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978-0-521-80214-7 - Parliament, Politics and Elections, 1604-1648

Edited by Chris R. Kyle

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INTRODUCTION

Chris R. Kyle

Early modern English Parliaments were institutional events: institutional because they occupied a significant role in the governance of the realm, and after the Reformation Parliament statute law became omniscient.¹ Furthermore, they established and followed (more or less) fixed procedures and had a permanent clerical staff. However, they were also events, summoned and dissolved at irregular intervals by the monarch, at least until the passage of the Triennial Act in February 1641.² The very nature of the assembly and its power, influence and role in English society and politics has been hotly debated by historians for many years and continues today to fill the pages of scholarly journals and the catalogues of publishers. No less controversial than the nature and role of the assembly is the impact and validity of its sources, official and unofficial. It is the aim of this introduction and the ensuing editorials and documents to discuss and deconstruct the nature of parliamentary sources and how they can be utilised in the study of parliamentary history.

In recent years the publication of documents relating to Parliament has concentrated on the diaries of MPs. These works, of immense value to all early modern historians, are important sources but they should not be viewed as the only material of relevance to the study of parliamentary history. The documentary output relating to early seventeenth-century Parliaments is vast and covers aspects of procedure, lobbying, elections, legislation, debate, foreign policy, high politics and local affairs. In line with this, the aim of the present collection of essays is to highlight the importance of a wide range of parliamentary material. In doing so it furthers not only our knowledge of the institution but also provides insights into the importance of the centre–locality relationship, local politicking amongst members of the gentry, the day-to-day working of Parliaments and high politics. The volume covers five different but overlapping aspects of parliamentary history. Designed to stand alone but also to form a coherent whole, the documents examine parliamentary debates, ambassadorial letters, the procedural

¹ G. R. Elton, *The Parliament of England, 1559–1581* (Cambridge, 1986), pp. 32–9; David L. Smith, *The Stuart Parliaments, 1603–1689* (London, 1999), p. 205 n. 99.

² 16 Charles I cap. 1. But see the contemporary discussion on the frequency and calling of Parliaments discussed in Pauline Croft, 'Annual Parliaments and the Long Parliament', *HR* lix (1986), pp. 155–71; *idem*, 'The Debate on Annual Parliaments in the Early Seventeenth Century', *PER* xvi (1996), pp. 163–74.

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operation of Parliament, elections, politicking and correspondence between MPs and their constituencies. The pieces reproduced here cannot hope to encompass all the different types of source material for Parliament but they cover a wider diversity of sources than is normally found in such a collection. It is hoped that in presenting this information, scholars will not only find the individual articles useful, but also recognize the importance of looking at what the institutional, local and foreign sources can tell us as well as moving parliamentary history beyond the normal concentration on journals and diaries.

One of the important lessons from 'post-revisionist' history is that we have started to expand the range of sources that are used in the study of Parliament and to look at questions which cannot be answered by reference to the Journals. Work by Pauline Croft,³ Richard Cust,⁴ Tom Cogswell,⁵ Norman Jones⁶ and Sean Kelsey,⁷ in particular, has provided a picture of Stuart Parliaments viewed from outside the gates of Westminster. The work has encompassed the print culture of Parliament, the iconography of the institution, the circulation of the speeches of MPs, political libels and the impact of legislation on the wider community. But in-depth research of this fresh approach to Parliament remains in its infancy and subjects such as the daily functioning of the institution, propaganda, political accountability and the socio-economic impact of Parliament on Westminster remain little understood.⁸

Furthermore, in order to understand Parliament and the wider world, some conception of its institutional character is necessary. Contrary to the strict revisionist position adopted by Sir Geoffrey Elton, early Stuart historians have broadened their focus from examining the 'official' sources of Parliament and have concentrated on the speeches and

³ Pauline Croft, 'Libels, Popular Literacy and Public Opinion in Early Modern England', *HR* lxxviii (1995), pp. 266-85; *idem*, 'The Reputation of Robert Cecil: Libels, Political Opinion and Popular Awareness in the Early Seventeenth Century', *TRHS* 6th ser. i (1991), pp. 43-69.

⁴ Richard Cust, 'News and Politics in Early Seventeenth Century England', *P&P* cxii (1986), pp. 60-90; *idem*, 'Politics and the Electorate in the 1620s', *Conflict in Early Stuart England*, ed. Richard Cust and Ann Hughes (London, 1989), pp. 134-67; Richard Cust and Peter Lake, 'Sir Richard Grosvenor and the Rhetoric of Magistracy', *BIHR* liv (1981), pp. 40-53.

⁵ Thomas Cogswell, *The Blessed Revolution: English Politics and the Coming of War, 1621-1624* (Cambridge, 1989); *idem*, 'Thomas Middleton and the Court, 1624: A Game at Chess in Context', *HLQ* xlviii (1984), pp. 273-88.

⁶ Norman L. Jones, *God and the Moneylenders: Usury and Law in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 1989).

⁷ Sean Kelsey, *Inventing a Republic: The Political Culture of the English Commonwealth* (Manchester, 1997).

⁸ The volume *Parliament at Work: Parliamentary Committees, Access and Lobbying under the Tudors and Stuarts* (Boydell and Brewer, forthcoming) edited by myself and Jason Peacey, adds further to our knowledge of how Parliament operated on a day-to-day basis.

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debates of Members, particularly those scribbled down by the burgeoning number of parliamentary diarists in the 1620s and 1640s. That it has been possible to do so, owes much to the publications of the Yale Centre for Parliamentary History – ‘a heroic project’ in the words of John Morrill.⁹ For the 1620s, only 1624 remains completely unpublished and work is well advanced on the production of the diaries of the Long Parliament.¹⁰ These volumes have highlighted the importance of diaries for an understanding of Stuart Parliaments as well as saving the valuable research budgets of historians previously forced to trek the length and breadth of England and to travel to Ireland and the United States. The Yale Centre has also included many other types of documents relating to Parliament, including accounts of elections, some texts of bills, newsletters and separates. But before drawing these into the orbit of this discussion it is worth highlighting the nature of the ‘official’ sources in the early seventeenth century.

The surviving Commons Journals for the early Stuart period are a far cry from their Tudor antecedents and 1640s counterparts.¹¹ Through the vagaries of fire and survival, many of the Journals are the rough notes of the Underclerk written on the floor of the House rather than the fair copy shorn of references to speakers and what they said.¹² Thus what has come down to us are Journals, especially for the 1620s, which do record speeches and debate in detail and are not simply a record of the formal business of the House. Clearly, in the 1620s the Commons attempted to impose tighter restrictions on the Journal,¹³ but it remains a valuable record of debate until the Short Parliament and the order of the Commons to the Clerk assistant, John Rushworth, not to take notes of anything other than formal proceedings.¹⁴ In addition, debates in *both* Houses and the proceedings of the Parliament can be reconstructed from the material in the House of Lords Record Office. Although most of the Commons’ archive was destroyed by fire in 1834, the Main Papers of the Lords do contain much of value to those interested in the Commons. A wealth of documents deals with committees in the Lower House, including the notes of their proceedings,

⁹ John Morrill, ‘Reconstructing the History of Early Stuart Parliaments’, *Archives* xxi 91 (1994), 67.

¹⁰ See below n. 45.

¹¹ *CJ*, i. 139–1057.

¹² It is tempting to attribute the loss of the fair-copy Journals not to fire, but to the light fingers of Sir Simonds D’Ewes. His ‘borrowing’ of the Elizabethan Journals is well known and his parliamentary diary for 1624 (BL, Harl. 159) is based partly on the Underclerk’s Journal. On D’Ewes and the Elizabethan Journals see David Dean, *Law-making and Society in Late Elizabethan England* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 3.

¹³ See *Proceedings 1628*, p. 2; Sheila Lambert, ‘The Clerks and Records of the House of Commons, 1600–1640’, *BHR* xliii (1970), pp. 215–31.

¹⁴ *CJ*, ii. 12. I am grateful to Jason Peacey for this reference.

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whilst many petitions and papers concerning grievances and the activities of MPs (political and procedural) can also be found there. The Main Papers should be regarded not only as a source for the history of the Lords but for the Commons as well.

Given the recent debates on the nature of parliamentary sources, and private diaries in particular, it is increasingly important to emphasise the problematic nature of many of the parliamentary diaries. Did the author have a particular bias? Was he present at the day's proceedings or did he write down an account relayed from another witness? How can we be sure that the diarist captured both the exact words and the tone of the speaker(s)? When we have ten versions of a particular speech, which one should we believe? I do not wish to dwell long on this matter as the question of the reliability of these diaries as accurate accounts of the proceedings of the Commons was answered some time ago by J. H. Hexter, and much of the subsequent debate has added little to our knowledge. But John Morrill has offered the radical solution that we should not quote directly from the Journals and diaries, but paraphrase them after reading and collating all the available accounts.¹⁵ Furthermore, Morrill has provided a timely reminder of the importance of comparing the various diaries and not simply relying on one account, for example the dependence of Conrad Russell on the synopses of John Pym, and Robert Ruigh, whose work on the 1624 Parliament relied mainly on the diaries of Pym and Sir William Spring.¹⁶ However, it is easy to exaggerate the problem. One point that Morrill, Jansson and David Smith all note is that it is necessary to employ good historical working practices – a point that surely no one will argue with.¹⁷ In examining the proceedings of the Commons we should follow the ten guidelines that Morrill has suggested,¹⁸ and also note that his analysis of the diaries illustrates the fact that 'time and time again the *similarity* of the accounts to one another (if rarely the precise replication of words and sentences) allows us to be confident that we are getting the gist of what is spoken'.¹⁹ Perhaps this is also true of Morrill's own experiment in lecture notes in which he reviewed the notes of his students after

¹⁵ J. H. Hexter, 'Parliament under the Lens', *British Studies Monitor* iii (1972-3), pp. 4-15; *idem*, 'Quoting the Commons, 1604-1642', *Tudor Rule and Revolution*, ed. DeLloyd J. Guth and John W. McKenna (Cambridge, 1982), pp. 369-91; Morrill, 'Reconstructing the History', pp. 67-72; *idem*, 'Paying One's D'Ewes', *PH* xiv (1995), pp. 179-86; *idem*, 'Getting Over D'Ewes', *PH* xv (1996), pp. 221-30; Majja Jansson, 'Dues Paid', *PH* xv (1996), pp. 215-20.

¹⁶ Conrad Russell, *Parliaments and English Politics, 1621-1629* (Oxford, 1979), p. xix; Robert E. Ruigh, *The Parliament of 1624: Politics and Foreign Policy* (Camb. MA, 1971).

¹⁷ Smith, *Stuart Parliaments*, pp. 13-14; Morrill, 'Reconstructing the History', p. 71; Jansson, 'Dues Paid', p. 220.

¹⁸ See Morrill, 'Reconstructing the History', p. 71.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* p. 70.

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lecturing for five minutes on parliamentary diaries. He found that

one had tried hard to summarize all that I said; one had only noted points she did not already know; and the third had written down not so much what I had said as his reflections and commentary on what I had said. Two had drawn closely on my actual words (but one more closely than the other), one had used his own (and wittier) language. In 50 years time how easily would such surviving notes allow a reconstruction of my lecture or my personal bearing as I lectured?²⁰

But here it is important not to burn the lecture notes of the recent graduate in a celebratory pyre, but, to apply the guidelines of Hexter and Morrill to *read* the lecture notes, *compare and contrast* them and reach an *informed* opinion. The unanswered question is, do the *collected* notes of Morrill's students accurately reflect what he said? In entering into the debate on this subject, I must confess (before someone else points it out) that I am equally guilty of directly quoting what MPs said in Parliament. But after spending the last fifteen years working with the parliamentary diaries of the 1620s, I see little need to paraphrase and no need to refrain from quoting the Journals and diaries. Not least because if we do not trust historians to read all the diaries and select the most accurate account, then why should we trust their own paraphrases?

Thus I believe that the problem of the usage of diaries has been exaggerated. Problems of conflicting evidence, misdating and value tend to sort themselves out. Following Hexter, it is true that 'the axes along which it turns out to be worth grading the narratives of the early Stuart Parliaments are completeness, competence and coherence. Bias and point of view enter the picture occasionally but rarely. Any problems that may arise on those scores, as in the case of Eliot's *Negotium Posterorum*, are best dealt with "ad hoc."²¹

Moving beyond the eye-catching nature of the diaries there remains a vast amount of parliamentary information. Parliamentary separates have been used by Wallace Notestein, Tom Cogswell and Richard Cust to illustrate the widespread circulation of news about parliamentary debates, especially the speeches of Commons grandees such as Sir

²⁰ Morrill, 'Paying One's D'Ewes', pp. 185–6.

²¹ Hexter, 'Quoting the Commons', p. 391.

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Edward Coke, Sir Edwin Sandys and John Eliot.²² In addition, MPs frequently reported parliamentary news to their constituencies and friends;²³ MPs and peers ordered copies of bills, speeches and royal addresses;²⁴ boroughs sent delegations to Westminster to assist their MPs;²⁵ petitions flooded into Parliament;²⁶ committee lists were hung in the lobby of the Commons which was open to the public;²⁷ and on occasion, petitions and grievances were posted around London and Westminster.²⁸ This wealth of parliamentary material has also highlighted the theoretical construct of parliamentary secrecy. It seems clear that there was widespread knowledge, at least among the élite, of parliamentary debates and individual speeches. We may argue over the degree of the 'trickle-down' effect,²⁹ but the overall conception of Parliament as a *public* institution agrees with Jason Peacey's comment when discussing the 1640s 'that secrecy was not enforced, while the determination of publishers ensured that it could not be enforced'.³⁰ The logical development from this point is to look at the impact of print in the parliamentary arena. In conceptualising Parliament from the standpoint of print it is clear that much more source material exists than just the official proclamations and statutes. This has been recognised by historians working on the 1640s but much less so by their early Stuart colleagues.³¹ Throughout the 1620s and the 1640s, MPs

²² Wallace Notestein and Frances Relf, eds, *Commons Debates 1629* (Minnesota, 1921), *CD 1629*, pp. xx-xli; Cust, 'News and Politics', pp. 60-90; *idem*, *The Forced Loan and English Politics 1626-1628* (Oxford, 1987), pp. 155, 158, 168; Thomas Cogswell, 'Politics and Propaganda: Charles I and the People in the 1620s', *JBS* xxix (1990), pp. 187-215; *idem*, 'Underground Verse and the Transformation of Early Stuart Political Culture', *Political Culture and Cultural Politics in Early Modern England*, ed. S. D. Amussen and Mark A. Kishlansky (Manchester, 1995), pp. 277-300.

²³ See, for example, the correspondence of John Lister with the Hull corporation in Hull RO, L. 166-70, and the numerous letters reproduced in the Yale *Proceedings in Parliament* volumes. I am grateful to Simon Healy for the Hull references.

²⁴ Vernon Snow, ed., *Parliament in Elizabethan England: John Hooker's Order and Usage*, (New Haven, 1977), p. 172. For a specific incidence see HLRO, Main Papers, 13 March 1624, order for Lord Danvers to have a copy of the Gouthland manor bill.

²⁵ Chris R. Kyle and Jason Peacey, "'Under cover of so much coming and going': Public Access to Parliament and the Political Process in Early Modern England" in *idem*, eds, *Parliament at Work* (forthcoming).

²⁶ See for example the Guildhall collection noted below, p. 7. Scribal petitions can be found in vast quantities in HLRO, Main Papers.

²⁷ *Proceedings 1614*, p.99; *CD 1621*, ii. 32.

²⁸ PRO, STAC 8/128/11, pt. 2; GL, Broadside 23.105. I am grateful to Andrew Thrush for the PRO reference.

²⁹ Derek Hirst, *The Representative of the People?* (Cambridge, 1975), p. 181.

³⁰ Jason Peacey, 'Making Parliament Public: Privacy, Print and Political Accountability during the Civil Wars and Interregnum'. I am grateful to Dr Peacey for showing me a copy of his paper in advance of publication.

³¹ See, for example, Alan Cromartie 'The Printing of Parliamentary Speeches, November 1640-July 1642', *HJ* xxxiii (1990), pp. 23-44; Sheila Lambert, ed., *Printing for Parliament*,

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and peers were subjected to a barrage of petitions and lobbying documents, some of which were printed in many copies and distributed to all Members of both Houses. The extent of this degree of lobbying is clear, not least from a collection in the Guildhall Library, London, in which one MP, probably a member of the grievances committee, amassed at least 60 individual printed petitions during the 1621 Parliament.³² At least 120 different printed petitions survive from the 1620s alone, some of which were printed in many ‘hundreds’ of copies.³³ This deliberate mass lobbying of MPs, which continued despite a Lords order on 5 April 1624 to stop petitions to Parliament being printed,³⁴ illustrates how widespread the notion had become of Parliament as an effective forum for the grievances of individuals, companies and the commonweal.³⁵

Print was also the favoured medium for the sermons preached to Parliament;³⁶ woodcuts circulated depicting such newsworthy events as the fall in 1621 of the notorious patentee, Sir Giles Mompesson;³⁷ Ben Jonson,³⁸ John Dee³⁹ and John Taylor the Water Poet immortalized

1641–1700 (List and Index Society, xx, 1984); *idem*, ‘The Beginning of Printing for the House of Commons, 1640–1642’, *The Library*, 6th ser. iii (1981), pp. 43–61.

³² GL, Broadsides. These are scattered throughout the Guildhall collection. They are undated, but are identifiable by cross-referencing against the 1621 Journals and debates and by annotations in the same hand.

³³ S. R. Gardiner, ed., *Reports of Cases in the Courts of Star Chamber and High Commission* (Camden Society, new ser., xxxix, 1886), 37–40; PRO, STAC 8/128/11, pt. 2. In 1641 Robert Jager, attending at Westminster to help with business for Sandwich, informed the corporation that with their case to be freed from the subsidy, ‘I have put it forth to print that every men of the House may have one’. CKS, Sa/C4, unbound letters, Robert Jager to Sandwich, 10 March 1641. I owe this reference to Jason Peacey.

³⁴ William A. Jackson, ed., *Records of the Court of the Stationers’ Company, 1602–1640* (London, 1957), p. 166.

³⁵ I am currently engaged in research on these petitions. My preliminary findings were given in a paper entitled ‘Parliament, Print and Petitions in Early Seventeenth Century England’ at the North American Conference on British Studies (Cambridge MA, 1999).

³⁶ *Prayers for the Parliament* (?1604); *Prayers for the Parliament* (?1605–6); *A Prayer for the Speaker of the Commons House of Parliament* (London, ?1606); Society of Antiquaries, Broadside no. 176, *Prayers for the Parliament* (1621); John F. Wilson, *Pulpit in Parliament* (Oxford, 1970); H. R. Trevor-Roper, ‘The Fast Sermons of the Long Parliament’, *Essays in British History Presented to Sir Keith Feilding*, ed. Trevor-Roper, (London, 1964), pp. 85–138.

³⁷ Society of Antiquaries, Broadside no. 182.

³⁸ C. H. Herford, Percy and Evelyn Simpson, eds, *Ben Jonson* (11 vols, Oxford, 1925–52), viii in *Epigrammes* (1612), no. 24. See also Jonson’s description of the King’s procession to Parliament in 1604, *B. Jon[son]*; *His Part of King James his Royall and Magnificent Entertainement* . . . (London, 1604).

³⁹ John Dee, *To the Honorable Assemblie of the Commons in the present Parliament* (1604), Corpus Christi College, Oxford, F.A.1.10 (38, 39); Henry E. Huntington Library, San Marino, California, RB 41808, 41809; Bodleian, 4^o.S.2 (7a, b) JUR; Ashmole MS 133 (3, 4); Lincoln College, Oxford, O.3.15; BL, RB C.21.b.25 (2).

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Parliament in verse;⁴⁰ printed breviates of bills were available to MPs in the chamber and at committee meetings;⁴¹ while those interested in lobbying or knowing who sat in Parliament could purchase lists of MPs and peers, some engraved not only with names but also with representations of peers seated in the Lords and MPs sitting in St Stephens.⁴²

It is partly through this reflection upon the wide range of extant parliamentary material that certain conclusions can be drawn about Parliament in the 1620s and its relationship with the Short and Long Parliaments. Analysing Parliament through an examination of the myriad sources pertaining to it allows us to see a picture far removed from the Russellian event of the 1620s. It challenges the revisionist position that Parliament in the 1620s increasingly became a body of no use to the Crown and little to the Commonwealth. Indeed, it illustrates that Parliament was increasingly viewed as the 'body of the whole realm' to which, in the face of royal policy, the gentry and wider populace turned in order to remedy grievances and to act as a national sounding-board. Furthermore, collating the parliamentary material shows just how prevalent this view was and that Parliament played a more significant and newsworthy role than has been generally accepted hitherto. The extent and nature of the parliamentary material emphasises Cust's notion of a more politicised institution than that discussed by Conrad Russell and Mark Kishlansky.⁴³ And this politicisation of Parliament was a development which happened both within the chambers and in the community at large. It is viewed in this light that the documents reproduced here interact with one another and emphasise the public and private awareness of Parliament.

Simon Healy's chapter, 'Debates in the House of Commons, 1604-1607', reproduces the unpublished notes and diaries of the first Jacobean Parliament of 1604-10 and in doing so continues the publication of the proceedings of the early modern English Parliament. Leicester Uni-

⁴⁰ John Taylor, *The Subjects Joy for the Parliament* (1621), Society of Antiquaries, Broadside no. 177.

⁴¹ See for example BL, Harl. 7608, fols 382v-87; GL, Broadside 23.120. Alford took notes on the dorse of his copy of this petition whilst sitting in the House that morning. For other examples see GL, Broadside 24.31; Society of Antiquaries, Broadside no. 216; Hampshire Record Office, Jervoise Papers, Scrapbook TD/540; BL, Harl. 7607, fols 393-404; The Queen's College, Oxford, Sel.b.229, no. 2; GL, Broadside 23.122, 123.

⁴² Society of Antiquaries, Broadside nos 281, 282. See also no. 221 for a rare engraving of Convocation with a list of the Members present in 1624. See, for example, *The Names of the Knights for Parliament 1625* (1625). Numerous other lists are noted in the *STC*, 2nd edn, i. 351-2.

⁴³ Russell, *Parliaments and English Politics*; Mark A. Kishlansky, *Parliamentary Selection: Social and Political Choice in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 1986); Cust, 'Politics and the Electorate', esp. pp. 136, 158-62.

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versity Press has published the private diaries of the proceedings of the House of Commons for 1559–1601,⁴⁴ while the Yale Centre for Parliamentary History and various individuals have undertaken the editing of the debates of the sessions covering the period from 1610 to 1641.⁴⁵ However, the sessions of 1604–7 have been covered less adequately. A comprehensive edition of the fullest diary, kept by Robert Bowyer during the sessions of 1605–6 and 1606–7, was published by D. H. Willson, who interpolated many of the notes made by Sir John Holles and Sir Thomas Wilson into his footnotes.⁴⁶ However, this still leaves a number of other sources for the first three sessions of James's first Parliament either unpublished or edited in abbreviated form. These are reproduced here in full, with appropriate cross-referencing to Bowyer and other published sources:

1. the diaries and notes kept in all three sessions by Sir Edward Mountagu, which are partially calendared in *HMC Buccleuch*.
2. the notes of Sir Robert Cotton in British Library, Titus F.IV.
3. Sir George Manners' account of the opening weeks of the 1604 session in Belvoir Castle MS 14.

⁴⁴ T. E. Hartley, ed., *Proceedings in the Parliaments of Elizabeth I* (3 vols, Leicester, 1981–95).

⁴⁵ Elizabeth Read Foster, ed., *Proceedings in Parliament 1610* (2 vols, New Haven, 1966); Maija Jansson, ed., *Proceedings in Parliament 1614 (House of Commons)* (Philadelphia, 1988); Wallace Notestein, Frances Helen Relf and Hartley Simpson, eds, *Commons Debates 1621* (7 vols, New Haven, 1935); Maija Jansson and William B. Bidwell, eds, *Proceedings in Parliament 1625* (New Haven, 1987); William B. Bidwell and Maija Jansson, eds, *Proceedings in Parliament 1626* (4 vols, New Haven, 1991–6); Mary Freer Keeler, Maija Jansson Cole, and William B. Bidwell, *Proceedings in Parliament 1628* (6 vols, New Haven, 1977–83); Wallace Notestein and Frances Helen Relf, eds, *Commons Debates for 1629* (Minneapolis, 1921); Wallace Notestein, ed., *The Journal of Sir Simonds D'Ewes from the Beginning of the Long Parliament to the Opening of the Trial of the Earl of Strafford* (New Haven, 1923); Willson H. Coates, ed., *The Journal of Sir Simonds D'Ewes from the Final Recess of the Long Parliament to the Withdrawal of King Charles from London* (New Haven, 1942); Maija Jansson, ed., *Proceedings in the Opening Session of the Long Parliament* (3 Nov. 1640–20 Mar. 1641, 2 vols, London, 2000); *idem*, ed., *Two Diaries of the Long Parliament* (Gloucester and New York, 1984); Willson H. Coates, A. S. Young and Vernon F. Snow, eds, *The Private Journals of the Long Parliament* (3 vols, New Haven, 1982–92). See also the parliamentary volumes in the Camden series: Samuel Rawson Gardiner, ed., *Parliamentary Debates in 1610* (Camden Soc., OS, xxxi, 1862); Lady de Villiers, ed., 'The Hastings Journal of the Parliament of 1621', in *Camden Miscellany* (Camden Soc., 3rd ser., xxxiii, 1953); Samuel Rawson Gardiner, ed., *Notes of the Debates in the House of Lords 1621* (Camden Soc., OS, ciii, 1870); Frances Helen Relf, *Notes of the Debates in the House of Lords, 1621–1628* (Camden Soc., 3rd ser., xlii, 1929); Samuel Rawson Gardiner, ed., *Notes of the Debates in the House of Lords, 1624 and 1626* (Camden Soc., 2nd ser., xxiv, 1879); *idem*, ed., *Debates in the House of Commons in 1625* (Camden Soc., 2nd ser., vi, 1873).

⁴⁶ David Harris Willson, ed., *The Parliamentary Diary of Robert Bowyer, 1606–1607* (Minneapolis, 1977).

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Publication of these sources fills one of the few remaining gaps in the parliamentary diary sources for the early seventeenth century.

Brennan Pursell, in 'War or Peace? Jacobean Politics and the Parliament of 1621', has translated and edited two letters from the Spanish Ambassador to England, Count Gondomar, to the Infanta Isabella. These letters offer a fascinating insight into James's attitude to Parliament and his reasons for adjourning it in December 1621. Furthermore, they illustrate the close relationship between James and Gondomar and how the Spaniard was made privy to the most intimate secrets of state. Gondomar gained his knowledge not only from the King but also in private conversations with Prince Charles, George Villiers, Marquis of Buckingham, and Sir John Digby. In relaying this information to the Infanta, Gondomar offered a unique perspective on Jacobean high politics and revealed himself to be very well informed on the debates in the House of Commons. The letters add substantially to our knowledge of the November-December sitting of the 1621 Parliament as well as providing further evidence on the King's relationship with the Lower House. Gondomar emerges as an astute and witty reporter although, as Pursell notes, one who was overly prone to 'rambling syntax.'

In my own chapter, '“It will be a Scandal to show what we have done with such a number”: House of Commons Committee Attendance Lists, 1606-1628', I have transcribed a series of House of Commons committee lists from 1606 to 1628 which are annotated with the attendance of MPs. The subject-matter of the legislation and select committees ranges widely through public and private matters, such as the bill for better attendance in the Commons (1610), purveyance (1624) and the naturalization of a physician, Samuel Bave (1626). This material illustrates a wealth of issues of importance not only to parliamentary historians but also to all those who study the early modern period. The documents themselves reveal an astonishing apathy in attendance amongst those named to committees, as well as shedding further light on the workings of the Lower House, both by MPs and the nascent bureaucracy. The publication of the lists greatly increases our knowledge of how parliamentary committees operated in the early seventeenth century as well as providing valuable biographical information on important Members, such as Sir Edward Coke.

Jason Peacey's chapter, 'Tactical Organization in a Contested Election: Sir Edward Dering and the Spring Election at Kent, 1640', concerns a notebook of Dering pertaining to the Kent county election for the Short Parliament of 1640. The notebook offers an important insight into the degree of planning and preparation which went into some contested parliamentary elections. While other early seventeenth-century elections reveal evidence of concerted organisation, and even