

Party Realignment in Britain, 1900-1925: A Preliminary Analysis

Author(s): Hugh W. Stephens

Source: *Social Science History*, Winter, 1982, Vol. 6, No. 1 (Winter, 1982), pp. 35-66

Published by: Cambridge University Press

Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1170846>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at <https://about.jstor.org/terms>



Cambridge University Press is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *Social Science History*

JSTOR

Party Realignment in Britain, 1900-1925

A Preliminary Analysis

HUGH W. STEPHENS

University of Houston

It is doubtful that any other period of comparable length in British history witnessed as many profound changes in politics as did the first quarter of the twentieth century. To mention only some of the more important examples, voter turnout rose from about 21% to 76% of the adult population; the party system was transformed when Labour displaced the Liberals as the major party of the left; legislative power was profoundly altered by the Parliament Act of 1911 which deprived the Lords of the right to veto permanently bills passed by the Commons; the social base of parliamentary recruitment expanded to include more members from lower middle- and working-class backgrounds; the disruptive influence of Irish self-government was removed from political life; and public concern shifted from issues related to Empire and wider access to parliamentary politics to domestic matters of a distributional nature. Under the cumulative impact of these changes, particularly in the party system, British politics in essence ceased to be traditional, and became modern.

The abundance of studies about electoral and party politics during the period, and the recurrence of dramatic terms to describe certain events such as the Conservative “disaster” at the 1906 general election or the Liberal “downfall” after World War I, testify to the importance the period holds for scholars of British political history. Except for psephological efforts, however, most analyses take a basically narrative and descriptive approach, focusing mainly upon the views and actions of parliamentary

leaders and discrete events, such as campaigns and elections. While these are insightful and provide much interesting detail, they leave us with a vague and sometimes confusing impression of party change because they fail to distinguish between immediate and longer term influences and their interaction. For example, the major scholarly controversy about the politics of the period, between advocates of the “accidentalist” and “inevitalist” explanations of the Liberal decline and Labour’s rise to major party status, revolves around the relative emphasis placed upon the actions of party leaders compared to structural changes in the electorate.¹ Moreover, the paucity of party studies spanning the pre- and post-war eras tends to leave the impression that Labour’s growth was almost entirely a product of wartime and immediate postwar developments (Butler and Stokes, 1971: ch. 7), yet there is evidence to support the assertion that while growth may have been more extensive after 1918, the prewar era was significant because it witnessed a basic reorientation of electoral and party evolution (Clarke, 1971: 16-18; Blewett, 1972: ch. 18).

This examination, part of a larger study of the relationship between partisan constituency support, party power in parliament, and changes in government policy between 1900 and 1925, is designed to refine the somewhat vague image of party change at the time by analyzing changes in certain contextual elements of party politics. To this end, several features of change derived from the theory of party realignment will be used to trace the growth and interaction of voter turnout levels, the character of constituency partisanship, and party strength in the House of Commons. The results should enhance our understanding not only of the forces that helped to produce the Labour Party’s rapid displacement of the Liberals, but of the often-overlooked changes occurring in the character of Conservative Party support as well.² The analysis should also permit a more precise assessment of the mediating effects of two major structural alterations in electoral rules and voter choice upon constituency partisanship—the McDonald-Gladstone agreement of 1903 concerning a limited division of parliamentary contests between Liberal and Labour candidates at the 1906 and 1910 elections, and the Reform Act of 1918, which brought about the largest single expansion of the electorate in British history.

Implicit in the purpose are several hypotheses which provide the focus for the analysis. The first is that transformation in the structure of constituency partisanship and party power between 1906 and 1924 was quite profound, so much so in fact that its effects upon party politics are apparent well into the 1960s. Second, it appears that the cumulative addition of large numbers of voters during the period was as important in effecting party change as were shifts in loyalties among existing ones, perhaps more so. The possible significance of electoral mobilization in turn requires careful investigation of changes in the electoral rules associated with this. Both the MacDonald-Gladstone pact and the 1918 Reform Act were important to Labour fortunes; the first facilitated the party's early attempt to gain representation in the Commons, while the second, through enfranchisement of almost all adults, altered the composition of the electorate by making working-class voters a majority of the electorate. Also, the measures of constituency character used herein suggest that new trends in party support were initiated at the January 1910 election, meaning that while wartime developments may have hastened and extended realignment, the critical juncture occurred before, not after, World War I. Finally, it should be understood that this is a preliminary assessment of British party realignment, and more conclusive answers to these and other related questions must await more detailed study.

ANALYTICAL DESIGN

The concept of partisan or party realignment has been developed by scholars of American political history to designate basic shifts in party loyalties of major segments of the electorate, together with ensuing changes in legislative representation, party control of government, and public policy that are sufficiently abrupt and extensive to set one period of political life off from another (Campbell and Trilling, 1980: 21-23). Realignments and their component critical elections are clearly important phenomena in American politics: to E. E. Schattschneider (1960), they denote a redefinition of conflict in the polity; to V. O. Key (1955), a more or less profound readjustment of power relations

within the community; and to J. Sundquist (1973), a transition from one distinct national party system to another. Since there are parallels between political changes associated with American realignments, such as the mid-1890s or the New Deal era, and what happened in Britain during the period of time under study, it is likely that variations in voter turnout, electoral partisanship, and legislative strengths of the parties interact in a similar manner in the two countries. Therefore, three realignment features derived from American studies have been selected as the major variables for this examination: emergence of new phases in the electoral cycle, when electoral majorities and minorities break up and reform (Burnham, 1970: 6; Key, 1959: 198); a marked alteration in the level of electoral activity among major elements of the voting population (Burnham, 1970: 7-8; Sundquist, 1973: 277); and the formation of new, durable, partisan coalitions among the electorate and/or emergence of a "third" party (Burnham, 1970: 10).

In order to make the analysis dynamic and to allow interactions among variables to be traced systematically over time, they are represented by measures amenable to quantification. The first, change in the electoral cycle, is represented by the number of seats in the Commons controlled by each party during successive parliaments, as well as by their shares of the total popular vote at general elections. The second variable, electoral participation, is measured by the total popular vote for all candidates of all parties during each parliament, including by-elections, and by average constituency turnout in terms of the proportion of eligible voters. Partisan constituency support, the third realignment variable, is assessed by the aggregate character of constituencies controlled by the respective parties during a given parliament, according to the following indices:³

characteristic

size or scale
urbanization or density
electoral participation
region

measure

total population
population per square mile
turnout as percentage of registered voters
four English, Wales, Scotland

The characteristics and their measures were selected with consideration of their political ramifications as derived from modernization theory, substantive features of party change in Britain at the time, and availability of standard data series throughout the entire period. Modernization theorists argue that increase in the scale of social interaction, represented by the total population of constituencies, is positively related to the importance of organization and ideology in the formation and retention of political loyalties, mainly because life becomes more impersonal. (Deutsch, 1953; G. and M. Wilson, 1945). Urbanization, serving as a surrogate for complexity of social and economic structures in constituencies, is recognized as a key aspect in breaking down cognitive and attitudinal barriers associated with traditional culture and in promoting new levels of aspiration, which in turn influence both personal desire and ability to participate in politics (Apter, 1965; LaPorte, 1976; Huntington, 1968). Total voter turnout as a percentage of registered voters, (hereafter referred to as proportionate turnout), was selected as the measure of electoral participation because it reveals the impact of voter turnout in terms of how it affected party representation in the House of Commons. Regional distribution of party strengths for each parliament is included because it was obviously important in determining the loyalties of sizable elements of the electorate, particularly before World War I.⁴

Quantitative data for these measures were collected for all parliamentary constituencies in England, Wales, and Scotland (Ireland is excluded) for six of the eight parliaments that were elected during the period under investigation: 1900-1906, 1906-1910, January-December 1910, 1918-1922, 1922-1923, and the Members returned at the general election of the 1924-1929 parliament. Except for region, constituency partisanship is expressed according to the percentage of seats ranked in each quartile of a given measure controlled by one or another of the parties. This allows shifts in the nature of constituency support from one parliament to the next to be traced with ease; for instance, Table 1 shows that the Conservatives held 70% of seats ranked in the highest quartile on the size measure during the 1900-

Table 1 Party Distribution on Constituency Characteristics: 1900-1924 (percentages)^a

	1900-1906			1906-1910			1910			1918-1922			1922-1923			1924				
	Cons	Lib	Lab	Cons	Lib	Lab	Cons	Lib	Lab	Com	Co.Lib	Lib	Lab	Com	N.Lib	Lib	Lab	Cons	Lib	Lab
Population	1	70	27	21	69	10	32	49	9	49	22	5	20	53	10	7	28	62	3	30
	2	64	35	27	65	8	38	55	7	58	20	5	12	54	7	8	32	61	5	32
	3	58	41	28	68	4	47	49	12	56	19	8	12	54	11	8	27	63	7	29
	4	54	46	30	70	0	56	43	0	68	15	10	6	62	10	15	12	78	8	13
Density	1	77	23	29	62	8	44	46	10	63	16	6	8	48	6	7	28	57	6	34
	2	66	32	30	62	8	41	50	9	62	18	6	12	60	9	10	20	70	5	24
	3	52	47	20	75	5	36	54	10	44	21	4	25	45	9	4	40	55	2	38
	4	60	39	27	72	1	53	46	1	62	19	11	4	59	14	16	10	81	10	7
Turnout/ ^b	1	50	50	28	66	6	49	44	8	50	15	7	20	45	8	13	33	62	6	32
Reg. Voters	2	54	44	26	67	7	39	56	5	64	13	7	10	44	7	10	38	65	4	29
	3	62	37	24	74	2	41	50	9	63	18	5	10	64	8	9	19	71	5	20
(seats) ^c	4	80	19	28	63	9	38	48	13	58	21	11	6	63	13	8	13	72	6	21
		(397)	(219)	(161)	(393)	(46)	(278)	(281)	(41)	(382)	(126)	(46)	(82)	(328)	(55)	(56)	(145)	(391)	(36)	(153)

a. Some rows within parliaments do not add to 100% because of the Independents.

b. Uncontested seats not included.

c. Includes Members returned at by-elections.

1906 parliament, but only 21% in the next, indicating a drastic reversal in the loyalty of this type of constituency. Mean averages for seats controlled by the parties on each characteristic except region are set forth in Table 3 for additional perspective on the nature of change in the character of support.

The impact of the MacDonald-Gladstone agreement and the 1918 Reform Act will be evaluated within the context of realignment trends, particularly constituency partisanship. Assessment of the MacDonald-Gladstone agreement is accomplished by comparing the character of those constituencies included and Labour's success in contesting them, to the character and success rate of Labour candidates in those seats not included, where Labourites faced Liberal as well as Conservative opponents. Assessment of the impact of the 1918 Act upon party fortunes relies mainly upon party distributions on the measures of proportionate turnout set forth in Tables 1 and 5, as well as average turnout figures in Table 3.

Before undertaking the analysis, it seems useful to make explicit certain implications of data choice and measurement used in this examination. Most important, it should be understood that this is not a study of changes in the electoral partisanship of major social groups as such, but rather, of what kinds of constituencies support which party. Therefore, the measures do not represent aggregates of individuals, much less attitudinal aspects of partisanship; given the absence of survey information on party preferences, there appear to provide the best information available. At any rate, as William L. Miller (1977: 111) aptly notes, the outcome of British general elections is decided by the way constituencies, not voters, vote. Finally, with the exception of region, the measures of constituency character and party distribution are relative and not absolute; this means that noncontinuous or reapportioned seats are not a serious limitation on the findings, but quartile rankings do not show absolute levels of population size, urbanization, or proportionate turnout, the measurement base of partisanship used in psephological studies (Mitchell and Boem, 1966; Blewett, 1972).⁵

PREWAR POLITICS

The successive general elections of 1906 and January 1910 brought about the most abrupt shifts in realignment variables during the entire period from 1900 to 1925. The first disrupted the structure of twenty years of almost uninterrupted Conservative domination over parliament, and the second began the development of a three-party system that was finally consolidated in 1924 and lasted well into the 1960s. What does realignment analysis indicate was the base of Conservative power before 1906? The variables tend to sustain the assertions of several scholars that extensive apathy among the electorate and attenuated Liberal competitiveness at parliamentary elections were major factors (Cornford, 1970: 113-15; Blewett, 1972: 21). If an estimated half-million plural voters are deducted from a total turnout of 3.4 million at the 1900 election, only some two-thirds of eligible voters cast ballots, constituency turnout averaged 8700 persons, (or only 12% more than in 1886), and the Liberals failed to contest a record 149 seats compared to only 22 for the Conservatives.

The fact that the Liberals had a higher success rate in seats they did contest than their overall share of the seats won at the general election supports the thesis about the significance of voter apathy. Party distribution on proportionate voter turnout for the 1900-1906 parliament in Table 1 reveal that the higher the quartile, the better Liberal candidates fared. For future reference, it is important to note that voter apathy was more extensive among electorates in constituencies ranked in the two higher quartiles of population size and urbanization, although the likely presence of large numbers of workers in them who were unable to meet property qualifications undoubtedly contributed to this condition (Matthew et al., 1976: 731-32).

Even though the Conservatives were in a majority in all categories of the measures of constituency character, clearly, the core of their support was located among the larger-sized, more urban seats having lower levels of proportionate turnout, whereas Liberal support centered among smaller, more rural seats with relatively high proportionate turnout levels. The regional distributions of party strength set forth in Table 2 represent continua-

Table 2 Regional Distribution of the Parties: 1900-1924 (percentages)^a

	1900-1906			1906-1910			1910			1918-1922			1922-1923			1924				
	Cons	Lib	Lab	Cons	Lib	Lab	Cons	Lib	Lab	Cons	Co. Lib	Lib	Lab	Cons	N. Lib	Lib	Lab	Cons	Lib	Lab
London	85	13		39	57	4	54	42	4	70	17	6	5	71	5	8	7	63	3	32
South	74	26		30	68	1	67	32	1	76	10	6	4	80	7	7	6	87	4	7
Midlands	71	29		43	50	6	61	32	7	65	9	9	14	63	14	6	17	79	0	21
North	57	43		19	68	12	29	54	17	51	22	4	19	46	9	8	36	56	5	36
Wales	20	75		1	96	3	6	80	14	11	41	7	36	17	3	23	54	25	29	46
Scotland	47	53		14	83	3	14	83	3	39	32	17	10	19	19	19	43	50	11	37

a. Some rows for various parliaments do not add to 100% because of Independents.

tion of a basic pattern of Conservative dominance throughout most of England, and Liberal supremacy in the Celtic areas of Wales and Scotland, although the former party had done well in Scotland for the first time and the Liberals won a respectable share of seats in North England.

The return of 402 Conservatives and only 187 Liberals at the general election of 1900 marked the acme of prewar Conservative fortunes, for soon thereafter, a series of developments rapidly undermined the prestige of Prime Minister Balfour's government and the apathy of political Liberal supporters as well. First in point of time was enactment of education reform in 1902; because it mandated state support of Anglican schools, this, as well as a temperance reform measure passed in 1904, offended many nonconformist groups and revived their flagging support for the Liberal Party (Glaser, 1958). Another development was Joseph Chamberlain's proposal for a system of preferential tariffs for the empire; this disturbed a wide range of economic interests committed to Britain's long-standing policy of free trade and also split the normally solid ranks of the Conservative Party. Also, the Taff Vale decision by the House of Lords, holding a trade union liable for financial losses suffered by a company during a strike, engendered a surge of hostility toward the Conservative Party among many trade unionists, some of which was canalized into support for the newly formed Labour Representation Committee (LRC). This organization, an alliance of the Independent Labour Party, socialist societies, and trade unions, sought to attain working-class representation in the Commons outside of Liberal sponsorship, but realizing the difficulties confronting a minor party, its leaders sought to cooperate with the larger party on electoral matters. In 1903, its secretary, Ramsay MacDonald, was able to make a confidential agreement with Herbert Gladstone, chief liberal whip, for a limited division of contests at the next parliamentary election (Marquand, 1977: 80). The net effect of these developments was to raise the salience of politics for a variety of heretofore apathetic groups, and the presence of 31 Labour candidates standing without Liberal opposition at the 1906 election by virtue of the agreement extended viable electoral choice further to the left and gave more candidates of working-

class origin a meaningful chance for victory than at any time in British history.

Compared to the party strengths in 1900, the return of 401 Liberals, 29 Labourites, and 157 Conservatives at the 1906 general election marked the most abrupt reversal of party strengths from one parliament to the next since 1832. In view of what happened 4 years later, even the overwhelming nature of the Liberal victory nevertheless did not initiate a new electoral cycle; rather, this was an anti-Conservative verdict by a reawakened, expanded electorate that disrupted the old parliamentary majority in the Commons. The surge in voter turnout was as dramatic as the change in party strengths, but, as events were to prove, this was permanent as well. An increase in the total popular vote from 3.4 to 5.8 million, or from 75% to 82% of registered voters, was partly a function of greater competition for seats, since only 32 were not contested, but a growth in average constituency turnout from 8,700 voters to 10,300 at this election suggests that voter interest was greater than before.

Quite obviously, the surge in voting was highly favorable to the Liberals, whose share of the popular vote rose 80% over its 1900 level compared to an increase of 40% for Conservative candidates, or 18% and 10%, respectively, in terms of mean average constituency turnout. A breakdown of constituency proportionate turnout averages by size and urbanization for the 1906-1910 parliament set forth in Table 4 indicates that the anti-Conservative vote tended to concentrate among the larger, more urbanized seats—precisely those that had formed the core of Conservative support during the previous parliament. This shift, in combination with extensive Liberal gains and Conservative losses in all quartiles of the measures in Table 1, suggests that the 1906 general election and by-elections during this parliament reduced differences in the internal distributions of party support. That is, neither party's constituency base was heavily weighted toward larger or smaller, urban or rural, high or low proportionate turnout types of seats, as had been the case in the 1900-1906 parliament. In effect, it was as if the new voters abolished Conservative power without deciding at the same time what should replace it, although the Conservatives did suffer least

Table 4 Constituency Proportionate Voter Turnout by Size and Density: 1900-1910 (percentages)^a

	1900-1906			1906-1910			Jan-Dec 1910		
Gen'l avg.	74.8			82.8			87.1		
	Consv.	Liberal		Consv.	Liberal	Labor	Consv.	Liberal	Labor
Size	1	70	74	80	81	78	78	77	75
	2	73	75	76	79	86	80	82	83
	3	77	77	76	78	85	82	82	82
	4	77	80	81	86	..	84	85	..
Urbanization	1	69	74	77	80	79	77	81	79
	2	78	79	85	85	85	85	85	85
	3	76	77	83	85	84	83	85	84
	4	76	75	85	82	81	85	82	..

a. Uncontested seats are excluded.

heavily among smaller, more rural seats and among those with relatively high levels of proportionate turnout.

The return of 29 Labourites at the 1906 general election seemingly confirms the growth of another realignment feature, the emergence of a “third” party as part of a critical or realigning election, but the particular circumstances of the Labour victories require serious qualification to such a judgment. Confronted by extensive prejudice against working-class candidates from an electorate in which the middle class was highly significant and the disadvantages of a dominantly single-member, winner-take-all electoral system, the new party was nevertheless able to win 29 of the 45 seats it contested.⁶ Whatever the impact of Labour’s appeal to the electorate, provisions of the MacDonald-Gladstone pact and shifts in partisan constituency support were quite important to the outcome. In essence, the agreement provided that Liberal leaders would try to persuade local associations in about 50 specified constituencies not to put up candidates and allow Labourites straight fight opportunities against Conservatives in return for Labour’s endorsement of Liberal candidates elsewhere

(Bealey and Pelling, 1958: Appendix A). In the event, only 31 straight fights could be arranged, yet these provided Labour with 24 of its victories. Since quartile distributions and mean averages on the measures of constituency character are similar for the 31 straight fight contests, most of which Labour won, to the 14 additional contests in which a Liberal as well as a Conservative stood in opposition, most of which Labour lost, the opportunity provided by the agreement was probably critical to the new party's successes at this point.

Once past this hurdle, Labourites were in a position to take advantage of the anti-Conservative realignment trends, for most of the seats they contested were of the larger, urban types, precisely those most likely to cast aside their past loyalty to the Tories. Table 1 shows that the Labour Party's constituency base during the 1906-1910 parliament was small but distinctive, confined almost wholly to larger, heavily urban seats where turnout rates were low in proportionate terms, but high absolutely. How well the Liberal or Labour parties might have fared in 1906 without the agreement is an oft-debated but moot question; what is important is that Labour Party victories deprived the Conservative Party of much of its past core support, and the new party took control of seats where voters may not have yet committed themselves to its goals but were in the process of transferring their partisan affiliation.

The timing, and to some extent, the outcome of the January 1910 election originated from the innovative policies of the Liberal government which assumed office in 1906. Buoyed by its large majority and under pressure from its own radical wing as well as its Labour allies, Liberal leaders introduced and passed a broad range of economic and social reforms, but a number of important ones failed to reach the statute book because they encountered the disapproval of the House of Lords. Despite growing irritation among Liberals at the pro-Conservative bias of the Lords, a crisis between the two Houses did not arise until the Lords took the unusual step of vetoing the government's finance bill for 1909, known as the "People's Budget" because it provided for much heavier taxation of the wealthy elements of society. This interference with the popular will as expressed through the

Table 5 Constituency Proportionate Voter Turnout by Size and Density: 1918-1924 (percentages)^a

	1918-1922				1922-1923				1924	
	Cons	Collib	IndLib	Lab	Cons	NatLib	IndLib	Lab	Cons	Lib
General avg.			57.1				74.7			76.7
Size	1	62	67	63	67	76	78	86	75	79
	2	60	54	56	57	71	74	74	75	76
	3	57	52	51	64	71	67	72	76	75
	4	65	57	54	66	73	60	74	78	71
Urbanization	1	64	55	44	54	67	68	70	72	74
	2	62	67	61	75	76	95	94	86	80
	3	57	58	59	66	73	71	76	79	80
	4	60	51	58	61	73	64	71	73	70

a. Uncontested seats are excluded.

Commons and the alleged unconstitutionality of the action served as the catalyst for the election, but the nature of the campaign debate suggests that fundamentally at issue was whether or not governmental power should be used to modify the social order toward greater collective equality (Emy, 1973: 94-103, 142-45).

Under these circumstances, it is not surprising that the January 1910 election was among the most intensely fought in modern British electoral history. New levels of voter turnout were attained as 6.6 million votes were cast, amounting to 87% of registered voters, and the constituency turnout again rose, this time to average 10,900 voters. Judging by changes in the structure of partisan constituency support, a considerable portion of the expanded electorate must have had reservations about Liberal innovations, for the Conservative Party recovered about half of its 1906 losses by winning 272 seats on 47% of the vote, compared to 274 seats for the Liberals and 40 for Labour on 44% and 7% of the popular vote, respectively.

The combined increase in Conservative seats ranked in the highest quartile of proportionate turnout and the lowest quartiles on size and urbanization shown in Table 1 indicates that the key to the party's resurgence was a shift of support among smaller, more rural types of seats from Liberal control. The Conservatives also regained a majority of seats in three of the four English regions, but made little progress in North England, Scotland, or Wales. Their inability to do better in North England was particularly important, for it indicates that their failure to resume control of most of the heavily urban seats in and around Lancashire, whose electorates were predominantly working-class, denied them the chance to reconstitute their old majority (Blewett, 1972: 401).

What happened to Liberal constituency support is best understood by first taking note of the Labour Party's fortunes at this election. The latter won 40 seats, 11 more than in 1906, but 5 less than it had held at the close of the 1906-1910 parliament. After 1906, 13 of the 16 additions were constituencies dominated by the mining vote, and their members had officially changed their party designation from Liberal to Labour when the Miner's

Federation affiliated to the LRC in 1908. This development left the Liberal leadership unwilling to grant Labour more than a very few additional concessions for the 1910 election, but they did honor past results of the MacDonal-Gladstone agreement by challenging Labour incumbents in only three seats. Again, the pact appears to have been critical to Labour success, for the party's candidates won most of their straight fight contests against Conservatives, but none of the 33 additional contests in which Liberal also stood in opposition, despite the fact that these seats were regarded as good prospects for Labour victories. The party's constituency base therefore remained relatively narrow, concentrated among the largest, most urban seats with relatively low levels of proportionate turnout. The major change was the addition of the mining seats, most of which ranked in the third quartile on population size and urbanization.

As for the Liberals, since Labour lost only 5 seats, their defeats were at the hands of Conservatives, and even though Table 4 reveals no substantial difference in proportionate turnout levels for the smaller, more rural seats won by Conservatives compared to those won by Liberals, modest increases in turnout favorable to the former were sufficient to shift many of these from the Liberal to the Conservative column. In a manner similar to what had happened to the Conservatives four years previously, these losses moved the center of Liberal electoral gravity, in this instance, toward the larger, heavily urbanized constituencies. Solid support for the Liberal Party in the Celtic regions indicated in Table 2 demonstrates that traditional regional loyalties remained an important component of the party's strength, but retention of most of its gains in the heavily urban London region also suggests that a rural-agricultural vs. urban-industrial cleavage was beginning to take hold among the English electorate by 1910 (Wald, 1977).

Since a second general election held in December 1910 confirmed the results of the first and was the last prior to the outbreak of the war, it is possible to summarize and assess the effects of realignment changes before 1914 on the basis of the three parliaments that sat between 1900 and 1911. The timing of changes in voter turnout levels, party majorities, and in con-

stituency support demonstrate that the elections of 1906 and January 1910 severly altered many features of electoral and party politics without permanently transforming the structure of partisan constituency support and party power in parliament. A surge of voter mobilization in 1906 helped to disrupt the base of long-standing Conservative dominance that had rested upon a certain amount of voter apathy and variegated constituency support centering among larger, urban seats with relatively low proportionate turnout levels. Since these were precisely the seats where the party suffered its heaviest losses, their inability to regain them four years later, combined with gains among the smaller, more rural types of seats, meant that a marked shift had occurred in the character of Conservative support.

As the major beneficiary of increased voter turnout in 1906, Liberals experienced marked gains among all kinds of seats but, as the party's distribution on the measures in Table 1 indicates, subsequent losses in the January-December 1910 parliament removed not only their absolute majority in parliament, but the distinctive qualities of their support. In fact, if the constituency measures are conceived of as forming a spectrum, the largest, most urban seats with low turnout being at one end and the opposite types at the other, with due allowance for limited overlap of seats having all three characteristics and the small number of Labourites involved, the profiles of party support in the January-December 1910 parliament place Labour at the former end of the spectrum, the Conservatives toward the other, and the Liberals in a poorly defined middle position. This judgment is also supported by differences in the mean averages of parties on the measures of constituency character shown in Table 3, for the Conservatives possess the lowest, Labour the highest, and the Liberals fall in the middle. In fact, Liberal constituency support had come to resemble that of the Conservatives more than that of Labour. This, combined with Liberal unwillingness to concede Labour more than a very few additional seats at the January 1910 election, suggests that realignment had produced the potential for overt conflict between the two parties of the left over who should ultimately gain control of the larger, heavily urban seats that had cast off their past loyalties to the Conservatives.

For its part, Labour was nevertheless in a highly vulnerable position. Although able to take advantage of anti-Conservative realignment when Liberal concessions allowed, the new party could not transcend its dependence upon Liberal tolerance imposed by the electoral system and its unique qualities as an avowedly working-class, trade union oriented organization as well. Whatever the disadvantages imposed by its character and aims, its growth prospects were severely circumscribed by the electoral system, for the record 87% turnout of registered voters at the January 1910 election indicates that there was no large, untapped source of uncommitted voters to which the party could turn for additional support. Since the existing franchises allowed a mere 60% of adult males to votes, of whom some 40% were middle class, Labour Party prospects would remain dim without extensive reform (Matthew et al., 1976: 733, 740).

POSTWAR POLITICS

The eight year hiatus between the general elections of December 1910 and December 1918 is treated by most scholars of British electoral and party history as a major divide in the country's political evolution. While this view tends to underestimate important continuities between pre- and postwar periods, several developments associated with World War I did bring about important alterations in the context of politics, and ultimately strengthened realignment trends that had begun beforehand. The split in Liberal ranks during 1916 was obviously one of these. This ushered in a coalition government led by Lloyd George and supported by his Liberal followers and most Conservatives, lasting until 1922 and probably delaying Liberal reunification past the point where the party had any chance of blocking Labour's growth. A second change was the rapid increase in membership and organizational strength of the trade union movement and creation of close ties between it and the Labour Party (the latter being reorganized in 1918 as an overt political party), for this gave it the potential support required to operate as an entity independent of the Liberals. Electoral reform was a third

development that helped Labour realize some of this potential and become the major party of the left; the Representation of the People Act of 1918 expended the electorate to about 80% of all adults, including women 30 years of age or older, and made the working class an overwhelming majority of voters (Kinnear, 1973: 30).

The net effect of these three developments was that the Liberals entered the postwar era divided and organizationally weak, presenting the public with a diffuse and confusing image of their character and purpose. The combination of normal turnover in the electorate and franchise expansion produced a voting population with little experience and tentative in its partisanship, and Labour emerged larger and better organized, capable of transcending the constrictions of Liberal tolerance.

The principal reasons for the drastic deviations in constituency partisanship shown in Table 1 for the 1918-1922 parliament stem from the immediate circumstances of the 1918 election and the fragmented state of party structure. The euphoria of military victory and four years of neglect of party organization meant that issues were not sharply focused and confusing patterns of cooperation and opposition emerged among erstwhile friends and enemies that offered inexperienced voters a bewildering variety of choices. Of 481 contests for seats during the 1918-1922 parliament, most of which occurred at the general election, 44% involved more than 2 candidates; in addition to 167 Liberal and 364 Conservative candidates standing as coalition allies, there were 376 Independent Liberals, followers of former Prime Minister Asquith, 361 Labourites, and several hundred independents of one variety or another. The coalition won an overwhelming victory as 122 of its Liberals and 332 Conservatives were returned on 45% of 9.65 million popular votes, while Labour managed 61 victories on 21% of the vote, and the Independent Liberals only 36 wins on 13%. In addition, about 50 independent Conservatives and 17 other candidates were elected, the result indicating little more than a victory of a wartime coalition located somewhat to the right of center, led by a Prime Minister whose personal popularity was extremely high, and a severe setback to the Independent Liberals.

The extent of party fragmentation emerging from the 1918 election is readily apparent in Table 1. Because a major share of the net gain of some hundred seats by the Conservatives relative to 1910 occurred among larger, heavily urbanized seats, mostly at the expense of Independent Liberals, Conservative support temporarily reversed the prewar trend. For future reference, it should be noted that the largest single increase for the party on the population size and urbanization measures took place in the second quartile of urbanization, suggesting that suburban, middle class were joining the party in ever greater numbers (Kinnear, 1968: 124).

The key to Labour's modest improvement as well as the absence of a definite pattern in its constituency support appears to have been a lag in mobilization of newly enfranchised voters. Although attainment of virtual manhood suffrage shifted the weight of its support on proportionate turnout into the first and second quartiles of this measure, its 57% overall average for the seats its candidates won was identical to the average for all seats, so whatever the potential benefits of franchise liberalization, the party appears to have received no benefit at this point. Trade union influence does seem to have been crucial to the party's fortunes, however; the large increase in its share of seats in the third quartile of urbanization reflects the fact that 25 of its 61 victories came in mining constituencies, where the influence and organization of the Miner's Federation was brought to bear (McKibbin, 1974: 111).

It is difficult to generalize about the constituency support of the two disparate Liberal parties other than to state that Independent Liberals enjoyed modest support among smaller, rural constituencies, and coalition Liberals did respectably in the Celtic regions. Both were probably aided by the same lag in voter mobilization that hindered Labour; Table 5 shows that 26 of 43 seats won by the former were carried on proportionate turnouts well below the overall average, while about half the coalition Liberal victories came on a turnout rate of 55%.

The structure of party power and constituency support produced by the 1918 election and by-elections during the parliament failed to lend much coherence to parliamentary politics. Govern-

ment stability rested on the tentative unity of an uneasy coalition of two parties that had opposed each other historically and, despite removal of the vexing Irish question from the political agenda and consummation of a peace treaty with Germany, Lloyd George's government was plagued with serious difficulties in adjusting the economy to drastically different postwar conditions. In October 1922, Conservative members rejected Lloyd George's offer to continue the alliance for another election, precipitating his immediate resignation and terminating the coalition government. The coalition's demise and Liberal failure to reunite at this juncture blurred voter choice even more than in 1918 and consequently, the 1922 election was one of the most confused of modern times (Kinnear, 1973: 142).

Of 590 contests held for seats in the 1922-1923 parliament, 199 involved at least 3 candidates, typically a Conservative, a Labourite, and an Independent Liberal, since the National Liberals, as the followers of Lloyd George were called, were able to field only 144 candidates. Despite the confusion caused by party fragmentation, realignment data indicate that two important changes got underway at this election. One was a renewed surge in voter turnout as the lag in mobilization of new voters began to end, for the popular vote increased to almost 14.4 million, or 73% of registered voters. Labour appears to have derived the greatest benefit from this development, because its candidates received about 60% of the additional turnout, winning 142 seats on almost 30% of the total popular vote and becoming the major opposition party in parliament for the first time.

Shifts in the distribution of Labour constituency support shown in Tables 1 and 2 indicate the beginning of a second major development, resumption of prewar trends in party support. Not only did Labour achieve sizeable gains in the former Liberal bastions of North England and Wales, but most of the additional seats ranked in the two higher quartiles of population size and urbanization, and the party's distribution on these measures came to resemble that of the January-December 1910 parliament. The Conservatives, whose constituency support in this parliament shows little distinctiveness, appear to have gained the most from electoral confusion, for they became the sole governing party for

the first time in 16 years by winning 344 seats on only 38% of the popular vote, 42 seats being gained without opposition. Without Conservative cooperation, the National Liberal ranks were decimated by the loss of about a hundred seats. The remaining 56 members were too few in number to be of much significance because they held seats mostly of the smaller, rural types, won on extraordinarily low polls and scattered almost at random about the country except for Scotland, where they still enjoyed Conservative backing (Cook, 1975: 17). Independent Liberals experienced a mild but disappointing improvement, winning 62 contests. The diffuse nature of their constituency base shown in Table 1 is probably the major reason why their 18.6% share of the popular vote failed to translate into an equivalent number of seats in the House of Commons. Generally, except for Labour Party gains and National Liberal losses, partisan constituency support changed little during this parliament, and although shifts in Labour's base do suggest that prewar realignment trends had resumed, electoral and party affairs seem to have remained under the influence of short-term forces, particularly the breakup of the coalition and the absence of Liberal unification.

The Conservative government that Stanley Baldwin formed in November 1922 had been in office scarcely a year when he decided to call a general election on the issue of a preferential tariff system for the empire. As intended, this prompted a shorting-out of party factions as National Liberals severed their remaining ties with Conservatives and made an uneasy peace with the Independent Liberals to defend the time-honored principle of free trade. The electoral verdict of 1923 did not produce a majority for the Conservatives, or for any party for that matter, because the Conservatives took only 258 seats; Labour increased its representation to 191, and the Liberals finished a disappointing third by winning only 158 contests. Although the 1923-1924 parliament was not analyzed for realignment trends, other studies suggest that the Liberals lost this, their last good opportunity to regain major party status, because they failed to make serious inroads among Conservative support in rural and suburban seats or Labour's core among large, heavily urban constituencies (Cook, 1976: 167). Because of continuing differences within Liberal

Party leadership, the party was unable to form a government, and Labour received the opportunity to form a minority government and demonstrate to the public that it could exercise power in a responsible manner.

Unlike the three previous general elections, 1924 was an unambiguous electoral verdict that created a definite party majority and established a structure of partisan constituency support solid enough to last in its essentials for the next forty years. As R. R. James writes, "British politics could, after nearly a decade of violent fluctuations of fortunes, alliances and allegiances, resume a coherent pattern" (1976: 111). This election brought yet another marked increase in voter turnout, this time to almost 16.6 million, about 2 million more votes than were cast in 1922, and amounting to 77% of the eligible electorate, a proportion not surpassed until 1970. Within this context, viability of party organization was important to the outcome, for the Conservative and Labour parties put up 534 and 514 candidates, respectively, whereas the Liberals managed only 339 for the 615 seats in the Commons. In the event, the Conservatives won an overwhelming victory, taking 412 seats on 47% of the popular vote compared to 151 for Labour on 33% and 36 seats for the Liberals on 18% of the vote.

What the election did to alter the structure of partisan constituency support was at least as important as what happened to the strength of the parties in parliament. Although the divided condition of the Liberals at the 1922 election makes comparison to 1924 difficult, the potential for a confrontation between Liberals and Conservatives over who should control the smaller, more rural seats created by the outcome of the earlier election now came to fruition, to the detriment of the Liberals. The diffusion of Liberal support for its few remaining seats indicated by the measures in Tables 1 and 2 indicates that it had clearly failed to gain the loyalty of a sizable, distinct element of the postwar British electorate that might have yielded a larger share of representation in the Commons. Only in Wales, where residual influences of religious and nationalist sentiment were still reasonably strong did Liberals win a respectable portion of the seats, and even here, most were in rural areas, presumably less affected

by the younger Welsh intellectuals and the influx of English miners who were more attracted to Labour's proposals for dealing with unemployment and economic recession (Hechter, 1975: 293-298; Morgan, 1970: 254-255).

The Labour Party's losses were mostly in rural areas, for despite a drop of about 40 in its overall strength, it achieved modest increases among seats ranked in the higher two quartiles of urbanization, obviously at the expense of Liberal and minor party candidates. As a result, the center of its constituency support shifted even more onto an urban base than it had been in 1922-1923, and relatively speaking, the distribution of support resembled that of the January-December 1910 parliament more than at any point in time during the period under examination. The fact that the largest percentage of Labour seats ranked in the third quartile of urbanization, most of which were mining constituencies controlled by the Miner's Federation, suggests that trade union support remained highly significant to the party's success in gaining access to parliament.

It follows that the major share of Conservative gains came in seats ranked in the lowest quartiles of the two demographic characteristics. Actually, with the exception of what happened at the 1924 election, no marked changes occurred in the distribution of Conservative strength on the population size measure during any of the three postwar parliaments analyzed in this examination, suggesting that reapportionment of constituencies carried out under terms of the 1918 Reform Act may have undercut the validity of this measure. The evidence of change in the nature of Conservative support on urbanization is clear-cut, however; the party won almost every rural seat it contested against a Liberal and some against Labourites as well, and divided the urban ones with Labour more or less evenly. When considered with the respectable increase of Conservative strength in the second quartile of this measure, it becomes apparent that, possibly in response to "red scare" propaganda directed at Labour and disillusionment with Liberal indecisiveness, rural and middle-class suburban voters flocked to the polls and voted overwhelmingly for Conservative candidates. The Conservatives actually won more urban seats than Labour, as they did in all other

categories, but the internal balance of support of the two parties on size and density is distinct and represents a consolidation of realignment trends begun in January 1910, when Labour support began to concentrate among larger, heavily urban constituencies and Conservatives began to grow in strength among the smaller, more rural ones.

CONCLUSION

We began by asserting that dramatic alterations took place in British politics between 1900 and 1925, particularly in electoral activity and in the party system. The outstanding feature of party change was a rapid displacement of the Liberals by Labour as the major party of the left, although there were also important transformations in the character of the Conservative Party as well. We noted that considerable disagreement exists among scholars as to why this happened and how various forces may have affected the result, in part because immediate- and longer-term aspects of political change have not been separately analyzed and their interaction systematically assessed. This examination attempts to improve our understanding of what happened to the party system by applying certain features of party realignment in order to follow changes in aspects of political context throughout the period and also to ascertain the impact of two important alterations in electoral rules, the MacDonald-Gladstone pact, and the Reform Act on 1918.

What do the realignment variables add to our understanding of party and electoral change during the period? With allowances for the preliminary nature and brevity of the analysis, the evidence on voter turnout levels, partisan constituency support, and party strengths in the House of Commons sustains the hypotheses set forth at the outset concerning a transformation in the party system and the significance of the 1906 and January 1910 elections in that process. The Liberal landslide victory in 1906 and the presence of a respectable number of Labourites disrupted the structure of Conservative electoral dominance by depriving the latter party of much of its past support among

larger, heavily urbanized seats. Partisanship began to take on a new configuration at the next election four years later when the Conservatives recovered part of their losses, mainly among smaller, more rural seats taken from Liberals and at the time failed to recover the larger, urban ones lost in 1906. The Liberal Party emerged from the 1910 elections still the largest single party and retained control of the government by virtue of Labour and Irish nationalist backing, but the bland quality of its constituency support, at least in terms of the measures used here, probably facilitated the 1916 split and contributed to the party's subsequent difficulties after the war in attempting to stake out a distinctive ideological and policy posture relative to the other two parties.

Coalition government, canalization of trade union power to Labour, and expansion of the size and social base of the electorate after the war all enhanced prewar realignment trends and carried them to their consolidating point in 1924. By then, the British party system had become vastly different from what it had been before 1906: Conservative support now rested largely upon smaller, more rural seats, together with a significant portion of suburban constituencies; Labour had become the second largest party in the Commons, its core resting among the largest, most urbanized constituencies and mining seats; and the Liberals were a nondescript party whose size had declined so much that it had little chance of ever regaining major party status.

The growing differences that we have observed in the profiles of constituency support for the left and right in British politics demonstrate that a new cleavage had intruded upon an older one based on localistic, sectarian, and regional sentiments without replacing it. Shifts in party distributions on the measures in Tables 1 and 2, together with information from descriptive political studies, suggest that the smaller, more rural seats, where personal relationships, social hierarchy, and property counted for a great deal, tended to support the Conservatives as the party most closely identified with the traditional order, whereas the larger, densely populated constituencies, where life was more complex and impersonal and social groups required greater amounts of government services, opted for the parties of innovation, first the Liberals, and as time progressed, increasingly the Labourites. It

should be noted that this judgment is congruent with the results of several studies on electoral partisanship that make use of occupational and regional data in attempting to trace shifts toward class voting. For instance, our findings that the Conservatives were unable to reconstitute their prerealignment majority in 1910 because they could not recover the heavily urbanized seats in Lancashire and London is congruent with assertions of Blewett (1972: 400) and Clarke (1971: 406) that by this time partisanship had definitely begun to shift onto a class base, at least in England. Party distributions for the 1924 election on urbanization, which show the Conservatives better represented in the second (suburban) and fourth (rural) quartiles and Labour relatively strong among the first (city) and third (mining) quartiles is compatible with evidence developed by Butler and Stokes (1976: 111-118) and Kinnear (1968: 112) indicating that class voting continued to increase after the war. Also, the fact that the Conservatives held a greater number of seats ranked in the highest quartile of urbanization than did Labour after the 1924 election supports the observation of Butler and Stokes (1976: 118) that the pull of Labour was not strong enough to break voter loyalties all at once, and many working-class voters maintained their traditional loyalty. Parallel findings with psephological studies such as these are only meant to be suggestive however, for not only is the unit of analysis used in this examination different, but the relationship between the class composition of constituencies and their relative size or degree of urbanization is by no means clear.

The realignment variables, particularly the party support measure for proportionate turnout, suggest that increases in voter turnout were crucial to change in the party system as a whole, and particularly to Labour's growth to major party status. There is no way of assessing how many voters in various kinds of constituencies actually switched their partisanship at any given election, but there is ample evidence of a positive relationship between increases in proportionate turnout levels and party success at election time. Consider the following: in 1906, superior increases in turnout among large, urbanized seats were a key element in the overwhelming victory of the Liberals and their Labour allies; in

1910, a partial recovery by Conservatives was centered among smaller, rural types of seats where turnout rates increased more than those constituencies of the opposite types which remained loyal to the anti-Conservative parties; in 1922, Labour more than doubled its 1918-1922 parliamentary strength when a lag in mobilization of new voters began to abate; in 1924, counter mobilization of rural and suburban voters gave Conservatives an overwhelming majority in the Commons. In fact, the popular vote received by the Liberal Party in 1924 is the sole instance of a decrease in the absolute turnout level for any party at any general election during the entire period.⁷

Since the Representation of the People Act of 1918 was basically responsible for growing voter turnout after World War I, this raises the question of what effect changes in electoral rules and choices had upon realignment trends and alteration of the party system. The evidence developed here suggests that by expanding the electorate from about 28% to 80% of the adult population and by broadening its social base in the process, the 1918 Act was at least a necessary ingredient in Labour's growth to major party status. We found, for instance, that under the prewar electoral system, when proportionate turnout reached a record 87% of registered voters, Labour was unable to transcend its dependence on Liberal tolerance in order to win seats in parliament. This is why the MacDonald-Gladstone agreement was so important; it allowed Labour some early successes and public visibility until the party was able to take advantage of the changed circumstances of postwar politics. Although the popular vote rose absolutely for all parties, Labour's share rose more than any of the others and, with the exception of the 1918-1922 parliament, proportionate turnout for seats it won after the war was consistently higher than in seats won by Liberals or Conservatives.

This examination represents a preliminary test of the realignment concept as a means of explaining party change in Britain. As a result, and because of its brevity as well, even though the approach shows considerable promise in analyzing changes in political context, it leaves many questions unanswered and does not completely explain those that constitute its focus. Therefore,

not only is there merit in conducting a more detailed study of interrelationships between changes in voter turnout, partisan constituency support, as the parliamentary representation of parties during this period, but efforts should be made to include the full range of realignment effects, such as alterations in the governmental agenda and public policy and in the relative power of major decision-making institutions which we noted at the beginning were also important features of political change in Britain at this time.

NOTES

1. The "accidental" viewpoint is represented by Roy Douglas (1975) and Trevor Lloyd (1975). The "inevitable" viewpoint can be found in works by Phillip Poirier (1958) and Henry Pelling (1968). Kenneth Wald (1978) provides a summary discussion of what he terms the traditional and revisionist schools of thought on the rise of class-based voting during this period.

2. Although this party was officially called the Unionist Party prior to 1918 because it was an alliance of Conservatives and their Liberal Unionist allies, the term Conservative is adopted here for the sake of consistency.

3. Computation and data sources for the measures are as follows: (a) Party identity of members of Parliament: *Constitutional Yearbook, 1901, 1907, 1912, 1920, 1925*; (b) constituency population, registered voters, and voter turnout: *Constitutional Yearbook, 1901, 1907, 1912, 1920, 1925*; (c) density of population (urbanization) is computed by persons per square mile, and the land area of constituencies is found in the following: Great Britain, House of Commons, *Parliamentary Paper*, "Census of England and Wales, 1911"; "Census of Scotland, 1891"; "Return, showing each parliamentary constituency, 1918"; (d) region, see Note 4. Measures for members representing double-member constituencies, of which there were twenty-five before the war, were calculated on the basis of the entire constituency, that is, as two single-member seats.

4. The regions represent groups of regions established by C. B. Fawcett based on the 1911 census as set forth by Henry Pelling (1967). South England includes South East, East Anglia, Central, Wessex, Bristol, Cornwall and Devon; Midlands includes East and West Midlands; North England includes Peak-Don, Lancashire, Yorkshire, and North England. All regions in Scotland are combined.

5. Some interesting attempts have been made to incorporate quantitative measures of constituency character into psephological studies of the period. For the prewar period, see Cornford (1970) and especially Blewett (1972), based on Pelling (1967). For the post-World War I period, see Michael Kinnear (1968). The analytical thrust of this examination aside, the difficulty of using these series is that they are not sufficiently comprehensive and do not cover the entire period.

6. Actually, two Labour Party candidates were elected in 1900 and three at by-elections during the 1900-1906 parliament. Also, four of the seats Labour contested, and two of its victories in 1906 were Scottish seats and were not included under the term of the agreement.

7. The absence of other instances of a decrease in the popular vote for all candidates of a party and the shift of so many smaller, rural seats from Liberal to Conservative control between 1922 and 1924 tends to sustain the assertion of Butler and Stokes (1976: 108) and Matthew et al. (1976: 739) that most of Labour's additional support came from manual workers who had grown up in nonpolitical homes and that a greater share of Liberal defectors must have joined the Conservatives rather than Labour at this point.

REFERENCES

- APTER, D. (1965) *The Politics of Modernization*. Chicago: Chicago Univ. Press.
- BEALEY, F. and H. PELLING (1958) *Labor and Politics*. New York: Macmillan.
- BLEWETT, N. (1972) *The Peers, the Parties, and the People: the British General Elections of 1910*. Toronto: Toronto Univ. Press.
- BURNHAM, W. D. (1970) *Critical Elections and the Mainsprings of American Politics*. New York: Norton.
- BUTLER, D. and D. STOKES (1976) *Political Change in Britain*. New York: St. Martin's.
- CAMPBELL, B. and L. TRILLING (1980) *Realignments in American Politics: Toward a Theory*. Austin: Univ. of Texas Press.
- CLARKE, P. (1971) *Lancashire and the New Liberalism*. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press.
- Constitutional Yearbook (1901, 1907, 1920, 1923, 1925) Brighton: Harvester.
- COOK, C. (1975) *The Age of Alignment: Electoral Politics in Britain, 1922-29*. Toronto: Toronto Univ. Press.
- CORNFORD, J. (1970) "Aggregate election data and British party alignments, 1885-1910," in E. Allardt and S. Rokkan (eds.) *Mass Politics*. New York: Macmillan.
- DEUTSCH, K. (1953) *Nationalism and Social Communication*. New York: John Wiley.
- DOUGLAS, R. (1971) *The History of the Liberal Party: 1885-1970*. Teaneck, NJ: Sidgwick and Jackson.
- EMY, H. V. (1973) *Liberals, Radicals, and Social Politics, 1892-1914*. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press.
- GLASER, J. (1958) "English nonconformity and the decline of liberalism." *Amer. Historical Rev.* 63 (October): 352-363.
- Great Britain, House of Commons, Parliamentary Paper (1918) "Return, showing each parliamentary constituency." XIX 138.
- House of Commons. Parliamentary Paper (1912-1913) "Census of England and Wales 1911." CVII, Vol. III.
- House of Commons. Parliamentary Paper (1891) "Census of Scotland." Cmd. 6755.
- HECHTER, M. (1975) *Internal Colonialism: The Celtic Fringes in British National Development, 1536-1966*. Berkeley: Univ. of California Press.
- HUNTINGTON, S. (1968) *Political Order in Changing Societies*. New Haven: Yale Univ. Press.
- JAMES, R. R. (1976) *The British Revolution*. London: Hamish Hamilton.
- KEY, V. O. (1955) "A theory of critical elections." *J. of Politics* 17 (February): 3-18.
- KINNEAR, M. (1973) *The Fall of Lloyd George*. Toronto: Toronto Univ. Press.
- (1968) *The British Voter: An Atlas and a Survey since 1885*. Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press.

- KOSS, S. (1975) *Nonconformity and Modern British Politics*. Hamden, CT: Archon.
- LAPORTE, T. (1975) *Organized Social Complexity: Challenge to Politics and Policy*. Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press.
- LLOYD, T. O. (1975) "Lib-Labs and 'unforgivable electoral generosity.'" *Institute of Historical Research. Bulletin* 48: 256-259.
- MARQUAND, D. (1977) Ramsay MacDonald. London: Jonathan Cape.
- MATTHEW, H.G.C., R. MCKIBBIN, and J. A. KAY (1976) "The franchise factor in the rise of the labor party." *English Historical Rev.* 91 (October): 723-753.
- MILLER, W. L. (1977) *Electoral Dynamics in Britain Since 1918*. London: Macmillan.
- MITCHELL, B. and K. BOEM (1966) *British Parliamentary Election Results: 1950-1964*. London: Oxford Univ. Press.
- MORGAN, K. (1970) *Wales in British Politics, 1868-1922*. Cardiff: Univ. of Wales Press.
- PELLING, H. (1967) *Social Geography of British Elections*. New York: St. Martin's.
- and F. BEALEY (1958) *Labor and Politics, 1900-06*. New York: Macmillan.
- POIRIER, P. (1958) *The Advent of the British Labor Party*. New York: Columbia Univ. Press.
- SCHATTSCHNEIDER, E. E. (1960) *The Semi-Sovereign People*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.
- SUNDQUIST, J. (1973) *Dynamics of the Party System: Alignment and Realignment of Political Parties in the United States*. Washington, DC: Brookings.
- WALD, K. (1978) "Class and the vote before the first world war." *British J. of Pol. Sci.* 8 (October): 441-457.
- (1977) "The rise of class-based voting in London." *Comparative Politics* 9 (January): 219-229.
- WILSON, G. and M. WILSON (1945) *The Analysis of Social Change*. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press.
- WILSON, T. *The Downfall of the Liberal Party*. Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press.

Hugh W. Stephens is Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Houston, Central Campus. He specializes in analysis of party realignments in British history, has published articles on the realignment of 1886, and is presently writing a book on realignment and public policy in Britain during the first quarter of the Twentieth Century. Professor Stephens is a member of the Electoral and Legislative Behavior and Public Policy Network, SSHA.