to herself, the success of the Whigs in the House of Lords will be their ruin and her salvation.

I hope she will, I believe she will; and by the next post your Excellency will know what has passed, for the crisis is come, and the delay cannot be long."

Lord Poulett, who normally bowed to Oxford's judgement, was just as agitated. He was convinced the ministry was doomed unless the Queen could be persuaded to make a thorough change.

The Queen and Oxford kept the supporters of the ministry on tenter-hooks for three weeks. During these tense days the ministry's hangers-on, like Swift, Matthew Prior, and Erasmus Lewis, were considering the possibility of finding some quiet retreat. These plans were thrown aside when it was noticed that Oxford was looking far more cheerful and confident. By 27 December it was clear that Oxford was endeavouring to secure a majority in the Lords to prevent violent Whig addresses against the peace after the Christmas recess.

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169 Bothmar, the Hanoverian envoy, had also protested against the peace and, like Count Gallas, was in close contact with the Whigs.
172 Journal to Stella, ii, 436, 439, and 442. 11, 15, and 19 Dec. 1711.
173 Ibid., ii, 447.
Two days later the ministry was saved when the Queen agreed to create twelve new Tory peers. There seems little doubt that St. John was considered for one of these peerages and it was rumoured that it would be an earldom. As early as 18 December there was talk of him becoming earl of Bolingbroke. On the 29th Ralph Palmer wrote of several new peers to be created and mentioned St. John for the title of earl of Bolingbroke. The lord treasurer quite clearly considered St. John for one of the peerages. Among his papers there is a memorandum in his own hand, dated 27 December 1711, on which there is a list of Tory names. The paper has twenty names in two columns, the first of thirteen and the second of seven. Of those in the first column, Sir Michael Warton refused a peerage and Sir William Courtenay, who was not in parliament, was passed over in favour of

176 B.M., Portland (Harley) papers. Loan 29/10/16.
someone at present in the Commons. Ten of the other eleven members in the first column were created peers in the next few days. St. John was the exception. From the second column only Masham, the husband of the Queen's favourite, gained a peerage. The twelfth new peer was Allen Bathurst, who was not listed in either column. St. John was apparently promised a peerage at the end of the session, but at present his talents in the Commons were regarded as indispensable. Though the secretary was probably a little piqued at this decision, Oxford could afford to congratulate himself on this unprecedented triumph with the Queen. He had clearly demonstrated that his influence at Court was paramount and that he was indispensable to the ministry. What must have been an additional satisfaction to him was the knowledge that all the twelve new peers, though Tories, were distinctly of the Harleyite brand. They were all in fact personal friends or connections of the lord treasurer.

Not all the ministers had supported the creation of so many new peers. Dartmouth regarded it as an odious and near-unconstitutional measure, but Oxford persuaded him that it had been necessary to free the administration from its dependence on the Scottish peers. After his vote on the Hamilton peerage, which had

180 Burnet, vi, 95 and note.
helped to alienate the Scottish peers, Dartmouth could hardly oppose this line of reasoning. Swift, who had just written to Dean Sterne of the government's difficulties: "This must infallibly end either in an entire change of measures and ministry, or in a firm establishment of our side. Delay, and tenderness to an inveterate party, have been very instrumental to this ill state of affairs," was able to add a postscript about the new peers: "We are all in the greatest joy imaginable to find her Majesty declare herself so seasonably." In addition to the new peers Oxford worked hard to strengthen the ministry by bringing in Sir Thomas Harmer, the leading Tory backbencher in the Commons. Once again he demurred, though it was clear that he no longer had any general objection to the peace negotiations. The opponents of the peace were sent reeling by a final hammer blow: Marlborough was dismissed from his command. His removal was quickly followed by that of Cadogan and then that of the duke of Somerset.

The Court did not stop with the securing of the ministry's position in the Lords or with the dismissal of the main opponents of the peace. There was a deliberate attempt to appeal to the high Tories of the October Club variety by going some way towards satisfying

181 Swift's Corr., 1, 311. 29 Dec. 1711.
their demands for an assault on the financial dealings of the late
Whig ministry. Plans were laid to arraign both Marlborough and
Robert Walpole on the basis of the report which the commissioners of
accounts had delivered to the Commons in December 1711. At the
same time the ministry attempted to moderate the temper of the October
Club. The process of infiltrating their ranks with moderate Tories
was intensified, a few more October men were rewarded with places,
and a press campaign was opened in order to convince the Tory
backbenchers of the need to support the ministry. By 18 January 1712
Swift had sent his pamphlet, A Letter to the October Club, to the
printers. In this work he urged the club's members to remain loyal
to the lord treasurer even though he had not yet turned out every single
Whig. He went on to suggest that it might not even be in the chief
minister's power to accomplish all their demands because of the Queen's
reluctance to serve a party cause.

183 Commons Journals, xvii, 15-24
184 For example, Henry Lee became a commissioner of victualling;
Sir Richard Levinz was sent as attorney-general to Ireland;
Sir William Pole was made master of the royal household; and
Francis Scobell became a receiver-general of the stannaries.
185 Journal to Stella, ii, 466.
186 The pamphlet, finally entitled Some Advice to the October Club,
can be seen in Swift's Prose Works, vi, 72-79.
Oxford ended the year 1711 on a note of triumph and indeed the whole year had enhanced his reputation and his control of the ministry. He had withstood an assassination attempt, the obstruction of the October Club, and the intrigues of Henry St. John. He had found a way out of the ministry's financial difficulties, he had dominated the early peace negotiations, he had secured peerages and cabinet office for his loyal friends, and he had demonstrated his power over the Queen. In contrast Henry St. John had suffered several setbacks and had come close to dismissal. His reputation as a man of affairs had not been enhanced by his failures in Canada and the House of Commons. The peace negotiations had been started without him even knowing of them. The attempts to lead the October men and to lead an opposition group within the ministry had both floundered. Nevertheless, there were several hopeful signs for St. John and a few dark clouds on Oxford's horizon. In foreign affairs the lord treasurer was now committed to making peace with France even at the expense of bullying or deserting the allies. He had also failed to keep the discussions secret, tentative, or within his own control. St. John had begun to wrest some measure of influence in the vital negotiations. At home Oxford had begun to make concessions to the October Club. He had retained the chief ministerial posts for the moderates, but he had agreed to the backbench demands for attacks on the late Whig ministry.
When these got underway the lord treasurer's links with the moderate Whigs were weakened and strained. This allowed his ambitious rival, St. John, to find a stronger Tory base from which to lever Oxford further over into the Tory camp or to weaken his hold over the party on which he now had to depend.
Appendix III.

The October Club.

This list is taken from Boyer's Political State, iii, 117-122.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member</th>
<th>Constituency</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Whitmore Acton</td>
<td>Bridgenorth</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. John Aislabie</td>
<td>Ripon</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Francis Annesley</td>
<td>Westbury</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Sir Copleston Bampfield</td>
<td>Exeter</td>
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<td>5. Sir Henry Banbury</td>
<td>Chester</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Sir William Barker</td>
<td>Ipswich</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Allen Bathurst</td>
<td>Cirencester</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Peter Bathurst</td>
<td>Wilton</td>
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<td>9. Sir George Beaumont</td>
<td>Leicester</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. John Berkeley</td>
<td>Gloucestershire</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. Maurice Berkeley</td>
<td>Wells</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. William Berners</td>
<td>Hythe</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. Henry Bertie</td>
<td>Beaumaris</td>
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<tr>
<td>14. James Bertie</td>
<td>Middlesex</td>
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<tr>
<td>15. Leonard Bilson</td>
<td>Petersfield</td>
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<td>16. Abraham Blackmore</td>
<td>St. Michael</td>
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<td>17. John Boteler</td>
<td>Hythe</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Name</td>
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<td>18.</td>
<td>John Bromley</td>
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<td>19.</td>
<td>Richard Bulkeley</td>
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<td>20.</td>
<td>James Bulteel</td>
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<td>21.</td>
<td>John Burgh</td>
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<td>22.</td>
<td>Robert Byerley</td>
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<td>23.</td>
<td>William Cage</td>
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<td>24.</td>
<td>Henry Campion</td>
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<td>25.</td>
<td>Thomas Cartwright</td>
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<td>27.</td>
<td>Charles Cesar or Caesar</td>
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<td>28.</td>
<td>Thomas Chaffin</td>
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<td>29.</td>
<td>Sir Richard Child</td>
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<td>30.</td>
<td>Charles Cholmondeley</td>
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<td>31.</td>
<td>Thomas Chowne</td>
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<td>32.</td>
<td>Sir John Clerke</td>
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<td>33.</td>
<td>John Codrington</td>
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<td>34.</td>
<td>Bryan Cooke</td>
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<td>35.</td>
<td>Clement Corrance</td>
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<td>36.</td>
<td>Sir William Coryton</td>
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<td>37.</td>
<td>John Hynde Cotton</td>
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<td>38.</td>
<td>George Courtney</td>
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<td>39.</td>
<td>Charles Cox</td>
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<td>40.</td>
<td>Edward Cresset</td>
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</table>
41. Richard Cresswell  Bridgenorth
42. Thomas Cross  Westminster
43. John Curzon  Derbyshire
44. John Dalby  Reading
45. George Dashwood  Stockbridge
46. Sir Robert Davers  Suffolk  Leading member.
47. Sir Chomley Deering  Kent
48. Paul Docminique  Gatton
49. Viscount Downe  Yorkshire
50. George Downing  Dunwich
51. John Drake  Amersham
52. Francis Duncomb  Amersham
53. Lord Dupplin  Foway
54. Lewis Dymocke  Lincolnshire
55. Joseph Earle  Bristol
56. Sir Robert Eden  Co. Durham
57. Sir James Etheridge  Great Marlow
58. Charles Eversfield  Sussex  Leading member.
59. Lord Fermanagh  Buckinghamshire
   Fildey, see Tylney
60. Heneage Finch  Surrey
61. Richard Fleming  Southampton
62. Edward Foley  Droitwich
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Place</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>63</td>
<td>Thomas Foley</td>
<td>Hereford</td>
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<tr>
<td>64</td>
<td>Charles Fox</td>
<td>New Sarum (Salisbury)</td>
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<td>65</td>
<td>Ralph Freeman</td>
<td>Hertfordshire</td>
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<tr>
<td>66</td>
<td>John Cape</td>
<td>St. Albans</td>
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<td>67</td>
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<td>Dorchester</td>
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<td>68</td>
<td>William Gore</td>
<td>Colchester</td>
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<td>69</td>
<td>Dodington Greville</td>
<td>Warwick</td>
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<td>70</td>
<td>William Griffith</td>
<td>Carmarvon</td>
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<td>71</td>
<td>Richard Gulston</td>
<td>Hertford</td>
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<tr>
<td>72</td>
<td>Richard Halford</td>
<td>Rutlandshire</td>
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<tr>
<td>73</td>
<td>Thomas Halsey</td>
<td>Hertfordshire</td>
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<tr>
<td>74</td>
<td>Sir Thomas Hanmer</td>
<td>Suffolk</td>
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<td>75</td>
<td>John Hardress</td>
<td>Canterbury</td>
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<tr>
<td>76</td>
<td>Percival Hart</td>
<td>Kent</td>
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<td>77</td>
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<td>Clithero</td>
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<td>78</td>
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<td>Old Sarum</td>
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<tr>
<td>79</td>
<td>William Hedges</td>
<td>Calne</td>
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<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>Willoughby Hickman jnr.</td>
<td>East Retford</td>
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<td>81</td>
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<td>Scarborough</td>
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<td>82</td>
<td>Robert Hyde</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>83</td>
<td>Edward Jeffreys (alias Winnington)</td>
<td>Droitwich</td>
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<td>84</td>
<td>Edward Jeffreys</td>
<td>Brecon</td>
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<tr>
<td>85</td>
<td>Sir Robert Jenkinson</td>
<td>Oxfordshire</td>
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<td>86.</td>
<td>John Jenyns or Jennings</td>
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<td>93.</td>
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<td>94.</td>
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<td>Derby</td>
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<td>95.</td>
<td>Thomas Lewis</td>
<td>Winchester</td>
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<td>96.</td>
<td>Thomas Lister</td>
<td>Lincoln</td>
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<td>97.</td>
<td>Sir James Long</td>
<td>Chippenham</td>
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<td>98.</td>
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<td>Appleby</td>
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<td>George Mackenzie</td>
<td>Nairn</td>
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<td>Kinross</td>
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<td>102.</td>
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<td>103.</td>
<td>Clayton Milborne</td>
<td>Monmouth</td>
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<td>104.</td>
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<td>Warwickshire</td>
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<td>105.</td>
<td>Sir Nicholas Morice</td>
<td>Newport</td>
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<td>George Morley</td>
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<td>107.</td>
<td>Sir Roger Mostyn</td>
<td>Flint</td>
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<td>108.</td>
<td>Richard Mytton</td>
<td>Shrewsbury</td>
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Leading member:
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<td>Edward Nicholas</td>
<td>Shaftesbury</td>
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<td>111</td>
<td>Theophilus Oglethorpe</td>
<td>Haslemere</td>
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<td>112</td>
<td>Sir John Pakington</td>
<td>Worcestershire</td>
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<td>114</td>
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<td>116</td>
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<td>117</td>
<td>Thomas Pitt</td>
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<td>118</td>
<td>Sir William Pole</td>
<td>Devon</td>
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<td>119</td>
<td>Samuel Pytts</td>
<td>Worcestershire</td>
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<td>120</td>
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<td>121</td>
<td>Thomas Renda</td>
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<td>122</td>
<td>Samuel Robinson</td>
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<td>124</td>
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<td>128</td>
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<td>129</td>
<td>John Sharp</td>
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<td>130</td>
<td>Samuel Shepheard jnr.</td>
<td>Cambridge Town</td>
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<td>131</td>
<td>James Shepheard</td>
<td>Honiton</td>
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132. Richard Shuttleworth Lancashire
133. Hugh Smithson Middlesex
134. Sir Bryan Stapleton Boroughbridge
135. William Stephens Newport
136. Thomas Strangeways Dorset
137. Thomas Strangeways jnr. Bridport
138. Sir Simeon Stuart Hampshire
139. Sir John Thorold Grantham Leading member.
140. John Trevanion Cornwall Leading member.
141. Sir John Trevilian Minehead
142. Frederick Tylney [Fildey] Whitchurch
143. Thomas Vernon Whitchurch
144. Sir Francis Vincent Surrey
145. Sir George Warburton Cheshire
146. Sir Francis Warr Taunton
147. Thomas Webb Gloucester
148. Henry Whitaker Shaftesbury
149. Sir William Whitlock Oxford University Leading member.
150. Sir Edward Williams Brecon
151. Lord Willoughby (Peregrine Bertie) Lincolnshire
152. Dixie Windsor Cambridge University
153. Salway Winnington Bowdley
154. James Winstanley Leicester
B. In the Huntington Library, California, there is a broadsheet entitled 'A True and Exact List of those Worthy Patriots, who, to their eternal honour, have, in one session, detected the mismanagements of the late M—ry; discover'd the abuses in the victualling, and other publick offices; supported and retriev'd the credit of the nation; made good all deficiencies of former funds, and provided for the payment of all national debts; and preserved the Church of England from being overturn'd by fanaticks; and enlarg'd its pale, by the addition of fifty new churches in the cities of London and Westminster' (London, 1711). Though this is simply a list of most of the Tories in the Commons during this session it does pick out 161 members of the October Club. No fewer than 156 of these also appear on Boyer's list. Sir Robert Jenkinson, John Middleton, and

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I am grateful to Dr. W. A. Speck for bringing this broadsheet to my notice.
Sir Henry Seymour are not on this broadsheet though they are listed by Boyer. The broadsheet adds five new names, viz., Robert Chapman (Buckingham), Robert Child (Helston), Scrope Howe (Nottinghamshire), William Paul (New Windsor), and Alexander Pendarvis (Penryn).
Chapter Nine.

Secretary of State and the Making of the Peace.

It is important to stress the significance of the making of the peace on the Oxford-St. John rivalry and on the whole question of the leadership of the Tory party. The ministerial revolution of 1710 and the Tory triumph in the general election of that year both owed much to the widespread desire for peace. The ministers and the Tory backbenchers were frequently at odds in the next three years, but their common determination on a peace helped to keep the Tory party together, though relations were often strained. Ironically, once the great peace had been signed the party began to disintegrate. In later years St. John himself recognized that the most serious problems facing the Tories only appeared after the Treaty of Utrecht: "The peace had been judged with reason to be the only solid foundation whereupon we could erect a tory system: and yet when it was made we found ourselves at a full stand. Nay the very work, which ought to have been the basis of our strength, was in part demolished before our eyes, and we were stoned with the ruins of it." The actual peace negotiations themselves, however, were responsible for

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1 A Letter to Sir William Wyndham, p. 50.
increasing the tension between Oxford and St. John for the two leading ministers differed on how to end the war most rapidly and successfully. The great cabinet split in September 1712 was not the result of pressure on the ministry from the Tory backbenchers but the consequence of the secretary’s eagerness to take control of the negotiations with France and to make a separate peace. Since St. John failed to make peace on his terms he had to continue working in an uneasy alliance with the lord treasurer. Once the peace was made the ministry appeared to lose its raison d’être and its whole sense of direction. With this the disputes between the two leading ministers and the disintegration of the Tory party overlapped. The serious Oxford-Bolingbroke split and the major divisions in the Tory party really appeared in 1713-14 when the ministers and the backbenchers had to face the dilemma of the succession.

With the ministry determined on peace and willing to accede to some of the October Club’s demands St. John had the opportunity to appear in the suitable rôle of the partisan leader. Unfortunately the design of censuring Marlborough for accepting money from Sir Solomon Medina, who had obtained the bread contract for the army, and for taking 2½ per cent of the English pay to her foreign troops, placed St. John in a predicament. For years he had been on close terms with Marlborough and even now he had no wish for an irrevocable breach with him. Now he could not ward off this blow entirely without
alienating the Tory backbenchers, though he was at pains to assure the Duke, that, if he acted reasonably, the censure would be as light as possible. James Brydges, a crony of St. John's, informed Marlborough:

"I was this morning with Mr. St. John, whom I found concern'd upon his having heard yr Grace intended to push for a Vote of Justification in Parl[liament.] He thought it w[oul]d be lookt upon as attacking ye Ministry, wch w[oul]d engage many, who w[oul]d otherwise not appear against you to espouse their interest, & I find by him it will be very difficult to prevent a Vote's being carried that ye 2½ p.c. sh[oul]d be deem'd publick money, yr Grace having in effect, he says, own'd it in your letter to ye Commiss[ion]ers to be such. He will have ye honour to discourse you upon it himself, & says if he does not see yr Grace at his house tomorrow before six in ye evening, he'll wait upon you at yours."²

The Duke, however, was prepared to defend his conduct, claiming that these perquisites had been allowed him by the Queen for use in gaining military intelligence. Nevertheless, as St. John well knew, the commander had allowed his subordinates, like Brydges and Cadogan, to enrich themselves during the war, and so the secretary could not prevent the attack. The great debate, on 25 January 1712, found both the ministry and the October Club prominent among Marlborough's

³ Godfrey Davies, 'The Seamy Side of Marlborough's War', Huntington Library Quarterly (1951), xv, no. 1, 21-44.
critics, though there is no evidence that St. John played a leading role.

Once given its head the October Club soon proved a headache to the ministers, especially to Oxford who was still hoping to eschew violent methods. The Commons passed a bill to tolerate the episcopal church in Scotland. Oxford was opposed to this measure which threatened to alienate Presbyterian opinion, but it had the enthusiastic support of Buckingham, the lord president, and the Tories in general. The lord treasurer refused to speak up for the bill, but, when the October Club expressed resentment at one of the Lords' amendments, his friends, including Poulett and Trevor, were prepared to drop the offending article. At the same time Oxford was faced with the problem of a place bill, which had passed the Commons with the minimum of opposition. In the Lords the Whigs

4 The speakers included Benson, Foley, Hanmer, Pakington, and Shippen. Benson, the chancellor of the exchequer, took the lead and was backed up by moderates like Foley and extremists like Pakington. Hanover Ms. 107a, ff. 96-97. Kreienberg's dispatch to Hanover, London, 25 Jan./5 Feb. 1712.
5 Bodleian Library. Ballard Mss. 8, f. 87v. The bishop of Killaloe to Dr. Charlett, Killaloe, 17 Mar. 1710/11.
supported the bill in order to embarrass the Court and the second reading was carried by a clear majority. Oxford and his colleagues whipped up every possible supporter and every available proxy in time for the meeting of the committee on 29 February. There he was able to defeat the bill by a narrow majority in a very full House. The lord treasurer came in for criticism for defeating this popular measure and for continuing to resist further changes in the commissions and minor offices. The unruly Commons and the narrow majority in the Lords began to depress him.

St. John must have viewed this situation with some satisfaction since it embarrassed the lord treasurer and confirmed the secretary in his opinion that the ministry must rely on its Tory supporters. To emphasise this, to increase his own popularity and influence, and to curtail Oxford's room for manoeuvre, St. John planned to hasten the peace by intimidating the Dutch. On 4 February there was a majority of 150 in the Commons for an attack on the conduct of the allies. Supported by Swift's Some Remarks on the Barrier Treaty and Hanmer's 'State of the Nation' address, St. John opened a

11 Journal to Stella, ii, 504. 4 Mar. 1712.
12 Ibid., ii, 480.
parliamentary attack on the Barrier Treaty, which the previous
administration had signed with the Dutch. When Bothmar, the
Hanoverian envoy, suggested that this should not infringe the clause
by which the Dutch guaranteed the Hanoverian succession, the
secretary saw fit to send him 'a peppering answer'. In the debate
in the Commons, on 14 February, "Mr. St. Johns began to tell the
house of what dangerous consequence this treaty was to England, 'twas
not only a barrier for the Dutch against the French but against the
[English?]... he expatiated very handsomely upon these subjects &
then said other gentlemen that would speak after him woud no doubt lay
the pernicious consequences more home to them." This bitter attack
was seconded by his personal friends Arthur Moore and Sir William
Wyndham. When Nicholas Lechmere suggested that the ministry wished
to censure the Barrier Treaty because it prevented it concluding an
inglorious and ignominious peace, "St. John told him those that had
the honour to be advisers to the Queen abhor'd the French & French
Interest as much as anybody could but 'twas not this treaty that stood
in the way of a good Peace, but from her Majesty's factious subjects
at home, who writ letters abroad & bid the Dutch stand out." Two

13 Ibid., ii, 479. 3 Feb. 1712.
Peter Wentworth to Strafford, London, 15 Feb. 1712; and Hanover
Mss. 107 a, f. 116. Kreienberg's dispatch to Hanover, London,
15/26 Feb. 1712.
days later the Commons voted the Barrier Treaty destructive to the trade and interest of Britain.

St. John made sure that the news of these debates reached The Hague as quickly as possible. Yet it is doubtful whether his campaign in parliament had much success in intimidating the Dutch. He may even have stiffened Dutch resistance to a peace dictated by Britain. The lord treasurer probably had more influence over the Dutch by using persuasion instead of threats. On the home front, however, St. John had scored a significant success. He had delighted the Tories with the attack on the Barrier Treaty and with his declaration that the Dutch would be forced to play their proper part in the war. On 4 March he did nothing to resist, and almost certainly approved, Sir Thomas Hanmer's address to the Queen that the country should not contribute more than her agreed share to the war in Spain. The lord treasurer, meanwhile, seemed much less effective. On 15 February he was taken by surprise when the

15 Commons Journals, xvii, 92.
opposition, including Nottingham and Guernsey, moved an address to the Queen to say that the French peace offers were unsatisfactory. "The Min[iste]rs were afraid of a train of Torys following him [Guernsey] so the I[Id] Treas[ure]r spoke to I[Id] Scarsdale to give it up & immediately ye whole House agreed to it, & then as averse as ye Min[iste]rs had been to it ye I[Id] Treas[ure]r affected to press it on by moving first yt ye Committee shoud immediately withdraw and prepare ye Address wch was done accordingly; but I hear they are very angry with 'emselves & ye Address."

While Oxford was having difficulty in the Lords with both foreign affairs and domestic measures St. John seemed to be establishing his own control over the Commons. In this session he made sure nothing would hold up the voting of supplies. After his disasters in the previous session he now appeared to have recovered his reputation as a parliamentary manager as well as having gained popularity with the Tory backbenchers through his vigorous denunciation of the allies. Swift noted: "The Secrty is much the greatest Commoner

19 Lords Journals, xix, 379; and Journal to Stella, ii, 488-90. 14 and 16 Feb. 1712.
in Eng[lan]d, and turns the whole Parlmnt, who can do nothing without him, and if he lives & has his health, will I believe be one day at the Head of Affairs."  St. John had scored a notable success with the October Club. For one of their evening meetings he was elected president. There were all the signs that the October Club was coming to terms with the ministry.

The secretary, however, was soon to learn that it was no easy task to lead a united Tory party. He seemed to think that all the Tories would docilely follow a vigorous lead, but the divisive nature of the party taught him otherwise. His success with the October Club did not unite the disparate Tory elements. Some of the October Club resented the influence that the ministry had acquired over their erstwhile colleagues, whom they feared had been bought.

At the end of March 1712 this dissident minority broke away to form a new society, the March Club. At first only about 35 strong it soon increased to around fifty members. It included the 'Country party' element, men of estates like Sir Arthur Kaye, member for Yorkshire, who had an inherent dislike of the Court. Those few Tories, who had supported Marlborough and defended the Barrier Treaty, were also members.

22 Journal to Stella, 11, 495.  23 Feb. 1712.
23 Hanover Mss. 107 a, f. 151.  Kreienberg's dispatch, 28 Mar./8 April 1712.
24 Ibid.
They declared that they were for either a good peace or a good war. Like Nottingham, they were suspicious of the ministry's peace proposals and its attitude towards the succession problem. Thus another splinter group of the Tory party had become 'Hanoverian' and had virtually gone into opposition. They were of course only a minority and they left the October Club more than ever under St. John's influence. This was underlined when the March Club excluded from their society both Charles Eversfield and Sir Simeon Stuart, two of the most active members of the October Club, for introducing St. John into that society. The seven commissioners of accounts were also blackballed as instruments of St. John and the lord treasurer.

This new political development again found St. John wanting in the finer arts of parliamentary management. Just when he seemed to have gained control of the Commons the situation became even more confused. Unfortunately for the secretary an incident which involved him personally allowed the March Club to give him a stinging rebuff. The issue arose when a poor family, the Sandes, petitioned the Commons for the recovery of money from Arthur Moore, St. John's close friend, who sought to defend himself by claiming the special privilege of a member of parliament. In a committee of the Commons, on 2 April,

25 Ibid., f. 142. Kreienberg's dispatch, 1/12 April 1712; and The Wentworth Papers, pp. 283-84. Peter Wentworth to Strafford, 8 April 1712.
St. John secured a resolution "that the said petition is frivolous and vexatious." When this was reported to the whole House a great debate ensued. St. John's resolution was supported by his new friends in the October Club, but it was defeated when the March Club joined the Whigs in opposition to it. A month later St. John found himself supporting the March Club against the October men. The latter, led by Stuart, Shippen, and Sir William Barker, planned to tack the bill, to appoint commissioners to examine royal grants of land since 1688, to the lottery bill. The March Club was intent on keeping the two bills separate as it knew the Lords would automatically resist such a 'tack'. The ministry, including St. John, Benson, and Foley, wished to avoid a clash with the Lords at all costs and so it supported the March Club. Yet there was not enough management to prevent the issue coming to a vote, in which the October men were crushed by 300 to 81 votes. Clearly the October men were willing to

26 Hanover Mss. 107a, ff. 195-96. Kreienberg's dispatch, 4/15 April 1712.
27 The Wentworth Papers, pp. 283-84. Peter Wentworth to Strafford, 8 April 1712; and Commons Journals, xvii, 168.
29 Hanover Mss. 107a, ff. 217-220. Kreienberg's dispatch to Hanover, London, 9/20 May 1712; The Correspondence of Rev. Robert Wodrow, i, 291. To his wife, 10 May 1712; and Commons Journals, xvii, 212.
support St. John on some partisan issues, but they had demonstrated that they were not his personal followers nor his dependable allies. Without their support the secretary could not mount a sustained challenge for the leadership of the Tories in the Commons. Without a power base in the Commons St. John had little chance of exercising a dominant influence in the cabinet.

The spectacle of the Tory party in such disarray must have given comfort to all its opponents. Kreienberg observed: "Comme cette affaire passe la raillerie, et que les Ministres se trouvent ainsi brouillés avec le Club d'Octobre aussi bien que celuy de Mars, il est aisé à juger, combien ils sont embarrasés, et combien il sera difficile de retablir la bonne harmonie qu'il y avoit." St. John, after a bright start to the year, seemed to have lost effective control in the Commons. When seven commissioners were chosen to investigate royal grants of land since 1688, five of those chosen were from the March Club and only two from the more manageable October Club. Such a combination could not be denied. The ministry was forced to accept the bill and in the Lords Oxford struggled to get it accepted. On the third reading there was a tie, 78 votes on each side, and the bill was

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30 Hanover Mss. 107 a, f. 220. Kreienberg's dispatch, 9/20 May 1712.
31 Ibid., f. 230. Kreienberg's dispatch, 20/31 May 1712; and Commons Journals, xvii, 222. 13 May 1712.
lost. The opposition not only included Nottingham, but also several Court and Tory peers like Carteret, Northumberland, Argyll, Islay, and Blantyre. Lord Strafford abstained, and neither Cholmondeley nor Radnor would come to Oxford's aid. The ministers were disappointed at this result, but the Tories in the Commons were downright furious. The lord treasurer was bound to come in for the most criticism, but even before this latest set-back St. John himself was becoming disillusioned with the task of trying to manage the dissident Tories. He confessed to Peterborough:

"In all your experience, I may venture to affirm, you never passed through such a scene of confusion and difficulty, as this winter has afforded us; and though we have kept one point steadily in sight, and worked towards it, yet have been forced to shift our course, and try different measures, almost every day.

Faction can invent nothing more ruinous to the public, the rage of woman nothing more barbarous towards particular men, than some of the intrigues which have been lately carried on."

The fortunes of St. John and Oxford and their ability to lead the Tories, either together or singly, depended on the ministry's

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35 Bolingbroke's Corr., ii, 303. Whitehall, 2 May 1712.
ability to make a satisfactory peace. This was not easy when, besides the beginnings of a Hanoverian Tory group and the hostility of recalcitrant allies, the two ministers themselves could not see eye to eye on how to conduct the negotiations. The lord treasurer confessed to Gaultier his unwillingness to confide certain points of the negotiations to St. John. He also kept the secretary in the dark about his discussions with the allies. When he planned to solve the vexed problem of the succession to Spain it was with Shrewsbury that he discussed the unrealistic proposal of handing Spain over to Savoy while Philip secured Sicily and retained his right of succession to the French throne. With his cruder but more incisive diplomatic talents St. John realized that not everyone could be satisfied with the peace terms. He was quite prepared to make a separate peace since he believed the Dutch and the Austrians could not be satisfactorily accommodated when Britain was to secure so much. The problem of Philip V's renunciation of the French crown presented no obstacle to him and, provided the British demands were met, he was

37 R.M. Portland (Harley) papers. Loan 29/10/15. Memorandum dated 25 April 1712.
quite happy to ditch the allies. While Oxford was still trying to placate the Dutch, St. John was prepared to issue them with an ultimatum. Indeed, the secretary seemed quite pleased with the obstinacy of the Dutch: "I begin to wish the Dutch may continue still to be dully obstinate over the Assiento, since we do not want them either to make or superintend the peace, and since it will be better settled for England without their concurrence than with it."

The prospect of imminent peace persuaded the ministry to send the notorious 'restraining orders' to Ormonde, the new commander in chief. St. John wrote to him:

"It is therefore the Queen's positive command to your Grace, that you avoid engaging in any siege, or hazarding a battle, till you have farther orders from her Majesty. I am at the same time, directed to let your Grace know, that the Queen would have you disguise the receipt of this order; and her Majesty thinks that you cannot want pretences for conducting yourself so as to answer her ends, without owning that which might, at present, have an ill effect, if it was publicly known."40

This was bad enough, but, to compound their treachery, the ministers informed Marshal Villars of Ormonde's orders and the two 'enemy' generals began combining to deceive Ormonde's allies. This

39 Ibid., ii, 324. To Strafford, 10 May 1712.
40 Ibid., ii, 320. 10 May 1712. See also, Dartmouth to Ormonde, 10 May 1712. H. M. C., Dartmouth Mas., iii, 75.
41 Ibid. Villars to Ormonde and reply, 14/25 and 15/26 May 1712.
decision, to desert the allies and to make a separate peace should it prove necessary, seemed to smack of St. John's handiwork. In fact St. John always claimed that the orders had originated with Oxford himself and it does seem that the lord treasurer had at last been compelled to make a clear declaration of policy. However, since peace was expected shortly, Oxford may have thought the risk worth taking. There was no doubt that St. John relished the decision and was even prepared to see Villars teach Prince Eugene and the Dutch a lesson.

The Whigs soon suspected that Ormonde had been given orders not to fight and Prince Eugene, who held the same view, seemed to confirm their fears. This naturally led to renewed and vigorous Whig attacks on the ministry's conduct of the peace negotiations. In the Commons St. John played the leading part in defeating a motion critical of Ormonde's refusal to take offensive action. When, in

42 Burnet, vi, 128n; and Bolingbroke's Defence of the Treaty of Utrecht, ed. G. M. Trevelyan, p. 130.
44 Gaultier to Torcy, 21 May 1712. Cited by Churchill, iv, 542.
another debate, Hampden spoke of the trifling peace negotiations, "Mr. Secretary St. John, highly piqued at, and resenting that Expression, said, 'It reflected on her Majesty and her Ministers, and that some had been sent to the Tower for less Offences.'" In the Lords, Poulett, just as rattled as the secretary, made such a malicious attack on Marlborough's generalship that there was some danger of a duel being fought between them. Oxford tried to moderate the temper of the debate and suggested that there was little point in sacrificing lives needlessly when the terms of peace were expected any day. He succeeded in defeating the Whig motion by a substantial majority. A few days later, on 6 June, the Queen was able to present parliament with the terms on which Britain could make peace. These included the acquisition of Gibraltar, Minorca,

47 Commons Debates, iv, 310.
49 Journal to Stella, ii, 537. 31 May 1712. Swift added: "It was reckoned as a wrong Step in Politicks for Ld Treas[ure]r to open himself so much. The Secrty would not go so far to satisfy the Whigs in the House of Commons: but there all went swimmingly." This difference was partly due to the more delicate balance of parties in the Lords, but also to the lord treasurer's natural instinct not to antagonise the opposition. St. John was prepared to be brutal in defence of the peace negotiations.
50 Coxe, v, 197; and Lords Journals, xix, 461.
Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Hudson Bay, and trading concessions, in addition to the Assiento, though these had not been finally settled. The Queen did not think fit to determine what the allies should gain, though she promised her support for 'just and reasonable satisfaction'. Sir John Stonehouse, one of St. John's lieutenants, proposed an address of thanks and the secretary himself skilfully avoided any division by the Whigs. The opposition in the Lords proposed an amendment to the effect that Britain should work closely with the allies. This was heavily defeated by 81 to 36 votes. The opposition to the peace was clearly crumbling and, according to Kreienberg, no fewer than thirteen peers deserted the opposition on this occasion. The ministry had certainly recovered from the trough of December 1711 and St. John, at least, was determined to emphasize its ascendancy. He led the October Club in a motion of censure on the bishop of St. Asaph's Four Sermons, whose preface was regarded as "malicious and factious, highly reflecting upon the present Administration of publick Affairs under her Majesty, and tending to

51 Commons Journals, xvii, 258-59.
52 Hanover Mss. 107a, f. 256. Kreienberg's dispatch, 10/21 June 1712.
create discord and sedition amongst her subjects." At the same
time St. John, supported by Henry Campion of the October Club,
attacked the publication of A Letter from the States General to the
Queen of Great Britain, which was highly critical of the peace
negotiations. A week later, on 17 June, St. John easily prevented
the Whigs springing a surprise in a thin House. An address, urging
that the allies should be asked to guarantee the Hanoverian
succession, was defeated by 133 to 48 votes.

The ministry had recovered astonishingly well from the
débâcle of December 1711. In the debates of June 1712 the ministers
saw that peace now commanded widespread support both in parliament
and in the country as a whole. The peace terms, vague as some of
them were, were sufficiently advantageous to Britain for the majority
of people to ignore the protests of the allies and even the expressions
of dissatisfaction emanating from Hanover. The government was

54 Ibid.; Bodleian Library. Add. Ms. D23, f. 73. Bishop of
St. Asaph to Bishop Burnet, 17 June 1712; Commons Journals, xvii,
263; Hanover Mss. 107a, f. 262. Kreienberg’s dispatch,
13/24 June 1712.
55 Ibid.
56 R.M. Add. Ms. 37272, ff. 121-22. St. John to Bishop Robinson,
Whitehall, 18 June 1712; and Commons Journals, xvii, 271.
57 Thomas Harley was sent on a special mission to Hanover to persuade
the electoral family of the country’s need for peace and of the
ministry’s loyalty to the Hanoverian succession. R.M. Add. Ms.
40621, ff. 103-147. Letters to Thomas Harley from St. John,
persuaded to bully the allies into a peace and to discipline some of its rebellious placemen at home. These moves represented a victory for St. John. With the allies the lord treasurer's tactics of speaking fair words became less successful and he found it difficult to answer St. John's demands for an immediate peace, with or without the allies. Oxford had also failed in his grand design of handing Spain over to Savoy and St. John was not prepared to make difficulties on the niceties of Philip's renunciation of the French throne. Though Oxford carefully kept copies of the secretary's correspondence with Torcy, he was not able to prevent St. John making the running in the negotiations in the summer of 1712. His bold and imperious temperament led St. John to drastic and high handed action against the allies. He substituted insensitive brow-beating for subtle diplomacy. Ormonde was ordered to leave the confederate army and to march to Dunkirk, which the French had agreed to hand over as an earnest of their good faith. If the Dutch endeavoured to withhold supplies during the march then force was to be used. The residents of the auxiliary powers with troops in British pay were called to the secretary's office, on 20 June, and he ordered them to make sure their troops followed Ormonde's orders or else Britain would

58 R.M. Portland (Harley) papers. Loan 29/163/8.
refuse to pay them. The threat was not very effective for most of these troops preferred to remain with Prince Eugene, much to Bolingbroke's annoyance. The whole ministry, even Oxford, was furious with the allies and anxious for peace, though some ministers (perhaps Dartmouth, Shrewsbury, and Buckingham) bitterly regretted the armistice with France and the prospect of a separate peace.

In fact the minor French victory at Denain helped to push the Dutch towards renewed co-operation with Britain.

In addition to the tension within the ministry, especially between St. John and Oxford, on the conduct of the peace negotiations, there was renewed friction on the domestic front over changes made in the composition of the government. Now that Ormonde had become commander in chief and had to spend a considerable time abroad some thought had to be given to replacing him as lord lieutenant of Ireland.

59 Bolingbroke's Corr., 11, 369-84. To Ormonde, Whitehall, 7, 11, 14, and 20 June 1712.
The lord treasurer hoped Shrewsbury would fill the post, but the duke declined it, explaining that the only way to pacify Ireland was to make concessions to the Whigs there, which would irritate the Tories in both countries. For the time being, Ormonde had to retain both his posts as Oxford could not find a man to suit his taste for the post in Ireland. In the minor ranks of government he was prepared to make a number of changes to satisfy his Tory critics. The new board of trade and plantations was made up entirely of Tories, and two Whigs, George Baillie and Charles Turner, were dismissed. The Whig lieutenant-general Erle, though a former crony of St. John's, was dismissed from all his posts, including the governorship of Portsmouth and the lieutenant-generalship of the ordnance. Lieutenant-general Webb, the Tory hero, was appointed commander-in-chief of the land forces in England, while Argyll, to repay him for his disappointment in Spain, was given a similar post in Scotland. Lord Lansdowne was moved to the comptrollership of the household, from which Mansell was transferred to a tellership of the exchequer in place of the Whig.

63 B.M. Portland (Harley) papers. Loan 29/159/1. Shrewsbury to Oxford, 4 April 1712.
64 Journal to Stella, ii, 544. 1 July 1712.
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John Smith. All these moves reflected Oxford's influence since those rewarded were personal adherents, courtiers, or, at the worst, moderate Tories. Nevertheless, since the ministry was now more dependent upon Tory support and the challenge from St. John was more serious, a few posts had to be given to men less amenable to the lord treasurer's influence and less willing to follow a non-partisan role.

Sir William Wyndham, St. John's close friend, became secretary at war. Charles Eversfield, a leading member of the October Club and an active supporter of the secretary in recent debates, took over the posts of treasurer and paymaster of the ordnance. Sir William Pole, a member of the March Club, was appointed master of the household. St. John's new ally, Jack Hill, was made lieutenant-general of the ordnance and was also sent out as governor of Dunkirk to supervise the destruction of the fortifications.

Henry St. John himself was rewarded, for his exertions in the Commons and for his work on the peace negotiations, with the long-awaited peerage. It had generally been expected, not least by St. John himself, that he would obtain an earldom as had Harley in 1711.


Instead, he was given a viscountcy. This was such a blow to his pride that he even offered to remain in the Commons and almost decided against the title of Bolingbroke, which, as an earldom, had belonged to the senior branch of his family. The viscountcy seemed to him a blow to his ambition, to his prestige, and to his family. The decision to deny him an earldom may well have been the Queen's, as Oxford claimed, but the secretary thought he could detect the lord treasurer's baleful influence behind it. He complained bitterly to Lord Strafford:

"My promotion was a mortification to me. In the House of Commons, I may say, that I was at the head of business, and I must have continued so, whether I had been in court or out of court. There was therefore nothing to flatter my ambition in removing me from thence, but giving me the title which had been many years in my family.... To make me a peer was no great compliment, when so many others were forced to be made to gain a strength in Parliament [in December 1711]... Thus far, there seems to be nothing done for my sake, or as a mark of favour to me in particular; ... I own to you that I felt more indignation than ever in my life I had

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68 On 3 July St. John wrote to Oxford: "I am perfectly satisfied to continue in the House of Commons, and if I did some little service in the last session I will endeavour to do more in the next."

H. M. C., Portland Mss., v, 198.

69 Journal to Stella, ii, 545.

70 H. M. C., Portland Mss., v, 466. Oxford's account of his administration. This defence was made before the Queen's death and so Oxford would have been careful to avoid being caught by the Queen telling lies.
done; and the only consideration which kept me from running to extremities, was that which should have inclined somebody [Oxford] to use me better. I knew that any appearance of breach between myself and the Lord Treasurer, would give our common enemies spirit, and that if I declined serving at this conjuncture, the home part of the business would, at least for some time, proceed but lamely. To friendship therefore, and the public good, if I may be pardoned so vain an expression, I sacrificed my private resentment, and remain clothed with as little of the Queen's favour as she could contrive to bestow."71

Despite this show of self-sacrifice Bolingbroke never forgot the incident. The viscountcy was the final straw in his strained relations with Oxford. As well as the personal antagonism and the widening differences in political strategy, Bolingbroke now believed that his services to the Tories and to the ministry would never be adequately rewarded while Oxford remained the leader of both. It spurred him to further efforts to achieve his own salvation. After leaving the Commons as the commanding personality he had no intention of going to the Lords merely to play second fiddle to Oxford.

Meanwhile, the peace negotiations at Utrecht were progressing but slowly and several outstanding problems remained to be settled. The adjustments for the allies had still to be arranged and

71 Bolingbroke's Corr., ii, 484-85. 23 July 1712.
72 In A Letter to Sir William Wyndham, p. 31, he wrote: "I was dragged into the house of lords in such a manner; as to make my promotion a punishment, not a reward."
even Britain's interests in North America and her commercial relations with France and Spain remained unsatisfied. In order to speed up negotiations the French pressed Britain to send a responsible minister to Paris to renew direct consultations. Partly under pressure and partly to soothe Bolingbroke's ruffled pride Oxford agreed to send the secretary, though he clearly believed he should confine himself to discussing the interest of the duke of Savoy. Certainly Bolingbroke's instructions carefully avoided any mention of a separate peace. He was "to have especial care to avoid entangling us in any new engagements" or "any stipulation which may oblige us to make war, and especially with our old Allies, in order to procure this settlement." At first Bolingbroke, who was accompanied by Gaultier and Matthew Prior, concentrated on gaining some of the demands for Savoy. He also managed to extend the armistice and he made no difficulty about the form of Philip V's renunciation of the French throne, which needed to be made more water-tight after recent deaths in the French royal family. Bolingbroke, who was delighted with


74 Bolingbroke's Corr., iii, 2n - 6n.

75 Ibid., iii, 1-23. To Dartmouth, Fontainebleau, 21 Aug. 1712. N.S.
his magnificent reception, spun out his visit for another week and attempted to give a very different turn to the peace negotiations. With the encouragement of the French ministers he tried to take a decisive step in the direction of a separate peace. For some time he had been convinced that a separate treaty would best serve British interests and force the recalcitrant allies to make what terms they could at an early date. Before he left Paris he gave Louis XIV and Torcy to understand that as soon as the renunciation was signed by Philip, peace could be signed between Britain, France, and Savoy. French demands could then be imposed on the Dutch and the Imperialists. He was quite prepared to let the French have Condé and Tournai, and he urged the French to settle all outstanding problems as rapidly as possible before the Dutch agreed to peace and the ministry had to support their demands.

Bolingbroke had exceeded his instructions, but he was not in fact able to accomplish his designs. Oxford saw to that. The lord treasurer had always opposed the idea of a separate peace and he now set about slowing down the pace of the Anglo-French entente until the Dutch could be persuaded to make peace. This was facilitated by putting Dartmouth in charge of the correspondence with Torcy and with

Prior, who had been left behind in Paris. This was quite in order as Dartmouth was secretary for the southern department, but in view of the extraordinary position Bolingbroke had won for himself in the negotiations this was a deliberate rebuff. Torcy was dismayed and he kept up his correspondence with Bolingbroke, but it was some months before Dartmouth's intrusion could be neutralized. Under pressure Bolingbroke had to remind the English plenipotentiaries that there would be no separate peace. The secretary resented what he regarded as Oxford's obstructive tactics and faint-hearted policy. During September there was growing friction between them. Bolingbroke stayed away from his office, though, on a number of occasions, he visited the Queen and Lady Masham with letters from Torcy, presumably to win support for his own conduct. Swift tried once more to shore up the rift in the ministry, but the dispute grew more bitter until there was an explosion in the cabinet on 28 September.

In this meeting the ministers angrily discussed the whole conduct of the peace negotiations and the respective merits of each other's conduct. Buckingham, who had long felt uneasy with all his

77 Ibid., pp. 576, 581.
78 Ibid., pp. 587-588.
79 Journal to Stella, ii, 556 and 568. 15 and 28 Sept. 1712.
colleagues' policies, was highly critical of the whole negotiation and
he accused the leading ministers of selling their country for a paltry
armistice. Bolingbroke criticised Oxford for irresolution and
Dartmouth for incompetence. He suggested that the matter should be
put to the test through a general election. On this, though for
different reasons, Buckingham, Harcourt, and Shrewsbury were prepared
to support him, but the idea was opposed by Oxford, Dartmouth and
Poulett. The lord treasurer's reply was crushing. He openly
upbraided Bolingbroke for going beyond his instructions and for
misconduct in Paris. He accused him of seeking a separate peace and
of making open-handed promises to the French, which had made them
reluctant to come to terms with the allies. All this had delayed the
chance of a general peace. With the Dutch now willing to come into
the negotiations the ministry must press for Tournai for their
Barrier. This withering attack convinced Harcourt, a friend of
Bolingbroke though by instinct a trimmer, to come out against a
separate peace. Buckingham and Shrewsbury probably joined him in
deciding against a dissolution. Left unsupported Bolingbroke was

80 For this crucial cabinet meeting see: Hanover Mss. 107a, ff. 320,
L'Hermitage's dispatches to the States General, 7, 14, and 18 Oct.
1712 N.S.; The Correspondence of Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough,
pp. 82-83. Arthur Maywaring to the duchess, 29 Sept. 1712;
Lincoln Record Office. Monson Mss. 7/12/197. Penistone Lamb to
Continued
forced to back down. He was compelled to tell Strafford that the French had interpreted the remarks he had made in Paris incorrectly. To Torcy he had to write an apologetic letter admitting that Britain would support the Dutch pretensions. The secretary had failed to by-pass Oxford's peace plan of 1711, which had envisaged agreement with the Dutch.

Oxford’s attack on Bolingbroke at this cabinet meeting did not stop with his criticisms of the secretary's handling of the peace negotiations. Bolingbroke had met the Pretender and he had told Torcy that many people in England hoped that the Pretender would not settle too far from her shores. The lord treasurer regarded this as the height of folly. He even gave Hanover to understand that Bolingbroke would be dismissed. In fact some kind of reconciliation was patched up yet again. Bolingbroke retired to Bucklebury for a few days to lick his wounds, the Queen cried all night, and Lady Masham left Windsor in a rage. Kreienberg believed that the ministers had only

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81 Bolingbroke's Corr., iii, 130-34.
82 Ibid., iii, 125-30.
84 H. M. G., Portland Mss., v, 285 and 466; James Macpherson's Original Papers, ii, 358-59; and Hanover Mss. 107 a., ff. 330-331.
Kreienberg's dispatch, 10/23 Oct. 1712.
narrowly avoided an open rupture and that further disputes between Dartmouth and Bolingbroke were inevitable. Bolingbroke was, in fact, soon conducting a deliberate policy to oust Dartmouth from the peace negotiations or at least to intimidate him. Erasmus Lewis reported to the lord treasurer: "I have been this morning with my Lord D[artmouth], who tells me Lord B[olingbroke] treated him last night on two or three occasions in so rough a manner that he believes it will be impossible for you to find any expedient to keep them together." Dartmouth believed Bolingbroke could not be dismissed and so he offered to resign. This was the last thing that the lord treasurer wanted and so, backed by the Queen, he persuaded Dartmouth to soldier on. Oxford had confirmed his authority within the cabinet and his control over the peace negotiations. Although the Queen was less satisfied with his conduct than before he was still the dominant influence at Court. When six new knights of the garter were chosen, the highly-prized ribbons went to Oxford, Beaufort, Kent, Hamilton, Poulett, and Strafford. The last five could hardly match Bolingbroke's

86 H.M.C., Portland Mss., v, 234. 13 Oct. 1712.
services to the ministry or the Tory party, yet he had to be content
with the post of lord lieutenant of Essex. His efforts to dominate
the ministry and its policies had clearly failed.

This was far from meaning that Bolingbroke's power and
influence were insignificant. The cabinet spent weeks discussing the
peace offers which ought to be made to the allies and the new
projected Barrier Treaty for the Dutch. There were disagreements
which the lord treasurer seemed unable to resolve. This allowed the
more decisive Bolingbroke to devise a Barrier Treaty, which was studded
with reflections on the 1709 treaty and which was intended to cut down
the advantages to Dutch trade in the Spanish Netherlands to a bare
minimum. It was also Bolingbroke, this time supported by the Queen
herself, who pressed for the dispatch of an ambassador to Versailles to
speed up discussions on North America and commercial rights. The
first choice for this important embassy was the duke of Hamilton, a
strange selection in view of his known Jacobite sympathies.

89 Boyer's Political State, iv, 261-62; and Bedford Record Office.
L30/8/47/1. Lord Masham to Kent, Kensington, 21 Oct. 1712.
90 A. D. Maclachlan, 'The Great Peace. Negotiations for the Treaty of
Utrecht 1710-1713', unpublished Cambridge University Ph.D. thesis
91 H.M.C. Bath Mss., i, 223. Queen to Oxford, 13 Nov. 1712; and
Dec. 1711 as printed].
92 E. M. Add. Ms. 31144, f. 297. Peter Wentworth to Lord Strafford,
Windsor, 8 Sept. 1712.
Possibly as a result of a Whig plot, Hamilton was killed in a duel before he could leave for France. The more moderate and pro-Hanoverian duke of Shrewsbury replaced him, though Matthew Prior did much of the actual work. Bolingbroke played the leading rôle in instructing them and in pressing the French to come to terms. He was determined to secure Britain's interests in Newfoundland, Cape Breton Island, and Nova Scotia. When the French employed delaying tactics, hoping that Britain would accept poorer terms rather than drag on negotiations, Bolingbroke became angry. He instructed Matthew Prior:

"We stand indeed on the brink of a precipice, but the French stand there too. Pray tell Monsieur de Torcy from me, that he may get Robin [Oxford] and Harry hanged; but affairs will soon run back into so much confusion, that he will wish us alive again. To speak seriously, unless the Queen can talk of her interest as determined with France, and unless your Court will keep our allies in the wrong, as they are sufficiently at this time, I foresee inextricable difficulties."  

Three days later he added: "Make the French ashamed of their sneaking chicane; by heaven, they treat like pedlars, or, which is worse, like attorneys." When words failed to persuade the French, Bolingbroke

warned them that supplies would be raised for a new campaign. The French gave way, though they put a good face on it.

The treaty of Utrecht was not an unsuccessful peace, as the next two decades were to show, but it had many unsatisfactory features. These were largely due to Britain's desire for peace, the ministry's need to accomplish it to survive, and the rivalry between Oxford and Bolingbroke. The lord treasurer had resisted Bolingbroke's attempts to sign a separate peace, but he had been prepared to force the allies to come to terms. He had at least connived at the notorious 'restraining orders' to Ormonde and he had joined Bolingbroke in blatantly betraying Prince Eugene's plans to the French. Though he succeeded in getting the Dutch to join in the peace negotiations he had not safeguarded their commercial interests and they had to accept a reduced barrier. He was almost as willing as Bolingbroke to ditch the Austrians, who were left to make a separate peace. Both the ministers had done little, and that late, to remove the Pretender from France.

97 Ibid., iii, 497-99. Torcy to Bolingbroke, 8 Mar. 1713. The peace was signed on 31 March 1713. The full treaty can be seen in A Collection of Treaties between Great Britain and other powers, ed. George Chalmers (London, 1790), i, 340-90.
What Oxford did with extreme reluctance and under pressure, Bolingbroke did cheerfully and willingly. The secretary was prepared, without much compunction, to wash his hands of the Catalans and he agreed to some terms which were far from satisfactory. The agreement over Newfoundland was not complete and the commercial treaties with France and Spain, which were such failures, owed much more to Bolingbroke than to Oxford.

Thus, as the latest historian of the peace has shown, there was a strange paradox about the treaty of Utrecht. Oxford, to an infinitely greater degree than is realized, controlled the negotiations. The main outlines of the British gains, at least, had been decided before Bolingbroke was even aware that any discussions were in progress. The secretary's efforts to make a quick and, if need be, a separate peace, were successfully resisted by Oxford. Thus, much of the basis of the final terms were due to the lord treasurer. Yet his methods were devious, confusing, and less than frank. He tended to get caught up in the threads of his own cunning. In contrast, Bolingbroke saw clearly what the grumbling, discontented Tories desired.

100 H.M.C., House of Lords Misc., x, 258-263. Letters concerning the Catalans, Jan.-April 1713; and Lords Debates, 11, 411-12. 2 and 5 April 1712.
and how far they would support his policy of safeguarding British interests rather than those of the Grand Alliance. His later defence of the statesmanlike qualities of the treaty and frank admission of some of its weaknesses was a deliberate appeal to a new generation and an admiring posterity. At the time he was prepared to ignore inconvenient problems and he sought to erase facts in order to achieve a peace which would satisfy Tory opinion at home and bolster his own reputation. In the last stages of the negotiations he made the running and clinched a peace which was popular and relatively successful, if weak in some of its terms and 'perfidious' in some of its implications. It was a more satisfactory peace than he would have made but for Oxford. Yet "in the long run ... it was Bolingbroke's victory. He alone had fully appreciated that the country was prepared to sacrifice its allies for peace, and consequently, it was he who was best able to accomplish a revolution in English policy by friendship with France."

The French procrastination in the final stages of the peace negotiations caused the ministry considerable trouble on the home front. The opposition continued sniping at the terms being discussed at

Utrecht. The leading ministers had less to fear from the Whigs
than from the dissatisfaction of the Tory backbenchers and from
divisions within the ministry. The backbenchers and some friends of
the ministry became very disgruntled as parliament was prorogued time
and again because the peace was delayed. White Kennett noted:
"H[anmer] has been very obstinate and very free: D[uke] Arg[yll]
extremely angry, and even L[ord] Pet[erborough] talks strange things
and some weak Tory memb[ers] of each house are frighted into an
apprehens[ion] that they have been deceiv'd." According to Swift,
Sir Thomas Hanmer returned to England from a visit to Flanders "much
out of Humor with things, he thinks the Peace is kept off too long;
& is full of Fears and doubts." The Tory country gentlemen were
particularly anxious to end the war in order to reduce the burden of
the land tax. In January 1713, Lord Berkeley was telling Lord
Strafford that the squires would take it very ill if the land tax was

103 See, Bolingbroke's Corr., 111, 491. To Lord Orrery, 6 Mar. 1713;
and R.M. Portland (Harley) papers. Loan 29/159/4. Oxford to
Monsr. de Grote, 9/20 Feb. 1713, warning him not to alienate the
clergy and gentry by supporting the Whig opponents of the peace.
104 B.M. Lansdowne Ms. 1013, f. 187v. To Rev. Sam. Blackwell,
17 Jan. 1712/13. Cf. Hanover Ms. 113a, ff. 5-6. Kreienberg's
dispatch, 6/17 Jan. 1713.
105 Journal to Stella, 11, 625. 22 Feb. 1713.
106 not reduced by two shillings in the pound. By March the ministers had conceded that this was necessary to please their supporters.

With the procrastination of the French, the sniping of the Whigs, and the rumblings of discontent from the Tory rank and file, it was not surprising that the nerves of the ministers became frayed. The differences between Bolingbroke and Oxford again came out into the open. Once more Bolingbroke's solution to the problems facing the ministry was to urge bolder action. Abroad, as we have seen, he threatened the French with a renewal of the war and at home he wanted the dismissal of all the Whigs still in office. Cadogan did indeed lose all his remaining posts in January 1713, but this did not satisfy either Bolingbroke or the Tories in general. Bolingbroke was particularly anxious to dismiss two Whigs, Lord Chief Justice Parker and Lord Cholmondeley, the treasurer of the household, both of whom openly opposed the peace. Even Bromley, now a loyal lieutenant of the lord treasurer's, urged Oxford to appease the Tories with changes, at least in the Church.

106 R.M. Add. Ms. 22220, f. 50. 7 Jan. 1713.
110 Journal to Stella, ii, 656. 7 April 1713.
111 R.M. Portland (Harley) papers. Loan 29/200. 18 Feb. 1713.

Omitted from the end of the letter in H.M.C., Portland Mss., v, 297.
What gave an added edge to Bolingbroke's discontent with Oxford's conduct and leadership were the meetings the lord treasurer continued to arrange with the Whig opposition. Oxford was not necessarily plotting to betray his Tory colleagues. He may have been trying to smooth the way for the new parliamentary session. There were several good cards he could play. The peace was popular, there were still Whigs in office, and he could also threaten to lead parliamentary attacks on the late Whig ministers. All these points gave him the opportunity to offer the Whigs a quid pro quo: accept the peace and no action would be taken against them and their supporters. Nevertheless, the rumours floating about did imply that the lord treasurer was prepared to ditch the Tories once the peace was signed. Bolingbroke grew increasingly uneasy for he knew that he would not be able to effect a reconciliation with the Whigs. On 3 March, he protested to Shrewsbury: "I cannot help saying, in the fullness of my soul to your Grace, that if we do not establish ourselves, and the true interest of our country, it is the Queen's and Treasurer's fault." After one meeting with the Whigs at Halifax's


113 Bolingbroke's Corr., iii, 488-89.
house several Tory peers taxed the lord treasurer, who expressed surprise that he was not trusted more.

The pressure from the Tories was such that Oxford was again forced to make concessions. Several changes were made. In April, Harcourt was promoted to lord chancellor, while Lord Cholmondeley and Sir Richard Temple, 'the greatest Whig in the Army', were dismissed. By June, the reluctant lord treasurer had retreated a few more inches. Dorset was removed from his post as warden of the Cinque ports and Bolingbroke was at last successful in obtaining a bishopric for Francis Atterbury. These changes were wrung out of Oxford only after persistent pressure. Some kind of political reconciliation was again patched up between him and Bolingbroke even though Swift, still on good terms with them both, was far too hopeful in congratulating himself on their renewed friendship. There were few signs of any identity of political interest between them, apart from the desire to complete the peace. The personal friendship was certainly dead.

After several prorogations parliament finally met on 9 April 1713 when the Queen informed both Houses that the peace had finally

115 Journal to Stella, ii, 656. 7 and 8 April 1713.
116 Bodleian Library. Rawlinson Ms. Letter 92, f. 563. R.G. to Dr. Turner, House of Commons, 11 June 1713.
117 Journal to Stella, ii, 656. 8 April 1713.
been signed. The nation as a whole was delighted that the war was at last over and there were numerous loyal addresses from the constituencies. The ministry considered that the opposition might raise such issues as the way Spain had been left in Bourbon hands, but it knew it could always instigate a debate into the state of the nation, stressing the terrible burden of the late war, which the Whigs would have prolonged indefinitely for purely selfish motives. In the event the debates in parliament showed that the steam was going out of the opposition's objections in view of the evident popularity of the peace. In the Lords, the Tory duke of Beaufort, who had been a supporter of the October Club and other former critics of the ministry, moved for an address of thanks to the Queen. This spoke of "the greatest joy and satisfaction ... that peace is concluded."

An opposition amendment, that the treaties of peace and commerce should be immediately laid before the House, was easily defeated. Lord Guernsey and the Tory bishop of Chester joined Nottingham in voting with the opposition, but they were a very small shadow on the

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118 See, for example, the address from New Windsor. Berkshire Record Office. Braybrooke Mss. D/EN 0/16/1. Most of them were published in the London Gazette.

119 R.M. Portland (Harley) papers. Loan 29/164/9. 'Concerning the Peace', by Dr. Arbuthnot, 16 April 1713.

120 Lords Journals, xix, 515; and Lords Debates, ii, 393.

ministry's triumph. In the Commons, there was no division on the motion for an address of thanks. The same opposition amendment as the Whig peers had suggested was passed only after the ministry had secured the addition of the words 'in due time', which completely nullified it. One minor amendment was crushed by the huge majority of 231 to 49 votes. This reflected the general popularity of the peace. Sir Thomas Hanmer, who had previously shown signs of discontent with the ministry's peace negotiations and who was soon to lead the rebellion against the treaty of commerce with France, was on this occasion one of the leading supporters of the address of thanks.

The ministry was enjoying a moment of triumph and this was prolonged when it proceeded to other measures to please the Tory backbenchers. The demands for a reduction of the tax burden were accepted. On 15 April, the Commons moved that Sir Thomas Hanmer should bring in a bill to appoint commissioners to examine the cost of the war in recent years. Six days later the navy was reduced and,

122 Commons Journals, xvii, 278.
123 Commons Debates, iv, 336-38.
124 Commons Journals, xvii, 281.
126 Commons Journals, xvii, 238 et seq.
on the 23rd, a committee of the whole House voted to halve the land 127
tax. At last the ministry seemed to be playing the kind of Tory game, which Bolingbroke had long suggested. Lord Berkeley reported:

"The house of commons hath pleas'd a great part of ye nation with taking two shillings off the land, and were unanimous in it."

This satisfaction of Tory demands may have persuaded the backbenchers not to join the country Whigs in supporting a place bill which would embarrass the ministry. The attempt simply to secure the bill a second reading was heavily defeated by 216 to 87 votes. The country Whigs' desperate policy of tacking it to the malt tax also failed.

The quiet and satisfactory start to the session did not portend the disasters ahead for the ministry and the Tory party. The real test came with the discussions on the treaty of commerce with France. Bolingbroke was deeply interested in this treaty which he felt would lead to closer relations with France. This political and diplomatic aim led him into paying less attention to the implications of

127 Ibid., 298 and 300.
129 Commons Journals, xvii, 308 and 352.
130 Ibid., 354; Berkshire Record Office. Downshire papers. Trumbull Mss. Vol. 11. Thomas Bateman to Sir William Trumbull, 15 May 1713; and H.M.C., Polwarth Mss., 1, 10. George Baillie to Lord Marchmont, 16 May 1713.
and reaction to the commercial terms. Articles eight and nine, and
to a lesser extent article ten, were soon seized upon by critics of
the treaty. Bolingbroke laid great store on it and, though he
envisaged some opposition, he hoped parliament would ratify it.
In its early stages the bill to ratify the treaty had the united
support of the ministry. Bolingbroke's personal friends, Arthur
Moore and Sir William Wyndham, ministerialists like William Lowndes
and Robert Benson, and adherents of the lord treasurer, such as
Edward Harley and Sir Robert Davers, were all active in support of the
bill. Yet the second reading was only passed by the narrow
majority of 122 to 97 votes in a thin House. This should have
served as a warning to Bolingbroke especially as some Tories had
opposed the bill at all the early stages. Moreover, a positive
flood of petitions to the Commons was building up from all those
merchants and traders, who believed that they would suffer if the treaty
was ratified. The gist of all these petitions was that some

131 R.M. Add. Ms. 37273, f. 178. Bolingbroke to the lords
plenipotentiary, 7 April 1713.
132 Hanover Ms. 113a, ff. 70-72. Kreienberg's dispatches to Hanover,
London, 5/16 and 8/19 May 1713.
133 Commons Journals, xvii, 315.
134 Ibid., 314-15. 9 and 11 May 1713. On the first and second
readings one of the opposition tellers was a Tory.
135 For a list of the petitions see, Calendar of Treasury Books, 1713,
xxvii, part one, pp. vi-vii and xxii-xxiv. For the different
reactions to the petitions see, R.M. Add. Ms. 36772, ff. 32-33v.
Thomas Burnett to George Duckett, n.d. but June 1713.
improvement in trade with France would not compensate for the much greater damage which would be done to Britain's trade in wool and other textiles. In the debate outside parliament similar arguments against the bill appeared, especially in Charles King's British Merchant. In contrast, the defence of the treaty, mainly by Defoe, was neither widely canvassed nor forcibly made. It may well have been that Bolingbroke and his supporters could not combat the economic arguments of the Whigs and they did not dare reveal their real motive for pushing on with the treaty. Bolingbroke was well aware of the value of propaganda and he could have employed Swift's highly effective pen, but to proclaim his desire for closer relations with France would cast suspicion on his loyalty to the Hanoverian succession.

On 14 May, a committee of the house of Commons discussed for ten hours the question of bringing in a bill to make effectual the eighth and ninth articles of the treaty of commerce, the two clauses arousing most opposition. The motion again received the backing of a cross-section of the ministry, including Sir William Wyndham, Edward Harley, and William Lowndes, and, at this stage, it had the support of Sir Thomas Hanmer. There was a substantial majority for the bill,

136 In The Mercator and Considerations upon the Eighth and Ninth Articles of the Treaty of Commerce (London, 1713).
137 H.M.C., House of Lords Mss., x, p. xiv.
252 to 130 votes, though there were many Tories in the minority. This sizeable defection could not persuade Bolingbroke to abandon the bill. Instead, the ministry tried to outmanoeuvre the opposition. When the committee reported the resolution to bring in the bill the ministry waited until the opposition had left the House before it put it to the vote. It was accepted by 146 to a mere 12 votes. This decision was followed by more and more petitions from merchants. The ministers at last began to have second thoughts on the wisdom of proceeding with the commercial treaty. Rumour had it that the bill would be quietly dropped. Bolingbroke was not prepared to retreat. He had staked his reputation on the treaty, he hoped it would force the ministry to follow his lead, and he was temperamentally opposed to retreat, manoeuvre, and conciliation.

Nevertheless, it was more than two weeks before the bill was presented to the Commons. The majorities on the first two readings were satisfactory if not exactly encouraging. Yet there was no premonition of the coming disaster. The crisis came on 18 June when

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138 Hanover Mss. 113a, ff. 76 and 105-6. Kreienberg's dispatches, 15/26 May 1713; and Commons Debates, v, 11.
139 Commons Journals, xvii, 354; and Hanover Mss. 113a, ff. 105-6. Kreienberg's dispatch, 15/26 May 1713.
140 Ibid., ff. 110 and 113. Kreienberg's dispatches, 22 May/2 June and 26 May/6 June 1713.
141 Commons Journals, xvii, 386 and 402. The majorities were 147-89, 148-86, and 202-135 votes.
the Commons met to consider the amendments made in committee. The
debate was both warm and long, with many members anxious to make a
speech. The bill again had the combined support of Bolingbroke's
friends, adherents of Oxford, and some prominent backbenchers.
Ominously, a few of the leading backbenchers, like Francis Armesley
and Sir Arthur Kaye, opposed the bill. The turning point came
when Sir Thomas Hanmer, the most highly respected Tory backbencher,
rose to attack the eighth and ninth articles of the commercial treaty.
He declared:

"That before he had examin'd the Affair in Question to
the Bottom, he had given his Vote for the bringing in
the Bill to make the VIIIth and IXth Articles of the
Treaty of Commerce effectual; but, that having
afterwards maturely weigh'd and consider'd the
Allegations of the Merchants, Traders, and Manufacturers,
in their several Petitions and Representations, he was
convinc'd, that the passing of this Bill would be of
great Prejudice to the Woollen and Silk Manufacturers of
the Kingdom; consequently encrease the number of the
Poor, and so, in the End, affect the Land. That, while
he had the Honour to sit in that House, he would never
be blindly led by any Ministry; neither, on the other
Hand, was he byass'd by what might weigh with some Men,
viz. the fear of losing their Elections: But that the
Principles upon which he acted, were the Interest of his
Country, and the Conviction of his Judgment, and upon
those two Considerations alone, he was against the Bill."144

142 Commons Debates, v, 41.
143 Ibid. Among those who spoke in favour of the bill were Arthur
Moore, Thomas Foley, Edward Harley, Charles Caesar, Henry Campion,
144 Ibid., v, 40.
Hanmer's independence and integrity were so widely recognised that it was not surprising that his arguments and oratory on this occasion swayed many other unimpeachable Tories. The bill was defeated by 194 to 185 votes. It was significant that the tellers for the majority were two members of the March Club, Lord Downe and Sir Arthur Kaye. It is also clear from the size of the vote that there was a fair number of abstainers. The scale of the Tory revolt can be gauged by an examination of the extant lists of this crucial division. It would appear that no fewer than seventy-two Tories deserted the government on this occasion and voted with the Whig

145 Commons Journals, xvii, 430. These two Yorkshire members may have been swayed by their connections with the West Riding wool trade.

146 There are at least five lists of this division: A Collection of White and Black Lists (London, 1715), pp. 23-30; A Letter to a West Country Clothier and Freeholder (London, 1713); A Letter from a Member of the House of Commons to his Friend in the Country relating to the Bill of Commerce (London, 1713); Remarks on a Scandalous Libel entitl'd a Letter from a Member of Parliament relating to the Bill of Commerce (London, 1713); and An Exact and Compleat Double List of Both Houses of the Last and Present Parliament. Where at one View may be seen the several Alterations; and who Voted for and against the Bill of Commerce, &c. (London, 1713). These lists have slight variations, concerning five members. On some of them Sir Thomas Cave and Russell Robartes are listed as voting for the bill and Walter Chetwynd, William Luckin Grimston, and Daniel Wilson against it. On other lists they do not appear at all. On none are they given as voting the other way so the lists are in substantial agreement.
opposition. Some of these were influenced by personal considerations: they themselves were merchants who might suffer if the treaty was ratified or they represented constituencies which might be hard hit. But many were swayed by wider considerations: the political and commercial interests of the nation as a whole. Even among the Tories there was no overwhelming desire for friendship with France.

When Nottingham had opposed the peace preliminaries in December 1711 he had found few supporters among the Tory rank and file. On this occasion Sir Thomas Hanmer had over seventy Tory


148 Among the merchants in opposition to the bill were 19 Tories, including Docminique, Herne, the Heyshams, and the Newlands. Not a single Gloucestershire M.P. supported the bill and 14 Wiltshire M.P.s opposed it. They were both strong clothing counties.
colleagues voting with him, though they did not form a closely knit group under his leadership. He had in fact simply represented a major section of backbench opinion. Yet this blow was so staggering, that some writers have suggested that the only satisfactory explanation was that Oxford had secretly conspired against Bolingbroke's cherished treaty of commerce. Bolingbroke certainly blamed Oxford for the defeat of the bill. "The reason of this majority", he told Lord Strafford, "was, that there had been, during two or three days' uncertainty an opinion spread that Lord Treasurer gave up the point." There is however very little evidence to substantiate such a charge against Oxford. The worst construction that can be put on his behaviour was that he failed to speak out clearly enough to dispel the rumours that he was against the bill. Peter Wentworth suggested that Oxford did not labour heartily in the bill's favour, leaving it to the individual conscience. William

149 Commons Debates, v, 40n; and Abel Boyer, Queen Anne (London, 1735), p. 638.
150 Bolingbroke's Corr., iv, 165-66. 20 June 1713. Bolingbroke also added: "The Court were willing to have dropped the bill rather than to have made a breach among our friends; but the body of the Tories absolutely refused to part with it." This was said to excuse Bolingbroke for pressing on with the bill and to suggest that the only possible explanation for its defeat was the lord treasurer's machinations.
Bishop was not sure of Oxford's role, but he believed that he could have steered it through the Commons had he really wished to do so. Despite these opinions there is some much stronger evidence to suggest that the lord treasurer had supported the bill. In the Commons all his relatives (the Harleys, Foleys, and Winningtons), his personal adherents, and the courtiers had spoken up for it. In addition, several letters from William Stratford to Lord Harley, Oxford's son, suggest that the defeat of the bill had both surprised and troubled the lord treasurer. For example, in one letter he wrote: "Surely there was either some treachery or at least neglect or carelessness in some of your own friends. I am heartily concerned for the difficulties your father has to struggle with." Kreienberg, the normally well-informed Hanoverian resident, was convinced that Oxford had been in favour of the bill. Nevertheless, it is important to remember that Bolingbroke held Oxford responsible for the defeat. It does not seem to have occurred to him that there might be anything wrong with the eighth and ninth articles or anything suspicious about his reasons for signing the treaty.

152 Bodleian Library. Ballard Ms. 31, f. 104a. To Dr. Charlett, 20 June 1713.
153 H. M. G., Portland Ms., vii, 144-47. Letters dated 18, 21, 23, and 25 June 1713.
154 Hanover Ms. 113a, f. 141. Dispatch of 16/27 June 1713.
If Oxford did not engineer the defeat of the commercial treaty then there must have been some other strong reasons for such a massive Tory revolt. Some contemporaries believed that the rebellious Tories had merely wished to teach the ministry a lesson, in order to persuade it to make further concessions to the backbenchers. In other words, it was a replica of the October Club revolts of 1711-12. Thomas Edwards wrote of the dissatisfaction at Oxford's trimming policy and a Jacobite voiced a similar opinion:

"'Tis ... a great affront upon the Crown, and upon the Treasurer in particular to yt degree that all who voted so who are lovers of the Church & Crown do own 'twas to make the Treasurer shake at root. The truth is he acts as if he was absolute & as if nobody understood commonsense besides himself ... the loyal party have complain'd many times of his not altering the greatest part of the Whig Lieutenancy and almost all the Justices of ye Peace in the Kingdom & all the employments of collectors & officers of the customs, excise, &c."  

There may have been some truth in these assertions. Many of the Tory opponents of the commercial treaty had previously distinguished themselves as critics of Oxford's trimming policy. Over forty of these Tory rebels had once been members of the October Club. Yet it

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155 Bodleian Library. North Ms. c 9, f. 5. To Lord North and Grey, Greek Street, 22 June 1713. Edwards also mentioned that some Tory peers, notably Anglesey and Abingdon, were opposed to the treaty of commerce and that Anglesey had ambitions to succeed Oxford as lord treasurer.

156 Ibid. Carte Ms. 211, f. 133. R. White to the Pretender's Court, 23 June 1713.
seems unlikely that they would have deliberately staged such a massive rebellion after the Oxford ministry had made peace, had reduced the land tax, and had made numerous Tory appointments since early 1711. The defection had shaken the whole basis of the ministry, which did not seem to be Hanmer's intention for, on 23 June, he moved an address to the Queen to thank her for the treaty of peace and even for the treaty of commerce with France. After his notable part in defeating the eighth and ninth articles this was completely unrealistic, though there were rumours that the ministry intended introducing the bill again after the general election. Hanmer's decision to accept the speakership after the 1713 election would also suggest that he was not fundamentally opposed to Oxford's policies in general. Indeed, it was even rumoured that he might replace Bolingbroke as secretary of state. We are thus left with the two most obvious explanations of the massive Tory rebellion over the commercial treaty. Most of the Tory opponents of it undoubtedly believed that Bolingbroke had not secured the best terms for Britain. The eighth and ninth articles were widely interpreted as being detrimental to her trading interests. Whig propaganda argued that

157 Commons Journals, xvii, 436; and Commons Debates, v, 42.
158 Hanover Mss. 113a, f. 171. Kreienberg's dispatch, 17/28 July 1713.
159 Ibid., f. 150. Kreienberg's dispatch, 26 June/7 July 1713.
unemployment would ensue as a result of the treaty, which would force up the poor rate and remove all the advantage of the reduction in the land tax. Even Tory squires were not prepared to see Britain's trade suffer to the benefit of France. Secondly, most of these Tory rebels disliked the idea of closer links with France. They were naturally more xenophobic than the Whigs and the French were gradually replacing the Dutch in the popular dislike of foreigners. In this instance there was the additional fear that closer links with France would imply some support for the Pretender. The ministry had tried hard to divorce the peace from any suggestion of sympathy for the Jacobite cause, but not with complete success. The Whigs had kept up a constant propaganda campaign, implying that peace meant the desertion of the Hanoverian cause. The ministry had unwittingly assisted them. Bolingbroke was rumoured to have met the Pretender on his visit to Paris in 1712 and the original choice of the duke of Hamilton as ambassador extraordinary to France had aroused considerable speculation. Hanmer and the Tory rebels, known at this stage as 'whimsicals', were soon to be labelled 'Hanoverian Tories'. Their revolt against the commercial treaty probably heralded the really great split in the Tory party on the basic issue of the succession.

The disarray among the Tory ranks caused a great deal of discomfort and heart-searching to the ministers and to the party in general. Some wiser heads could see that the party's disunity only
played into the hands of the united Whig-minority. Lord Berkeley explained the dangers to Lord Strafford: "The Whigs are apparently elevated at this division, who must have this justice done them that they observe better discipline, but the others all think themselves fit to govern .... I do not know what to say to you about the trade business, being stunned to find people soe ready to divide upon every occasion, which must give a great advantage to another set, better regulated and united." The split in the Tory party put Bromley in an awkward position since Hanmer and his followers had been his close friends and colleagues. William Stratford suggested that Bromley should try to reconcile Hanmer with the ministry. If this failed "it is to be hoped now that this new party may not have time enough to take a deep root, and that in a new Parliament there may not only be many new members, but that many old ones may come up to it with new dispositions."

160 The Wentworth Papers, pp. 337 and 339. 19 and 26 June 1713.
Ester Vanhomrigh commented to Swift: "Lord! how much we differ from the ancients, who used to sacrifice everything for the good of the commonwealth; but now our greatest men will, at any time, give up their country out of pique, and that for nothing."
Swift's Corr., ii, 47. 23 June 1713.
161 H.M.C., Portland MSS., vii, 144. To Edward Harley, 21 June 1713.
In the midst of these unexpected difficulties the ministry walked into trouble more clearly of its own making. The reduced land tax would not meet the government's financial needs and, when a committee of the Commons suggested a malt tax, the ministry accepted the idea even though it must have known it would alienate the Scots. The ministers may have preferred to do this rather than antagonize the Tories any further. This seemed a sensible decision when the malt bill was passed against the opposition of a mere 57 votes.

The Scottish peers planned a stiffer test for the ministry. On 1 June, they attacked the way the Union had been infringed by the malt tax, and earlier by the Treason Act and the Hamilton peerage case. This gave the Whigs the opportunity to join the Scottish peers in order to embarrass the ministers. The lord treasurer tried hard to placate the Scots, but a motion to appoint a day to consider the Union was only defeated by a superior number of proxies in the ministry's hands.

Erasmus Lewis did not take the affair seriously, believing that it had been an elaborate political exercise by the Scots: "It was very comical to see the Tories, who voted with Lord Treasurer against the dissolution of the Union, under all the perplexities in the world, lest they should be victorious; and the Scotch, who voted for the bill of

162 Commons Journals, xvii, 373. 22 May 1713.
163 Lords Debates, 11, 394-99.
dissolution, under agonies lest they themselves should carry the point
they pretended to desire." There was some reason for believing the
Scottish peers did not wish to end the Union, but the threat was
serious enough at the time. The ministry certainly had to rally all
its supporters to pass the malt bill itself.

The ministry had suffered two simultaneous blows in early
June, though of course the Tory rebellion against the commercial treaty
with France was much the more serious threat. While the ministry was
on the defensive the Whigs launched another attack. This time they
aimed at the ministry's weakest link, its attitude towards the
Pretender. On 30 June, Lord Wharton moved an address to the Queen
requesting her to have the Pretender excluded from Lorraine. After an
uneasy pause Lord North and Grey endeavoured to show that such an
address would show distrust of the Queen or of her ministers. This
was precisely the point Wharton wished to make. The ministers saw the
danger of opposing the address and so it was passed unanimously, though
Bolingbroke and Oxford were not present when the address was
presented. On 3 July, the Queen sent the short reply: "I shall

164 Swift's Corr., 11, 41. To Swift, Whitehall, 2 June 1713.
165 Lords Debates, 11, 398-99; and Lords Journals, xix, 564 and 567.
The voting on the second reading was 85-83 votes in an
exceptionally full House.
166 Hanover Mss. 113a, f. 160. Kreienberg's dispatch, 3/14 July
1713.
repeat my Instances to have that Person removed according as you desire in this address." This did not satisfy the Tory duke of Buckingham. Though he remained lord president he was constantly at odds with both Bolingbroke and Oxford. He protested that he had never heard of any instances that had yet been made to the duke of Lorraine. This played into the hands of the opposition, who expressed surprise at the failure of the ministry's efforts.

After this further rebuff the ministry was glad to prorogue parliament on 16 July, immediately after the passing of the Mutiny Act. In August parliament was dissolved and the ministers looked to the general election results to revive their sagging fortunes and drooping spirits.

The short but crucial session of 1713 marked an important stage in the fortunes of the Tory party and the Oxford-Bolingbroke dispute. The party achieved the peace for which they had been pressing for a number of years. It also secured further concessions from the Court so that the administration was more than ever dependent

167 Ibid., f. 164. Kreienberg's dispatch, 7/18 July 1713.
168 For the debates on the Pretender's place of residence, see, Lords Debates, ii, 399-401; and Lords Journals, xix, 590-594. The opposition introduced a similar motion in the Commons, which passed without a division. Boyer's Political State, vi, 4.
169 Lords Journals, xix, 615.
on the Tories. The great Tory victory in the 1713 general election only emphasized this. Yet the session also saw the greatest split in the Tory party since the tack of 1704. It illustrated the fundamental division within the party of what was now, after the peace had been signed, the most important issue of the day. Quite clearly something needed to be done if the Tories were to be united on the succession issue, before the Queen's death brought them face to face with unpleasant reality. These trends and developments affected the relationship between Bolingbroke and Oxford. The lord treasurer was being committed further and further to Tory support, but he would not accept Bolingbroke's advice to trust wholeheartedly in his backbenchers. The secretary had suffered a personal defeat in June 1713, but he blamed others and not himself. He was confident that an administration more truly Tory would not have met this disaster and could avoid a split on the succession issue. In many ways he was deluding himself. He always had a tendency to believe that boldness made awkward problems vanish. Since he was not committed in principle either to the Pretender or to Hanover he believed other Tories would simply choose the most convenient successor to Anne. The only real obstacle was the lord treasurer. Once he had been removed Bolingbroke would give the lead that he expected the Tories to follow tamely. The longer Oxford held on to power without coming out with any clear declaration of policy, the
nearer came the expected problem of the succession and the more bitter became the dispute between Bolingbroke and Oxford. The lord treasurer had resisted the secretary's challenge for two years while following his own course, devious and confused though it sometimes was. Increasingly his touch became unsure and his aims even less clear. The initiative passed to Bolingbroke, though he was to find Oxford the master of defensive political tactics and still far too influential at Court.
Bolingbroke's bid for the leadership.

None of the Tory ministers could have been pleased with the short parliamentary session of 1713. After the tension of weeks of waiting to see the peace signed, the ministry had seen its programme split the Tory party wide open. Divided among themselves the Tory ministers had now found themselves facing a serious rebellion from their own backbenchers. This revolt, led by a man of Sir Thomas Hanmer's stature, represented a more serious threat than the peevish discontent of the October Club. The new split had appeared over differences of principle rather than of tactics. At first the differences were over the commercial treaty with France, but increasingly the main issue was the thorny problem of the protestant succession. Contemporaries were well aware of this grave threat to the Tory party. Erasmus Lewis told Swift: "We are all running headlong into the greatest confusion imaginable. Sir Thomas Hanmer is gone into the country this morning, I believe much discontented; and I am very apprehensive, neither Lord Anglesey nor he will continue long with us." L'Hermitage, the Dutch agent,

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1 Swift's Corr., xi, 55. Whitehall, 9 July 1713.
believed that if the Tory leaders did not reach some accommodation a new party might appear on the political scene.

With a general election in the offing the Tory leaders should have been striving to re-establish some measure of harmony and discipline. Instead Bolingbroke mounted his most serious challenge to Oxford's leadership in the summer of 1713. Though claiming that he did not wish to separate his interest from that of the lord treasurer, Bolingbroke was clearly leading a faction, which included Harcourt, Atterbury, Lord Chief Justice Trevor, and Lord Bingley, the chancellor of the exchequer. Bolingbroke was also angling for Shrewsbury's support. Having told him of the dissension within the ministry, he added: "I will only say thus much, that I wish heartily you was here, because it will very soon be time for those, who must in honour and good sense unite in the same measure, to come to some peremptory resolution; and that resolution cannot, ought not to be taken, until your Grace is amongst us." The secretary of state, despite the defeat of the commerce treaty, believed he was strong

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2 B.M. Stowe Ms. 225, f. 163. To the States General, London, 25 July 1713.
enough to treat with Oxford as an equal. The lord treasurer believed that Bolingbroke's plan was to restrict his initiative and his room for independent action. Bolingbroke thought a group of ministers could effectively counterbalance Oxford's authority. This veritable junto would, at the very least, reduce his position to that of one among equals. Indeed, it looked as if Bolingbroke intended to dictate to the lord treasurer. On 27 July 1713 he wrote him a long letter, complaining that the attacks from disaffected Tories were due to the unpreparedness of the ministry. He listed three faults that needed remedying at once. The party required greater encouragement and leadership; too many places were still held by opponents of the ministry; and Oxford tried to do too much himself whereas his role should be that of supervisor over the whole ministry. In an imperious tone he virtually commanded the lord treasurer:

"Separate, in the name of God, the chaff from the wheat, and consider who you have left to employ; assign them their parts; trust them as far as it is necessary for the execution each of his part; let the forms of business be regularly carried on in Cabinet, and the secret of it in your own closet. Your Lordship would soon find those excellent principles, laid down in the Queen's Speech, pursued with vigour and success." 6

6 Ibid., v, 311-12.
Bolingbroke even made suggestions about the disposal of cabinet posts and seemed anxious to keep Bromley as Speaker instead of having him as a minister who would support Oxford. To his colleagues, Bolingbroke voiced similar complaints against the lord treasurer's conduct. He sympathised with Lord Strafford, who had not received his proper allowances from the treasurer, but explained that Oxford had not yet re-imbursed him for the expenses of his trip to France in 1712. In a letter to Matthew Prior he wrote of his intense dissatisfaction with Oxford's indecision, which was playing into the hands of the Whigs:

"Our enemies are in themselves contemptible, and our friends are well inclined. The former have no strength but what we might have taken from them, and the latter no dissatisfaction, but that we might have prevented. Let the game which we have, be wrested out of our hands; this I can bear; but to play, like children, with it, till it slips between our fingers to the ground, and sharpers have but to stoop and take it up; this consideration distracts a man of spirit, and not to be vexed in this case, is not to be sensible."

This attitude caused offence in the lord treasurer's circle, especially as Oxford was very ill in July. William Stratford was

8 Ibid., iv, 201. Whitehall, 25 July 1713.
amazed at Bolingbroke's demands, but, at the beginning of August, he feared that the lord treasurer might be overborne.

There was a rapid reversal of Stratford's opinion when he saw Oxford's success in thwarting Bolingbroke's ambitions to dominate the ministry. Instead, when the ministry was recast in mid-August, the new appointments strengthened the lord treasurer's hand. The bishop of Bristol retired and Lord Dartmouth, for whom Bolingbroke had nothing but contempt, succeeded as lord privy seal. Dartmouth was a loyal supporter of Oxford, as was William Bromley who accepted the vacant secretaryship of state. Francis Gwyn, who had followed Rochester into the Harley camp in 1710, became secretary at war. In the government of Scotland the lord treasurer was even more successful. The earl of Mar became the third secretary of state, with special responsibility for Scotland. This was a slap in the face for Bolingbroke, who had been trying to extend his authority over Scottish affairs. At the same time Lord Findlater was appointed lord chancellor of Scotland, a move which diminished

10 H.M.C., Portland Mss., vii, 161. To Lord Harley, Christ Church, 2 Aug. 1713.
11 By mid-August Stratford was looking forward to Bolingbroke's fall: "He is a sad warning to gentlemen of how little use the greatest parts are to one void of all sense of honour and religion." Ibid., vii, 164. To Lord Harley, Christ Church, 16 Aug. 1713.
the patronage of Lord Harcourt, Bolingbroke's closest friend in the ministry. Even with minor appointments the lord treasurer triumphed for several of his adherents were rewarded. Lord Lansdowne became treasurer of the household, Lord Denbigh was appointed a teller of the exchequer, and Thomas Foley was made auditor of the imprests. In contrast, Bolingbroke gained few pickings. He himself was moved to the senior secretaryship, and two of his followers, Sir William Wyndham and Sir John Stonehouse, were appointed chancellor of the exchequer and comptroller of the household respectively. These were small rewards for Bolingbroke's attempt to share power with Oxford. Once more the lord treasurer had effectively demonstrated his greater influence with the Queen, an influence which could always checkmate his rival's moves.

The lord treasurer scored two further successes in the late summer of 1713. After repeated attempts he managed to persuade Hanmer to become the ministerial candidate for the Speakership. Since Hanmer had previously refused all offers of a place and had led the rebellion against the commercial treaty with France, this must be

13 The Correspondence of Sir Thomas Hanmer, ed. Sir Henry Bunbury, pp. 143-44. Oxford to Hanmer, 8 and 30 July 1713; H.M.C., Portland Mag., v, 321, Bromley to Oxford, 9 Aug. 1713; and National Library of Wales, Bettisfield Ms. 87, Bromley to Hanmer, 10 Oct. 1713.
accounted a significant achievement. A more personal triumph for Oxford was the marriage of his son to the daughter of his late friend, the duke of Newcastle. She was the greatest heiress in England, a fact which of course did not escape Bolingbroke's notice. He commented sourly to Matthew Prior: "He [Oxford] has established his family now beyond what he could expect, and I am heartily rejoiced at it: let him establish the Queen's administration on a sure and lasting principle, and I think I have virtue enough to acquaint him of any reward I may be thought to deserve; I could take the trouble of contributing to such a work as full and ample recompense." Over this marriage, however, Oxford did take a fatal step. Too anxious to secure the interests of his family he irritated the Queen by pressing her to allow his son to inherit the late duke of Newcastle's titles.

Bolingbroke was not slow to see that here, at last, was an opportunity of weakening Oxford's influence with the Queen. He had long recognised that the Queen's regard for the lord treasurer was

the principal obstacle to his own advancement to the leadership of
the ministry and the Tory party. With Bolingbroke trying to curry
favour with the Queen the lord treasurer began to fear that his
position was not impregnable. Two months after his triumph over
the new appointments he was drawing up a memorandum for a
confrontation with the Queen:

"This is the question
Is it for the service either Public or Private that
Mr. H[arley] should continue to be emplo'y'd.
Yea or no.
If no - justice requires you should tell him so. If
you act otherwise he is not so blind as not to see that
& will find a hole to creep out of, hoping rather to
walk out of Court than be thrust out. ... 
If it is worthwhile to keep him in then let ye world
see that he is to be in."16

All these signs of malaise in the ministry and divisions
in the Tory party would not appear to augur well for the general
election in the autumn of 1713. Yet the most reliable evidence
points to a rather unexpected result, an increased Tory majority.
L'Hermitage suspected that the Tories might be gaining on the Whigs
in the early stages of the election and, when over 400 results were
in, he could only find a hundred or so Whigs. After all the

1713.
17 R.M. Add. Ms. 17677, GGG, ff. 327 and 343. Dispatches to the
States General, London, 8 and 26 Sept. 1713.
returns had been made he calculated that the Tories had won over	hree-quarters of the seats in England and Wales, though the Whigs
had secured a majority in Scotland. In Cornwall alone it was
confidently predicted that the Tories would gain forty of the forty-
four seats, and the expectation was justified. Lord Berkeley
claimed "that on all hands it is agreed the Tories have incomparably
the majority in the elections for parliament men." Mrs. Mary
Cocks was even more hopeful: "I should hope ye are all mighty happy
& joyful for ye good success yt ye Church party have in all their
Elections, if it be possible I believe there will be fewer of ye
Faction in ys House of Commons yn ye last wch I hope will make all
our hearts easie." A recent analysis of the results for England
and Wales suggests that the Tories had a majority of 361 to 152, an
increase of no less than 64 on the 1710 majority. In Scotland

19 Bodleian Library. Ballard Ms. 18, f. 46. Thos. Carte to
Dr. Charlett, 29 Aug. 1713.
20 H.M.C., Portland Mss., v, 330. Lord Lansdowne to Oxford,
Launceston, 11 Sept. 1713.
21 The Correspondence of George Berkeley and Sir John Percival,
ed. Benjamin Rand (Cambridge, 1914), p. 126. To Percival,
22 Surrey Record Office. Somers Ms. 0/2/58. To her brother,
8 Sept. 1713.
23 W. A. Speck, 'The House of Commons 1702-1714: A Study in Political
Organization', unpublished Oxford D.Phil. thesis (1965),
p. 419 n.
the Whigs secured about two-thirds of the seats, but this still left
the Tories with a majority of just over two to one.

This remarkable Tory victory is eloquent testimony to the
claim that a majority of the voters were naturally Tories.
Divisions within the party could not eradicate this natural majority.
Once again the clergy had thrown most of their considerable influence
in the balance against the Whigs. The chief reason for the Tory
victory, however, was the immense relief of the country gentlemen
that the war had at last been concluded with substantial British
gains. For example, an address from Beaumaris to the Queen had
thanked her for a peace "which will put a stop to the Effusion of
Christian Blood, in a short time ease us of our taxes, wch consequently
will advance ye Landed Interest, and also give us an opportunity to
enrich these Kingdoms by a return of trade."

After the conclusion of peace Lady Barnard had told James Graham of the reception of this
news: "We had a vast number of bonfires in every village. The mob
likes the peace, although the dons do not." The reduction in the
land tax, a consequence of the peace, also made the Tories very

24 R.M Add. Ms. 17677, GGG, f. 312. L'Hermitage to the States
25 Bangor University College Library. Baron Hill Ms. 6766.
Address without date.
8 July 1713.
popular with the squirearchy. The Tories had in fact never been more successful in the county elections. According to William Bromley: "Our friends have prevailed in all contests in County Elections, except in Rutland & Surrey, where both were lost from supines & because they would not be at any Expense."

Despite the overwhelming Tory victory it was still not easy to evaluate the result in view of the sharp divisions within the Tory party. Nicholas Lechmere told James Lowther: "By all the computations I have heard of distinguishing between Whig and Tory, the latter are at least 3 to 1; but on the Court test, which is, for or against the Bill of Commerce, 'tis believed the Bill has lost ground." Nor did the Tory successes lead to an entire rout of the opposition. James Stanhope lost his seat at Cockermouth, but great efforts were made to secure him a seat elsewhere. James Craggs appealed to Thomas Erle to find Stanhope another seat and he was eventually brought into the Commons as a member for Wendover. The earl of Sunderland had worked closely with Nottingham during the election campaign and he had used his influence with the duke of Rutland to find a seat for Lord Finch. Nottingham had moreover

27 Bodleian Library, Ballard Ms. 38, f. 162. To Dr. Charlett, Whitehall, 7 Sept. 1713.
28 H.M.C., Lonsdale Mss., pp. 246-47. 17 Sept. 1713.
29 Charborough Park, Erle papers. Craggs to Erle, 21 Sept. 1713.
30 Leicester Record Office, Finch Mss., Box vi, bundle 24. Sunderland to Nottingham, Althorp, 14 Sept. 1713, and draft reply.
won Lord Guernsey to the opposition and had high hopes of persuading the discontented Lord Anglesey to abandon the ministry. The ministers could not but view these negotiations with some alarm.

Much more alarming than the possibility of individual desertions was the fundamental split in the Tory party which was now clearly emerging and was to be the major factor for the rest of the reign. This was the appearance of staunchly pro-Hanoverian and stolidly Jacobite elements which broke away and began to operate as almost separate forces. After the 1713 election the committed supporters of the Pretender in the Commons numbered at least eighty, and the total was probably as high as a hundred. About half of these were prepared to act as an independent unit under the leadership of Sir John Pakington, George Lockhart, and William Shippen. Many of the remainder hoped that the ministry would give a lead by renouncing or by-passing the Act of Settlement. The Hanoverian Tories had already emerged in the last parliament under their own leaders, Sir Thomas Hanmer and the earl of Anglesey, who had opposed the commercial treaty with France. In the Lords Anglesey led a small group including Archbishop Dawes of York,

Carteret, Conway, Windsor, and, most important of all, Abingdon. In the Commons Anglesey had a few personal adherents, notably Francis Amnesley, a former leader of the October Club. He could also count upon the personal followers of Abingdon. Sir Thomas Hanmer was the rallying point for some notable Hanoverian Tories, including Ralph Freeman, Heneage Finch, Peter Shakerley, John Ward, Sir Roger Mostyn, and Sir Henry Bunbury. In all there were probably seventy Hanoverian Tories in the new parliament. They rarely acted as a united body, however, and were not unequivocally opposed to the ministry. A clear pro-Hanoverian lead might have reconciled many of them to the administration.

The election results and this fundamental division within the Tory party affected the relative strength and the future prospects of Oxford and Bolingbroke. In the last parliament the lord treasurer had won over many of the younger high Tories who had followed Rochester, Nottingham, and Bromley. High Church gentlemen like Charles Caesar, James Grahme, and Lord Cheyne usually rallied to his support. Now he found two important groups breaking away from his control. The Jacobites had never accepted his policies or his leadership, but they had not previously acted as a separate unit.

33 For the emergence of the Jacobite and Hanoverian groups in 1713, see Geoffrey Holmes, British Politics in the Age of Anne (London, 1967), pp. 279-83.
Now the Hanoverian Tories, many of whom had previously rallied to him against Bolingbroke, had their own leaders and were taking a more independent line. His rival was inspired by the breach in the Tory party to make renewed efforts to oust Oxford so that he could seek to unite the party. This was to prove a vain hope, but at least Bolingbroke had already made some advances towards increasing his personal following. He had drawn off some of the right-wing members of the Harleyite group like Harcourt, Sir John Stonehouse, and Lord Masham. Not surprisingly he had considerable success in attracting the more partisan Tories, especially those with Jacobite leanings. To followers like Sir William Wyndham in the Commons he added men like Henry Campion, one of the ablest Jacobites, Sir Edward Knatchbull, William Collier, Richard Cresswell, and Sir William Barker. A group of Scottish members, notably John Carnegie, the Solicitor-General for Scotland, James Murray, and Sir Alexander Cummings, also became prominent supporters of the secretary. Clients and friends of peers like Beaufort and Masham, who had rallied to Bolingbroke, increased his following. This brought over members like Sir Charles Kemya and Charles Aldworth. Bolingbroke also increased his group of personal adherents by his activities in the general election campaign. At the

34 Ibid., pp. 270-280.
end of 1712 he had been appointed lord lieutenant of Essex and he used his new authority to choose 47 deputy-lieutenants, of whom fourteen were Tory M.Ps. In the general election of 1713 the Tories swept the board in Essex. The two knights of the shire were Sir Charles Barrington and Sir Richard Child, both Tories and both deputy-lieutenants. The same applied to the members for both seats at Maldon and Harwich, and for Nicholas Corsellis one of the Tories elected at Colchester. For his former borough of Wootton Bassett, Bolingbroke was able to procure the return of the two Tory candidates, Richard Cresswell and Edmund Pleydell. Thus Bolingbroke's own personal following was increased and this, together with the overwhelming success of the Tories in general, encouraged him to step up his challenge to Oxford. The split in the Tory party only served to make the task seem more urgent and necessary.

The huge Tory majority increased Bolingbroke's confidence that the ministry would have no alternative but to abandon Oxford's moderate course in order to rally the support of the backbenchers. He urged the lord treasurer to pursue a more vigorous policy: "I am sorry there is little show of government when the difficulties we have to struggle with require that all the powers of it should be

exerted." Though he professed himself full of regard for Oxford and ready to accept his commands, he was caustic in his references to the lord treasurer's close friend, Lord Dartmouth. A fortnight later Bolingbroke was assuring Oxford: "I see an opportunity of giving new strength, new spirit to your administration, and of cementing a firmer union between us, and between us and those who must support us. ... Believe me for once, what I always am, and have been to you, sincere, however I may have been too warm and your Lordship, allow the expression, too jealous." The secretary of state was obviously not prepared to ditch the lord treasurer at this stage. Indeed, he had not the power to do so. But, despite his professions of loyalty, he was regarding himself as an equal, with whom Oxford should be prepared to concert measures. When the Whigs gained a majority in the Irish parliament, Bolingbroke suggested to Oxford that this parliament should not be allowed to sit. To one of his lieutenants, George Clarke, he confessed his plans for a Tory policy in Britain too: "I own to you Sir tho' I have not us'd to be very sanguine, that I begin to reckon upon a clear Tory scheme, more concert & better method.

36 H.M.C., Portland Ms., v, 369. Windsor Castle, 3 Dec. 1713.
37 Ibid., v, 373. Whitehall, 17 Dec. 1713.
38 Ibid., v, 377. Windsor Castle, 31 Dec. 1713.
Should we prove so happy, our friends must do their part in making ye administration easy in Parliament."

There was some justification for Bolingbroke's imperious language and growing confidence. After his defeat over the ministerial changes in July and August 1713 he was at last seeing signs of reducing Oxford's power. This was not simply because of the Tory majority in the elections, but because of the Queen's growing dissatisfaction with the lord treasurer's conduct. Oxford went off to Wimpole for his son's wedding, but stayed away from the Court for some time because of the sudden death of his daughter, the marchioness of Carmarthen. Bolingbroke seized the opportunity for regular attendance on the Queen at Windsor Castle. His first objective was to win over Lady Masham, the royal favourite. She was virtually bribed with a share of the assiento contract and a part of the large sum from the three explanatory articles of the treaty of commerce with Spain, which was ratified on 28 November 1713. It was during this month that contemporaries began to notice Bolingbroke's new influence at Court. William Stratford warned Oxford's son:

"On the 22nd of this month I made a visit for one day at Bucklebury. I there learnt that the gentleman [Bolingbroke] was much out of humour whilst he was there,

and amongst other signs of it, broke out into these expressions against your father, 'I and Lady Masham have bore him upon our shoulders, and have made him what he is, and he now leaves us where we were.' I know my old friend will rant sometimes, but the person he joined with himself made me take notice of the expression. I must leave it to others to make reflections on it."41

John Aislabie even believed that it would soon be time to salute the new favourite. He told James Grahme, that, while Oxford had been absent because of the death of his daughter, his rival had attended Windsor with 'unusual assiduity' and was putting on 'premier airs'. Schlütz, the Hanoverian envoy, also remarked upon Bolingbroke's constant attendance at Court during the lord treasurer's absence.

The Queen was certainly becoming dissatisfied with the lord treasurer's lethargy and apparent neglect of his duties. On 8 December she complained to him: "I cannot help desiring you again when you come next, to speak plainly, lay everything open and hide nothing from me, or else how is it possible I can judge of anything? I spoke very freely and sincerely to you yesterday, and I expect you should do the same to her that is sincerely your very affectionate friend." Oxford was too grief-stricken to heed the warning and he

41 Ibid., vii, 174. Christ Church, 26 Nov. 1713.
42 Levens Hall Mss. Box B, file A. [Dec. 1713].
43 B.M. Stowe Ms. 225, f. 322. To Robethon, 4/13 Dec. 1713.
44 The Letters and Diplomatic Instructions of Queen Anne, ed. B. Curtis Brown, p. 403.
continued to stay away from Court. This played straight into the hands of Bolingbroke, especially as Oxford was still absent when the Queen fell ill shortly before Christmas. The secretary did appeal to Oxford to come to the Queen's bedside and Erasmus Lewis warned the lord treasurer that 'everybody stands amazed' at his continued absence. Bromley too urged him to come to a meeting of the Tory leaders, but the lord treasurer stayed away. When the Queen recovered she made it plain that she was dissatisfied with him and it was confidently predicted that he would resign. Oxford, in fact, was not yet ready to make way for Bolingbroke. He even seemed prepared to make arrangements with Kent, a moderate Whig peer, and with the duke of Marlborough, to prepare the way for an easy parliamentary session.

46 Ibid., v, 375. 25 Dec. 1713.
47 B. M. Portland (Harley) papers. Loan 29/200.
49 Bedford Record Office. Grey Mss. L 30/8/41/2. 9 Dec. 1713.

Marlborough was now abroad, but Oxford promised him that he would try to avoid any attack on him this session. He may have hoped for some kind of quid pro quo from Marlborough's friends in parliament.
The Queen's illness recurred in mid-January 1714. Not only was the opening of parliament put off for a time, but there was a run on the Bank. This was another serious warning to the Tory leaders. Bolingbroke was convinced that the Tories must prepare for the Queen's death or else the Whigs would outwit them over the succession. The Queen "had but one life, and whenever that drops, if the Church interest is broke, without concert, without confidence, without order, we are of all men the most miserable. The Whigs will be united, and ready to take any hint which their leaders shall give." Bolingbroke had no very clear solution to the succession problem, but he had an immediate objective, to unite the Tories under his leadership. With this, and with constant vigilance in debate in both Houses, he believed the Tories could meet any Whig challenge. Oxford, however, did not accept that this meant his resignation.

Instead, he laboured to re-establish his influence with the Queen. By mid-January James Brydges was convinced that the lord treasurer was back in favour and would not relinquish his staff. Clearly

Bolingbroke had recovered some ground since his humiliation in August 1713, but there was still no immediate prospect of him leading the ministry.

The Queen's illness naturally brought the succession problem to the centre of the whole political stage. This suited the Whigs, who were united in favour of the Hanoverian succession and who could afford to play upon the obvious divisions within the Tory party on this issue. The ministry tried to counter the Whig propaganda by again sending Thomas Harley to Hanover to convince the Electoral family of the loyalty of the English ministers to the Hanoverian succession. The concern of the ministers that the Hanoverians would accept Whig propaganda was hardly surprising yet they had no real grounds for complaint. Both Oxford and Bolingbroke had been communicating with the Pretender for some time. Neither minister went so far as to promise positive action and both contented themselves with vague promises. Probably neither minister was sure how far the


other had committed himself. After September 1713 Bolingbroke had opened a separate channel to the Pretender through d'Iberville, the new envoy-extraordinary. This situation almost certainly exacerbated the bitter rivalry between the two ministers. Oxford was probably most alarmed at what the rash and ambitious Bolingbroke might be plotting with the Pretender. Yet, ironically, both the Pretender and Torcy were pinning their hopes on Oxford and there is no evidence that Bolingbroke was more actively engaged in the Jacobite cause. He, just as much as Oxford, insisted that nothing could be done until the Pretender changed his religion. When the Pretender refused both ministers took no further action to promote his cause, though they did not break off all contact.

Neither of the rival ministers could afford to leave the matter in abeyance, however, for they were still faced with the

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59 L. G. Wickham Legg, 'Extracts from Jacobite Correspondence, 1712-14', *ibid.* (1915), xxx, 507-8. Gaultier to Torcy, 26 Jan. 1714 and d'Iberville to Louis XIV, 5 Feb. 1714, N.S. See also, *ibid.*, 508-9, 512, and 514-515, Gaultier to James III, 6 Feb. 1714, and to Torcy, 26 Feb. and 1 Mar. 1714, N.S.
problem of the divisions in the Tory ranks. By 1714 they were fully aware of the need to contend with the two groups of dissatisfied Tories, the Jacobites and the Hanoverian Tories. In March Sir John Percival noted their problem in his journal: "The Tories were now in two Party's, those who submitted themselves entirely to the ministry's measures, and those who shewed a doubtfullness and distrust, and declared openly their adherence to the Hanover Settlement. The Jacobites in habit of Torys made a third Party." William Stratford believed that the Hanoverian Tories were planning to force Oxford to their terms. Bolingbroke was at the same time telling the Jacobites that it was Oxford who prevented anything being done for the Pretender. Setting both the groups against the lord treasurer might help to pull him down, but it would not assist Bolingbroke himself to devise a political platform to unite the Tory party. As the parliamentary session approached he had still not accomplished either of his aims, the defeat of Oxford or the rallying of the Tory party to his own banner.

In the first weeks of the new parliament there were few signs of the rivalry between the two leading ministers. Oxford and

62 H.M.C., Portland Ms's. vii, 181. To Lord Harley, Christ Church, 16 Feb. 1713-14.
63 The Lockhart Papers, i, 412-3, 441-2.
Bolingbroke combined in opposition to Whig attacks on the peace and they supposed were the dangers to the Hanoverian succession. It was Thomas Foley, one of Oxford's closest friends, who launched the attack on Richard Steele for arraigning the ministry in The Englishman and The Crisis. When Steele tried to strengthen his defence, and at the same time embarrass the ministry, by asking for papers relating to the state of Dunkirk's fortifications, he was opposed by a combination of the supporters of Oxford and Bolingbroke. On 18 March, Thomas Foley and Sir William Wyndham helped to present the ministry's case against Steele. The decision to expel Steele from the Commons was passed by a large majority and the ministers had the satisfaction of noting that the rebellion of Hanoverian Tories was of quite small proportions. In the Lords Oxford and Bolingbroke worked personally

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67 As the voting list of Steele's supporters is the only list for this parliament and as several of the members on this list were not in earlier parliaments, it is difficult to ascertain the Hanoverian Tories on this occasion. There were at least 15 Tories in opposition, viz. Benjamin Bathurst, Peregrine Bertie (Lord Willoughby), John Bromley, Paul Docminique, Edward Eliot, Robert Heysham, Archibald Hutchinson, Gilfrid Lawson, John Middleton, Sir Samuel Ongley, George Pitt, Thomas Pitt, Peter Shakerley, Samuel Shepheard Jnr., and Sir John Thorold. Lord Finch was locked

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together to defend the ministry. On 17 March the opposition peers, in the debate on 'the State of the Nation', represented the danger that threatened the protestant succession while the Pretender remained in Lorraine. The ministry had not been very persistent in its earlier demands that the Pretender should leave Lorraine, but it was now anxious to dispel any suspicions about its attitude to the succession. The lord treasurer moved to bring in a bill for the future security of the protestant succession. This would make it high treason to bring any foreign troops into the kingdom on the death of the Queen. Nottingham feared that this bill might prevent troops coming into the country to secure the Hanoverian succession. Bolingbroke sought to clear Oxford, and of course the whole ministry, of such an imputation. No doubt, he assured the House, the lord treasurer only meant to ban such troops as might be brought over by the Pretender. Oxford accepted this interpretation of his measure and Lord Anglesey, a leading Hanoverian Tory, excused the lord treasurer's lack of experience in the proceedings of the Lords. The motion was then dropped.

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69 Lords Debates, ii, 408-410.
At the same time as these concerted efforts in both houses of parliament there were negotiations behind the scenes to reconcile the rival ministers. The lord treasurer was resolved to defend his conduct. On 16 March he drew up a memorandum, perhaps for a confrontation with the Queen or with his colleagues. In it he claimed that he too could expect no quarter from the Whigs and that it was his rivals who prevented him from uniting and leading the Tories. Harcourt urged him to forget his resentment and prevent confusion in the public service. Oxford's reply was full of complaints and of offers to resign: "I have found myself a burden to my friends, & the only party I ever have or wil act with. Ever since this was apparent I have withdrawne myselfe from everything but where neglect would be inexcusable. When a retreat happens to be desirable to one's friends & agreeable to one's owne inclination & interest it must be sure to be right." He also drew up a memorial which claimed that his estrangement from the Queen and Lady Masham was largely due to the way his 'friends' continually spoke to them of his faults.

70 B. M. Portland (Harley) papers. Loan 29/10/10.
71 H. M. C. , Portland Ms., v, 400. 17 Mar. 1714.
Bolingbroke was still pressing for a more vigorous policy, which might unite the Tories. He told Lord Strafford: "All that can be done is doing, to prevail on our friend, my Lord Treasurer, to alter his measures, to renew a confidence with the Tories, and a spirit in them, and to give a regular motion to all the wheels of government. I am sanguine enough to hope that we shall prevail. Indeed, it would be a pity to lose by management, what none can wrest by force out of our hands." Bolingbroke had supposed that he might have toppled the lord treasurer by this stage, but he was being forced to continue to work with him, even to effect some kind of reconciliation. There were two reasons for this decision. Firstly, Bolingbroke had managed to win over Lady Masham, but he had not yet won over the Queen. He had angrily expostulated to her Majesty that it was impossible to tell whether Oxford was a Whig or a Tory. Yet, apparently, the lord treasurer had persuaded her that only he could keep her out of the arms of the Whigs. The Queen had thereupon insisted on reconciling her ministers. In the second place, despite

74 Bolingbroke's Corr., iv, 494. 23 Mar. 1714.
all his efforts, Bolingbroke could not command an impressive array of Tories. Jacobites, like George Lockhart, did not believe that he was sincere in his professions of loyalty to the Pretender, though they hoped he might yet prove true. The leaders of the Hanoverian Tories, Anglesey and Sir Thomas Hanmer, appeared more willing to support and trust Oxford. The bulk of the 'Church' Tories, stalwarts like Bromley, Charles Caesar, Justinian Isham, and Sir George Beaumont, had failed to rally behind Bolingbroke's demands for a more positive Tory policy. They were no doubt offended by Bolingbroke's flagrant immorality, his shameful treatment of his wife, and his ill-concealed contempt for the Church of England itself. It is significant that, apart from Atterbury, no leading churchman seriously supported Bolingbroke. In fact the secretary was left with a rag-bag of supporters, the inexperienced, the self-seeking, and the second-rate. He could count on men of the calibre of Arthur Moore, Sir John Stonehouse, Edward Knatchbull, and Sir Alexander Cuming. This was in stark contrast to the men who would still follow the lord treasurer. Until Bolingbroke could widen the base of his support he had to accept Oxford's leadership. He virtually admitted his inability and perhaps his unwillingness to oust the lord treasurer at this stage: "I most

78 The Lockhart Papers, 1, 444 and 460.
sincerely desire to see your Lordship, as long as I live, at the head of the Queen's affairs, and of the Church of England party."

Largely due to the Queen's insistence some kind of reconciliation was achieved. This appeared to revive Tory morale. The earl of Mar, who, a month before, had been complaining that he was a mere cypher, did not take his complaints any further. Lord Anglesey, whose loyalty had been in doubt, now declared that he would support the ministry. Erasmus Lewis expressed renewed confidence:

"We flatter ourselves that during this short recess [over Easter] our friends are so far reconciled to one another that they will go on cheerfully and unanimously with the public business, which has hitherto proceeded but slowly." An important outcome of this ministerial rapprochement was the decision to push ahead with a policy of rooting out Whig officers in the armed forces. This had long been advocated by Bolingbroke and he had already had some success in this direction. In January 1714 he had personally informed Admiral Byng that he was to be placed on half-pay and left out of the commission of the admiralty.

79 H.M.C., Portland Mss., v, 404. 27 Mar. 1714.
82 Ibid., v, 405. To Thomas Harley, Whitehall, 29 Mar. 1714.
John Aislabie, a former member of the October Club who was now voting with the Whigs, was replaced on the commission of admiralty by Sir George Beaumont, a loyal Tory. The army, however, was a greater target for ministerial wrath. According to Abel Boyer a cabinet council of as early as 14 March had resolved to remove Argyll from all his places and to order the earl of Stair and several colonels in the Guards to sell their regiments. This decision to get tough at last with the Whig army officers delighted the Tory backbenchers. They soon welcomed other changes on the same lines. Orkney was made governor of Edinburgh castle and lieutenant-general George Hamilton became the new commander-in-chief in Scotland. Plans were laid for sweeping changes among the troops on the Irish establishment, while the ministers worked hard to bribe other officers with promises of suitable rewards.

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84 Boyer's Political State, vii, 410.
85 Ibid., vii, 263-4. These removals took place after the reconciliation between the ministers. B.M Add.Ms. 31339, f. 78. Bromley to Lord Strafford, Whitehall, 2 April 1714.
87 Scottish Record Office. Montrose Mss. Box vi. List of commissions signed by the earl of Mar.
88 Hardwicke State Papers, ii, 522. Stair's memorial to Marlborough (written late in 1714).
89 Captain Robert Parker, Memoirs of the most remarkable military transactions 1683-1718 (London, 1747), pp. 247-49; An Apology for the Army, written by an Officer (London, 1715).
This whole policy of remodelling the army was universally attributed to Bolingbroke. He also carefully selected the army officers who were to be sent to supervise the demolition of the fortifications of Dunkirk. He had no wish to see damaging reports being sent back to the Whig leaders, who might use the evidence of the slow process of demolition to attack the ministry. Bolingbroke even had plans to oust the Whigs from all other posts under the Crown. On 4 April Sir Edward Knatchbull recorded in his diary:

"We had a meeting by summons from Mr. Bromley at his office when Lord Treasurer, Lord Bolingbroke, Lord Chancellor, the Speaker and about 30 Gentlemen of the House of Commons when the Lords proposed that we should exert ourselves and not let a majority slip through our hands, and that we should meet twice a week for a mutual confidence and that the Queen was determined to proceed in the interest of the Church, etc., and my Lord Bolingbroke farther added afterwards that she would not leave a Whig in employ." 92

The welcome that the Tories gave to the removal of Whig army officers probably encouraged Bolingbroke to pursue similar policies to win their approval and support. Certainly, within days of his reconciliation with Oxford, he was again rocking the boat and

90 Charles Hamilton, Transactions during the reign of Queen Anne (Edinburgh, 1790), p. 324.
91 B.M. Egerton Ms. 2618, f. 215. To George Clarke, 20 May 1714.
challenging for the leadership. The lord treasurer’s private discussions with Whigs like Lord Cowper no doubt increased Bolingbroke’s uneasiness about the essential weakness of his position. The sudden storm over the succession, which came in April, made him determined once more to safeguard his future by ousting Oxford before the Queen died. The succession problem was raised in both Houses and by Schütz’s demand for a writ summoning the electoral prince to England.

The first blow fell suddenly and unexpectedly in the Lords on 5 April. The ministry had begun confidently, with Lord Ferrers moving that the House should agree that the Hanoverian succession was not in danger.

"Whereupon," wrote Sir John Percival, "Ld Anglesea got up in great warmth, and said he was surpris’d, after what had appear’d in the House, that any Ld could make such a motion; I am one (said he) who thinks it in very great danger, and I will be bold to say that your passing such a vote, instead of quieting the fears of the Nation will sink the Stocks 10 p. cent, and distract men. Then he ripp’d up ye Peace and said he was told at the beginning we should have a peace glorious to her Matys adventageous to her Allys, and safe for Europe and the Protestant Interest, that it would secure the Hanover Succession and settle such a profitable Trade to England, that we should be gainers of 2 millions yearly above what ever we had before. I now challenge the ministry to shew in any one of these Particulars how they have kept their word. On the contrary they have impos’d upon us, and in particular broke the asseverations on this subject to me, and now I own I have been under a mistake and mislead." 94

94 R.M Add. Ms. 47027, ff. 175-76. To his brother, London, 8 April 1714.
This alarming attack posed a major challenge to the ministry.
Unfortunately, it provoked a different response from the two leading
ministers. Oxford opted for caution and wanted to drop the motion,
but Bolingbroke wished to take up the gage thrown down by Anglesey.
While Oxford spoke scarcely a word, the secretary defended the
ministry 'with much warmth and quickness'. Harcourt tried to screen
the ministers behind the Queen's name by proposing to add the words
'under her Majesty's Administration' to Lord Ferrers' motion. This was
narrowly carried after the rebellion of at least nine Hanoverian Tory
peers, namely Abingdon, Anglesey, Ashburnham, Carteret, Orrery, Thanet,
Weymouth, Windsor, and the archbishop of York. This was the most
serious defection yet seen in the Lords. Abingdon and Anglesey were
leading Tory peers. Orrery and Windsor, as a friend of Bolingbroke and
as one of the famous 12 Tory peers of December 1711 respectively, were
expected to be loyal to the Court. Sir William Dawes had only recently
been translated to York and he was one of the most respected Tory
churchmen of the reign. The rebellion of Tory peers of this calibre
was indeed a vivid illustration of the divisions within the party and
the need for a policy which would heal the breach.

95 Ibid., f. 178.
D'Urban to Torcy, 6/17 April 1714; Bodleian Library. Rawlinson
Mss. Letters 92, f. 627. R.G. to Dr. Turner, 6 April 1714;
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The ministry faced a serious threat from the Hanoverian Tories in the Lords, though it did manage to defend its policy of making payments to Highland clans to keep them loyal and to pass a motion to strengthen the protestant succession against fears which were being spread through the nation. Bolingbroke, however, hoped for a more vigorous defence of the ministry's attitude to the succession when it was debated in the Commons. He planned his strategy with a handful of close friends, including Wyndham, Moore, and Sir Edward Knatchbull. When Knatchbull pointed out that it was difficult to rally the dispirited Tories with so many Whigs still in office, Bolingbroke replied, "if there was one Whig in employment at the rising of this session he would give anyone leave to spit in his face if he would keep his seals 2 months after the session." The secretary may have inspired Knatchbull to support the motion that the protestant succession was not in danger, but he was unable to convince Sir Thomas Hanmer. Following the lead given by his friend Lord Anglesey, Hanmer opposed the motion on 15 April. Once again, as with

B. M. Stowe Ms. 226, f. 489. George Ridpath to Hanover, Rotterdam, 24 April 1714, N. S.; and H. M. C., Polwarth Mss., i, 18. G. Hume to Marchmont, Meller [staines], 11 April 1714.

97 Lords Debates, i, 415-19.

the commercial treaty in 1713, Hamner had a decisive impact on many backbench Tories. Though he only spoke for about ten minutes "his appearance gave a great life to those who oppos'd the Question. Sir H. Bunbury spoke also against it, and so did Ward, the Queen's Councill, Sir Arthur Kay, & sev[era]ll others from whom it was not expected; four score and odd Tory divided against the Court." Fortunately, the rebellion was only on a Whig motion to adjourn the debate. When this was defeated the main motion passed without a division. Nevertheless, the defection of so many Tories was another warning to the ministers of the seriousness of the succession issue.

The warning from the Commons was hardly necessary for the ministers were already reeling from Baron Schütz's demand for a writ to summon the electoral prince to England under his title of duke of


This demand, on 12 April, placed the ministers in a cruel dilemma. The Queen bitterly resented any suggestion that she could not be trusted to safeguard the protestant succession and that a member of the Hanoverian family was needed in the country to protect its interests. Quite naturally she also had no wish to see a rival court set up in England, attracting increasing support as she neared death. The ministers respected her views, but, as the current debates in parliament were revealing, they could not afford to appear lukewarm in the Hanoverian interest. The incident emphasized the divisions within the cabinet. According to one account Oxford, Harcourt, and Dartmouth decided that the writ would have to be granted, but Bolingbroke opposed this. Apparently he hoped this would ingratiate him with the Queen. The ministry tried to extricate itself by a compromise solution. Schütz was told that the writ could be collected, but the Hanoverian Court was left in no doubt that the Queen did not want the writ to be demanded. The Hanoverians took the

103 A month later Bolingbroke was insinuating that Oxford had deliberately persuaded Schütz to ask for the writ. Berkshire Record Office. Downshire papers. Trumbull Add. Ms. 134a. Thomas Bateman to Sir William Trumbull, London, 21 May 1714; and Swift's Corr., 11, 137. To Peterborough, 18 May 1714.
hint and Schütz was recalled.

Brow-beating the electoral family, however, was no substitute for a clear ministerial policy. This was all the more necessary as events in parliament were getting out of hand. Not only did the Commons make several speeches highly critical of the peace with Spain, but they passed a place bill without a division.

Much more alarming was Hanmer's decision to use his casting vote against a supply bill, the drawback bill upon tobacco. These events of the first two weeks of April convinced Bolingbroke of the need for a more determined policy to retrieve the situation before it was too late. Taken together they persuaded him to abandon the reconciliation arranged such a short time before. On 21 April he appealed to Oxford


106 Commons Journals, xvii, 540. 5 April 1714.

to make an example of Heneage Finch, Nottingham's nephew, who was voting with the Whigs though he still held a Court post. To Lord Strafford he wrote: "My Lord, let us act like men of courage and public spirit; let those who guide the helm answer for the course of the ship, but let us hand the sails, and do our part of the work, without reproach. Even Swift, anxious to keep on good terms with Oxford as well as with Bolingbroke was alarmed at the lack of preparation for the situation that would arise when the Queen died.

The lord treasurer had little faith in Bolingbroke's partisan policies. He still hoped that all might be saved if the Queen declared unequivocally for the Hanoverian succession. She was persuaded to send a strong letter to the duke of Lorraine asking him to order the Pretender to leave his territory. It was by such actions that he hoped to restore the faith of the Hanoverian Tories in the Queen's ministers. The policy was not without its initial success for

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108 H.M.G., Portland Mss., v, 425. He suggested that Sir William Barker should replace Finch at the Jewel Office.
109 Bolingbroke's Corr., iv, 524. 27 April 1714.
110 Swift's Corr., ii, 137. To Peterborough, 18 May 1714.
112 Ibid. Loan 29/169/5. Queen to duke of Lorraine, 30 April 1714. Draft among Oxford's papers.
Lord Anglesey and the Finches began to protest their devotion to the Queen. Oxford appealed personally to Sir Thomas Hanmer: "I know the weight you have as you ought, I shal endeavour to support it for the common tranquility. I think the crisis at present so particular, that it is easy to save or to plunge our country into unforeseen miserys; your concerne & mine are the same. I shall be glad to unite with you in joint endeavours: to that end, if I may wait upon you any time.... I shall be glad to communicate to you my poor thoughts for the public good." At the same time he was deep in negotiations with the more moderate Whigs, Halifax, and Cowper, trying to assure them of his devotion to the Hanoverian succession. Cowper's reply was to the effect that Oxford should dismiss his opponents within the ministry and construct a new one more loyal to the Hanoverian cause. Unfortunately this was impossible for Bolingbroke was now too strongly entrenched to be dislodged. The lord treasurer blamed Lady Masham

113 H.M.C., Portland Mss., v, 436. Dartmouth to Oxford, 7 May 1714.
St. James's, 13 May 1714.
Oxford to Cowper, 12 May 1714.
117 Wentworth Papers, p. 382. Peter Wentworth to Strafford, 21 May 1714.
Bolingbroke's problem was to find some kind of policy which would unite the Tory party. This was well-nigh impossible on the succession issue. Bolingbroke believed that a majority of the Tories might be brought round to accepting the Pretender, but only if he would openly renounce Catholicism. While the Pretender continued to refuse these conditions Bolingbroke had to consider how to face a possible Hanoverian succession. The electoral family had been annoyed at the separate peace, but it would have to accept Tory ministers if a strong, united Tory party was in control of most of the levers of power when the Queen died. Therefore, instead of grasping the nettle of the succession problem, Bolingbroke sought to unite the Tories on all other issues. His plans were to oust the lord treasurer, to make a clean sweep of all the Whigs still in office, and to face any successor with a Tory party entrenched both at Westminster and throughout the country. Then, as leader of the Tories, he himself would be in a strong position to make terms with either of the rival claimants to the throne.

All these ambitious plans depended on Bolingbroke winning over the Queen. This was an agonisingly slow process as far as the thrusting secretary was concerned. He had clearly replaced Oxford in

Lady Masham's favours and he was slowly winning over the duchess of Somerset, another royal favourite. Yet he could not be sure of success even now. The partisans of the two rivals were confident that their leader had the greater influence at Court. Bolingbroke planned to tip the scales in his favour by showing the Queen that it was he who commanded the support of the Tory rank and file. His first move in this direction was something of a blunder, and Oxford almost thwarted him. The secretary decided to move that the Hanoverian troops should not be paid their arrears since they had refused to obey Ormonde's orders after the cessation of arms in 1712. He probably came to this decision after a great number of Tories had gathered at his office to insist that these arrears should not be paid. All Bolingbroke's friends supported the motion in the Commons, but Oxford's followers were divided among themselves, perhaps because the lord treasurer had not made his own views clear. Thus, Lord Harley and William Bromley supported the motion whereas

119 See, Swift's Corr., 11, 151-52. Arbuthnot to Swift, St. James's, 12 June 1714; and Swift's reply, 16 June. Ibid., 11, 153.
120 R.M. Stowe Ms. 227, f. 220. Bothmar to Hanoverian Court, 13/24 July 1714. The duchess's daughter was married to Sir William Wyndham.
121 Ibid., f. 50. Cadagon to Hanoverian Court, London, 15/26 May 1714.
122 The Lockhart Papers, 1, 467.
123 R.M. Add. Ms. 17677, HHH, f. 221. L'Hermitage to the States General, 25 May 1714, N.S.
Edward Harley and Erasmus Lewis opposed it. Nevertheless, the motion was only narrowly carried by eight votes. In the Lords Oxford gave a clearer lead against the measure and canvassed, in the Queen's name, to have the arrears paid. Bolingbroke tried to counter this by offering to take Lord Anglesey to the Queen to hear her oppose the payment of the arrears. The secretary defeated the lord treasurer on this occasion, but only at the cost of alienating the Hanoverian Court.

Bolingbroke hoped for a more striking success with the Schism bill, which he, Atterbury, and Harcourt promoted. He knew that both the Queen and the Tory backbenchers would take delight in this attack on one of the main strongholds of nonconformity, the dissenting academies. It would also place Oxford, with his well-known sympathy with the Dissenters, in an invidious position. Indeed, it was believed that the bill was "design'd to inflame the high church against those of the ministry who do not appear zealous for this bill".

126 H.M.C., Portland Mss., vii, 185. William Stratford to Lord Harley, Christ Church, 3 June 1714.
Finally, the secretary hoped that the bill would drive a wedge between the Whigs and the Hanoverian Tories, drawing the latter under his banner. The bill was piloted through the Commons by Sir William Wyndham, Bolingbroke's principal lieutenant. The Tories were not all in agreement on how severe the bill should be and some of them helped to carry an amendment, which would allow the Dissenters to teach their children to write. Nevertheless, the bill passed its third reading by a majority of over a hundred. It was noticed that Bolingbroke's friends all voted for it, while Auditor Harley opposed it and other relatives of the lord treasurer left the House without voting.

Though he denied that he was taking matters into his own hands, Bolingbroke clearly hoped that the bill would cause Oxford further embarrassment in the Lords. In the debate, on 4 June, "Lord Bolingbroke said, it was a Bill of the last Importance, since it concerns the Security of the Church of England, which is the best and firmest support of the Monarchy." The secretary must have been

129 Commons Journals, xvii, 644. The tellers were all Tories.
130 Ibid., xvii, 660.
131 B.M Add. Ms. 17677, HHH, f. 238. L'Hermitage's dispatch to the States General, London, 1/12 June 1714. This must refer to the Foley's since Lord Harley and Thomas Harley supported the bill. Debates and Speeches ... concerning the Schism Bill (1715), p. 6.
132 H.M.C., Portland Mss., v, 454-55. To Oxford, 3 June 1714.
133 Debates and Speeches ... concerning the Schism Bill, p. 6.
gratified to see both Abingdon and Anglesey come out strongly in favour of the bill. Oxford refused to commit himself in the debate, but, when he left the House without voting, it was clear that he in fact opposed the bill. It was noted that his close friends, Dartmouth, Foley, Mansell, and Poulett, all voted to hear counsel for the Dissenters. All this was useful ammunition for Bolingbroke in his campaign to damage the lord treasurer's reputation in the eyes of the Queen and the Tories. Yet it was not all gain, for the opposition managed to ameliorate the severity of the bill by several amendments. The bill only squeezed through the House by the very narrow margin of 77 to 72 votes. Nonetheless, Bolingbroke had scored a considerable success. He had embarrassed Oxford and, at least for the moment, he had won over some of the Hanoverian Tories. Most important of all he had pleased the Queen, who had expressed concern at the way the Lords had mutilated the Bill and at the possibility that the bill might actually be defeated.

134 Lords Debates, ii, 424.
136 Lords Debates, ii, 426-428. The vote is given elsewhere as 79-71. Debates and Speeches ... concerning the Schism Bill, p. 15; and Prussian Mss. 39 A, f. 169v. Bonet to Berlin, 15/26 June 1714. Lord Foley signed a protest against the bill.
137 H.M.C., Portland Mss., vii, 188. William Stratford to Lord Harley, Christ Church, 12 June 1714. The Commons accepted the Lords' amendments. Commons Journals, xvii, 698.
Despite this important success Bolingbroke had not yet won control in parliament or over the Tory party. In the Commons Ralph Freeman, a leading Hanoverian Tory, suggested that the Queen's proclamation, offering a reward of £5000 for the arrest of the Pretender if he landed in Britain, should be amended to raise the reward to £100,000. Wyndham, and even Bromley, spoke against the amendment, but they had to let it pass without a division. In the Lords, Bolingbroke himself was surprised when the opposition moved an amendment requesting the Queen to have the Pretender removed from Lorraine. The secretary was not even in the House at the time and when he hastily returned he was too late to defeat the attempt. To prove his loyalty to the Hanoverian succession he moved for a bill to make it high treason for anyone to enlist soldiers in the Pretender's service. The Whigs were delighted to commit Bolingbroke to the Hanoverian succession and a bill was immediately ordered. The secretary's supporters claimed that he had turned the tables on his opponents, but other commentators asserted that he was roughly handled in the debate. It seems more likely that Bolingbroke was outwitted.

139 Ibid., f. 98. Newsletter, 25 June 1714.
140 Ibid.
for, even when he chaired the committee on the bill, he could not prevent the acceptance of amendments making it more difficult for British troops to serve the Pretender or the King of France.

Bolingbroke's greatest failing, however, was his inability to pilot bills of supply through parliament with the skill displayed on such occasions by the lord treasurer. At one stage the committee of ways and means was uncertain what duties to impose which would raise £150,000. Apparently many Tories were joining in this attempt to embarrass the government. Peter Wentworth believed that the whole affair was arranged by Bolingbroke so that he could accuse the lord treasurer of negligence and of an inability to control the Commons and then he could show his own power by retrieving the situation. In fact, Bolingbroke was alarmed at the delay in passing the money bills. He sent for Lockhart, who was one of those Tories opposing the supplies, and angrily told him that nothing could be done for the Pretender until Oxford was defeated, and that this could not be achieved during the session. The lord treasurer

141 Lords Debates, 11, 430-33.
144 The Lockhart Papers, 1, 476-77.
realised this too and was spinning out the session as long as possible, particularly once Bolingbroke came under attack over the treaty of commerce with Spain. When the malt bill was before the Lords it was Harcourt, not the lord treasurer, who hastily rounded up every available peer to help steer the bill through the House.

The lord treasurer was clearly fighting a vigorous campaign, even if he was on the defensive. His greatest weapon was his influence with the Queen. He had been her greatest political confidant for a number of years and the Queen had always appreciated his moderation, his honesty, and his financial and political skill. His private papers are full of draft memoranda of the numerous arguments he used at this time in his discussions with the Queen. He pointed out that he was not personally ambitious, but that he was defending her interests. On 2 June he noted: "What have I omitted? What have they done? I have never quarrel'd with anyone - never interfer'd with any one's business or province, never found fault with any who would do all ye business. I stand still & let them attaque me. I desire rather to withdraw then resign. Let them tell their scheme. Mine is that the Queen should be easy & safe."

A month

147 B.M. Portland (Harley) papers. Loan 29/10/9.
later he was warning the Queen of the dangers that would accompany
his own fall. There would be no money, no credit, and the whole
church interest would believe that she planned to support the
Pretender. Everything would be endangered because she listened to
the advice of Bolingbroke, Harcourt, Trevor, and Lady Masham. In
these confrontations the lord treasurer could emphasise Bolingbroke's
overweening ambition. He could also make much of his failure to
manage affairs in parliament and of his general untrustworthiness.
This last argument was very effective. It was strongly rumoured that
Oxford had sufficient evidence of Bolingbroke's intrigues for a
Jacobite restoration as would support an impeachment. The secretary
was also losing credit with the Queen because of his ill-treatment of
his wife. In order to placate the Queen he had promised to return to
her. Bolingbroke's private morals had always contrasted ill with
those of Oxford and of the Queen. His financial dealings also compared
unfavourably with the strict honesty of the lord treasurer.
Unfortunately for Bolingbroke it was the sudden highlighting of
precisely this aspect of his character which made the Queen cling to

148 Ibid. Loan 29/10/6.
149 James Macpherson's Original Papers, ii, 630. Galke to Robethon,
London, 18/19 June 1714; and The Wentworth Papers, p. 395.
Peter Wentworth to Strafford, 4 June 1714.
150 H.M.C., Portland Mss., vii, 193. William Stratford to Lord Harley,
Christ Church, 1 July 1714.
Oxford. A major scandal arose over the financial terms of the Spanish commercial treaty and Bolingbroke himself was implicated. This played straight into Oxford's hands.

The treaty of commerce with Spain, which was ratified in November 1713, was most unsatisfactory. It clearly did not defend the interests of British merchants, and was actively hurtful to them, but the main parliamentary attack was not on the main terms but on some of the more shady aspects of the treaty. Its critics looked askance at the way 22½% of the profits from the trading clauses of the treaty was assigned to the Queen. It was generally believed that Bolingbroke and Lady Masham were to profit from this arrangement. The whole question was high-lighted when the court of the South Sea Company began to investigate a deal by which an additional cargo was to be put aboard the ship destined for the Spanish West Indies. Arthur Moore, the friend and financial adviser of Bolingbroke, was implicated in the deal. The secretary tried to forestall further inquiries by informing the company that the Queen was willing to surrender her share of the Assiento. When the company continued its investigations Oxford made

151 It was confidently reported to the Hanoverian Court as early as 18 June 1714 that Oxford hoped to use this issue to ruin Bolingbroke in the eyes of the Queen. R.M. Stowe Ms. 227, f. 162. Kreienberg's dispatch.

it very clear that he had had no part in the negotiations and so his hands were clean. Arthur Moore was judged guilty of a breach of trust and incapable of serving the company again.

Bolingbroke realised that these developments could destroy his bid for power. Even before the Lords took up the affair he was contemplating resigning at the end of the session. Oxford did his best to ensure that he did so. On 2 July Robert Monckton, one of the commissioners of trade and a friend of the treasurer's, denied that his board had any responsibility for the three explanatory articles, which the Lords were examining. Three days later Oxford himself voted to hear the views of the merchants trading with Spain since they were hostile to the explanatory articles. This brought his dispute with Bolingbroke on to the floor of the House. One report claimed: "It was observable that there was not a word said either by Lord Treasurer or any of his friends in defence of the peace


155 Lords Debates, ii, 433.

[with Spain] soe yt all readily conclude yt Ld Treasurer endeavours to sacrifice Ld Bolingbroke."

Erasmus Lewis told Swift that the lord treasurer had attacked the three explanatory articles, and Bothmar, the new Hanoverian envoy, believed that Oxford at last saw an opportunity to encompass his rival's downfall. Further damage was done to Bolingbroke's reputation on 8 July when William Lowndes, secretary to the treasury, confessed to the Lords that he was only the nominal assignee for the Queen's share of the Assiento. It was strongly suspected that the real beneficiaries were Bolingbroke, Lady Masham, and Arthur Moore. Even when the Queen gave up her share the Lords continued the attack. Bolingbroke desperately needed to end the session to prevent any more damaging disclosures. Fortunately for him, the debates in the Lords had been spun out by the detailed investigations into the treaty. This allowed the secretary to push through the last money bill, the lottery, despite the obstruction of the lord treasurer. On 8 July the bill was passed and next day, on Bolingbroke's advice, the Queen prorogued the session.

159 R.M. Stowe Ms. 227, f. 219. Dispatch to Hanover, 9/20 July 1714.
159 For the debates, see Lords Debates, ii, 433-37.
159 The Works and Life of ... Charles, late Earl of Halifax (London, 1715), p. 256.
It was a close shave.

These last disclosures in the Lords and the precipitous prorogation of parliament showed Bolingbroke in a bad light and, as far as he was concerned, fatally postponed the fall of Oxford. A week or so before there had been a welter of speculation about ministerial changes. William Stratford believed that the secretary was winning some converts. Ormonde had gone over to him, Anglesey might be bribed with the lord lieutenancy of Ireland, and even Bromley might not hold firm under pressure. Swift also learned that Anglesey was to be lord lieutenant of Ireland, and that Abingdon was to become lord chamberlain, and Trevor, lord president. Bromley, however, would fall, as would Poulett. Another report claimed that Wyndham, Henry Campion, and Sir Constantine Phipps, would be appointed secretary of state, chancellor of the exchequer, and attorney-general in Ireland respectively, while Bolingbroke would take over the treasury. If all these reports were true it showed that Bolingbroke had won further converts, though he had not many supporters of integrity or great talent. The disclosures in the Lords probably

163 H. M. C., Portland Mss., vii, 189, 191-92. To Lord Harley, Christ Church, 17 June; Oxford, 27 June; and Christ Church, 1 July 1714.
lost him some of this support and it seems doubtful whether he could rally both Hanoverian Tories and Jacobites to him. Indeed, it now seemed that Oxford might survive. Arbuthnot told Swift that the lord treasurer was really exerting himself at last in resisting Bolingbroke. There was even some speculation that yet another reconciliation would be patched up. Charles Ford remained sceptical, while Erasmus Lewis believed that the fierce struggle would continue unabated:

"Our female friend [Lady Masham] told the Dragon [Oxford] in her own house, last Thursday morning, these words: 'You never did the Queen any service, nor are you capable of doing her any'. He made no reply, but supped with her and Mercurialis that night at her own house. His revenge is not the less meditated for that. He tells the words clearly and distinctly to all mankind. Those, who range under his banner, call her ten thousand bitches and kitchen-wenches. Those who hate him do the same.... The great Attorney [Harcourt] ... had a long conference with the Dragon on Thursday, kissed him at parting, and cursed him at night."

A reconciliation was considered by Oxford himself, for in his memorandum of a meeting of the ministers at the Cockpit on 22 July he noted that terms for an accommodation could be drawn up in writing.

166 Swift's Corr., 11, 174. 10 July 1714.
167 Ibid., 11, 179. 15 July.
168 Ibid., 11, 182. 17 July.
169 R.M. Portland (Harley) papers. Loan 29/10/6.
The lord treasurer's aim was probably to delay his own fall and so safeguard the interests of the Queen and nation. Harcourt began to despair of ever ousting the lord treasurer. When he became engaged in a dispute with Anglesey over Irish affairs he virtually abandoned the struggle and went off into the country. Bolingbroke, however, continued to push the Queen into dismissing Oxford. He was generally expected to triumph for there were widespread rumours about the composition of the new ministry. It was generally agreed that Bolingbroke would not be made lord treasurer and that the post would be put into commission. The names canvassed for the board included Bathurst, Wyndham, Henry Campion, James Brydges, Lord Lexington, Lord Masham, and Jack Hill, Sir John Pakington, and, surprisingly, the Bishop of London. Lord Trevor was expected to become lord president, Atterbury, lord privy seal, and Ormonde, lord lieutenant of Ireland. This was indeed a motley crew which served Bolingbroke. Apart from Harcourt and, perhaps, the Bishop of London, he had no supporters of ability or integrity. Trevor, Masham, Lexington,

Bathurst, and even Ormonde, were second-rate, Wyndham had not shown
great promise, Campion and Pakington were 'wild men' from the
backbenches, and the idea of Brydges and Hill at the treasury must have
alarmed everyone, perhaps even their colleagues. A ministry based on
such talent lacked credibility. After months of struggling
Bolingbroke had not won over Hanmer, or Abingdon, while Bromley,
Dartmouth, Poulett, and Buckingham remained loyal to Oxford. Anglesey's
position was not clear, but Shrewsbury had wisely stood aside from the
conflict. He was much too cautious to join a ministry, which was
virtually scraping the barrel for talent.

Nevertheless, despite the incredible quality of Bolingbroke's
proposed ministry, the secretary was at last able to persuade the Queen
to dismiss Oxford. On 27 July she parted with the lord treasurer,
complaining "that he neglected all business; that he was seldom to be
understood; that when he did explain himself, she could not depend upon
the truth of what he said; that he never came to her at the time she
appointed; that he often came drunk; that lastly, to crown all, he
behaved himself towards her with ill manner, indecency, and

173 Swift's Corr., 11, 199. Erasmus Lewis to Swift, Whitehall,
27 July 1714.
without foundation for Oxford had begun to drink heavily, had not fully recovered from the loss of his daughter, and his grip on financial and political affairs had not been so sure in recent months. Certainly Matthew Prior in Paris, who was by no means hostile to the lord treasurer, had complained that he had not received adequate directions in the conduct of his affairs. Yet it is hard to believe all these charges. Oxford had fought a very skilful defensive campaign to thwart Bolingbroke and he had almost prevented him passing supplies in time to prorogue parliament in the middle of the debate on the Spanish commercial treaty. It is even more difficult to believe that he, the most subtle and experienced politician of the day, could have so forgot the importance of the Queen's goodwill that he could behave towards her with such a complete lack of respect. More likely his rival had poisoned the Queen's mind and exaggerated all the lord treasurer's faults. It is certainly true that the Queen took a long time to pluck up courage enough to dismiss Oxford. The effort, indeed, was responsible for her last and fatal illness. The Queen's decision was something of a surprise to Bolingbroke himself and he had to send hastily for Harcourt, who was in the country, in order to put the

176 Ibid., ii, 190. Swift to Arbuthnot, Oxford, 22 July 1714.
finishing stroke to Oxford and to concert plans for the new ministry.

To Bolingbroke's everlasting bitterness his triumph was short-lived, almost non-existent. The Queen could not be persuaded to promote him to the treasurership and, to crown his disappointment, she fell mortally ill almost within hours of dismissing Oxford. The secretary lost his nerve in this crisis and virtually gave up the struggle. His plans to unite the Tories and to place his personal adherents in all the major posts of responsibility remained unfulfilled and time was running out too fast. He therefore took the extraordinary decision to seek a deal with the Whigs. He entertained Stanhope, Pulteney, and Craggs to dinner; Walpole was also invited, but he was away in Norfolk. To his astonished guests Bolingbroke protested his attachment to the Hanoverian succession. James Stanhope, a friend of his youth, replied that the Whigs expected deeds not words. He suggested that Marlborough and Orford should be given the command of the army and navy. As a last threat he added: "Harry! You have only two ways of escaping the gallows. The first is to join the honest party of the Whigs, the other to give yourself up entirely to the French King and seek his help for the Pretender. If you do not choose the first course, we can only imagine that you have decided for the second."

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Bolingbroke was crushed by this reply and failed to take any decisive action. It is ironic that after months of complaints about Oxford's lack of vigour and of any clear policy, Bolingbroke could only drift helplessly with the tide. In contrast, the Whigs acted efficiently and with great determination to safeguard the Protestant succession. Both Argyll and Somerset, who, like several other Whigs, had a legal right to attend, promptly appeared at the privy council meeting on 30 July after they learned of the Queen's serious illness. There, they and Oxford called for a full meeting of the privy council, which brought in Lord Somers and other Whigs. The council agreed unanimously to recommend to the dying Queen that Shrewsbury should be made lord treasurer. Bolingbroke made no objection and even took the message to the Queen himself. When she accepted this advice all Bolingbroke's hopes crashed in ruins, much to the delight of the supporters of Oxford.


180 R.M. Portland (Harley) papers. Loan 29/66/3. Lord Harley to Abigail Harley, 31 July 1714.
When the Queen died, on 1 August, the Hanoverian succession was assured. The Whigs were united and prepared to fight for the Elector if necessary. The Tories were as divided as ever on the succession. Oxford unreservedly accepted George I, congratulated him on his accession, and visited all the lords justices in order to ingratiate himself with the new regime. Bolingbroke meekly followed his lead, though he tried to pass off his despair with a philosophic shrug: "The Earl of Oxford was removed on Tuesday; the Queen died on Sunday. What a world is this and how does Fortune banter us." He took a full part in preparing for the arrival of George I and took the oath of allegiance. When he went to St. James's to hear the proclamation read he was hissed by the mob, though this did not prevent him lighting a bonfire that same evening to celebrate the King's accession. There is no reliable evidence

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181 The Lockhart Papers, 1, 462-63.
183 Ibid. Loan 29/10/6. List of lords justices visited and to be visited.
to suggest that Atterbury put forward the suggestion, which Bolingbroke rejected, that they should proclaim the Pretender. In fact, when parliament hastily reassembled, it was Bolingbroke's lieutenant, Sir William Wyndham, who moved to vote the civil list for George I. His supporters spoke against Walpole's motion to pay the Hanoverian troops their arrears since 1712, but they did not consider it wise actually to vote against this reversal of their previous decision.

When the list of regents or lords justices, chosen by the new King, was opened it was found to include moderate Whigs, like Halifax and Cowper, and Hanoverian Tories, such as Nottingham, Abingdon, and Anglesey. Among the notable omissions were Bolingbroke, Oxford, Somers, Sunderland, and Wharton. The new King had clearly opted for the moderates of both parties. Ironically, Bolingbroke might have saved his career had he come out strongly for the Hanoverian succession once the peace had been signed. He had taken the short-term view, to oust Oxford, without paying enough attention to the fundamental issue.

187 The evidence is all hear-say and long after the event. Rev. Joseph Spence, Anecdotes, Observations and Characters ... collected from the conversation of Mr. Pope (London, 1820), p. 73; and E.M. Add. Ms. 35837, f. 509. George Camocke, the Jacobite admiral, to William Stanhope, Aug. 1722.


facing the Tories. Now his folly was reaping a bitter harvest.

Bothmar, who had no reason to like Bolingbroke, discovered that the secretary had been planning a defensive alliance with France, Spain, and Sicily. This revelation greatly displeased George I and, it was rumoured, that more papers damaging to Bolingbroke's reputation had been discovered. At the end of August Bolingbroke was dismissed and his office was sealed up. At first he tried to put on a bold front, claimed that he had intended to resign as soon as he saw the King and that he was suffering from the gross misrepresentations of his enemies. In a letter to Atterbury, he tried to pass off the blow lightly: "To be removed was neither matter of surprise nor of concern to me; but the manner of my removal shocked me for at least two minutes."

He wrote in a less facetious vein to

190 As early as May 1713 Kreienberg had told Bothmar that Bolingbroke had described him as a 'fool'. Cited by R. Pauli, 'Aktenstücke zur Thronbesteigung des Welfenhaus in England', in Zeitschrift des historischen Vereins für Niedersachsen (Hanover, 1883), pp. 20-21.


194 Ibid. Bothmar's diary, 1/12 and 3/14 Sept. 1714.

Swift: "After a greater blow than most men ever felt, I keep up my spirit, am neither dejected at what has passed, nor apprehensive at what is to come."

Bolingbroke decided it would be prudent to spend some days in the country and he did not put in an appearance when the King landed. Oxford had done so only to be ignored by the King. The former secretary of state did return for the coronation, on 20 October, when he saw the new King for the first time. Lady Cowper noted the confrontation: "The King, seeing a face he did not know, asked his name, when he did him homage; and he (Lord B.) hearing it as he went down the steps from the throne, turned round and bowed three times down to the very ground."

Shortly afterwards Marlborough introduced Bolingbroke to the King. The former secretary began to hope that he might retrieve something from the débâcle of the last few weeks. A united Tory party, he thought, could not be ignored. Swift encouraged him to lead the Church party, which had more heads and hands than the Whigs though it lacked their steadfastness. He and

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196 Swift's Corr., ii, 229. 11 Aug. 1714. This was before his actual dismissal.
201 Ibid., ii, 225. Swift to Bolingbroke, 7 Aug. 1714.
Peterborough suggested another reconciliation with Oxford, though the latter was most reluctant to enter into such a negotiation and his friends, Erasmus Lewis and William Stratford, scornfully rejected the suggestion. Bolingbroke was well aware of the dangers if the Tories remained disunited. In September he had written to Atterbury: "The grief of my soul is this: I see plainly that the Tory party is gone. Those who broke from us formerly, continue still to act and speak on the same principles and with the same passions. Numbers are still left, and those numbers will be increased by such as have not their expectations answered. But where are the men of business that will live and draw together?"

Though this was an attempt to throw the blame for the divisions in the Tory ranks onto Oxford's shoulders, it was a sound diagnosis of the party's present situation and its future prospects. Several important leaders were lost to the party at present: Shrewsbury retained the treasurership for a time, Nottingham was appointed lord president, and Anglesey was confirmed in his post as vice-treasurer of Ireland. Most other posts, however, went to Whigs

204 Memoirs and Correspondence of Francis Atterbury, Bishop of Rochester, ed. F. Williams, i, 279-80. Sept. 1714.
and the new privy council excluded Bolingbroke, Oxford, Harcourt, Mar, Dartmouth, Poulett, and Lansdowne. The only hope for the Tories was for these leaders to unite and to rally the rank and file to face a spell in opposition. At least Bromley and Hanmer set an example by declining to serve with so many Whigs. Bromley's refusal of a teller's place did something to raise Tory morale. George Beaumont commented: "It is an Honour to him, that no one in the Kingdom could think of laying him aside without lying under the imputation of the highest ingratitude. & most people are of your opinion that he did well in refusing a marck of favor unequall to what he had deserv'd & at a time when his friends for no better reason are laid aside with him."

The great stumbling block remained. Nothing could bring Oxford and Bolingbroke together. Indeed the mutual hostility increased. In October, d'Iberville warned Bolingbroke that Oxford claimed to have information about his rival's negotiations with the Pretender. Bolingbroke hastily tried to effect some kind of reconciliation, but,

205 The Complete Peerage, ed. G. E. C[ockayne], iv, 212n.
206 Bodleian Library. Ballard Ms. 31, f. 129. William Bishop to Dr. Charlett, 28 Sept. 1714.
when he was rebuffed, he abandoned the attempt forever. There was now no chance of a quick return to political office, yet Bolingbroke never abandoned his ambition to lead a ministry. He spent the rest of his life endeavouring, sometimes by very dubious means, to fulfil the hopes dashed in the summer of 1714. That he failed was largely due to his rash temperament and to his naked ambition for the highest office, whatever the cost to his principles or to his colleagues. In many ways he deserved to fail.


210 H. N. Fieldhouse, 'Bolingbroke and the d'Iberville Correspondence, August 1714-June 1715', E.H.R. (1937), lii, 674. D'Iberville to Louis XIV, 6 May 1715. In all his writings on Oxford, even many years later, Bolingbroke revealed a bitter hatred of his former rival. He never accepted any responsibility for the débâcle in 1714 and placed all the blame on Oxford.
Conclusion.

Despite the way his hopes had been dashed by the accession of George I, Bolingbroke still hoped that a Tory majority could persuade the King to dismiss some of the numerous Whigs in office. He put his faith in a Tory victory in the general election. Unfortunately, the Tories were in a poor state to combat the Whigs in this election. Their leaders had broken irrevocably and the party was rapidly becoming anathema to the new sovereign, despite its protestations of loyalty. The Whigs were careful not to arouse a high Church storm, though Atterbury did his best to play upon the prejudices of the Tory rank and file. In his *English Advice to the Freeholders of England*, he claimed that the Whigs would turn out all the Tories and would destroy the Church of England. The gentry would be harassed with taxes and the coming elections would be fought at the expense of the landed interest, "which I take to be the political blood of the nation."  

1 A Tory address from Anglesey, in October 1714, expressed the hope that George I's experience in war "will secure us from all attempts from abroad and whose consummate wisdom and vigilance will subdue that Republican spirit at home which has always endeavoured to strip the Crown of her prerogative and the Established Church of her authority." Bangor University College Library. Baron Hill Ms. 6776. The Tories, however, did campaign vigorously on an individual level. See, for example, the numerous letters of Pynsent Chernock to Lord Ailesbury, Aug. - Dec. 1715, in Wiltshire Record Office, Savernake Mss., Ailesbury papers, no. 3503; and the many letters to Sir Thomas Cave about the Leicestershire elections in Leicester Museum, Braye Mss., 23 D 57, 2880 et seq.

2 *Somers Tracts*, ed. Sir Walter Scott, xiii, 521-541.
must have been delighted when the government rose to the bait and offered £1000 for the discovery of the author of this diatribe. This helped to generate some heat in the election campaign. The Whigs, however, had several powerful arguments to use in reply. They attacked the late peace and accused the Tories of being crypto-Jacobites. The greatest advantage that the Whigs had was the influence of the Court, which was thrown behind them as the election approached. The proclamation for the general election, which was largely drawn up by Robert Walpole, made it clear that the King favoured the Whigs. The King also made sure that the Whigs filled those posts which could influence elections. As early as 7 October 1714, Thomas Burnett wrote:

"I am satisfied this next Parliament will be perfectly right, for though in our country they [the Tories] are in some heart yet throughout Cornwall we shall carry it, Boscawen being made a Viscount & Lt Lieutenant of that county. And in Sussex, Middlesex & Surrey, as well as Hampshire, the Torys almost universally give out. In short our great men here seem secure of a right majority among the Commons & the Lords must be so of course."

By all accounts the Tories fared badly in the elections. In Scotland, the elections gave great satisfaction to the Whigs and even in

3 Ibid., xiii, 542.
a constituency like Boroughbridge, which had been represented by a member of the Stapylton family throughout Anne's reign, Richard Steele, the Whig pamphleteer, ousted Sir Brian Stapylton. Horace Walpole was confident of a great Whig success: "Ye new elections will certainly give great credit & weight to his Maj[es]ty's affairs in all parts, it being ye best Parliament that has ever been chosen for ye good of our country since ye Revolution." His confidence was justified by the results. On 19 February, the bishop of Carlisle was told that the results to date showed 244 Whigs elected compared to only 151 Tories. A later newsletter gave an estimate of 299 Whigs and 195 Tories, and calculated that 144 of the Whigs had captured Tory seats. There seems little doubt that the Whigs gained a substantial majority, certainly greater than any they had achieved in Anne's reign.

Bolingbroke now realised that his political opponents had triumphed and that there was no chance of any immediate change in his fortunes. The previous autumn he had been contemplating a temporary retirement to the continental spas to cure the illness caused by his long indulgences as a notorious rake of the town. But he had not yet

7 Northallerton Record Office. Ms. ZLQ 47. Sir Pynsent Chernock, who had made great efforts in Bedfordshire (see note 1), was defeated by the Russell interest.
thought of fleeing the country, much less of joining the Pretender.

The seizure of Lord Strafford's papers, in January 1715, first gave him serious cause for alarm. Then, in February, his old crony, James Brydges, warned him: "The elections growing more Whiggish than I am apt to think even the Court itself desires, there will in all probability be some violent measures set forward which the ministry will not be able (should they be willing) to avoid giving in to. The steps they have taken ... have so raised the expectation of the Whigs that they'll be soured and dissatisfied to the last degree if there is not care used to provide a sacrifice for them." Bolingbroke began to fear that the Whigs planned to sacrifice him and were seeking information to convict him of plotting to bring over the Pretender. John Drummond told Oxford that Bolingbroke feared his former rival would assist the Whigs in finding the available evidence:

"The general discourse is impeaching for high crimes and misdemeanours, even Lechmere says they cannot find treason, but my Lord Bolingbroke's great concern seems to be that those who ought to stand together in supporting the Queen's administration are like to be brought in to accuse the one the others, pretending to be well informed, that amongst the Queen's papers several of your Lordship's letters are found accusing him to her Majesty of several intrigues to his own advantage to the public prejudice, and both Lord Harcourt and him of Jacobitism. He seems very desirous to know your resolutions as to your joint behaviour with them or abandoning them. I cannot omit to mention to you that

at his first coming up his concern in this juncture seemed to exceed his good sense, and the Duke of Ormond was so much of that opinion that his Grace has pleased to tell me to preach up courage to him. 13

It was with some trepidation that Bolingbroke faced the new parliament, where the Whigs commanded a majority in both Houses. In the first meeting of the Lords, in March 1715, Bolton proposed an address which expressed the hope that the King would "recover the reputation of this kingdom in foreign parts." Bolingbroke took exception to the word, recover, and proposed the substitution of the word, maintain. The Whigs defeated this amendment by the large majority of 33 votes. In the Commons, on 24 March, the Tories failed, by 244 to 138 votes, to recommit the address. Sir William Wyndham also denounced the royal proclamation, issued for the late election, as an unwarrantable interference with the freedom of elections. When he was ordered to leave the House no fewer than 128 Tories followed him. It was an impressive demonstration of unity, but it showed that the Tories were clearly the minority party. These

16 J. H. Plumb, Sir Robert Walpole, 1, 213.
first defeats in the new parliament worried Bolingbroke, but the final blow, which shattered his nerve, was the seizure of Matthew Prior's papers in Paris. Bolingbroke at once inquired of d'Iberville whether Gaultier had ever written anything to Oxford of what he had let fall in his conversations with the French agent. If that were so, he insisted, his head would be in danger. In spite of Torcy's assurances, Bolingbroke definitely resolved upon flight and placed all his wealth under cover. D'Iberville reported that the Dutch and the Austrians were pressing the Whigs to demand Bolingbroke's head, and the duke of Marlborough had advised his former protégé to withdraw, at least temporarily. Bolingbroke's secretary, Thomas Hare, had retired so that he would not have to give evidence against his master, but he was ordered to surrender his papers. Finally, Bolingbroke himself was

19 D'Iberville to Torcy, 21 Mar. 1715. Ibid.
20 D'Iberville to Torcy, 4, 5 April and 3 May, 1715. Ibid., 678-679.
Sir George Beaumont wrote: "All the news in town is of my Lord Bolingbroke. Just as my Lord Marlborough did by his advice, he has now done himself, & is gone beyond sea." Leicester Museum. Braye Mss. 23 D 57, 2967. To Sir Thomas Cave, 31 Mar. 1715. Bolingbroke later denied that Marlborough had given him this advice, but it seems quite likely that he did so. A Letter to Sir William Wyndham, p. 91.
21 B.M. Add. Ms. 47028, f. 44. Political Journal of Sir John Percival, April 1715.
asked to hand over all his papers and, according to Matthew Prior, he
"had so little time to suppress or take away any papers, that, as I have
heard say, many of his private correspondences were seized." In the
greatest secrecy Bolingbroke prepared to flee to France. On the
Saturday night, 26 March, he appeared, unconcerned, at the play-house,
but early on the Sunday he fled to Dover, disguised as a servant of La
Vigne, one of the French ministers. From Dover, he sailed to Calais
just in time to avoid arrest.

This flight was one of Bolingbroke's greatest blunders. Once
again he had revealed a tendency to lose his nerve, to panic in a crisis.
To do him justice he was by nature very highly strung and there was some
reason to believe that the Whigs might have found evidence of his
Jacobite intrigues. Nevertheless, it was a fatal mistake. Oxford
was in as much potential danger, but he remained to face the storm.
Several prominent figures, including Cowper, Marlborough, Nottingham, and

23 Matthew Prior, History of His Own Time, ed. Adrian Drift, p. 437.
24 London Gazette, 29 Mar. - 2 April 1715; Newsletter, 31 Mar. 1715, in
Lyne Letters, 1660-1760, ed. Lady Newton, p. 263; and Charles Petrie,
Bolingbroke, pp. 254-256.
25 J. H. Plumb, Sir Robert Walpole, 1, 213, argued that Bolingbroke's
flight only appears to be a blunder in the light of subsequent events.
He suggested that he was not only saving his life, but seeking room
to manoeuvre for a political come-back. In a later work, he
accepted that the flight was a blunder of the first magnitude.
Stanhope, had all expressed a preference for saving Bolingbroke at the expense of Oxford. Moreover, the Whigs naturally took Bolingbroke’s flight as proof of his guilt and even the Tories were nonplussed. Aware of the reactions that would attend his flight Bolingbroke had written a letter from Dover, addressed to Lord Lansdowne, which attempted to justify his conduct:

"You will excuse me, when you know that I had certain and repeated informations from some who are in the secret of affairs, that a resolution was taken by those who have power to execute it, to pursue me to the scaffold.

My blood was to be the cement of a new alliance; nor could my innocence be any security, after it had been once demanded from abroad, and resolved on at home, that it was necessary to cut me off. Had there been the least reason to hope for a fair and open trial, after having been already prejudged, unheard by the two houses of parliament, I should not have declined the strictest examination."  

26 D'Iberville to Torcy, 7 Nov. 1714. Cited by H. N. Fieldhouse, 'Bolingbroke and the d'Iberville Correspondence, August 1714 - June 1715', K.H.R. (1937), 111, 674. Some Whigs were, however, very hostile to Bolingbroke because of his amorous adventures with their wives. D'Iberville to Torcy, 3 June 1715. Ibid., p. 676.

27 Carlisle Record Office. Lonsdale Mss. D/Lons., bundle 27 a. To James Lowther from his sister, 31 Mar. 1715; and Scottish Record Office. Stair Mss. CD 135. Vol. 145. Charles Cathcart to Stair, 31 Mar. 1715. Metcalfe Robinson told his mother that 'Dr. Smith ... says the Tories give out that Mr Bolingbrook was prevail’d upon for a great sum of money to go off, to bring an odium upon them & make the accusations against the rest go down better." Studley Royal. Vyner Ms. 131, 98. No date, but c. Mar. 1715. This was the kind of damaging rumour which Bolingbroke’s flight inspired.

The letter did something to alleviate the Tory fears. Swift was told that it "hath done a great deal of good, and we have not lost a man by his going. It was a great surprise to his friends at first, but everybody is now convinced he would have been sacrificed had he staid." The letter probably encouraged pamphleteers to rush to Bolingbroke's defence. His whole conduct was lavishly praised in A Letter to the Right Honourable the Lord Viscount Bolingbroke (London, 1715) and his part in the peace negotiations was defended in The Representation of the Right Honourable the Lord Viscount Bolingbroke (London, 1715).

Having committed the grave mistake of fleeing to France, Bolingbroke's best policy would have been to defend his past actions while quietly awaiting the outcome of the Whig investigations. This seemed to have been his original intention. When he arrived in Paris, he sought, though in vain, to wait upon Lord Stair, the new ambassador.


30 Other pamphlets defending the conduct of the late Tory ministers, often at the expense of some of their colleagues, had been published shortly after George I's accession. Daniel Defoe had defended Oxford in The Secret History of the White Staff (London, 1714), to which Bolingbroke had replied with Considerations upon the Secret History of the White Staff (London, 1714), which defended his own conduct. Oxford was attacked and Atterbury, Bolingbroke, and Harcourt praised, in The Mitre and the Purse (London, 1714).

in order to clear himself of any imputation of serving the Pretender. 

Even d'Iberville admitted that Bolingbroke had not committed himself to the Jacobite cause. In order to keep his conduct free from suspicion, he took the advice of his friends and withdrew to the Lyonnais in May. Nevertheless, he had allowed Berwick to believe that he would serve the Pretender and he soon proved himself temperamentally incapable of remaining inactive while critical events took place elsewhere. On 1 May N.S., the Pretender wrote to Bolingbroke to thank him for his inclinations to serve his cause.

Early in July, Bolingbroke agreed to meet the Pretender at Commercy and to accept the seals of secretary of state as well as an earldom.

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32 Stair, however, was convinced that he would support the Pretender. Scottish Record Office. Montrose Mss. Box V. To Montrose, Paris, 15 April 1715. Stanhope, on 31 March, ordered Stair to observe all Bolingbroke's actions. Ibid. Stair Mss. GD 135. Vol. 141/2.


34 On 17 April, James Brydges had advised him to leave Paris. 'The Letters of James Brydges to Henry St. John', ed. Godfrey Davies and Marion Tinling, Huntington Library Bulletin (April. 1936), no. 9, p. 145. In June, Bolingbroke claimed that he had left Paris as much on his friends' account as his own. R.M. Egerton Ms. 2618, f. 217. To George Clark, Belle Vue nr. Lyons, 27 June 1715 N.S.

35 Mémoirs du Maréchal de Berwick (Collection des Mémoires .... par A. Petitot et Monnerque, Paris, 1828), lxvi, part ii, 228.

36 H.M.G., Stuart Mss., 1, 357-362. Several letters from Berwick to the Pretender, April 1715.

37 Ibid., 1, 361-362.

38 Ibid., 1, 372 and 379. James III to Bolingbroke, Commercy, 2 July 1715 N.S. and Bar, 26 July 1715 N.S.
anything this was an even greater blunder than his original flight. He had now broadcast his treachery to the Hanoverian succession, an act which he was to repent for the rest of his life. Yet attempts have been made to justify even this act of folly. Bolingbroke, himself, in his Letter to Sir William Wyndham, written in 1717, claimed he had been driven to this course by the Whigs' decision to impeach him on a charge of high treason. This defence has been criticised as a very lame excuse since, it is argued, the impeachment did not begin until 9 July. However, the committee of secrecy to investigate the peace was appointed as early as 9 April 1715 and it was packed with Whigs. Five days later, Brydges had warned Bolingbroke that the Whigs were hoping to impeach him. Finally, the actual impeachment of Bolingbroke was carried on 10 June, before his final decision to throw in his lot with the Pretender.

39 p. 91. In fact the Whigs had no real proof of his Jacobite intrigues, though Bolingbroke could not be certain of this. For the articles of impeachment, see Charles Petrie, Bolingbroke, pp. 349-361.


42 For this defence, see J. H. Plumb, Sir Robert Walpole, i, 215.
Modern historians have also attempted to explain Bolingbroke's conduct as a calculated risk, which might well have come off. They have shown that he had good reason to believe that Jacobitism was by no means a lost cause. There were certainly signs of unrest and of the unpopularity of the Hanoverians. There were riots in several counties and, by May 1715, Sir John Percival was writing: "The Riots committed in London, Oxford and other Places are but too plain marks of the Dissatisfaction the common people have taken at the King's choice of his Ministry." Bolingbroke had always believed that a majority of the people supported the Tories and he was normally a good judge of the public mood. His mistake on this occasion, in believing that a majority of the people would welcome a Jacobite invasion, may have been due to his distance from England. Yet he should still have taken care to determine just how much support the Pretender would have from France before committing himself irrevocably. As it was, he discovered too late that there was not enough military stores to equip even a modest expedition. His miscalculation ruined his whole future as an active politician at Westminster. He had played into the Whigs' hands and proved their

43 Ibid., 1, 213-214; Charles Petrie, Bolingbroke, p. 269; Jeffrey Hart, Viscount Bolingbroke: Tory Humanist, pp. 45-46; and Wolfgang Michael, The Beginning of the Hanoverian Dynasty, i, 130-131. Michael cited Bonet's dispatch, which claimed that Jacobitism had made great strides under George I and now embraced nearly two-thirds of the nation.
of treason, if only in retrospect, and it allowed his opponents to substitute an act of attainder for their rather dubious charges in the articles of impeachment. The most satisfactory explanation of his decision still seems to be that his rash, ambitious temperament would not let him stand idly by, while great scenes were being played out. His temperament and ambition had always threatened to extinguish his bright gifts.

In contrast to Bolingbroke, the earl of Oxford did not panic and awaited his fate with considerable equanimity. The Whigs, meanwhile, set up a committee of secrecy which examined the papers of Bolingbroke and Strafford, and cross-examined Matthew Prior in order to find proof that the late Tory ministers had committed treason. Some Whigs, like Lord Egmont, were convinced that this would be an easy task:

"The blackest things that can be imagined are come out in relation to the making of the peace .... The charge was so bad upon them that the Tories would not divide in their favour, nor did any of their leaders speak in the whole debate .... I have met with Tory members since, and so likewise have others, who, upon the discoveries of the Committee made, own themselves astonished at the late ministry's proceedings, and think them justly chargeable with High Treason." 46

45 Lords' Debates, iii, 17. August 1715. Fifteen Tory peers signed a protest that no proof of guilt had been established; viz., Abingdon, Ashburnham, Bathurst, Clarendon, Compton, Foley, Jersey, Lansdowne, Masham, Scarisole, Strafford, Weston, Willoughby de Broke, and the bishops of Chester and Rochester.

46 R.M. Add. Ms. 47087 (not foliated). To his brother, 11 June 1715.
This confidence was found to be misplaced. Without the evidence that was in the hands of the French ministers the Whigs could not make their charges amount to high treason. Oxford was committed to the Tower while investigations continued, but Bolingbroke, once he had joined the Pretender, was simply attainted of treason. Though his property was sequestered, the King allowed a clause to safeguard the interests of Bolingbroke's much-maligned wife, Frances. When the Commons, after many months, could not bring any proof of Oxford's guilt, he was unanimously acquitted by the Lords on 28 June 1717. Thus, after two years in the Tower, Oxford had recovered his freedom and had not lost his estates nor his honour. In sharp contrast, Bolingbroke neither regained his reputation nor his political rights. He had served the Pretender as secretary of state during the abortive Jacobite rebellion of 1715, but found himself blamed for this failure. He was dismissed, after bitter recriminations, in the spring of 1716. All the rest of his life he spent trying to regain what he had thrown away in 1715.

With his Letter to Sir William Wyndham, Bolingbroke began his second career, that of purging the Tory party of the taint of Jacobitism.

48 Lords' Debates, iii, 57-73.
49 H.M.C., Stuart Mss. 1, passim; and Hardwicke State Papers, ii, 552.
Lord Stair's Journal at Paris. For criticisms of Bolingbroke's work as secretary of state and the defense he made, see Bodleian Library, Rawlinson Mss. A 311, ff. 15-21 v.
and of educating it for a new rôle under the Hanoverian dynasty. In The Craftsman and, later, in The Patriot King he laboured to depict the Tories as the honest, patriotic party, fighting the corruption and faction engendered by Walpole's ascendancy. Though often accused of betraying his past, and of stealing the ideas of his former rival, Oxford, it can be claimed that Bolingbroke was trying to re-educate the Tory party to face entirely new circumstances. Bolingbroke became a thorn in Walpole's side, but he did not succeed in his self-appointed task. It was not until 1723 that he was pardoned, not until 1725 that he recovered his estates, and he never regained his place in the Lords. He shook Walpole in 1733, but never really looked like replacing him. After 1735 he devoted himself to writing political and philosophical works. Though these attracted a great deal of attention, both then and since, they did little to advance the political fortunes of himself or the Tory party. It has now been shown that The Patriot King did not influence the young George III and, though Disraeli praised Bolingbroke, it cannot be claimed that the latter had any real influence on the Tory party of the nineteenth century. His philosophical works, though interesting for

51 The two most recent discussions of his literary output are Wayne Jackman, Man of Mercury (London, 1965) and Jeffrey Hart, Viscount Bolingbroke: Tory Humanist (London, 1965).
their style, have never commanded much respect.

Bolingbroke's political failure after 1714 reflected that of the Tory party as a whole. After the 1715 election the Tories were not only out of office but heavily outnumbered at Westminster. The leadership of the party remained divided and was shattered by the impeachments and the investigations of the committee of secrecy. It was the Jacobite rebellion, however, that ruined the Tory party. This insurrection had only limited support in England, but the active rebels, like Derwentwater and Forster, and the arrested suspects, like Lord Lansdowne and Sir William Wyndham, were readily identified with the Tory party. More fatal was the proof that the Pretender's campaign was aided by Bolingbroke, Mar, and Ormonde, all of whom had served in Queen Anne's last Tory ministry. This supplied the Whigs with excellent ammunition to denounce all Tories as crypto-Jacobites, never to be trusted as loyal servants of a Hanoverian sovereign. Cunning Whig politicians like Robert Walpole were able to play on these suspicions long after the Tories had renounced Jacobitism. A handful of Jacobites, eccentric plotters like Bishop Atterbury and provocative backbenchers like William Shippen, played into the hands of the Whigs. The folly of the Jacobites and the political skill of the Whigs ensured that the Tory party, as it had existed in Anne's reign, would never again dominate an administration.

54 The most devastating attack is by D. G. James, The Life of Reason (London, 1949), pp. 174-267.
Yet Toryism did not die easily. A few ambitious Tory families, the Carterets, the Legges, the Gowers, the Foxes, and others, abandoned the party and became Whigs, but the majority retained their Toryism for several generations. Devoid of Jacobitism and rarely stirred by religious issues, their political philosophy was little more than the programme of a 'country' party. They disliked patronage and placemen and opposed high taxation, but they neither plotted to overthrow the Hanoverian family nor to replace the King's ministry with their own. By George III's reign the Tories could hardly be distinguished from those 'country gentlemen' descended from unimpeachable Whig stock.

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