

*Databases and Historic Research:
The 16th century English Army*

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Outline

- The Problem and Questions
- Use of the Database
- Some results from the data
- Challenges
- Potential Advantages

• Bill:



• Mike:



The Research

- 16th century military cohorts
 - G R Elton's "points of contact" in the English Kingdom
 - Two huge armies: Dutch war with Spain (1585-1598); English rebellion funded by Spain (1594-1603)
 - Hence: the English penumbra of Hispanic Baroque military culture
 - We know effect was profound
 - Questions:
 - Who were the captains? How recruited?
 - What effect does 1000 or more office-holders have in a limited official world, 1579-1603?
 - Vast revenues for war draw men and materiel.
 - What effect on official culture? Developing military culture?
 - Offices are transitory: who's attracted? Why? From where? Effect on their careers? Death rates? Region? Background? Other connections: family, court, county?
 - Sources: Based on accounts and account of war (NA E 351/runs)
 - Very complex--can be verified in other sources



The Research: Motivation for Database



- Lots of data: > 1000 individuals; typically, multiple offices each; other data: family, education, relationships
- Difficult to analyze manually
 - Need better ways to look for and understand patterns of behaviour, trends
 - Means to look for “anomalies”, i.e., “unusual occurrences”



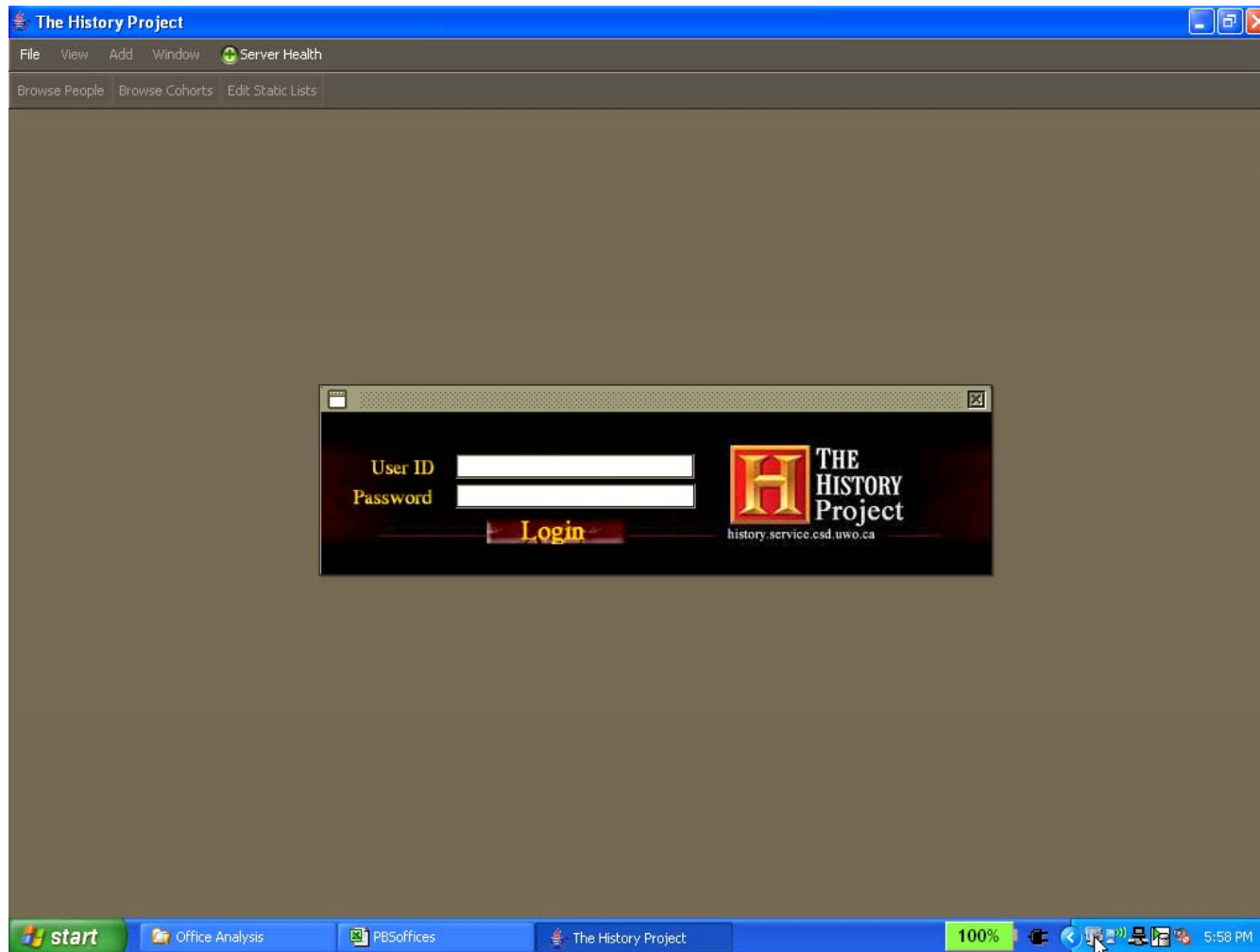
Creation of Database

- Objective
 - Capture details about individuals in cohorts
 - Name, birth, death, education, ..
 - Capture details about each office that an individual held
 - Office type (civilian, military)
 - Title
 - Start/End dates
 - Capture relationships
 - Family
 - Sponsors

Database

- Developed around needs of project
 - Took several iterations
 - Still evolving
- Web-based interface for data entry

Database: Web Interface



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Viewing Data



The History Project

File View Add Window Server Health

Browse People Browse Cohorts Edit Static Lists

Browse People

Name Filter

Given Name Wild Card Matching

Family Name Wild Card Matching

Search

Person(s)	Attribute	Count	Education	Nobilities	Land Owned	Offices Held	Relationships	Subjects Taught
Bacon, Sir Nicholas	Education	0						
Badbey, Thomas	Nobilities	1						
Bagenal, Sir Henry (1566 - Aug...	Land Owned	0						
Bagenal, Sir Nicholas	Offices Held	24						
Bagenal, Sir Samuel	Relationships	0						
Baker, James	Subjects Tau...	0						
Bamberghe, Thomas (Unk - Ju...								
Bangor, Roger								
Banister, Laurence								
Banks, Henry								
Banks, Thomas								
Bannester, Edmond (Unk - Jul ...								
Bannester, William								
Baptist								
Barber, Mary (Unk - 1679)								
Barkeley, Henry								
Barker, James								
Barker, John								
Barker, William								
Barkley, Edward								
Barkley, John								
Barmshe, John								
Barnewall, Patrick								
Barnewall, Elizabeth								
Barnewall, Christopher								
Barnewall, Mary								
Barmishe, (unknown) (Unk - Jul...								
Barrett, Edmund								
Barrington, John								
Barrowe, William								
Barr...								

Add Update

New Attribute Change Attribute Remove Attribute

start Office Analysis PBSoffices The History Project Microsoft PowerPoint ... 100% 6:01 PM

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Database: To Date

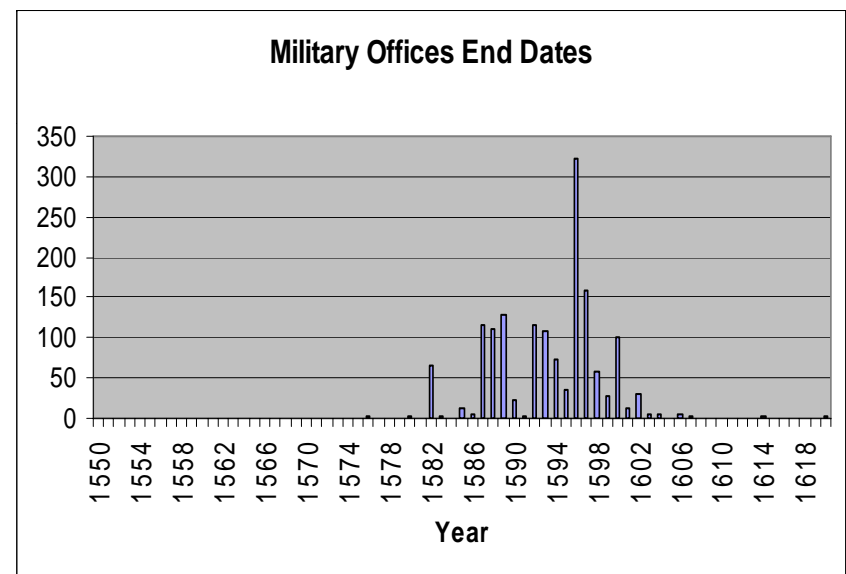
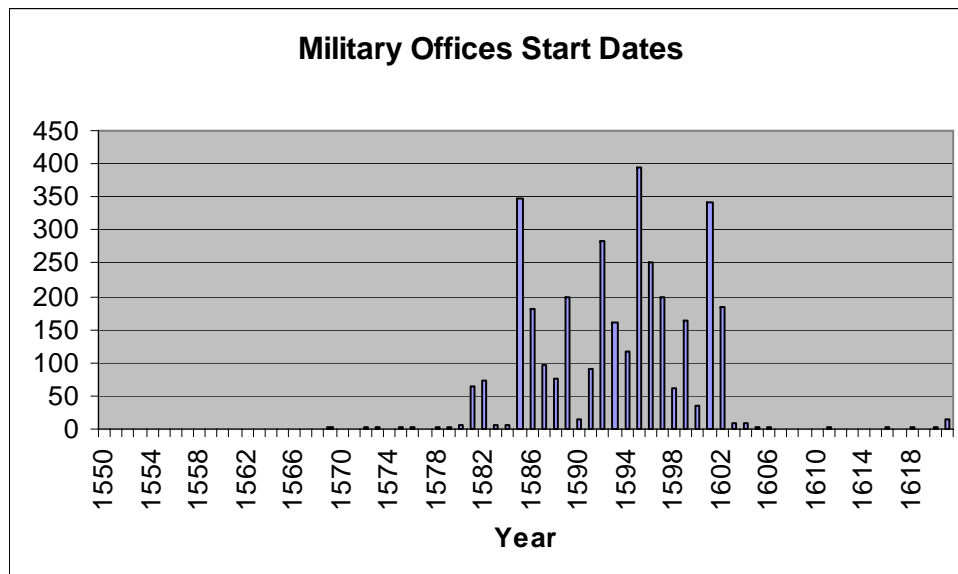
- Magnitude
 - Individuals: 1618
 - Offices: 4169
- Challenges
 - Precision of dates
 - Precise to only the year
 - Unknown
 - Sources
 - Multiple
 - Different for different data elements



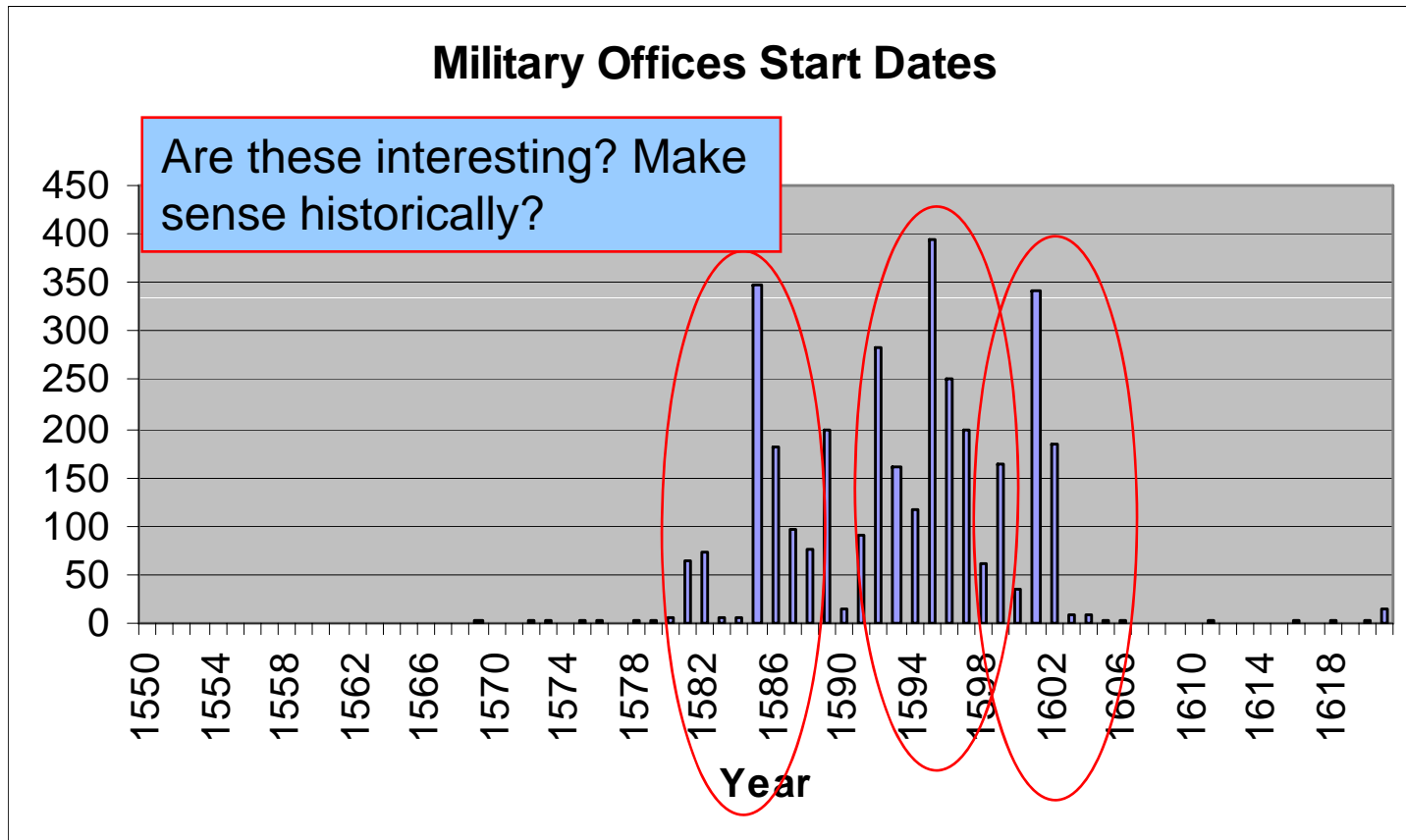
Looking at Data

- Histograms
 - Looking at what the data says
 - Distributions
- Looking at career patterns
 - Markov graphs

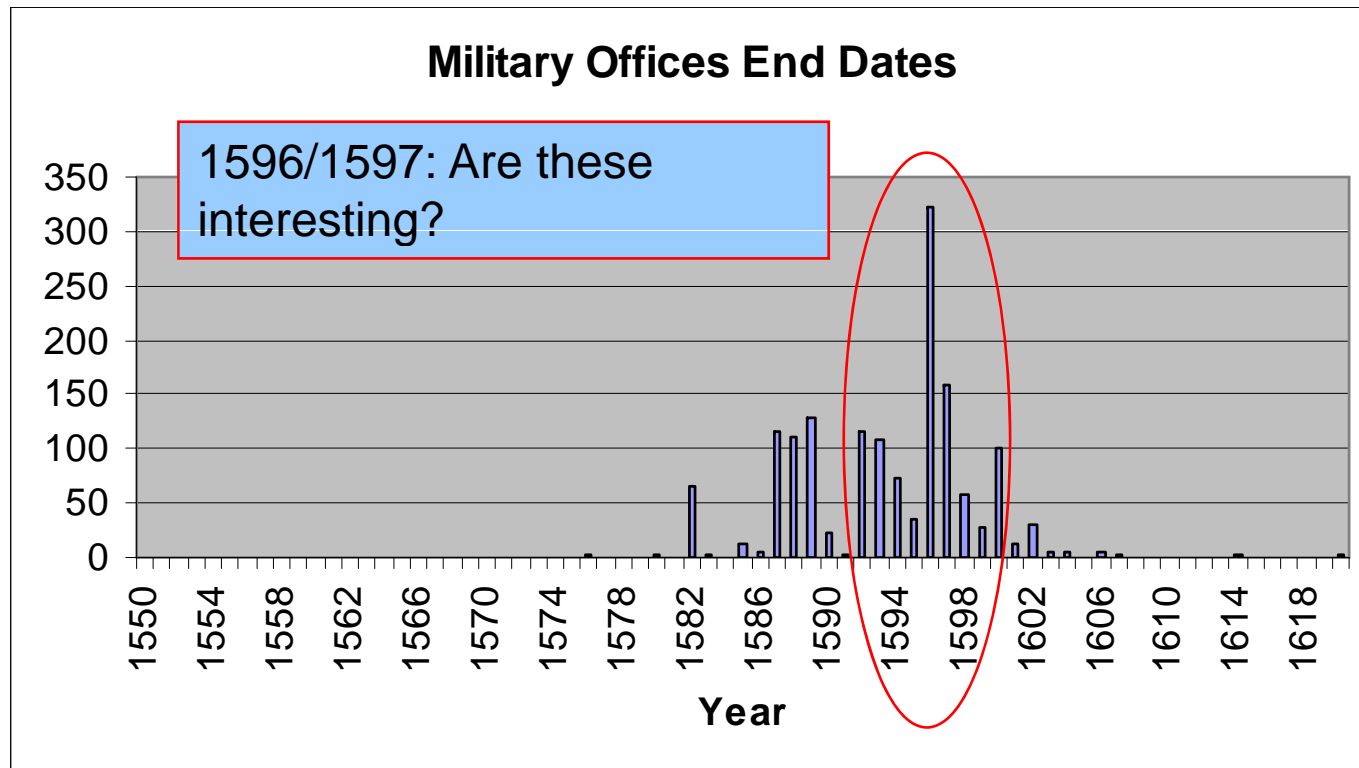
Military Offices



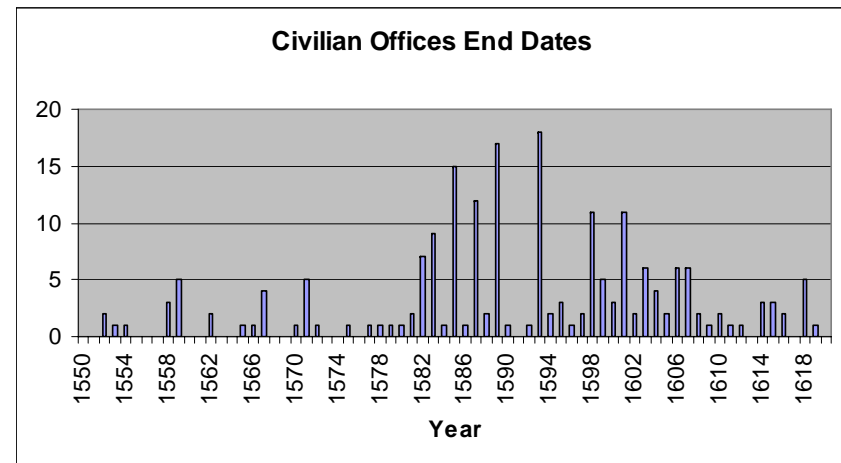
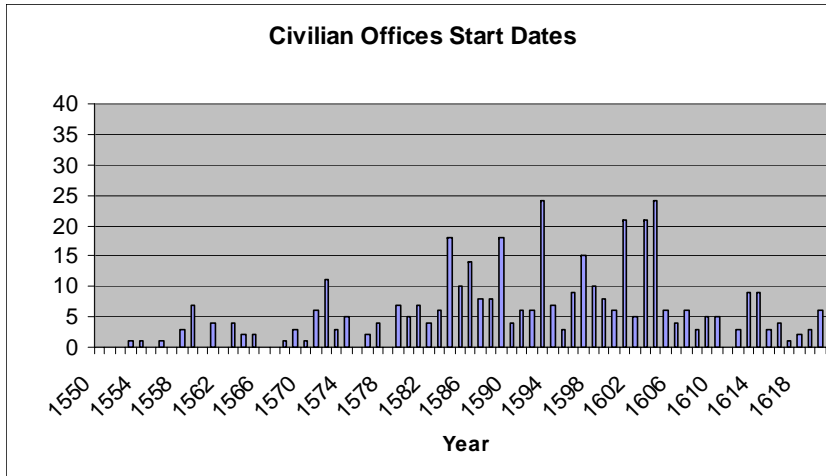
Military Offices: Start Dates



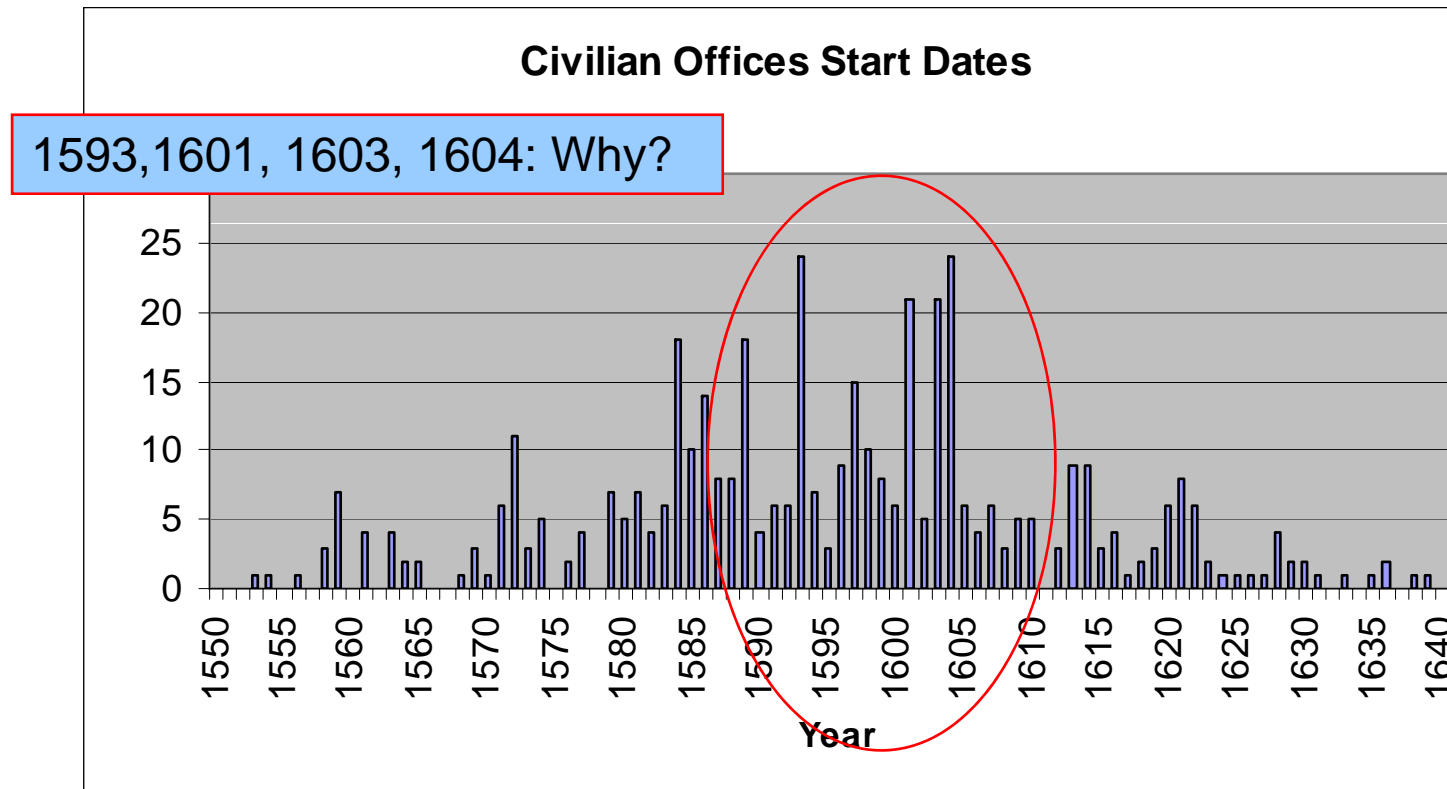
Military Offices: End Dates



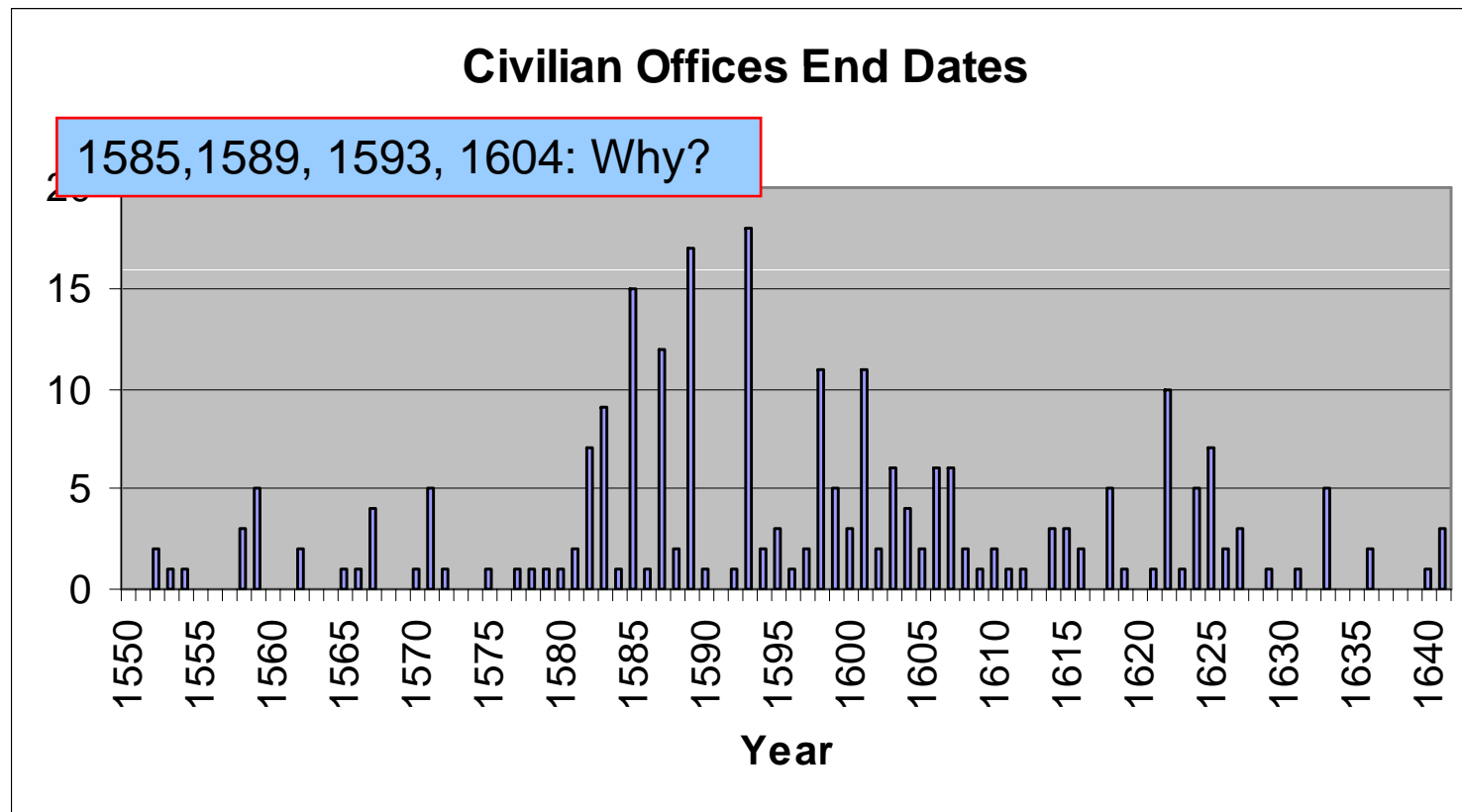
Civilian Offices



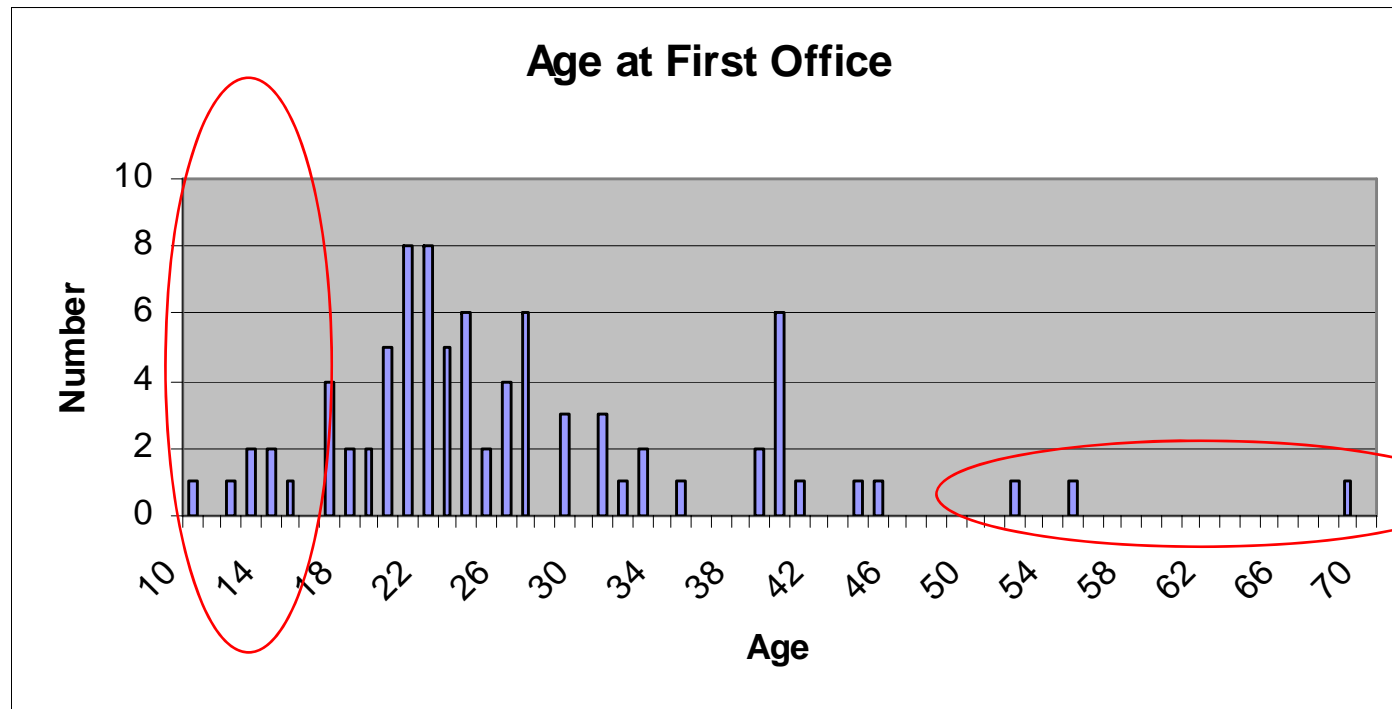
Civilian Offices: Start Dates



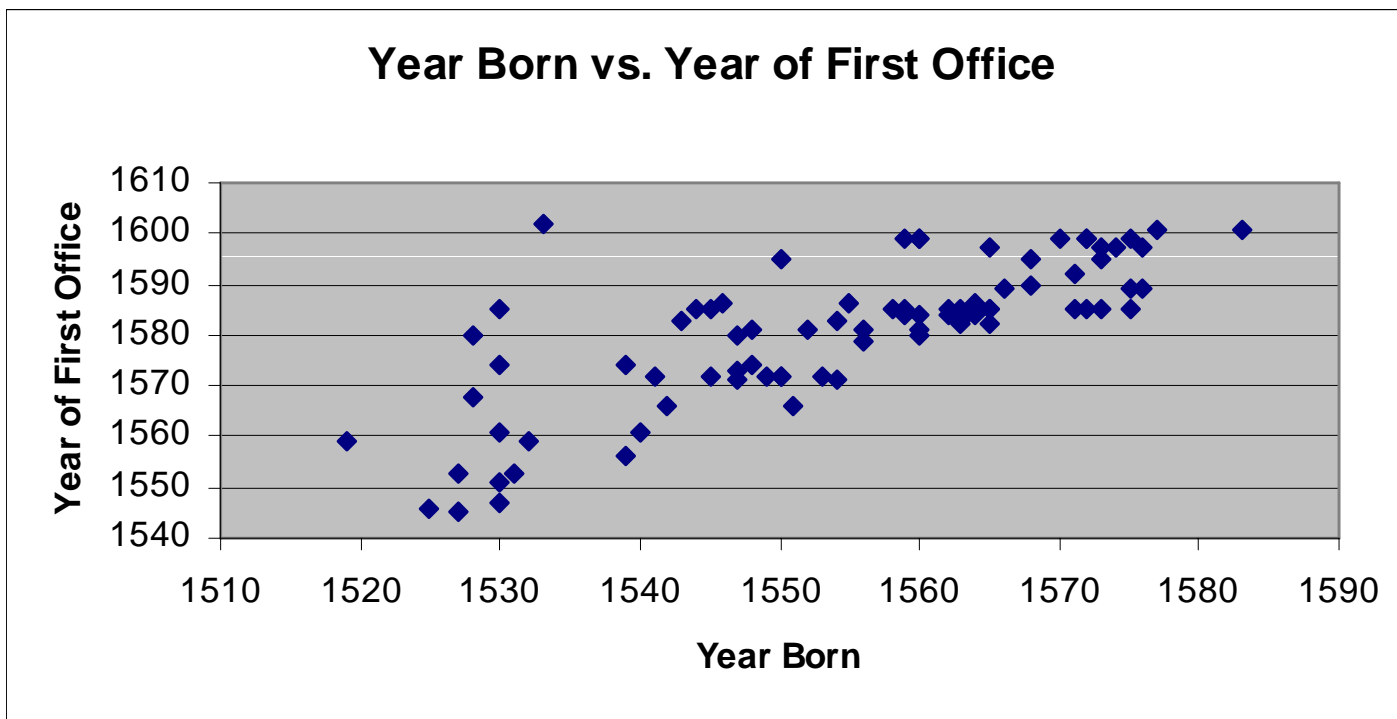
Civilian Offices: End Dates



Age at First Office



Year Born vs. Age at First Office



Patterns in Offices

- Markov Graph
 - Captures probability of being in one “state” followed by another “state”
 - Think of it as moving from one state to another

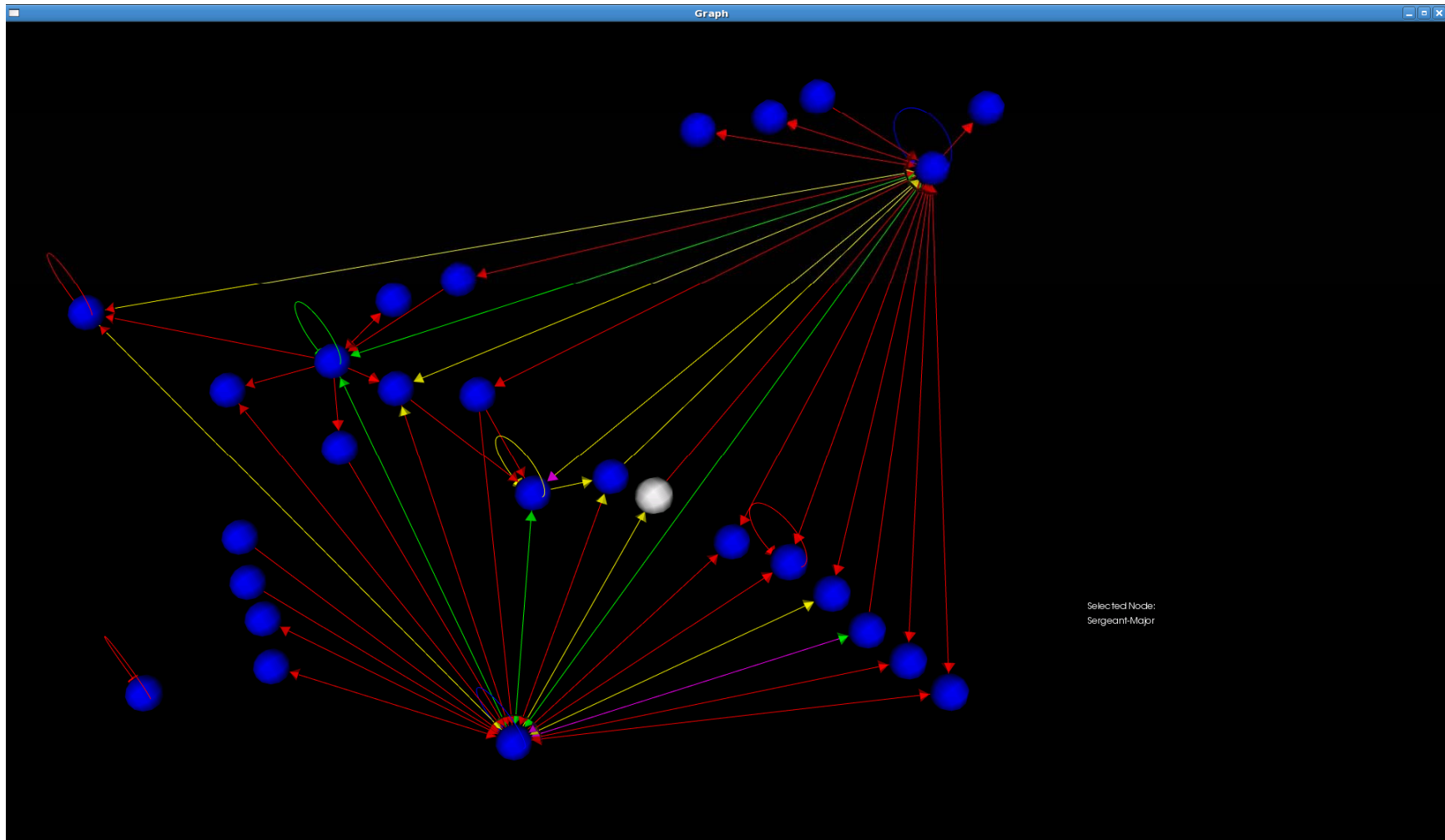


Example from Data

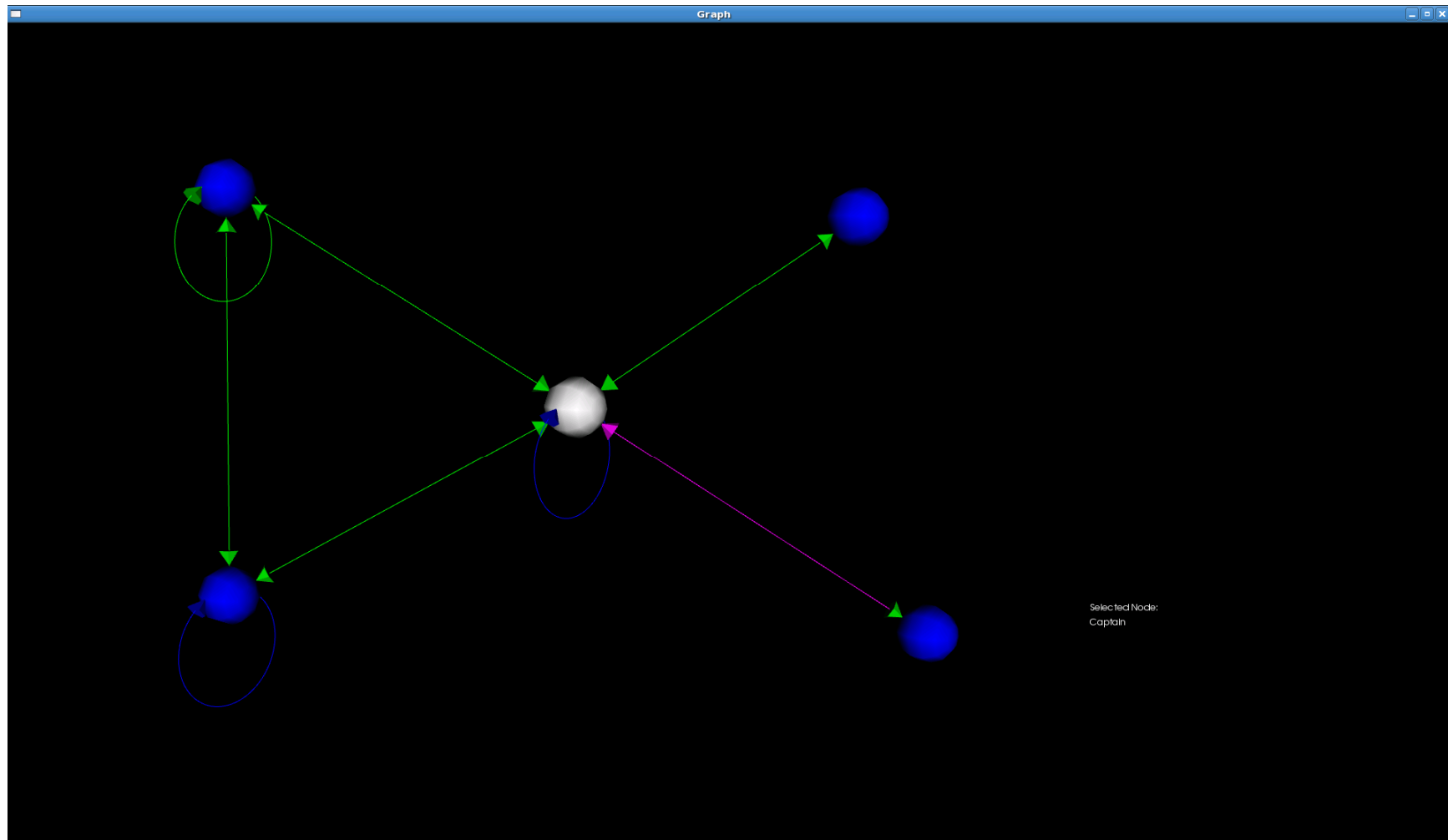
- Captain – Captain of Horse: .926%
- Captain of Foot – Captain: 1.967%
- Captain – Captain: 3.355%
- Captain – Death: 10.181%



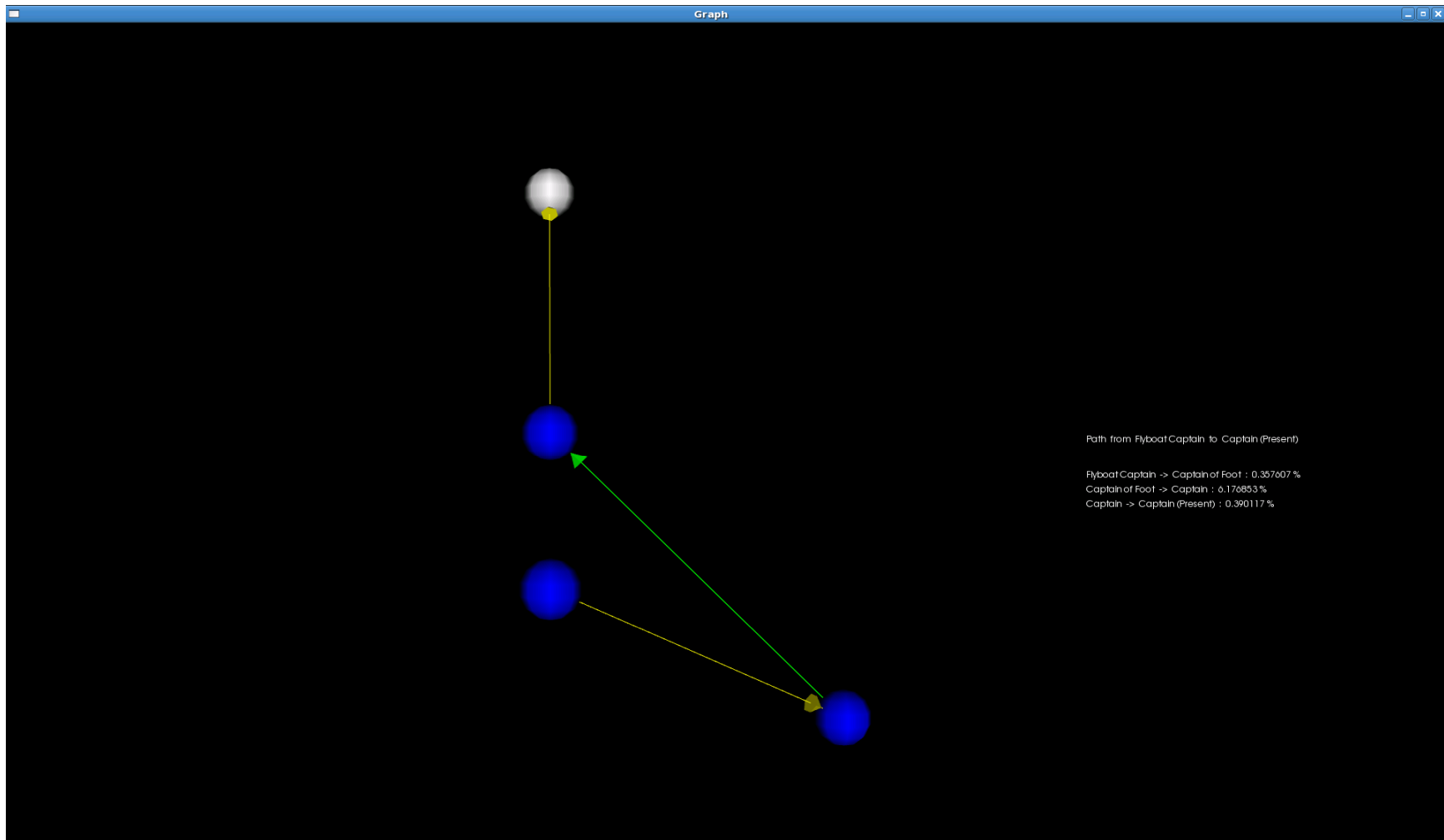
Viewing Parts of the Markov Graph



High Probability Transitions



Identifying "Career Paths"



Observations and Insights - 1



- More complex than originally thought
 - This is natural given the extent of the database
 - Largest compilation of early modern military personnel
 - Questions existing analysis--anecdotal evidence analysed



Observations and Insights - 2

- Recruiting: seems to be more complex
- Death Rates: high as expected, seems to indicate several discrete populations
- Progression: Captain-to-Captain (Markov graph)
- Elite office-holders--small group, how influential? Just tourists:)
- "Lone men"
- Regional variations: poor counties?
- Court influence is ambivalent: necessary but disliked intensely.
- Crossover of personnel from Low Countries to Ireland: Expedition experience; County experience. Data suggests that a cadre of military with "foreign" office are becoming remote from the rest. Could be a formalizing of existing elite pattern of serving abroad as voluntaries, or of gaining expertise.
- Oldest Captains: have experience of having fought "with" the Spanish under Mary (1550s); bring back expertise
- Closeness of Dutch "military revolution"
- Frustration huge with English government who refuse to sanction "foreign" anything in military.



Challenges

- Data entry
- Data validation
 - Accuracy of data
 - Entry errors
- Extraction
 - Basic database queries are there
 - Not the right kinds of questions
- Analyses
 - Some data manipulation



Potential Advantages - 1

- Can "query" data nearly endlessly.
- Compare and define "groups"
- Map "states" of progression, e.g., Markov graphs
- Evolutionary: not a final structure but one which can be edited, added unto, corrected, re-defined



Potential Advantages - 2

- Entirely new analysis possible:
 - Gives radically-different view of a population while being critical and evaluative of how that population is defined
 - Usually treated from elite perspective: or "Military Revolution" thesis (Roberts, Parker) and other works treat "soft" data such as patronage
 - We can question the composition: generational, regional.
 - Spans the medieval to the colonial planters and joint-stock companies of 17th expansion
 - Not "high road to civil war", but considers the formation of a profession of arms systematically through an analysis of links, gentry, county, court, and official
 - Creation of military culture: offers another view
 - Transmission of knowledge: continental, especially Spanish.
 - On the penumbra of the Hispanic Baroque: heavily influenced the English and that influence will be subject of further study
 - Potential for linking the armies and cultures of early modern Europe.



Thank-you!

