Background

Some five years ago, when this project was still in inception, echoes of modern concerns about the governance of large private enterprises were just beginning to be heard in the historical literature on business.¹ There was interest in the relationship between business and the state with new research on taxation, company law and the effectiveness of commercial lobbying.² Historians had also begun to explore attitudes towards corporate failure and business fraud, and the political and social factors influencing company legislation.³ There had been, however, little exploration of those other ‘political’ relationships which could affect the way companies did business in the past. These include some of the major issues in the current debate about corporate governance, namely the internal relations between company directors, managers and shareholders. These relations are the focus of this project. It represents the first comprehensive examination of corporate governance in industrialising Britain, and the most ambitious study of the early corporate economy yet undertaken.⁴

The working hypothesis is that in enterprises large enough for a space to develop between ownership and management, this space became a political arena in which governing executives confronted their ‘public’ legislatures, the assemblies of shareholders. This project tests this hypothesis through an analysis of the institutional arrangements for, and the practice of, governance in stock companies in Britain between
the Bubble Act of 1720 and the companies act of 1844, i.e. during the century or so when the legal status of the stock company in England was most uncertain, and when that in Scotland was still not entirely resolved.

The project also confronts the traditional view that the Bubble Act deterred stock company promotion, by outlawing the issue of transferable shares and the limitation of liability without a royal or parliamentary charter, and that, as a result, stock companies were ‘exceedingly rare’ during the Industrial Revolution. A further set of hypotheses is (i) that corporate forms of enterprise were far more common during this period than was previously thought, (ii) that the principle effect of the Bubble Act was to push entrepreneurs seeking large capitals into voluntary unchartered shareholding partnerships formed under various elements of trust, partnership, equity, contract and agency law, or to seek incorporation under a parliamentary act, and (iii) that the co-partnery form of ownership with transferable shares was adopted across a wide range of industries in the British economy during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Some support for (i) has come from the recent research of Harris, who estimated that about £18m was tied up in the capital of stock companies c.1740, and that this increased to £210m by 1840, a growth far outstripping the expansion of the economy as a whole.

Objectives

The principal aims of the project were:

- to examine the extent and evolution of ‘democratic’ practice in the governance of British business during this period.

- to explore the relationship between forms of corporate governance and the development of political institutions in Britain.

The issue of democratic practice taps directly into an emerging transatlantic historiographical debate. Alborn has recently argued that the new joint-stock banks
emerging in England after 1826 were ‘local republics’ of shareholders, paralleling the subscriber democracies fashioned by the urban middle classes through the voluntary associations of the period. Their form of ‘participatory’ politics came under pressure during the financial crisis of the late 1830s. Alborn contends that banks moved quickly away from the voluntary model towards more streamlined administrations and less ‘democratic’ constitutions under which ‘virtual’, rather than direct, representation of shareholders by boards of management became the norm. Such moves had parallels in the electoral compromise of 1832 and reflected the subsequent trajectory of middle-class politics away from populism. Dunlavy has found a similar development in the United States after the 1830s as stock companies moved away from a ‘democratic’ suffrage, characterised by weighted voting and restrictions on the concentration of shares, towards more plutocratic forms of governance typified by one-share-one vote. With these findings in mind, the project seeks to establish the existence of, and the timing and the reasons for, the putative shift towards business plutocracy during the first half of the nineteenth century. Were business and politics moving in opposite directions during the early nineteenth century – the former away from participatory democracy towards autarchy, plutocracy and the ‘virtual’ representation of shareholders by managers and directors, the latter towards democracy and the ‘direct’ representation of a wider electorate by central and local government? If there is evidence of these trends, what factors explain them? A further question, secondary to the main objects of inquiry in the current project, concerns the impact made by different forms of governance on business performance, and, by extension, on British economic growth.

Methods

Two 24-month research associate (RA) posts, to commence 1st October 2003, were advertised in the spring of 2003. These attracted some 50 inquiries, and two excellent
appointments were made from a very strong field. Mark Freeman had a Glasgow Ph.D. and had been a Tawney Research Fellow at the Institute of Historical Research. His Ph.D. was in press with the Royal Historical Society (published as *Social Investigation and Rural England 1870-1914*, Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2003). James Taylor had a Kent Ph.D. and was current Tawney Research Fellow at the IHR. His Ph.D. was also forthcoming with the RHS (published as *Creating Capitalism: Joint-Stock Enterprise in British Politics and Culture, 1800-1870*, Woodbridge: Boydell, 2006).

Induction meetings and regular workshops between the team were held in Glasgow, London and Hull on a fortnightly or monthly basis in the early phases of the project, at which the principal investigator (PI) introduced the RAs to the themes and objectives. Their primary task was the construction of the database on the governance provisions in stock company constitutions. Freeman, located in Glasgow, was responsible for collecting and processing sources held in record repositories across Scotland, the north and midlands of England. Taylor, residing in London, was responsible for the south and south-west of England.

The purpose of the database was to enable the analysis of the changing governance arrangements in a representative sample of English, Scottish and Irish stock companies founded between the Bubble Act of 1720, which rendered the legal status of unchartered stock companies in England highly uncertain, and the Companies Act of 1844, which provided the first official registration of stock companies in England. The aim was to be able to cross-tabulate governance provisions by industry, date of foundation, region, legal system, and type of company (chartered or unchartered).

Because the project was interested in the internal constitutional arrangements and relations between shareholders, directors and managers in these companies, it was decided to focus on businesses with a minimum of 13 partners holding transferable shares. This definition draws upon Charles Munn’s distinction between unincorporated
Scottish co-partneries with more than 13 partners and ordinary partnerships with fewer. The larger co-partneries, Munn argues, were most likely to have an elected committee to run their day-to-day affairs and thus to experience a separation of powers between managers and proprietors. Incorporated and unincorporated English stock companies can also be distinguished from small partnerships in this way.9

With this definition in mind, a pilot survey of over 16,000 business records was carried out by the PI prior to the project. This identified over 800 companies, that appeared to have relevant records, particularly constitutional documents (charters, deeds of settlement, articles of co-partnery, rules and by-laws) from the period 1720-1844. These records were located in hundreds of public and private repositories throughout the UK and Ireland, with a small number abroad. 10 This survey suggested the chronological distribution of stock companies through this period and the extent of their concentration in a five major sectors – banking, insurance, canals, railways and gas. It also indicated the geographical distribution of the archival sources for these firms.

Resource constraints initially indicated that a target of 350 companies was feasible, comprising of 60 from each of the five largest groups, namely canals, insurance, gas, railways and joint-stock banks, plus 50 companies drawn from a miscellany of other economic sectors. Thanks to efficiency gains in data collection and processing, however, the final database comprised 512 companies grouped into 12 main industrial sectors (see annex 1). Fifty-seven per cent of these were stock companies incorporated by acts of parliament or royal letters patent, the rest were unincorporated companies, constituted by private articles and deeds of association or copartnery.

One problem was how to make the sample representative of the total population of stock companies in England, Ireland and Scotland over this period, where we have no figures for this total population. There are a few modern and contemporary estimates, however, which together suggest there were at least 936 companies in the five largest
groups alone. Allowing for some undercounting, this suggests that our sample of 304 for these groups (64 banks, rather than the target of 60, were eventually included) covers nearly 30 per cent of all joint-stock banks, canals, railway, insurance and gas companies founded between 1720 and 1844. Within these five categories, and also the water companies, we were able to adjust the database to represent the actual chronological distribution of all companies (by date of foundation). For example, we knew that, of 172 insurance companies founded during our period, 18 per cent were established before 1800, so we endeavoured to ensure that 11 of the 60 (18 per cent) target number of insurance companies in our dataset were eighteenth-century foundations, and so forth. Because of the absence of data on total numbers, no such adjustment was possible for stock companies in sectors other than the six mentioned. These unadjusted sectors – shipping, manufacturing, property etc – together comprise 33 per cent of the total database. Annex 3 shows the chronological distribution of all companies in the database by date of establishment. It generally mirrors the familiar cycles of stock company promotion: the burst of canal and dock company foundations in the 1790s, the minor company boom of the late 1800s, and the major upswings in stock company flotations in the early 1820s and the mid-1830s (especially of gas, railway, insurance and banking companies).

We also adjusted our samples to make sure that all regions were represented. This was done less scientifically. Although we considered using the ratios of Scottish and Irish to English GDP as a guide to the geographical construction of the database, if we had stuck rigidly to these ratios, the numbers of Scottish and Irish companies in our sample would have been too small for analysis. In the end, we have 120 Scottish and Irish companies in the database, or 23 per cent of the sample. This is enough, we would argue, to allow us to make useful comparisons between the development of governance in stock companies under the different legal systems in the three kingdoms by sub-period, by
sector and by size of company. We have also tried to ensure that all regions of England and Wales are covered (see annex 2). In sum, the database has been constructed as carefully as possible with a view to producing - as far as record survival permits - a representative account of corporate governance in British and Irish business during this period. Altogether, the database covers perhaps between 34 per cent and 43 per cent of all stock companies founded in the UK and Ireland from 1720 to 1844.13

In addition to the 512 companies included in the database, data was collected during the course of the project on some 160 other firms founded between 1720 and 1844.14 These were excluded from the database, either because a constitutional record had not survived or was incomplete, or because we had too many companies in a particular category already. Some 20 of these organisations were mutual insurance, annuity, loan and benefit societies, and a few were partnerships of less than 13. One of our aims is to use these files to compare the governance of different organisational forms in business: mutual, stock, and a few commandite-type companies in Ireland formed under the Act regulating partnerships of 1772. We have also examined the governance provisions of non-business organisations, such as municipal corporations, poor law unions, voluntary societies and drainage, sewer and harbour commissions, where these included elective and associational elements. Two areas of great interest are the convergence of governance forms across business and non-business sectors, and also, in a few cases, the transmutation of non-profit 'public' organisations, such as public works commissions, into ‘private’ stock companies, where the lines between public and private are especially blurred.

Many of the files on companies not included in the database are by-products of the survey conducted of other sources. This comprised internal business records, including: minutes of company boards, committees and shareholders’ general meetings, accounts, ledgers, by-laws, prospectuses, circulars to shareholders, and letter books.
These types of records enable us to explore the extent to which the governance provisions in constitutions were put into practice in the daily operations of companies. Our approach was to focus on particular crises in company histories – caused invariably by poor business performance, mismanagement or instances of fraud – that raise tensions between proprietors, directors and officers. At such times boardroom attitudes towards shareholders are most likely to be exposed in the historical record and therefore open to investigation. Using these records we have developed a large number of case studies of governance crises. Altogether we have examined the surviving board and general meeting minute books for over 60 firms, plus other types of internal business records for dozens of other companies.

A great number of external sources and non-business records were also collected to give shape to the political, legal and cultural context in which stock companies operated during this period. These sources included diaries, autobiographies, contemporary pamphlet literature, newspaper and periodical articles, patent rolls, parliamentary papers, including committee reports, bills and statutes, legal treatises, and English and Scottish law reports.

From the original pilot survey, and from his earlier work on the insurance industry, the PI had drafted a template to analyse the governance provisions in constitutional database. This listed 54 variables of interest, including capital structure and share denomination; size and distribution of the proprietorship; number of directors and trustees; managerial structure and organisation; limited liability clauses; procedure for calls on shares; executive control over the purchase and transfer of shares; pre-requisites for share-ownership; scope of proprietorial rights (including the right to appoint and dismiss directors, to fix levels of remuneration, to declare dividends, to inspect books and accounts, to comment on directorial decisions, to amend the company’s constitution, to dissolve the company); quorae and frequency of shareholders’ meetings; shareholder’s
voting rights; directors’ duties and rights (including the right to stand for re-election); quality of accounting information presented to shareholders. Much time and energy was spent, principally by the two RAs, but also in many team meetings with the PI and via countless email exchanges, in modifying and refining the original template, until the final version extended to 90 closely defined variables. A 27 page booklet, *Summary of Variable Codes*, has been prepared to explain in detail the meaning of each variable and how the data has been entered from the original company deeds and charters into the database and the codes used. This booklet will be deposited together with the database itself at the ESRC data archive.

As British structures and practices were transmitted, sometimes in a modified form, to colonial and post-colonial North America, the genesis of British corporate governance is also of relevance to the history of the corporation in the United States. Encouraged by the referees for our book proposal, submitted to several leading academic publishers in 2005, we intend to introduce this comparative international context to our analysis. Although there is a limit to what can be achieved within the confines of this project, we are able to draw upon a growing body of research on corporate governance in the US by Dunlavy, Maier, Wallis, Lamoreaux and Rosenthal and others.15 Furthermore, to facilitate a direct comparison with our constitutional database, we have collected copies of over 200 US company charters from the sessional papers of five states that were major incorporators - Connecticut, New York, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania and New Hampshire. The acts collected are held in the Library of Congress, and cover the period 1800-1840.

**Results**

In recognition of the quality of the RAs input, to support their career development, and to provide them with incentives to stay the course, a decision was taken by the PI at an
early stage, that all publications and other direct outputs from the project would be denoted as equally co-authored, in the style 'Freeman, Pearson and Taylor'. The end product of the project is to be a book provisionally entitled Shareholder Democracies? Corporate Governance in Britain and Ireland before 1850. A provisional contract for this was signed with the University of Chicago Press in 2005. The expected delivery date for the completed manuscript is September 2007.

Until this book is completed, all results are tentative. Nevertheless, we can offer the following findings on aspects of the project, based on the conclusions of some of the papers produced so far (see Outputs section below).

1. The Politics of Business: Joint Stock Company Constitutions in Britain, 1720-1844

Based upon an initial survey of 90 companies in the canal, railway and banking sectors, this paper presents our initial analysis of constitutional arrangements in this period. The most striking point to emerge was the heterogeneity and complexity of the company constitutions. Although the canal and railway acts of incorporation were the product of a legal and parliamentary process that had become routine by the end of the eighteenth century, and although the layout and presentation of these acts were similar, the contents often diverged greatly. With the private deeds of settlement used by unincorporated companies in sectors such as banking and insurance, while there was an imitation and transfer effect as promoters drew upon pre-existing constitutional models of earlier companies, there was even greater scope for idiosyncratic governance regulations.

Some aggregate trends and moves toward standardization are observable, either across all sectors or within each sector. The moves by railway companies from the 1830s toward a four year term of office for directors and towards biannual general meetings of shareholders are examples of the standardization of practice. Several developments had a distinctly “plutocratic” thrust. Longer terms of office for directors, their increasing
eligibility for immediate re-election, rising directorial share qualification thresholds restricting access to the boardroom, and increasing share requirements for those proprietors wishing to call extraordinary general meetings, all worked to reduce shareholder power. These developments were particularly noticeable in the railway foundations of the 1830s, but aspects can also be seen among the new canal and dock companies of the early nineteenth century and the joint-stock banks after 1826. A similar effect was achieved by moves to restrict the access of individual shareholders to company books and accounts, by limiting inspection time to a fixed period around the general meeting, or by delegating the right of open access to ad hoc committees of inspection or accounts, or to “sitting auditors”. These moves were most visible among the railway companies of the 1830s, but can also be discerned among the later canal and dock companies. For the privacy of account holders and for obvious commercial reasons, but also for reasons to do with internal governance controls, banks were always more restrictive about allowing shareholders direct access to their books.

There were, however, several aspects of corporate governance before 1844 that remained remarkably “democratic” by later standards. The increased willingness to experiment with smaller share denominations, particularly by early nineteenth-century banks and railway companies, indicates an effort to widen the social base of their investors. Upon joining a company, these small investors often found themselves equipped with considerable rights, via the general meeting, to dismiss directors and appoint managers. They also enjoyed a franchise which was invariably weighted against the large shareholder, especially in the larger banks and railways founded towards the end of our period. The results of our analysis support Dunlavy’s view that the characteristic British company franchise was of the “democratic” or “prudent mean” type. It continued to be so, she argues, well after US stock companies began to move towards plutocracy.16
It is also clear that there was no common trajectory either towards or away from "democratic" governance across the three sectors. Railway constitutions, for instance, shifted from the relatively generous rights granted to shareholders by the early companies, to the restrictive clauses of the foundations of the 1830s, and back towards more "democratic" governance in the 1840s, without ever fully completing that circle.

Out of the great complexity of company charters and deeds, what we find is a sort of *de facto* system of checks and balances, worked out, it seems, by each company largely on its own account to suit its own needs and circumstances. Hence, the legislative power of the general meeting - embodied in most franchises and in clauses such as those granting shareholders access to books, the right to dismiss directors, and to amend constitutions by calling special meetings - was tempered by restrictions imposed on that power by other parts of company constitutions, and, increasingly, by rights and privileges accorded directly to the executive. The analysis reveals a paradox too, in that, in all three sectors, large companies tended to be more "plutocratic" on a number of counts than their smaller counterparts, while at the same time possessing more "democratic" franchises. The founders of early nineteenth-century banks and railways may have worked out more equitable voting systems for their proprietors than did their eighteenth-century predecessors establishing canals, but these proprietors often had many fewer permissible areas of governance to vote on than their counterparts in canals.

2. *The Limitation of Liability in British Joint-stock Companies, 1720-1844*

This is the first paper in which we examine the entire sample of companies in the database. Our argument is that shareholder liability needs to be seen in the context of a host of other constitutional provisions which, in theory at least, permitted shareholders to control rather than completely limit their liability. To compete successfully for finance with limited-liability incorporated companies, unincorporated companies had to market
themselves to investors as safe havens for their capital. To achieve this, entrepreneurs devised a raft of constitutional measures designed to regulate and control shareholder liabilities. The inclusion of some or all of these benefits in company constitutions was an important feature of promotional strategies. But they were not an infallible means of protection if directors chose not to reveal losses to shareholders, and shareholders did not detect them. Certainly, they did not prevent the collapse in the 1847 commercial crisis of many unlimited companies which had borrowed recklessly. Unlimited liability was sufficiently discredited by the 1850s for the state to concede general limited liability. Nevertheless, on the evidence considered in this paper, unlimited liability was undermined not simply by its intrinsic shortcomings or its unsuitability in an age of rapid economic growth, as by the governance failures which permitted directors to conduct their business in a greater degree of secrecy than was generally possible in companies incorporated by the state, and which enabled them to overrule the wishes of shareholders at general meetings.

3. ‘Different and Better?’ Scottish Joint-stock Companies and the Law, c. 1720-1845

This paper examines the legal status of joint-stock companies in Scotland in the period between the ‘Bubble Act’ of 1720 and the reforms of company law in the mid-1840s. Historians have generally contended that Scots company law was ‘different and better’ than English law. We question the assumption, however, that the legal personality of the unincorporated company in Scotland gave it a significant advantage vis-à-vis its English counterparts. Using the examples of the National and Commercial Banks of Scotland, and the Shotts Iron Company, we argue that, while unincorporated companies were never in danger of being ruled illegal in Scotland, their status presented them with a number of difficulties in their day-to-day activities. This legal framework reflected the
reluctance both north and south of the border to promote joint-stock enterprise at the expense of the private partnership long into the nineteenth century.

4. ‘A Doe in the City’: Women Shareholders in Eighteenth- and Early Nineteenth-Century Britain. [nominated output]

Historians have increasingly recognised the role of women in commerce in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Not only has women’s role in the accountancy profession received attention, but the activities of female investors and share traders have been identified and explored. The notion that men and women occupied ‘separate spheres’ in the nineteenth century has been challenged from a number of perspectives. In this paper we investigate the role of women as shareholders in joint-stock companies, and how far they can be characterised as active investors. We examine shareholder lists and the constitutions by which companies were established. Few companies prohibited women from holding shares; but some barred women from voting, and many others required that they vote by proxy. The penetration by women of the public sphere of investment did not always extend to the more public sphere of participation at shareholder meetings, which were often rowdy and uncontrollable affairs. In the literature of the period, representations of women as speculators reinforced the boundaries of women’s perceived role in the joint-stock economy. We suggest that, while the separate spheres may have been blurred, considerable limitations were set on the extent to which female shareholders could participate fully in the governance of joint-stock companies.

Activities

A website was set up for the project with information about the team’s activities and the project’s themes. The address is: www.corporategovernancehistory.org
All but one of the papers listed below were presented at a range of academic conferences and research seminars in Britain, Europe and the US during the course of the project. These included meetings of the Social History Society, the Economic History Society, the Association of Business Historians, and the European Business History Association. Members of the team also attended additional conferences and seminars which had papers or themes relevant to the project.

At the end of the project, the team participated in the XIV International Economic History Conference held in Helsinki in August 2006. Paper #7 listed below was presented in one session (#74) on the evolution of business organisation organised by John Turner (QUB) and Aurora Gomez (Mexico). A second session (#96) on corporate governance was co-organised by the PI and Professors Dunlavy (Wisconsin) and Kobrak (Paris), where the PI acted as commentator on three papers. Both sessions were highly successful and attracted packed audiences. They provided opportunities to showcase our project in the context of the latest international research on corporate governance in history.

As a direct result of the above activities, a substantial network of historical researchers on aspects of corporate governance has been established. This includes researchers in the UK, the US, Germany, Switzerland, Denmark, France, Spain, Mexico, Brazil, Australia, and Israel.

**Outputs**

Publications and unpublished conference papers (abstracts of these are available on the project website: www.corporategovernancehistory.org):

Proceedings from the 8th Annual Congress of the European Business History Association (Barcelona: CD-Rom, 2005).

2. “‘A Doe in the City’: Women Shareholders in Eighteenth- and Early Nineteenth-Century Britain”, Accounting, Business and Financial History, 16, no.2 (July 2006), pp. 265-90. [nominated output]


Consolidated Database of Stock Company Constitutions (excel and access versions)

Summary of Variable Codes (guide to the database codes).

In addition, sections of the following two-part, eight-volume edited collection of documents were dependent on research done for the project. These volumes contain two 5000-word introductions to each part, plus introductory essays to each document:
Robin Pearson (general editor), with Mark Freeman and James Taylor

**Impacts**

The activities and outputs of the project team have reached a wide international academic audience, as demonstrated above. In addition the project provided inputs to an invited lecture given by the PI to the Regional Development Agency, Yorkshire Forward:


We anticipate further interest from non-academic circles once the book is published.

**Future research priorities**

1. The international comparison of governance systems is now fully on the historical agenda, and this project has contributed to that development. There are discussions afoot about a follow-up session at the next International Economic History Conference in 2010. The networks referred to above will allow this to be pursued.

2. The project has also contributed to the growing research on gender and business. Freeman, Pearson and Taylor have been invited to write a new essay on women shareholders (see paper #2 above) for a volume on women and finance, to be edited by Josephine Maltby and Janette Rutterford in 2007. Routledge is the putative publisher.

3. There is considerable scope, and now a good platform, for comparable studies of governance structures and relations in British stock companies in the later nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

(4962 words)
ANNEX 1

SUMMARY OF DATA IN CONSOLIDATED DATABASE

N = 512 COMPANIES

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of company</th>
<th>NUMBER</th>
<th>%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Incorporated</td>
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<td>56.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unincorporated</td>
<td>222</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>NUMBER</th>
<th>% of total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Banking</td>
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<td>12.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridges</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>6.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canals</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>11.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colonial</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gas</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>11.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harbours</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>11.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing/trade</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>7.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Railways</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>11.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shipping</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>5.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>7.81</td>
</tr>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
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<td><strong>100.00</strong></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>NUMBER</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Colonial</td>
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<td>2.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
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<td>70.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>6.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
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<td>16.99</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wales</td>
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</tr>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>512</td>
<td><strong>100.00</strong></td>
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</table>
ANNEX 2

GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF COMPANIES IN THE DATABASE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>NUMBER</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>London and Middlesex</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>14.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South East</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>10.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South West</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>9.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Midlands</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>5.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Midlands</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>7.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North West</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>10.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yorkshire and Humberside</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>6.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>6.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wales</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lothian and Borders</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>4.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strathclyde</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>6.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Scotland</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>6.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colonial</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>512</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nb. ‘Colonial’ companies are those stock companies, such as several mining and land companies, founded in Britain and with head office and investors there, but whose business operations are largely abroad, in the colonies or elsewhere.
Annex 3: Number of companies in the database, per year of foundation, 1720-1844
ANNEX 4

References


Dunlavy is currently engaged in a comparative study of stockholder voting rights and corporate strategies in the United States, Britain, France and Germany between 1844 and 1910, which commences roughly at the point at which this research project ends.


10 The survey was carried out using the online catalogues of the UK National Register of Archives (NRA) and the Public Record Office (PRO), supplemented by several printed guides to records in individual industries, plus a range of secondary literature. Since the project began (October 2003) the total of 800+ has been moving up and down, as closer examination of the records reveals new stock companies not found in the original survey and companies that prove not to be joint-stock or without relevant records surviving from our period.


13 An informed guess. The sources in footnotes 11 and 12, plus our survey of surviving company records in other sectors, suggest that the total of stock companies was no fewer than 1200, and probably no more than 1500.

14 This figure does not include files compiled on pre-1720 stock companies.


16 Dunlavy, ‘Citizens to Plutocrats’, pp. 84-6.

17 Directors’ use of proxy votes to secure majorities at sensitive general meetings is one example of a counter-vailing force, among others.