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PARTY LINES DRAWN BY THE *SPECTATOR*

Emily W. Zehmer
January 15, 1971

Party Lines Drawn by the *Spectator*

The concept of political parties as they existed in England during the reign of Queen Anne has been the source of considerable conflict among Stuart historians. The traditional view, postulated by G. M. Trevelyan, is that the Tory and Whig parties were organized in the 1670's as outgrowths of the Cavalier and Roundhead factions of the Civil War, changing very little in the process. The Tories were a "solid phalanx of squires and parsons," whereas the Whigs were united not by class or vocation but by their agreement on various political issues: religious toleration for all Protestants, war with France on sea and land, union with Scotland, and the Hanoverian Succession.[1] In apposition with Trevelyan, Keith Feiling finds the genesis of both Whig and Tory elements in the religious differences among seventeenth-century Puritans and Anglicans. He stresses the factionalism within the Tory party during William's reign which resulted in a sharper definition of its tenets. Feiling asserts that the Tory party preserved certain "lasting conceptions of English politics- divinity of the State, the natural sanctity of order, the organic unity of sovereign and people, and the indisputable authority of the work of time."[2]

Refuting Feiling and Trevelyan, Robert Walcott applies the theories of Louis B. Namier concerning the 1760's to the Queen Anne period. He admits that there were Whig and Tory positions on major issues- Exclusion, the Established Church, and the Revolution of 1688. Nevertheless, he concludes from party lists that on a majority of questions there was no established party line; men voted Whig and Tory interchangeably.[3] Disregarding party labels, he divides Queen Anne's parliaments into groups based on membership in the same class or profession, or relationships between neighbors, family connections, dependents of a magnate, and politicians who had been associated previously.[4] For Walcott, each administration of the reign was therefore inevitably a coalition based upon personal relationships rather than allegiance to political principles or action.[5] Walcott supports the views set down earlier by D. G. Barnes, that neither the two-party system nor cabinet solidarity which characterizes nineteenth-century English government was even imagined in the first decade of the previous century.[6]

Despite the disparities found in these accounts of the political aura of Queen Anne's reign, some common ground has been discovered by the historian J. H. Plumb. Citing the English Bill of Rights as an assertion of gentry authority, he proposes that religious toleration- or the lack of it- and royal prerogative were not the primary reasons for a division into parties by the politically active gentry.

Rather, on the local level, there were two parties in conflict for power over charities, jobs, property, and real estate, in addition to competition for influence in Parliament. The intensity of the conflict was, according to Plumb, as violent as anything England had known since the Civil War.[7] The differences between Whig and Tory were therefore social, economic, and personal as well as political. The confusion which surrounds the nature of the parties results not so much from their absence, as Walcott would have it, but from the failure of one party to dominate the other with any degree of effectiveness. Governments were therefore forced into coalitions, and principles were often compromised.[8]

Although party lines appear somewhat blurred to modern historians, contemporaries seemed to have had far less trouble in distinguishing Whig from Tory. When lists of the members of the House of Commons for the sessions 1713 and 1715 were drawn up, probably to explain English political methods to Hanoverian officials, the compiler designated each member as Whig or Tory.[9] Moreover, frequent elections, twelve in all from 1689 to 1715, stabilized party stands. In the same period, there was a marked increase in the size of the electorate.[10] It became vital for politicians to seek to dominate this growing flock of the politically conscious. The electorate was wooed with bribes, entertainment, and most importantly from the standpoint of this paper, a voluminous output of party literature and propaganda.

After the emancipation of the press in 1695, politicians, to whom the conciliation of public opinion was most expedient, encouraged writers to align themselves with one party or the other. There was, indeed, fierce competition between the factions for party hacks.[11] Literature was not separated from politics; two of the most ardent propagandists were Defoe and Swift, who are more renowned for their fiction than for their political writings. Addison and Steele, although best remembered for their partisan essays, were equally successful as playwrights in their day. Perhaps it is fortunate that the responsibility for the popularization of political tenets was delegated to men whose literary skill was already well proven. Had the task been left to less competent writers, the record of each party may not have been as explicit. Furthermore, the intensity of party feeling illustrated in their works is a measure of the violence of partisan politics in the early eighteenth century. The controversial impeachments of Somers, Portland, Wharton, Sacherverell, and Marlborough, the relentless use of place, and the bitterly contested borough and county elections left indelible marks on contemporary periodical literature.[12]

Literary talent, therefore, was transformed into political weaponry. No one used it more skillfully than the prominent Whigs, Richard Steele and Joseph Addison. Although more openly partisan in many other of their collaborations, their

satire in the Spectator is perhaps more effective because it is almost unobtrusive.[13] It is the Spectator's portrait of the Tory party with which this paper is concerned. Often deliberately condemning their Tory opposition with faint praise, Addison and Steele in the Spectator support the traditional theories of Feiling and Trevelyan as extended by Plumb; namely, that political parties were established on both ideological and practical levels during the reign of Queen Anne.

Addison and Steele had been closely associated for a number of years before the Spectator began publication in 1711. Both had been educated at Charterhouse and Oxford, and were members of the Kit Kat Club, one of the numerous social organizations for men of similar political minds- in their case, Whig- which characterize the era almost as well as its periodicals. The political careers of the two were not limited to mere propagandists for their chosen party. In 1707, Steele had been appointed writer of the Gazette, the official government newspaper, only to be dismissed three years later when he and many other Whigs lost favor with the government. He was also a member of the Stamp Commission, a position from which he resigned in 1713 in order to devote more time to his literary efforts.[14] Addison's association with the government is even more impressive. Son of the Dean of Lichfield, he was elected

to membership in Parliament from the pocket borough of Malmesbury from 1708 to 1719, served as an Undersecretary of State in 1705, as Chief Secretary to Wharton, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland from 1708 through 1710, and finally as a Secretary of State in 1718. [15]

As authors, before their collaboration as essayists, Steele was best known for his dramas and Addison for his poem, The Campaign, which honored Marlborough's victories. Their first joint effort, the Tatler, published three times weekly from April, 1709 to January, 1711, established the essay periodical as a literary type. [16] Steele seems to have had the upper hand in the writing of this paper, just as Addison was to have later in the publication of the Spectator. Although entertainment and moral improvement were its stated aims, the Tatler was actually an outlet for its authors' political predilections.[17] Indeed, in its last issue, published on January 2, 1711, Steele does not begin to apologize for his politics. Rather, signing the paper himself, he pleads that public duty has forced him to discuss matters of church and state.[18]

The first number of the Spectator appeared on March 1, 1711, only two months after the demise of the Tatler. The Whigs themselves had suffered a more serious demise, beginning in April of the preceding year when Kent, the Lord Chamberlain was replaced by the moderate Tory, Shrewsbury.

Two months later, Sunderland, perhaps the most radical of the Whigs, was succeeded as Secretary of State by another Tory, Lord Dartmouth. The process was completed in August of 1710 with the dismissal of Godolphin, who had struggled to hold together what was once a predominantly Whig coalition.[19] With the fortunes of their party at such a low ebb, it was the task of Addison and Steele to bolster the Whig image in the public mind.

The Spectator's method of campaign was impication rather than argument. The Whig propaganda is masked as a series of essays intended to "enliven Morality with Wit and temper Wit with Morality."[20] The vehicle employed to give continuity to the series is the Spectator Club, the accounts of whose conversations comprise a majority of the Spectator numbers. On the surface, the members of the Club represent diverse members of English society: country squire, city merchant, military officer, and court dandy. Readers might well be assured from this assemblage of characters that "there is always Somebody present who will take Care of their respective Interests."[21] Yet, as will be shown, the Tory interest is not as well tended as the Whig.

In the first number, at least, the unifying character of all the papers, Mr. Spectator, is resolved "to observe an exact Neutrality between the Whigs and the Tories, unless I shall be forced to declare myself by the Hostilities

of either side." [22] Indeed, Addison and Steele seem adamantly opposed to party strife. As political activists, after all, they were seeking the dominance of their own Whig party on both national and local levels. According to them, the influence of

> Furious Party spirit...exerts itself in Civil War and Blood-shed... and naturally breaks out in Falshood, Detraction, Calumny and a partial administration of justice. In a word... it extinguishes all the Seeds of Good-nature, Compassion and Humanity... How many honest Minds are filled with uncharitable and barbarous Notions out of their Zeal for the Public Good? [23]

Yet the remedy offered by the Spectator for the dissolution of party strife is suspiciously simple. "All honest Men would enter into an Association, for the Support of one another against the Endeavors of those whom they ought to look upon as their common Enemies." [24] Should this advice be followed, animosity between "all honest Men" and "their common Enemies" would be the sure result. Addison and Steele are obviously saying that party differences are inevitable and unavoidable. Mr. Spectator, despite his noble declaration of neutrality, will be forced to declare himself, just as his creators intended for him to do.

The most appealing feature of the Spectator is the skillful characterization of the members of the Club. Moreover, these carefully developed portraits are the foremost satiric weapons of Addison and Steele. Aside from Mr. Spectator,

the well-traveled and non-committal narrator, there are Sir Roger de Coverly, the eccentric Tory baronet; Sir Andrew Freeport, the industrious Whig merchant; Captain Sentry, the self-assured military man; and Will Honeycomb, the aging courtier. It is Sir Roger who emerges as the most memorable figure. While he is immensely lovable, he is equally inept at politics. Although his manners and attitudes are amusing, they are totally obsolete. Sir Roger, "beloved rather than esteemed," [25] obviously is the Whig example of the sort not to be entrusted with the affairs of government.[26]

During the period from 1690 to 1710, the Tory party member stabilized into a composite figure. He stood for free, frequently held elections, strict punishment for corruption within the electoral system, low taxation, sound finance, accountability to Parliament, exclusion of place-holders, strict land qualifications for Members of the House of Commons, and staunch support of the Anglican Church. [27] As expounded by the slightly daft Sir Roger, the quality of the Tory political creed diminishes considerably, just as Addison and Steele intended.

Sir Roger, the Spectator's own composite Tory, is a "baronet of ancient descent, whose singularities proceed from his good sense, and are contradictions to the manners of the world only as he thinks the world is wrong." His clothes were in fashion thirty years earlier and "have

been in and out twelve times since first he wore them." [28] From these remarks, one would gather that the gentleman is set in his Tory ways, and that he would alter them only as readily as he would his outdated waistcoat. Yet Sir Roger is called "the best Master in the World," for all his servants are aged; indeed, they have "grown old with their Master...and his Coachman has the looks of a Privy Counselor." [29] Sir Roger's domestics seem to mirror those servants of the Tory government in the Whig mind.

The Whig interpretation of the Tory position toward the Church is represented by Sir Roger's relationship with another elderly member of his household, the chaplain. "He heartily loves Sir Roger, and knows that he is very much in the old Knight's esteem; so that he lives in the Family rather as a Relation than as a Dependent." [30] Sir Roger is the great benefactor of his parish church. The landlord of the entire congregation, "he keeps them in very good Order, and will suffer no Body to sleep in it besides himself...Pleased with the Matter of his Devotion, he pronounces Amen three or four times to the same Prayer." [31] Later, in a conversation with Mr. Spectator, de Coverly praises the Bill against Occasional Conformity, and adds that a rigid Dissenter who happened to dine at at his house on Christmas Day ate his plum porridge very plentifully. [32] The Tory attitude toward Dissenters, a

monopoly on self-righteousness, seems to deserve the ridicule expressed in this particular essay.

Changes in land ownership since 1688 had brought about changes in the structure of local politics. Merchants, growing wealthier, wanted the prestige of a seat in Commons. The peerage, having also increased its income, adopted an attitude of "benevolent despotism" [33] toward the boroughs surrounding their holdings. These conditions were unfavorable to the squirearchy, whose staunch conservatism was no longer fashionable in newly cosmopolitan London.[34]

The condescending attitude of the Tory gentry toward the metropolitan Whigs is parodied many times in Sir Roger's speeches. On one occasion, the old gentleman advises Mr. Spectator to

> take care how you meddle with country Squires. They are the Ornament of the English nation; Men of good Heads and Sound Bodies! Let me tell you, some of them take it ill of you that you mention Fox-hunters with so little Respect! [35]

Even without the crowning reference to fox-hunters, the phrase "good Heads and Sound Bodies" from a portly gentleman verging on senility would certainly be detrimental to any party he happened to support.

In a later number, Sir Roger and his Whig antagonist, Sir Andrew Freeport, are discussing, strangely enough, the

ancient Carthaginians. Sir Roger is not kindly disposed toward them. "The Carthaginians were the greatest Traders in the World; and as Gain is the chief end of such a People, they never pursue any other... They will not scruple to obtain money by Fraud." Following the baronet's bluster, Sir Andrew argues quite reasonably that the only remaining histories of the Carthaginians are those written by their enemies, the Romans. He goes on to remind Sir Roger of the "Monuments of Charity and Public Spirit which have been erected by Merchants since the Reformation." Sir Andrew argues that

> It is the Misfortune of many other Gentlemen to turn out the seats of their Ancestors to make way for such new Masters as have been more exact in their Accounts than Themselves; and certainly he deserves the Estate a great deal better who has got it by his Industry, than he who has lost it by his Negligence.[36]

The preceding episodes represent the opposing Whig and Tory stands on the Land Qualification Bill, which stipulated ownership of land as a prerequisite for election to Commons. It would exclude merchants, financiers, and the younger untitled sons of peers who were often too cosmopolitan for the country squires' taste. After failing to be enancted on two separate occasions, the bill was finally passed through the efforts of St. John in 1710. Nevertheless, it was easily ignored and failed to achieve the scourge Tory backbenchers had hoped for.[37]

By their portrait of Sir Roger de Coverly, who represents his party very badly but mankind very well, Addison and Steele undermine the righteous solidarity of the Tory program. Sir Roger symbolizes an era which, while it should be respected, cannot be allowed to shroud the present. Addison and Steele convey the dangers of the undeniable Tory nostalgia for England's agrarian past. They exemplify Goldgar's thesis that "the Whig literary circles... encouraged a more modern spirit, a more sympathetic view of human nature, and their attitudes underlay the literature of sensibility which gradually prevailed as the century progressed."[38]

In addition to the political caricatures found within the membership of the Spectator Club, Addison and Steele employ allegory as a satirical device. One of the best examples of this method is found in the third number of the Spectator. The Tories had become strongly critical of the government's financial policy during the early years of Queen Anne's reign. Nevertheless, Recoinage, the establishment of the Bank of England, and the creation of the Sinking Fund had transformed the English financial system into one unmatched by any other European country except Holland, whose financiers quickly invested in these English instituions.[39] Unfortunately for the

Tories, these innovations were identified with the Whigs. The Tory party, therefore, was forced to assume the role of "protector of the freeborn Englishman from arbitrary taxation and tyrannical revenue officers." [40] In 1711, the Whigs, mindful of the Tory successes of the previous year, feared that in the upcoming Bank elections, a Tory majority would precipitate a Jacobite restoration and a corresponding decline in public credit. [41]

Addison and Steele shared these Whig fears, which are reflected in a nightmare suffered by Mr. Spectator. Evidently the dream was brought on by

> the Many Discourses I had both read and heard concerning the Decay of Public Credit, with the Method of Restoring it, and which, in my Opinion, have always been defective, because they have been made with an Eye to separate interests and party Principles. [42]

A virgin called "Publick Credit" appears in the dream, seated on a throne of gold. On either side of her, the walls are hung with the Acts of Parliament in golden letters and the Magna Carta, which is flanked by the Act of Uniformity and the Act of Tolderation. [43] These last items are obviously symbolic of the middle position of the Whigs regarding the Church and Dissent. Surrounding Publick Credit are secretaries who constantly read the news to her. According to their reports, she "changed color and discovered many symptoms of Health and Sickness." [44]

The dream continues with the entrance of a young man, twenty-two-years of age, brandishing his sword at the Act of Settlement. He is surrounded by "Phantoms representing Bigotry, Atheism, Tyranny, and Anarchy."[45] The Pretender, James Francis Edward, also twenty-two years of age, was supported by a number of Tories who were not willing to see the line of Stuart Succession ended by the pre-arranged ascension of the Hanoverians.

In direct contrast to the Pretender and his eerie company, there appears another group of apparitions, which includes Liberty leading Monarchy, and Moderation leading Religion, followed by " a Person I had never seen with the Genius of Great Britain. At their first entrance, the Lady Publick Credit revived." [46] This last ensemble represents Prince George of Hanover, who had not yet been invited to visit Great Britain, a fact which irritated the Whigs, for they generally supported the Hanoverian Succession. [47]

Mr. Spectator seems to have forgotten in this essay his two-day-old pledge to "observe exact Neutrality." Indeed, his partisanship provoked comment from the Tory writer Swift in his party's propaganda arm, the Examiner, April 19, 1711. Evidently Swift assumed the author of the political allegory of Publick Credit was Steele, for he writes

> To hear some of these worthy Reasoners talking of Credit; that she is so nice, so squemish, so capricious, you would think they were describing a Lady troubled with Vapours or the Cholic, to be only removed by a Course of Steel or swallowing a Bullet.[48]

A still more blatant example of the partisanship of Addison and Steele is found in the Spectator of May 21, 1711. Something of an oddity, this issue, with the exception of an explanatory paragraph, is a combination of two items appearing concurrently in print, neither having been written by the Spectator's collaborators. The first selection is a paragraph reprinted from the Tory paper, the Post Boy, dated the previous afternoon. The second is the preface to a book of sermons written by the somewhat controversial Whig, William Fleetwood, the Bishop of Aspah. The synthesis of the two results in a defense of the Whig disparagement of the Tory peace and the Pretender's claims, and their support of the Act of Settlement and the Hanoverians, all the while demeaning the opposing Tory positions.

The portion included from the Post Boy is concerned with rumors of the death of "the young Dauphin of France," and attributes them to the "same Republican Hands," which cast similar doubts as to the existence of the Pretender.[49] The Post Boy also refers to the Baron de Bothmar, the envoy from Britain to Hanover, who was not regarded very highly

by the Tories. The Baron "is gone to Utrecht," where he was the Hanoverian representative to the peace conference, "whence he will proceed to Hanover, but not stay long at the Court, for fear the peace shall be made in his absence!" [50] Mr. Spectator thinks it odd that the author of his rival paper

> should with Impunity call Men Republicans for a Gladness on Report of the Death of the Pretender; and treat Baron Bothmar, the Minister of Hanover, in such a Manner as you see in my Motto. I must own, I think, every Man in England concerned to support the Succession of that family. [51]

The preface by Bishop Fleetwood to his book of sermons comprises the greatest part of the number. William Fleetwood was a prominient Whig minister who, nonetheless, was a favorite of Queen Anne, who appointed him Bishop of St. Aspah in 1708. He was invited to preach before the House of Lords on January 16, 1712, and he chose as his subject, "The People that Delight in War," defending the necessity of the War of Spanish Succession. The Tory ministry, whether by chance or by careful manipulation, adjourned the House beyond the day on which the Bishop was to speak. Nevertheless, the sermon was widely printed, and shortly afterward, a volume containing several more of his works followed. [52]

Steele, responsible for this particular number of the Spectator, has included the preface because, according to the narrator, "It seems to me to determine a great Point... in Opposition to all the Flattery and base Submission of false Friends to Princes, that Christianity left us where it found us as to our Civil Rights." [53] The Bishop's preface is an apology for his book; his reasons for publishing it concur with the Whigs' major propaganda themes; therefore, Steele has very good reasons for reprinting it.

In his preface, the good Whig Bishop expresses his former fears, particularly at the death of the Duke of Gloucester, that the Protestant Succession was in great danger. Yet the demise of Gloucester brought about

> the Succession in the House of Hanover, and giving it an Hereditary Right by Act of Parliament, as long as it continues Protestant. So much good did God, in his Merciful Providence from a Misfortune bring about. [54]

A eulogy of the Whig government which dominated the early years of Queen Anne's reign follows, including the merits of the recently dismissed Marlborough. Marlborough seems to have been an obstacle to the attainment of the Tory peace, and he was also a strong political force in the Whig opposition. [55] The first decade of the eighteenth century seems truly an Augustan age in the Bishop's words:

> Such was the Fame of Her Administration of Affairs at Home; such was the Reputation of Her Wisdom and Felicity in choosing Ministers; and such was then esteemed their Faithfulness and Zeal, their Diligence and great Abilities in executing Her Commands: To such a Height of military Glory did Her Great General and Her Armies carry the British Name abroad: Such was the Harmony and Concord betwixt Her and Her Allies: And such was the Blessing of God upon all Her Councils and Undertakings that...no Prince of ours was ever yet as prosperous and successful, so loved, esteemed and honoured by their Subjects and their Friends, nor near so formidable to their Enemies.[56]

Unfortunately, according to the Bishop, this idyllic state of affairs soon changed. In a manner reminiscent of the seven plagues of Egypt,

> ...God for our Sins, permitted the Spirit of Discord to go forth, and, by troubling sore the Camp, the City and the Country (and oh, that it had altogether spared the places sacred to his Worship!) to spoil... this beautiful and Pleasing Prospect.[57]

Surprisingly enough, this "Spirit of Discord" does not apparently refer to the War itself but to the arguments between Tory and Whig regarding the nature of the peace. The Whigs were convinced that the Tory aims of Utrecht were to sacrifice the Allies to France and bring the Pretender to power in England.[58] Addison, indeed, had published a pamphlet entitled, "The Present State of War, and the Necessity of an Augmentation," in which he wrote, "no peace is

to be made without an entire disunion of the French and Spanish Monarchies." [59] The Bishop of St. Aspah believes,

> It will become me better[to pray] to restore us to the Power of obtaining such a Peace, as will be to his Glory, the Safety, Honour and the Welfare of the Queen and Her Dominions, and the general Satisfaction of all Her High and Mighty Allies." [60]

Undoubtedly the Whig Bishop's use of us does not petition the Almighty on behalf of the Church Universal, but rather on that of his own political party.

The reaction to the publication of the book of sermons itself and of its preface reprinted in the Spectator is illustrative of the ferocity of party feeling and the use of periodicals as propaganda. On June tenth, the House of Commons ordered the preface to be "Burnt by the Hands of the Common Hangman" as "malicious and factious, highly reflecting upon the present Administration of Public Affairs, and tending to create Discord and Sedition amongst Her Subjects." [61] As if this condemnation were not enough publicity for Fleetwood's views on the part of the misguided Tories, the editors of two of their periodicals, the Plain Dealer and the Examiner, were foolish enough to criticize the Spectator's partisanship. William Wagstaffe, in the Plain Dealer of May 24, 1712, accuses Mr. Spectator of writing "out of mercenary consideration," and concludes his paper with a ridiculing advertisement, parodying the Bishop's book. [62]

Swift, in his Examiner, cannot seem to forget the incident, even though he admits that the preface would never have been widely read "if, to make it circulate through all England, at the Price of one Peny, ... the Spectator had not thought to revive it." [63] Later, Swift satirizes the Whig use of the preface in "A Letter of Thanks from My Lord W (harton) to the Lord B^p^ of S. Aspha, in the Name of the Kit-Kat Club." [64] Although it is unlikely that the Spectator was responsible for the circulation of 14,000 copies of the preface, as the Bishop himself estimated, [65] the storm of controversy surrounding the incident testifies to the Spectator's effectiveness as a propaganda tool of the Whig party.

The Spectator was well received by the eighteenth-century English public, perhaps more so than numerous other contemporary periodicals. Its popularity may be attributed to the fact that its political leanings were more subtlely expressed than those of its rivals. Another factor which accounts for its wide acceptance was the well-established reputation of Addison and Steele. Indeed, the Tatler had ceased publication only two months before it appeared. Published six times weekly, the Spectator was printed on both sides of a folio half-sheet, two columns to the page, with advertisements comprising a portion

of the second page.[66] With the publication of the tenth number, the *Spectator*'s circulation was estimated at three thousand by Addison himself. He also allowed twenty readers to an individual paper, having observed that the daily issue was often read aloud within groups at London coffeehouses.[67]

The characteristics of the average reader of the *Spectator* are a measure of the scope of its influence. Although it is difficult to determine those numbering among its daily readers during its years of publication, a list of the subscribers to the collected volumes of the paper, compiled in 1712, remains. Interestingly enough, each of these volumes, eight altogether, is dedicated to a prominent Whig.

The peerage is represented by forty-seven of the four-hundred-two names on the list, and in addition to the great Whig patrons- Wharton, Halifax, and Sommers- there are Tory names as well, one of the more interesting being Lord Foley, Harley's own brother-in-law. The landed gentry is not as well represented as men whose interests, financial and mercantile, are more similar to those of Sir Andrew Freeport that those of Sir Roger de Coverly. Many of this latter group were members of the Board of Directors of the Bank of England, private bankers, directors of various commercial ventures, promoters, or speculators.[68] A surprising number

of women appear on the list, thirty-six in all, divided more or less equally among the ranks of the aristocracy and upper middle class.[69] Their patronage was obviously a reward for the promise in the fourth number of the Spectator to "dedicate a considerable Share of these my Speculations to their (the Fair Sex) Service." [70]

Most importantly, the largest single group of subscribers is comprised of the rank and file of the bureaucracy. [71] Obviously, these were the men for whose benefit the satire in the Spectator appears. As Whig propagandists, it was the task of Addison and Steele to proselytize in order to win support from the great body of government workers. The appearance of so many bureaucrats on the subscription lists supports Plumb's suggestion that the spoils system, which was a by-product of the expansion of the executive role of government in this period, made government support essential to both parties. [72]

On December 6, 1712, the final number of the Spectator appeared. One reason for its discontinuance was St. John's Stamp Act, a Tory measure to diminish the output of an anti-government press by means of higher taxes.[73] The levy did not achieve its aim, however, for after the cessation of the Spectator, Addison and Steele continued to comment directly on political affairs in their more partisan papers,

the Guardian, the Englishman, and the Crisis.

Literary critics have hailed the Spectator because it provides an inexhaustible source of information on the way people lived.[74] What is more valuable to the historian are the paper's indications of the way people thought; in particular, the Whig evaluation of the rival Tory position. The major points of division- peace and war, religious toleration, the Succession, finance, landed and commercial interests- are the provocations for Addison and Steele's satire. Throughout their work, the Tory's most distinctive characteristic is opposition: opposition to the War of Spanish succession, financial reform, liberal religious policy, and the Hanoverians. This representation concurs with Plumb's evaluation,[75] and also with Feiling's explanation of the Tory demise.[76] Moreover, within the Spectator essays, there is ample evidence of the less political, but perhaps more significant, division between the squirearchy and the merchantry. It was this question, according to Plumb, which intensified party divisions.[77] Under the guise of the social essay, Addison and Steele have defined party lines, and have stereotyped both their fellow party members and their rivals. The Spectator papers are, therefore, contemporary evidence to support the traditional concept that political parties were organized on ideological and practical bases in England during the reign of Queen Anne.

NOTES

[1] George Macaulay Trevelyan, _Blenheim_, Vol. I of _England Under Queen Anne_ (3 vols.; London: Longmans, Green and Co., Ltd, 1930), p. 194.

[2] Keith Feiling, _A History of the Tory Party 1640-1714_ (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1924), p. 493.

[3] Robert Walcott, _English Politics in the Early Eighteenth Century_ (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1956), p. 34.

[4] _Ibid._, p. 35.

[5] _Ibid._, p. 71.

[6] D. G. Barnes, _George III and William Pitt, 1783-1806_ (Stanford, Calif. : Stanford University Press, 1939), p. 1.

[7] J. H. Plumb, _The Growth of Political Stability in England, 1675-1725_ (Baltimore: Penquin Books, 1969) pp. 73, 74.

[8] _Ibid._, p. 134.

[9] _Ibid._, p. 134, n. 3.

[10] _Ibid._, p. 40.

[11] Alexandre Beljame, _Men of Letters and the English Public in the Eighteenth Century_, trans. by E. O. Lorrimer (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co., Ltd., 1948), p. 215.

[12] Plumb, p. 159.

[13] Joseph Addison and Richard Steele, the _Spectator_, with an introduction by Donald F. Bond (5 Vols.; Oxford; Clarendon Press, 1965), Vol. I., p. xxxvi.

[14] _Ibid._, p. xvii.

[15] A. R. Humphreys, _Steele, Addison and Their Periodical Essays_ (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., Ltd., 1959), p. 27.

[16] Walter Graham, The Beginnings of English Literary Periodicals; A Study of Periodical Literature, 1665-1715 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1926), p. 66.

[17] Bertrand A. Goldgar, The Curse of Party: Swift's Relations with Addison and Steele (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1961), p. 47.

[18] Joseph Addison and Richard Steele, the Tatler (4 Vols.; London: John Sharp, 1804), Vol. IV, No. 271, January 2, 1712.

[19] Feiling, p. 405, ff.

[20] Addison and Steele, Spectator, Vol. I, No. 1, March 1, 1711.

[21] Addison and Steele, Spectator, Vol. I, No. 34, April 9, 1711.

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[24] Ibid.

[25] Addison and Steele, Spectator, Vol. I, No. 2, March 2, 1711.

[26] Addison and Steele, Spectator, Vol. I, p. xxvi.

[27] Plumb, p. 153.

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[30] Ibid.

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[37] Plumb, p. 146.

[38] Goldgar, p. 11.

[39] Plumb., p. 152.

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[47] Ibid., n. 3.

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[61] Laprade, p. 115.

[62] Addison and Steele, *Spectator*, Vol. III, No. 384, May 21, 1712, n. 2.

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