

‘But private notes for my own memory’? Parliamentary diaries, parliamentary history and the politics of information in early Stuart England\*

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Some ten days, and 50 pages, into his diary of the 1624 English parliament, the MP Sir William Spring provided a revealing insight of his method for recording the proceedings of the house of commons. In a passage situated somewhat abruptly within an account of a speech by Sir Dudley Digges, Spring wrote:

Whosoever shall read this, I wish them to know that I took short notes of his speech and may much wrong it both for the manner of the delivery and for the matter, because I could not either follow his method nor note all the matters as he laid them down; these are but private notes for my own memory, and imperfect both for matter and form as well in substance as circumstance; and as for this speech, so for others in this book.<sup>1</sup>

That Spring chose this precise moment to reveal the shortcomings of his recording practices may not have been entirely coincidental, as Digges himself readily acknowledged his ‘imperfection of speaking fast’.<sup>2</sup> But the passage certainly raises a host of questions relating to the use of parliamentary diaries as historical evidence, a topic that has generated some well-known spats between early modernists: that between Geoffrey Elton and Jack Hexter in the 1970s;<sup>3</sup> and that between John Morrill and Maija Jansson in the 1990s.<sup>4</sup> At the heart of these often heated exchanges were issues concerning the reliability and possible biases of

diaries, and how – and even whether – they should be quoted by scholars. While these remain important questions on which aspects of this article have a bearing, more recent research in the field has pursued contrasting (and more constructive) agendas. On the one hand, it is now clear that the study of parliamentary diaries and associated material such as parliamentary newsletters and separates need not be limited to the parliamentary or even the wider political history of the era, in that it may also be contextualised within the current literature on record-keeping and information gathering during the early modern period.<sup>5</sup> On the other hand, recent writing on parliament and political communication in early Stuart England has argued that the extensive dissemination of accounts of parliamentary speeches and debates played a pivotal role in opening up the workings and political intrigues of Westminster to a much wider public and in contributing to the rise of parliament in the contemporary historical imagination.<sup>6</sup>

Taking its lead from these approaches, this article examines several of the issues relating to how and why members of both houses of parliament – and other individuals, too – read, produced or undertook research into parliamentary diaries during the early Stuart period. It is not, then, concerned with what such sources reveal about parliamentary business but in studying them as evidence in their own right. This approach, it contends, sheds important light on the members and conventions of parliament, contemporary record-keeping and note-taking practices, and the politics of information gathering.

The first half of the article offers an original exploration of the culture, practices and purposes of keeping a parliamentary diary. Building on this, the second half suggests that the reading and creation of parliamentary diaries and related materials in early Stuart England is suggestive of changing contemporary attitudes towards parliament and parliamentary history.

For example, the dramatic increase in the production of manuscript pamphlets of parliamentary speeches during the 1620s has been interpreted as evidence of a desire to record and disseminate the recent history of parliament in order to warn readers of an imminent threat to the assembly's existence from members of the privy council.<sup>7</sup> Historians have focused here on the production and circulation of Jacobean and especially Caroline parliamentary proceedings, viewing them as an attempt to create a narrative history that related directly to the political debates of the 1620s and 1630s. What on this reading has received far less attention, however, is that those same decades also saw an extensive interest in the history of parliament during the sixteenth century, based on diaries, the official journals and separates, which has yet to receive the scholarly attention it deserves. The article argues that the production, dissemination and reading of this material in early Stuart England provides further evidence for the development of a contemporary consciousness of parliament's historical and political significance within the English state. Moreover, the engagement with such material points to the Tudor, as against the more commonly discussed medieval and continental, influences on contemporary political thinking. On one level, individuals clearly sought information on historic assemblies as an element of their political education, eager to learn how to better themselves as magistrates through knowledge of the processes of governance and the argumentation of their forbears. But at the same time, it could be no less of a politically charged act to read about the parliaments of the previous century as it was to do so of more recent events. Indeed, in studying Elizabethan parliaments, which contemporary accounts portrayed as co-operative ventures between queen, Lords and Commons and which emphasised the involvement of all three in the legislative process, there were obvious constitutional and political lessons to draw for those living in early Stuart England.

I

The 120 or so extant diaries that cover proceedings in the houses of parliament during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries vary considerably in their nature. While a minority have the appearance of being written in the actual chambers, many more take the form, at least in part, of compilations of copies of separates, petitions and other miscellaneous material. Others still are reflective, narrative accounts that were compiled some years after the events they describe, perhaps based on notes made at the time and other contemporary sources such as copies of speeches and newsletters.<sup>8</sup> Although distinguishing between the different types of account is vital when constructing a narrative of parliamentary business, it is less so for the purposes of this article. And this applies also to the associated debate concerning which kind of source is deserving of the title of a ‘diary’, with the word used in a general rather than technical sense in what follows. Moreover, and in spite of their variety, most of the accounts are likely to share a common characteristic in that they draw, to a greater or lesser extent, on notes which were made while the Houses were sitting.

This immediately raises an interesting question, as the issue of whether members were permitted to take such notes was often in dispute. Related to this was the long-standing notion that the affairs of parliament were *arcana imperii* (secrets of state) and that its proceedings were to be disclosed only to fellow members of the same House. That this was the theory rather than the practice, however, is made clear by an incident in 1589, when the Speaker of the Commons reportedly admonished members for ‘uttering the Secrets of this House, either in Table-talk, or Notes in Writing’.<sup>9</sup> There were occasions when note-taking was seemingly even authorised, as in 1626, when Bulstrode Whitelocke recorded that ‘such members of the [Commons] House as will’ were given permission to ‘take copies of the declaration to be presented to the King’.<sup>10</sup> In fact, whatever concerns existed that the monarch, members of the

other House or the general public would gain knowledge of parliamentary business, there was no official prohibition on the taking of notes in either chamber and the fact that members did so was commonly acknowledged. In a speech to parliament in 1610, for example, James I is reported remarking that ‘because I see many writing and noting I will ... hold you a little longer by speaking the more distinctly for fear of mistaking’.<sup>11</sup> Members may, of course, have been less inhibited in visibly recording royal speeches, particularly those made at the opening and closing of parliaments which were often printed officially for public consumption.<sup>12</sup> But there is no reason to doubt that the daily proceedings of parliament were often recorded in an open manner, that at times the practice was rife, or that those at the very highest level of government were aware of this.

These points are emphasised in an episode during the impeachment proceedings against the Duke of Buckingham in 1626. In an account of business in the upper House that May, various Lords are recorded reporting a conference with the Commons by reading out directly from their notes taken during the conference.<sup>13</sup> Buckingham subsequently called for a committee at which the various accounts could be compared, for ‘It is the fashion of this House to make reports out of their memory or notes, a certification by notes and memories’. In committee, Buckingham revealed that his notes of the conference were ‘taken in characters’ – that is, shorthand – but his attempt to prove that his accusers in the Commons had spoken treasonable words faltered when certain Lords now found their own notes wanting. Lord Denny, the Earl of Clare and others are reported asserting that their ‘Notes [were] short taken, [and] not to be entered nor used. A word here and another there may conduce to memory, but uncertain and may conduce to your own prejudice’. Similarly, the Earl of Devonshire is reported declaring that ‘My notes are so short that you can make no judgment out of them’.<sup>14</sup>

If the usefulness of their notes might be limited (in certain circumstances), that some members nevertheless regarded note-taking in parliament as a well-established convention is demonstrated by a later incident recounted in the diary of Sir Simonds D'Ewes. In March 1642 concerns over note-taking in the Commons were raised by Sir Walter Earle (a parliamentary diarist himself in the 1620s), who feared that it could lead to Charles I gaining knowledge of their proceedings. At this, Sir Henry Vane the elder is said to have pronounced that since 1625 the taking of such notes was forbidden, which drew D'Ewes, the self-dubbed 'principal note-taker in the house', to his feet, who records himself as saying

that taking notes in this house is ancient even before he [Vane] was born. I can make it good, for I have a journal taken by a member of this house in 13<sup>0</sup> Eliz., and from that time to the end of her reign there are several journals of several parliaments taken by private members. And this hath always been the ancient privilege of the members of this house to take notes so to preserve the memory of things past to posterity.<sup>15</sup>

Here D'Ewes's personal knowledge of Elizabethan diaries is used to justify the long-standing privilege of members to record parliamentary proceedings while also suggesting the purpose behind it, a point to which we shall return.

Clearly, however, not every member who recorded parliamentary debates did so with the intention of compiling a diary. Perhaps the majority who did so considered their jottings as no more than short-lived working notes that might, for example, be utilised in reporting a conference back to the house,<sup>16</sup> or else as personal reminders of a specific point of debate. But the taking of notes in the chambers was the likely starting point for most of the periods' parliamentary diaries and hence a key factor in their production.

## II

The architecture of the early modern houses of parliament did not lend itself to the act of note-taking. The chambers of both the Lords and the Commons were decidedly small, with the latter offering inadequate space to seat all MPs since the time of the mid-sixteenth century.<sup>17</sup> Contemporary images give a probably accurate impression that members, especially those in the Commons, were packed in like sardines, and one wonders just how much was audible to those in the lower House who found themselves seated or standing behind the Speaker's chair.<sup>18</sup> Quite how individuals made notes in such an environment is an obvious line of inquiry, especially when they lacked the benefit (unlike the official parliamentary clerks and their assistants) of a table on which to rest their writing implements and papers.<sup>19</sup> Most probably balanced the items on their knees, though some may have made use of contemporary table desks or writing boxes. Yet as demonstrated recently by Chris Kyle, a certain amount of mystery still surrounds the logistics of writing speedily in such cramped and crowded conditions.<sup>20</sup>

Tackling the question of the form in which members recorded proceedings is hampered by the existence of many more compilations and fair copy diaries than notes seemingly made in the chambers. Nevertheless, the 1620s diaries of Edward Nicholas fall into the latter category and reveal that he used his own individual 'speed-writing' technique – a combination of longhand, abbreviations and shorthand symbols.<sup>21</sup> The rough notes that exist for a single day of Nicholas Ferrar's 1624 diary are mostly in longhand, though with several sentences written vertically and often in a tiny hand, seemingly in an effort to cram in as much information as possible.<sup>22</sup> Surprise has been expressed that more of the accounts apparently written in the chambers are not in 'pure' shorthand, given that it was not uncommon for sermons to be

recorded in this way from the late sixteenth century.<sup>23</sup> Such surprise may be unwarranted, however. Research into the early English shorthand systems that were available from the 1580s has emphasised their cumbersome nature, which could require the user to memorise many hundreds of individual characters, and their penchant for inaccuracy.<sup>24</sup> Although these systems often advertised their ability to record speech verbatim – a skill of which it is claimed some parliamentary diarists were capable<sup>25</sup> – Frances Henderson’s verdict on this point in relation to the Putney debates is undoubtedly equally relevant to the recording of proceedings at Westminster: ‘it would not, I believe, have been physically possible for one man relying on the archaic and inadequate shorthand systems of the earlier seventeenth century to make such a complete record of these lengthy and lively debates’.<sup>26</sup> If the shorthand sermon notes in the hand of Sir William Spring at the end of his fair copy 1624 parliamentary diary may be read as evidence that he originally recorded proceedings in shorthand,<sup>27</sup> his comments above regarding the ‘imperfect’ nature of his account would only reinforce this assessment.

Scholars have now indeed established that when shorthand was used to record sermons and events such as the Putney and Whitehall debates, it was often based on comparison of the notes of two, or preferably three, separate note-takers. These notes were then collated, a process that might involve several draft versions, before a final, fair copy was produced.<sup>28</sup> Interestingly, there is evidence of a similar form of collaboration between MPs in the production of texts of parliamentary speeches.<sup>29</sup> Even so, while the practice may have worked for set-piece speeches – such as those delivered by James I in 1610 and 1624<sup>30</sup> – it hardly seems suited to recording the daily proceedings of an assembly that could sit for a succession of months at a time and which members attended as active participants,<sup>31</sup> unlike professional stenographers whose explicit purpose was to record what they heard. Members

did occasionally copy the notes of a fellow diarist in order to fill a gap in their own record of debates, as was the case with Sir Thomas Holland and Sir William Spring in their 1624 diaries.<sup>32</sup> But there is no evidence to suggest that this ever occurred on a systematic basis with the intention of producing a single consolidated account.

It remains possible, however, that the publication of new shorthand systems may account for what has been designated as a notable shift in the nature of pre- and post-1620s parliamentary diaries. Although the comparison might be questioned on the grounds of the relative paucity of pre-1620s material, this reading has emphasised the greater length of the 1620s accounts, their more detailed coverage of proceedings and their increase in number.<sup>33</sup> Such attributes could conceivably be the result of new recording practices and in this context the publication in 1618 of Edmond Willis's influential shorthand scheme, *The Abreuation [sic] of Writing in Character*, may be significant. Edward Nicholas used several characters from Willis's scheme in his diaries,<sup>34</sup> though, as noted above, those were not written in pure shorthand. Sir William Spring, by contrast, made use of an earlier and widely-used system, John Willis's *Arte of Stenographie* (1602).<sup>35</sup> Moreover, it was not until 1626 that the earliest incarnation of what was to become one of the most popular shorthand systems of the century, Thomas Shelton's *Tachygraphy*, was first published. In fact, it may well have been later editions of the system, which were published regularly from 1630 onwards, that established its commercial success, with William Clarke and Samuel Pepys amongst its famed users.<sup>36</sup>

There is, then, no clear-cut correspondence between advancements in shorthand technology and the apparent development of parliamentary diaries during this period. This reading, in addition to the points made earlier, calls into question recent assertions that the desire to record parliamentary proceedings stimulated an expansion in the use of shorthand systems

during the early seventeenth century.<sup>37</sup> Such claims seem unsubstantiated by the surviving documentary evidence and arguably fail to acknowledge the impracticalities of using shorthand at Westminster. Indeed, it is striking that several of the accounts seemingly composed in the chambers – for example, those of John Hawarde, Sir Thomas Holland and John Lowther – are essentially written in longhand.<sup>38</sup>

The apparent evolution of parliamentary diaries might more successfully be characterised as a response to the general increase in the availability of news from 1618, with the outbreak of the Thirty Years' War inspiring the publication of corantos and the circulation of newsletters across the country.<sup>39</sup> This development, it has been argued, had a major impact on 'the English political psyche', in that it inspired an elevated thirst for political information, the development of partisan opinions regarding the actions of government, and the creation of a climate in which the recording and analysis of news became a central component of the political process.<sup>40</sup> The emergence of new sources, such as 'news diaries', is dated to this period, with contemporaries increasingly prone to recording the events of their day the better to explicate them.<sup>41</sup> In this context, the more frenzied scribbles at Westminster from 1621 onwards may well reflect this wider cultural shift in the history of the politics of information in early Stuart England.

### III

By the time that they entered Westminster, the vast majority of the members of both Houses were probably skilled note-takers. Those who had received a grammar school education would have made notes of the key arguments of sermons as part of their curriculum, and the art of paraphrasing the spoken word would likewise have been attained by those who had attended university lectures, or readings at the Inns of Chancery or the Inns of Court.<sup>42</sup> The

serial diarist Sir Simonds D'Ewes, for example, was an experienced and compulsive recorder of sermons and legal cases before he turned his attention towards parliamentary proceedings.<sup>43</sup> Moreover, the practice of note-taking remained a vital component of contemporary learning well beyond the confines of youth and formal education. As is well-established, reading, note-taking and cataloguing – most obviously in the form of 'commonplacing' – were central to the way that members of the gentry continued a process of humanist self-improvement and instruction throughout their lives.<sup>44</sup> Thus for habitual note-takers and 'commonplacers' like Sir Richard Grosvenor and John Newdigate,<sup>45</sup> the recording of parliamentary debates was a natural extension of a method of self-education that informed their public duty as magistrates.<sup>46</sup>

The number of new MPs who are known to have kept diaries is suggestive of a further link between note-taking and education. As John Ferris established, of the 64 identifiable Commons diarists across the seventeenth century, just over half (35) began recording proceedings while sitting in their first parliament, and a further 19 in their second.<sup>47</sup> Arriving as a new member at Westminster could presumably be a daunting and confusing experience, and making notes of who spoke, what they said and of the overall business of parliament was a method some seemingly employed to educate themselves in its workings. Richard Dyott's diaries of the parliaments of 1621 (when he was first elected) and 1624, for instance, demonstrate a running concern to record its rules and procedures.<sup>48</sup>

Dyott is also an example of another group who feature prominently among the diarists of the period and to whom the art of note-taking was integral: lawyers. The requirement to listen to and record the key facts, evidence and arguments of a legal case within a court perhaps meant that lawyers were naturally inclined to document parliamentary proceedings. Clear evidence

of the extension of a professional habit into the parliamentary arena is found in the case of the Star Chamber lawyer John Hawarde, whose diaries are written partly in the Law French that would have been familiar to him from the courtroom.<sup>49</sup> Nevertheless, the note-taking of some lawyers, particularly during the early part of the seventeenth century, could extend to little more than the compilation of lists of legal precedents.<sup>50</sup> In such cases, the preoccupation with bill procedure and the legislative functions of parliament suggests the recording of information to construct a working document or a personal reference source.

In the examples discussed thus far, the contemporary predilection for note-taking, in combination with personal traits and professional circumstances, provided the impetus to record parliamentary proceedings, in all likelihood for the sole use of their author. But other members clearly documented the business of parliament with the explicit purpose of communicating it to a wider audience. In one sense, this was nothing new. MPs continued the historic practice of reporting back to their constituencies, as in 1628 when the members for Bristol delivered to the local corporation ‘six paper books containing the several arguments made in Parliament house’.<sup>51</sup> Patronage relationships still stimulated the production and circulation of parliamentary proceedings. For example, Francis Russell, from 1627 fourth earl of Bedford, studied and annotated diaries of the 1621, 1624, 1625 and 1629 parliaments written by his patron, John Pym. Bedford’s associates, the MPs Oliver St John and Richard Knightley, also owned copies of Pym’s diaries.<sup>52</sup> However, Geoffrey Elton’s insistence that the proliferation of diaries in the 1620s should be attributed solely to the need of the Lords to know of events in the Commons, ignores the changes to political culture and communication described above.<sup>53</sup> As recent literature has emphasised, a notable characteristic of the news revolution that began under James I was a startling upsurge in the production and circulation of materials relating to the early Stuart parliaments. An increase in the number and the more

detailed nature of parliamentary diaries were an aspect of this phenomenon. But the reading of those diaries and the involvement of their authors, such as Pym and Sir William Spring, in correspondence and newsletter networks, or the production of parliamentary separates, was even more important. Here the purpose of taking notes of parliamentary proceedings is no longer personal or private, regardless of Spring's assertion to the contrary cited at the beginning of this article. Rather, the practice has become instrumental to making the business of parliament more public, opening it up to wider critical view and scrutiny.<sup>54</sup>

In adopting this approach, some MPs evidently operated with an eye to posterity. Bulstrode Whitelocke, for example, copied his diary of the 1626 parliament into his larger work, the 'Annales of his own life dedicated to his children'. His record of proceedings was an educational resource for his son, 'leav[ing] it to you for an example, that in all debates I was neither swayed by Court flattery, nor popular vanity, butt only by that reason and conscience which God had given me'.<sup>55</sup> This provides an interesting example of how note-taking in parliament could inform the broader contemporary acts of life-writing and self-fashioning.<sup>56</sup> By contrast, Sir John Eliot's account of the 1625 parliament, *Negotium Posterorum*, served a very different purpose. Drawing on his personal notes or recollections, diaries by John Pym and an anonymous member, and other contemporaneous materials, the *Negotium* was seemingly the first instalment of a history of parliaments since the accession of the Stuarts. Composed five or so years after the events it described, Eliot's work has been described by its editors as a narrative of the actions of the parliament-men of the present to the parliament-men of the future, warning them of the need to check the royal prerogative when it threatened the rights of Englishmen.<sup>57</sup> Nevertheless, outside of these well-known examples, too much emphasis is arguably placed on the notion that parliamentary proceedings were recorded with a conscious intent of creating a permanent historical record for the benefit of posterity.<sup>58</sup>

When John Newdigate's diary omits speeches or debates on particular subjects, or lapses into a list of legal precedents, the conclusion that his note-taking was 'simply for posterity' is decidedly unconvincing.<sup>59</sup> Viewed in the context of his 'commonplacing', recording of sermon notes and long-standing interest in politics and current affairs, the diary seems very much centred on Newdigate's personal and political edification in the *present*. In a similar manner, the desire to engage directly in the major political debates of the day is seen as the key motivating factor for the production of materials relating to Jacobean and Caroline parliaments during the 1620s and 1630s.<sup>60</sup> The following section argues that the simultaneous interest in the parliamentary diaries and official journals of the sixteenth century, especially those of Elizabeth I, should be viewed in a comparable light.

#### IV

In stark contrast to the records of the early Stuart period, the parliamentary diaries of the Elizabethan era have received far less scholarly attention. This is attributable, at least in part, to the considerable number of anonymous works and to the fact that most of the manuscripts exist only as copies. Significantly, however, their modern editor has argued that much of the surviving material was copied during the early Stuart period as part of a more general interest in the reign of Elizabeth and in parliament during those decades.<sup>61</sup> Recent, important scholarship has illuminated the production and reception of documents concerning early seventeenth-century parliaments during this period, but has said relatively little about Elizabethan material.<sup>62</sup> This is surprising given that, against a backdrop of increasing criticism of her successors, much has been written on how Elizabeth's reign was frequently portrayed in early Stuart England as a model of good governance in which the queen ruled with the love of her parliaments.<sup>63</sup> How the production and circulation of Elizabethan parliamentary diaries and journals contributed to this image has received little attention,

however, as has their role in emphasising parliament's status as a permanent member of the body politic at the very moment its future seemed endangered.<sup>64</sup> If the creation and engagement with such sources reinforces the impression of contemporaries' increasing consciousness of the historical and political significance of parliament, the result was an institutional history that was as relevant for political action in the present as it was for the benefit of future generations.

There are extant diaries for the parliaments of Elizabeth I between 1571 and 1601, and copies of these manuscripts must have existed in substantial numbers during the early seventeenth century. Multiple copies of many of them survive today, and there are, for example, at least 12 copies of Hayward Townshend's substantial diary of the 1601 parliament, the full version of which runs to some 70,000 words.<sup>65</sup> The existence of a thriving contemporary market for materials on Elizabethan parliaments is indicated by a manuscript dealer's catalogue from the early 1620s. This opened, significantly, with documents 'Touching Parliam[en]ts' and began with Elizabethan manuscripts, comprising of diaries and journals for the 1571, 1593, 1597 and 1601 assemblies. Earlier sixteenth century materials relating to the parliaments of Henry VII and Henry VIII were also listed, in addition to several Jacobean documents. Suggestively, however, the latter were outnumbered by Elizabethan items, which included 'Other sev[er]all speeches & passages in p[ar]lia[ment] in the Queens time to the quantity of 10 quier [sic]'.<sup>66</sup> A second catalogue, from around 1630, provides evidence of the contemporary industry for making copies of Elizabethan parliamentary diaries. This lists the cost for making a copy of the short 1587 diary as 12*d.* and that for the more substantial account of 1597 as 5*s.* 6*d.*<sup>67</sup>

Unsurprisingly, we have only a partial knowledge of the people who owned or read these documents during the early Stuart period, but what we do know is suggestive of their motives

for so doing. For figures like the scrivener Humphrey Dyson, who was involved in the industry of copying and selling parliamentary diaries and journals alongside other contemporary manuscripts,<sup>68</sup> ownership was clearly a commercial investment. Others, such as the collector and MP Sir Robert Oxenbridge, are no doubt representative of the antiquarian and historical interests of the age: alongside parliamentary diaries, Oxenbridge owned numerous tracts from the Elizabethan period, antiquarian works, and pieces relating to Ireland and Italy.<sup>69</sup> Similarly, another MP, Sir Peter Manwood, a member of the Society of Antiquaries, recorded extracts from various English historical documents since Edward the Confessor, including Elizabethan parliamentary journals, and collected tracts on countries in Europe, Africa and Asia.<sup>70</sup> But, at the same time, other contemporaries who read or owned diaries and journals undoubtedly did so for more overtly political purposes.

The famous and much-frequented library of the antiquary and MP Sir Robert Cotton, for example, contained a two-volume compilation of Elizabethan parliamentary proceedings.<sup>71</sup> Much has been written about Cotton and the political and intellectual circle that gathered around him, especially in terms of their impact on early Stuart politics. While attention has been drawn to the classical, continental and medieval sources of their thinking,<sup>72</sup> the possible influence of material from the Tudor period has been largely ignored. As we shall see, however, at a time when veneration of Elizabeth was at its height,<sup>73</sup> Cotton's volumes of proceedings were much in demand among his associates, and this should not surprise us. Given the objectives of the Cotton circle to destroy the influence of the Duke of Buckingham and to preserve parliamentary government, it would have been natural for its members to look to the history of the sixteenth century, the period when parliaments became a regular part of the royal government and formed a partnership with the monarchy. Reading the volumes, in addition to his experience in the 1601 parliament, perhaps encouraged Cotton's

view of Elizabeth I as the example of the model ruler and his opinion that by the mid-1620s a sovereign counselled by parliament was vital to any restoration of effective government.<sup>74</sup> In the *Annales Rerum Anglicarum et Hibernicarum regnante Elizabetha* (1615) – the political history that essentially established the myth of Gloriana – William Camden notably thanked Cotton for access to sources that included ‘*Records & Journals of Parliaments*’.<sup>75</sup> Sir John Eliot, another close associate who made frequent use of the collections in Cotton’s library,<sup>76</sup> regarded such documents as essential reading. As he noted in the introduction to his *Negotium Posterorum*, ‘in the description of the parliaments will be best seen the state and condition of the kingdom’, providing ‘a good mirror of the times’.<sup>77</sup> On this basis, Eliot’s interpretation of Elizabeth’s reign was that the ‘great council of the parliament was the nurse of all her actions ... such an emulation was of love between that senate and this Queen’, thereby establishing ‘the importance of the parliaments and the happiness of the state, and how all the English kings have been fortunate by that council, none without it’.<sup>78</sup> Even after Cotton’s death in 1631, his volumes of parliamentary proceedings were still sought-after by his associates. At the end of the 1630s – another time of political crisis – they were borrowed by John Selden, a firm believer in the balance of the ancient constitution who shared Cotton’s conviction that important political lessons were to be derived from history.<sup>79</sup>

Lying outside the immediate orbit of the Cotton circle, the godly Cheshire MP Sir Richard Grosvenor was another owner of Elizabethan parliamentary material. He provides an interesting case study, on the grounds that his significance is said to rest in his ‘personification of the clichés of the political life of the period’.<sup>80</sup> Grosvenor’s own well-stocked library included manuscript separates on Elizabeth I and copies of parliamentary diaries of her reign,<sup>81</sup> and, once again, there is evidence for the wider circulation of this material: in the mid-1630s, extracts of items in Grosvenor’s library, including his separates

on Elizabeth, were copied at the home of his kinsman, Sir Roger Mostyn, in Flintshire.<sup>82</sup> Grosvenor owned a copy of the anonymous 1593 Commons diary, and, given his great fear of popery, the underlining of a passage concerning how the sectaries bill would affect recusants suggests that he studied the manuscript.<sup>83</sup> Interestingly, he also owned a much rarer account, a copy of a 1597–8 Lords diary that does not appear in the modern edition of Elizabethan parliamentary proceedings.<sup>84</sup>

In his own writing, Grosvenor displayed a similar reverence for both Elizabeth I and parliament as the members of the Cotton circle. He wrote in 1624 of ‘those golden and halcyon daies ... under the happy governments of that blessed saint of famous memory Queene Elizabeth’, and that ‘A parliament is the most honourable and highest court of the kingdome, havinge an absolute jurisdiction and an unlimited power to dispose of the lives, limms, states, goods, honours and liberties of the subject, yea and of their religion too’.<sup>85</sup> In contrast to Cotton and his associates, however, Grosvenor believed that those ‘halcyon daies’ extended into the reign of James I. Nevertheless, Grosvenor held members of the privy council responsible for James’s lax attitude to popery, and by the 1620s thought that papists, projectors and the injustices of the legal system were also contributing to the nation’s ills, a situation that parliament – as the unifying force between prince and people – was uniquely placed to resolve.<sup>86</sup>

Thus, in drawing on their knowledge and reading of sources on the nation’s recent past, contemporaries of differing convictions and perspectives identified effective parliamentary government as the solution to the problems of their day. And while the accuracy of their readings of history can obviously be questioned, it is their perceptions of the historical significance of parliament and interest in its recent records that should draw our attention.

Indeed, in the research, reading and circulation of Elizabethan parliamentary material in early Stuart England, we can see the formation of what literary theorists refer to as an ‘interpretative community’, in which readers and writers of texts are bonded together through a shared set of beliefs that are historically specific and determine the meanings of texts.<sup>87</sup> Those beliefs centred on a concern with the structure of government in early Stuart England, coupled with the perception that the nation’s recent history had been one of effective rule, founded on a successful union between sovereign and parliament. That was the meaning derived from Elizabethan parliamentary diaries and journals, and the engagement with those sources sheds important light on the reading practices of politically engaged contemporaries while also suggesting a direct relationship between Tudor historical scholarship and the politics of the period.

By far the most famous contemporary student of sixteenth-century parliaments was the godly puritan Sir Simonds D’Ewes. He carried out research into the diaries and official journals of the parliaments of Edward VI, Mary I and Elizabeth I, producing an edition of material covering the latter reign that was published, long after his death, in 1682.<sup>88</sup> Scholarly attention has tended to focus on the accuracy (or otherwise) of this edition,<sup>89</sup> but much greater consideration needs to be given to the context of its production.<sup>90</sup> For example, as D’Ewes was another member of the Cotton circle, we should not be surprised to learn from the preface to the printed edition that Cotton’s two volumes of parliamentary proceedings were one of its key sources. However, the longer version of the preface in the original manuscript provides significant evidence of the wider transmission and exchange of those volumes, with D’Ewes revealing that he used a transcript of the second volume which he borrowed from Richard Knightley of Northampton – the former MP, noted earlier, who owned copies of the parliamentary diaries of John Pym.<sup>91</sup> The timing of D’Ewes’s research is

also highly suggestive. Although he seemingly first read an Elizabethan parliamentary diary in 1625, it is notable that he began work on his edition in March 1629, the month of the ‘fatal and dismal abortive dissolution’, as he described it, of the 1628–9 parliament, and that his research on the records of Edward and Mary took place during the early years of the personal rule of Charles I.<sup>92</sup>

Comments made by D’Ewes on the anticipated audience and purpose of his edition are similarly telling. While he claimed, in a manner akin to Sir William Spring, that it was ‘intended chiefly for my own private use, and my Posterities’, elsewhere in the preface he stated that its goal was to ‘stir up some able Judgements’ and to see ‘the publick benefited’.<sup>93</sup> In his autobiography, D’Ewes described the edition as of use ‘for the clearing and directing of all matters, usages, and passages, that are incident to Parliaments’, and acknowledged that the study of records had ‘both historical and national’ significance. That national significance is evident in the ‘many animadversions and elucidations’ that D’Ewes inserted into the work,<sup>94</sup> in a clear strategy to control how it was interpreted by its readers.<sup>95</sup> Thus, at the very time that Charles I was ruling without parliaments (the edition’s preface is dated 1632), Elizabeth I was lauded for recognising at the outset of her reign that the way to address the nation’s ills ‘was by the common advice and Council, and with the Publick assent of the Body of her Realm’ and hence ‘did Summons her first Parliament’.<sup>96</sup> Elsewhere, it was acclaimed that in matters ‘touching the publick affairs of Church and State ... her Majesty was most graciously pleased to give the said House [of Commons] free Liberty to reform some abuses of the first, and to search into dangers of the latter’.<sup>97</sup> No less significantly, it was emphasised that ‘in these ensuing *Volumes*’ ‘may be frequently seen the admirable wisdom of her *Majesty* and this her *Great Council* in the happy quenching of such emergent differences as arose’.<sup>98</sup> Finally, D’Ewes was at pains to highlight that the sources he had brought together contained

‘divers very useful and good Precedents touching the Liberties and privileges of the House [of Lords]’ and ‘a number of excellent Passages concerning the Orders and Priviledge [sic] of the House of Commons’.<sup>99</sup>

The significance of D’Ewes’s edition has been said to lie in its provision of a detailed narrative history of parliament which emphasised the institution’s national importance to England’s recent past.<sup>100</sup> But its import goes much further than that. Most obviously, in the way it pointed up how lessons from the past were relevant to preoccupations in the present, we might include it among the period’s so-called ‘politic histories’.<sup>101</sup> In comparison to Camden’s *Annales* or Cotton’s famous *Reign of King Henry III*, which detailed the precepts of good government, the message to be derived from D’Ewes’s work is, arguably, less explicit. Nevertheless, in its veneration of Elizabeth I, its championing of the institution of parliament and its privileges as a key component of the English polity, and its emphasis on the necessity of a union between prince and people, that message was entirely consistent with the personal beliefs of D’Ewes<sup>102</sup> – and, as we have seen, with those of Cotton, Camden, Eliot and Grosvenor, too.

The actual production of the edition, with its attendant acts of research, reading and writing, is equally worthy of attention. On one level, it is evidence of the continual process of self-improvement and education among members of the gentry discussed earlier. But it also suggests that contemporaries read Elizabethan diaries and journals not as works of antiquarianism but as *political* histories, utilising them both to understand, and as a potential source of solutions to, the problems of their day. Here D’Ewes, whose Commons speeches of the 1640s referred regularly to his edition and its sources as the basis for his knowledge of parliamentary privilege and precedent,<sup>103</sup> was far from alone. The future Long Parliament MP

Sir William Drake, who in his ‘commonplacing’ praised the strong rule of Elizabeth I and expressed a belief in annual parliaments, instructed himself to ‘be well read in parliament journals [and] Star Chamber which are the most useful histories of all’. In 1635, and against the backdrop of the fiscal policies of the personal rule, he adopted his advice in turning his attention towards Elizabethan debates concerning impositions and monopolies.<sup>104</sup> A decade later, the royalist Sir Roger Twysden drew on D’Ewes’s edition and two additional Commons diaries in compiling his own volume of Elizabethan parliamentary proceedings.<sup>105</sup> This served as a major source for writings in which he praised the taxation policies of Elizabeth I against the financial expedients of both the Caroline and parliamentary regimes, and set out the case for the Long Parliament’s abuse of the rightful privileges of parliament.<sup>106</sup>

Here the production and reading of texts that narrated recent parliamentary history appears as a conscious form of political action.<sup>107</sup> Individuals such as Twysden, Eliot and Camden drew on such sources as they intervened in, and attempted to resolve, what they regarded as contemporary political crises. Moreover, among likeminded figures, there is an obvious correlation between the readers of Elizabethan parliamentary diaries and MPs who kept Commons diaries during the early Stuart period – with Drake, Cotton, Grosvenor and D’Ewes being prominent examples.<sup>108</sup> In this context, it is worth considering whether the palpable interest of early Stuart MPs in Elizabethan parliamentary material contributed to the apparent increase in the number of parliamentary diaries kept during the 1620s.

Finally, while the full scale of the recovered ‘interpretative community’ remains unknown, it is nevertheless suggestive that its identified membership was so decidedly varied. As we have seen, this encompassed godly figures such as D’Ewes and Grosvenor alongside committed believers in the Elizabethan settlement such as Drake and Twysden; a ‘constitutional royalist’

like Twysden together with staunch parliamentarians such as D'Ewes, Drake and Grosvenor; and a figure like Cotton, for whom parliament was a replacement for a corrupt privy council, beside genuine believers in parliamentary government such as Grosvenor and D'Ewes. Yet, in the specific context of the first half of the seventeenth century, these diverse individuals were inspired to look to recent parliamentary records, as the 'genealogical gaze'<sup>109</sup> of the age developed beyond family history and heraldry to embrace the history of parliament. And the resulting narrative accounts of the institution evidently garnered a popular audience. Yet if some readers – and modern historians, too – interpreted them as works of antiquarianism or as straightforward institutional histories written for the benefit of posterity, it is debatable whether this was the sole reason for their production. Rather, in providing a form of information and political education, a principal intention of such histories was to equip readers with knowledge that would inspire political action in the present.

V

This article has made the case for the more dynamic contribution of parliamentary diaries to the history of the politics of information in early Stuart England. For decades, 'private diaries', as they were designated, were used by scholars as little more than straightforward supplements to the official record of proceedings provided by the journals of either House. More recent literature has characterised their increasing number and evolving nature as a trait of the 'news revolution' of the period, as wider changes in communication practices encouraged a greater desire for political information. Evidence of the circulation and readership of diaries, which was an aspect of that process, also defies the notion that these were, as their authors invariably claimed, personal and private documents. Nevertheless, while scholarly attention has focused on materials relating to Jacobean and Caroline parliaments, politically engaged figures in early Stuart England were, at the same time, also

studying and reading parliamentary diaries and journals of the Elizabethan era. The meaning derived from those texts was determined by a backdrop in which increasing criticism of the Stuarts developed alongside an escalating reverence for the Elizabethan period, and in which, as sources, they offered an evidentiary basis for the ‘memory’ of a recent and golden age of parliamentary government. If such documents seem somewhat mundane in comparison to more readily studied (and lauded) classical, medieval and continental sources of contemporary thinking, their apparent impact on early Stuart politics should not be neglected.

One outcome of the contemporary interest in sixteenth-century parliamentary history was the construction of institutional narratives that were readily drawn upon by future generations. But in the specific context of early Stuart England, when the survival of parliament seemed threatened, they contributed to a heightened consciousness of parliament’s historic and political role within the English state. As such, the production, circulation and reading of those texts by men who were personally involved in the politics of the period could be a form of political action. It was through those sources that figures like Cotton, D’Ewes, Twysden and others sought solutions to the problems of their day by turning to a perception of the recent past which offered a blueprint for political action in the present.

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<sup>1</sup> ‘1 Mar. 1624’, in *Proceedings in Parliament 1624: The House of Commons*, ed. Philip Baker (British History Online, 2015–18), available at <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/no-series/proceedings-1624-parl/mar-01> (accessed 14 Aug. 2017).

<sup>2</sup> *Commons Debates 1628*, ed. Robert C. Johnson, Mary Frear Keeler, Maija Jansson and William B. Bidwell (4 vols, New Haven and London, 1977–8), ii. 516.

<sup>3</sup> Their dispute is conveniently summarised in G.R. Elton, ‘Studying the History of Parliament’, in G.R. Elton, *Studies in Tudor and Stuart Politics and Government* (4 vols, Cambridge, 1974–92), ii. 3–18; J.H. Hexter, ‘Quoting the Commons, 1604–1642’, in *Tudor Rule and Revolution: Essays for G.R. Elton From His American Friends*, ed. Delloyd J. Guth and John W. McKenna (Cambridge, 1982), 369–91.

<sup>4</sup> John Morrill, ‘Reconstructing the History of Early Stuart Parliaments’, *Archives*, xxi (1994), 67–72; John Morrill, ‘Paying One’s D’Ewes’, *Parliamentary History*, xiv (1995), 179–86; Maija Jansson, ‘Dues Paid’, *Parliamentary History*, xv (1996), 215–20; John Morrill, ‘Getting Over D’Ewes’, *Parliamentary History*, xv (1996), 221–30.

<sup>5</sup> For example, see Ann M. Blair, *Too Much to Know: Managing Scholarly Information Before the Modern Age* (New Haven and London, 2010); *Note-Taking in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Ann M. Blair and Richard Yeo, special issue, *Intellectual History Review*, xx (2010); *The Social History of the Archive: Record-Keeping in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Liesbeth Corens, Kate Peters and Alexandra Walsham, *Past and Present* Supplement 11 (Oxford, 2016); *Archives and Information in the Early Modern World*, ed. Liesbeth Corens, Kate Peters and Alexandra Walsham (Oxford, 2018).

<sup>6</sup> Chris R. Kyle, *Theater of State: Parliament and Political Culture in Early Stuart England* (Stanford, 2012); Noah Millstone, *Manuscript Circulation and the Invention of Politics in Early Stuart England* (Cambridge, 2016); *Writing the History of Parliament in Tudor and Early Stuart England*, ed. Paul Cavill and Alexandra Gajda (Manchester, 2018).

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- 7 Millstone, *Manuscript Circulation*, 20, 98–102, 199–200.
- 8 For a recent discussion of the variety of this material, see Kyle, *Theater of State*, 60, 67–81.
- 9 Heywood Townshend, *Historical Collections: Or, an Exact Account of the Proceedings of the Four Last Parliaments of Q. Elizabeth of Famous Memory* (1680), 18.
- 10 *Proceedings in Parliament 1626*, ed. William B. Bidwell and Maija Jansson (4 vols, New Haven and London, 1991–6), iii. 448.
- 11 Quoted in *Proceedings in Parliament 1610*, ed. Elizabeth Read Foster (2 vols, New Haven and London, 1966), i. xlvi.
- 12 Kyle, *Theater of State*, 157–8.
- 13 *Proceedings in Parliament 1626*, ed. Bidwell and Jansson, i. 478–80. My thanks to Ben Coates for bringing this episode to my attention.
- 14 *Proceedings in Parliament 1626*, ed. Bidwell and Jansson, i. 481.
- 15 *The Private Journals of the Long Parliament*, ed. Willson H. Coates, Anne Steele Young and Vernon F. Snow (3 vols, New Haven and London, 1982–92), i. 512.
- 16 On this point, see *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons, 1604–1629*, ed. Andrew Thrush and John P. Ferris (6 vols, Cambridge, 2010) [hereafter cited as *HPC, 1604–29*], i. 366–9.
- 17 *HPC, 1604–29*, i. 200; G.R. Elton, *The Parliament of England, 1559–1581* (Cambridge, 1986), 11 n. 25.
- 18 See the various images reproduced in Alasdair Hawkyard, ‘Indigo Jones, the Surveyors of the Works and the ‘Parliament House’’, *Parliamentary History*, xxxii (2013), 16–59.
- 19 Clerks seated at a table are a consistent feature in contemporary images of both chambers: see Hawkyard, ‘Indigo Jones’.
- 20 Kyle, *Theater of State*, 67–8.
- 21 For example, see TNA, SP14/166; SP16/97.

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22 *The Ferrar Papers, 1590–1790, in Magdalene College, Cambridge*, ed. David R. Ransome (Wakefield, 1992), Ferrar Papers 1584c.

23 Morrill, ‘Reconstructing History’, 68.

24 Frances Henderson, ‘Reading, and Writing, the Text of the Putney Debates’, in *The Putney Debates of 1647: The Army, the Levellers and the English State*, ed. Michael Mendle (Cambridge, 2001), 36–50, at 40; Arnold Hunt, *The Art of Hearing: English Preachers and Their Audiences, 1590–1640* (Cambridge, 2010), 141–3.

25 For example, see Kyle, *Theater of State*, 3, 63, 70. However, Conrad Russell was surely correct that extant parliamentary diaries, in whatever form they were recorded, only ever capture a small proportion of the actual words spoken in the chambers: Conrad Russell, *Parliaments and English Politics, 1621–1629* (Oxford, 1979), [xvii]–xviii.

26 Henderson, ‘Reading, and Writing’, 42, 48.

27 Houghton Library, Harvard University, MS Eng. 980, unfol. My thanks to Noah Millstone and Sonia Tycko for providing me with images of these notes.

28 Hunt, *Art of Hearing*, 145; Carolyn Polizzotto, ‘What Really Happened at the Whitehall Debates? A New Source’, *HJ* (2014), 33–51, at 35, 37, 39.

29 The extent to which this process relied on shorthand notes remains unknown, however.

30 *CJ*, i. 430; ‘8 Mar. 1624’, in *Proceedings in Parliament 1624*, ed. Baker, available at <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/no-series/proceedings-1624-parl/mar-08> (accessed 23 Aug. 2017).

31 It has rightly been noted that parliamentary diarists were often among the least inactive members, in terms of speeches delivered: John Ferris, ‘Before Hansard: Records of Debate in the Seventeenth-Century House of Commons’, *Archives*, xx (1992), 198–207, at 204. But this does not undermine my main point here, which concerns the impracticalities of the collaborative use of shorthand in the daily recording of parliamentary proceedings.

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- 32 See their respective entries for 1–3 Apr. in *Proceedings in Parliament 1624*, ed. Baker, available at <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/no-series/proceedings-1624-parl> (accessed 20 Jul. 2018).
- 33 Kyle, *Theater of State*, 71–2, 82.
- 34 Michael Mendle, ‘News and the Pamphlet Culture of Mid-Seventeenth Century England’, in *The Politics of Information in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Brendan Dooley and Sabrina A. Baron (London and New York, 2005 edn), 57–79, at 64.
- 35 I owe this information to the kindness of Frances Henderson.
- 36 Frances Henderson, ‘Shelton, Thomas (1600/01–1650?)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004), available at <http://www.oxforddnb.com.oxfordbrookes.idm.oclc.org/view/article/25319> (accessed 25 Aug. 2017).
- 37 Blair, *Too Much to Know*, 69; Polizzotto, ‘Whitehall Debates’, 36–7.
- 38 *HPC, 1604–29*, iv. 597, 754; *Commons Debates 1628*, ed. Robert C. Johnson, Mary Frear Keeler, Maija Jansson and William B. Bidwell (4 vols, New Haven and London, 1977–8), i. 32; Wiltshire and Swindon Archives, 9/34/2; Bodl. MSS Rawl. D1089, D1100; Carlisle Archive Centre, DLONS/L/2/1.
- 39 Kyle, *Theater of State*, 71, 84–5; F.J. Levy, ‘How Information Spread Among the Gentry, 1550–1640’, *Journal of British Studies*, xxi (1982), 11–34, at 20–3; Richard Cust, ‘News and Politics in Early Seventeenth-Century England’, *Past and Present*, cxii (1986), 60–90, at 62–4, 69.
- 40 [Sabrina A. Baron], ‘The English Model’, in *Politics of Information*, ed. Dooley and Baron, 17–21, at 17–18.
- 41 Noah Millstone, ‘Seeing Like a Statesman in Early Stuart England’, *Past and Present*, ccxxiii (2014), 77–127, at 113, 121–3.

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42 Hunt, *Art of Hearing*, 97; Ferris, 'Before Hansard', 200.

43 *The Autobiography and Correspondence of Sir Simonds D'Ewes*, ed. James Orchard Halliwell (2 vols, 1845), i. 95, 104, 138, 220, 243, 246.

44 Levy, 'How Information Spread', 11–12; Kevin Sharpe, *Reading Revolutions: The Politics of Reading in Early Modern England* (New Haven and London, 2000), 41, 180–205, 277–9; Richard Cust, 'Reading for Magistracy: The Mental World of Sir John Newdigate', in *The Monarchical Republic of Early Modern England: Essays in Response to Patrick Collinson*, ed. John F. McDiarmid (Abingdon and New York, 2016 edn), 181–99.

45 *The Papers of Sir Richard Grosvenor, 1st Bart. (1585–1645)*, ed. Richard Cust (Record Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, cxxxiv, 1996), ix, x, xii; Vivienne Larminie, *Wealth, Kinship and Culture: The Seventeenth-Century Newdigates of Arbury and Their World* (Woodbridge, 1995), 163–4, 171–2.

46 I am grateful to Vivienne Larminie for discussion of John Newdigate.

47 Ferris, 'Before Hansard', 204.

48 *HPC, 1604–29*, iv. 141; entries for 9 Mar., 26 Apr. and 4, 7, 12 and 15 May in *Proceedings in Parliament 1624*, ed. Baker, available at <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/no-series/proceedings-1624-parl> (accessed 17 Jul. 2018).

49 *The Parliamentary Diary of Sir Richard Cocks, 1698–1702*, ed. D.W. Hayton (Oxford, 1996), lxvii; *HPC, 1604–29*, iv. 597; Kyle, *Theater of State*, 74–5.

50 G.R. Elton, 'A Reply', *British Studies Monitor*, iii (1972), 16–22, at 19.

51 *HPC, 1604–29*, ii. 138. My thanks to Ben Coates for the reference and to Hannes Kleineke for discussion of the underlying practice.

52 *Proceedings in Parliament 1625*, ed. Maija Jansson and William B. Bidwell (New Haven and London, 1987), 11, 13, 21.

53 Elton, *Parliament of England*, 14.

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54 Millstone, *Manuscript Circulation*, 96–104; Kyle, *Theater of State*, 82–3, 98.

55 BL, Add. MS 53726, f. 22v.

56 Alexandra Walsham, ‘The Social History of the Archive: Record-Keeping in Early Modern Europe’, in *Social History of the Archive*, ed. Corens, Peters and Walsham, 9–48, at 37–9.

57 *Proceedings in Parliament 1625*, ed. Jansson and Bidwell, 19–24; *HPC, 1604–29*, iv. 186;

Noah Millstone, ‘The Politic History of Early Stuart Parliaments’, in *Writing the History of Parliament*, ed. Cavill and Gajda, 172–93, at 182–9.

58 Cf. Paul Seaward, ‘Institutional Memory and Contemporary History in the House of Commons, 1547–1640’, in *Writing the History of Parliament*, ed. Cavill and Gajda, 211–28, at 219, 221–2.

59 *HPC, 1604–29*, v. 508.

60 Millstone, *Manuscript Circulation*, 94–164.

61 *Proceedings in the Parliaments of Elizabeth I*, ed. T.E. Hartley (3 vols, London and New York, 1981–1995), i. xii–xv.

62 Millstone, *Manuscript Circulation*.

63 For example, see John Watkins, *Representing Elizabeth in Stuart England: Literature, History, Sovereignty* (Cambridge, 2002), 56–86; Julia M. Walker, *The Elizabeth Icon: 1603–2003* (Basingstoke, 2004), 6–70; Kevin Sharpe, *Selling the Tudor Monarchy: Authority and Image in Sixteenth-Century England* (New Haven and London, 2009), 467–9.

64 For some nonetheless pertinent remarks, see Seaward, ‘Institutional Memory’, 221–4; Alexandra Gajda and Paul Cavill, ‘Introduction’, in *Writing the History of Parliament*, ed. Cavill and Gajda, 1–36, at 2.

65 Elton, *Parliament of England*, 10–14; David Dean, *Law-Making and Society in Late Elizabethan England: The Parliament of England, 1584–1601* (Cambridge, 1996), 2; *Proceedings in the Parliaments of Elizabeth I*, ed. Hartley, ii. 1, iii. xviii.

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66 BL, Hargrave MS 311, f. 206.

67 All Souls College, Oxford, MS 117, unfol. For the dating of the catalogue and the argument that the prices were the cost of making copies, see H.R. Woudhuysen, *Sir Philip Sidney and the Circulation of Manuscripts, 1558–1640* (Oxford, 1996), 179.

68 Woudhuysen, *Sir Philip Sidney*, 177–80.

69 *HPC, 1604–29*, v. 578; Woudhuysen, *Sir Philip Sidney*, 186–7; Pauline Croft, ‘Annual Parliaments and the Long Parliament’, *BIHR*, lix (1986), 155–71, at 156.

70 James Daybell, *The Material Letter in Early Modern England: Manuscript Letters and the Culture and Practices of Letter-Writing, 1512–1635* (Basingstoke, 2012), 200–1, 209; Louis A. Knafla, ‘Manwood, Sir Peter (1571–1625)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004), available at <https://doi-org.oxfordbrookes.idm.oclc.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/18013> (accessed 17 Aug. 2018).

71 BL, Cotton MS Titus, F. I and II; Colin G.C. Tite, ‘The Cotton Library in the Seventeenth Century and its Manuscript Records of the English Parliament’, *Parliamentary History*, xiv (1995), 121–38, at 126, 135, 138.

72 Kevin Sharpe, *Sir Robert Cotton, 1586–1631: History and Politics in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 1979); Millstone, *Manuscript Circulation*.

73 See the comments in David Cressy, *Bonfires and Bells: National Memory and the Protestant Calendar in Elizabethan and Stuart England* (Stroud, 2004 edn), 134.

74 Sharpe, *Sir Robert Cotton*, 181, 226–7, 235, 244–5.

75 William Camden, *Annales, The True and Royall History of the Famous Empresse Elizabeth* (1625 edn), ‘The Avthor to the Reader’.

76 Sharpe, *Sir Robert Cotton*, 80, 177; Millstone, *Manuscript Circulation*, 199.

77 *Proceedings in Parliament 1625*, ed. Jansson and Bidwell, 488, 489.

78 *Proceedings in Parliament 1625*, ed. Jansson and Bidwell, 488.

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79 Tite, 'Cotton Library', 135; Sharpe, *Sir Robert Cotton*, 39, 209.

80 Richard Cust and Peter G. Lake, 'Sir Richard Grosvenor and the Rhetoric of Magistracy', *BIHR*, liv (1981), 40–53, at 40.

81 *Papers of Sir Richard Grosvenor*, ed. Cust, xvi, 44, 46, 49.

82 Senate House Library, MS 285, f. [iv], 1–v.

83 Parliamentary Archives, GRO/1, ff. 51–142v, at f. 133; Cust and Lake, 'Sir Richard Grosvenor', 42.

84 Parliamentary Archives, GRO/1, ff. 147–88.

85 *Papers of Sir Richard Grosvenor*, ed. Cust, 1, 2.

86 *Papers of Sir Richard Grosvenor*, ed. Cust, 2–3, 5; Cust and Lake, 'Sir Richard Grosvenor', 46–7.

87 See Sharpe, *Reading Revolutions*, 37, 60 and the sources cited there.

88 *Autobiography of Sir Simonds D'Ewes*, ed. Halliwell, i, 409–10, ii, 5, 53; Sir Simonds D'Ewes, *The Journals of all the Parliaments During the Reign of Queen Elizabeth*, ed. Paul D'Ewes (1682).

89 For example, see David M. Dean, 'Sir Symonds [sic] D'Ewes's Bills of 'No Great Moment'', *Parliamentary History*, iii (1984), 157–78.

90 On this point, see the suggestive comments in Sharpe, *Reading Revolutions*, 68.

91 D'Ewes, *Journals of Parliaments*, sig. Av, A2v; BL, Harley MS 73, f. 3v. For Knightley, see *HPC, 1604–29*, v. 37–9.

92 *Autobiography of Sir Simonds D'Ewes*, ed. Halliwell, i, 280, 399, 409–10, ii, 5, 53; Seaward, 'Institutional Memory', 220–1.

93 D'Ewes, *Journals of Parliaments*, sig. A2v, A3v. D'Ewes's nephew, who oversaw the eventual publication of the work, concurred, stating that D'Ewes's labours were not intended

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to be confined ‘to his own Family, but his Study tended to the Publick good’: D’Ewes, *Journals of Parliaments*, sig. \*2.

94 *Autobiography of Sir Simonds D’Ewes*, ed. Halliwell, i, 235, 410.

95 For a discussion of such techniques and their impact, see Sharpe, *Reading Revolutions*, 44, 55–7, 319.

96 D’Ewes, *Journals of Parliaments*, sig. A2v, 1.

97 D’Ewes, *Journals of Parliaments*, 332.

98 D’Ewes, *Journals of Parliaments*, sig. A2v.

99 D’Ewes, *Journals of Parliaments*, 597, 620; for similar comments, see also 37, 78, 191, 311.

100 Seaward, ‘Institutional Memory’, 221–4.

101 For politic histories, see D.R. Woolf, *The Idea of History in Early Stuart England: Erudition, Ideology and the ‘Light of Truth’ from the Accession of James I to the Civil War* (Toronto, 1990), 141–3; F.J. Levy, *Tudor Historical Thought* (San Marino, 1967), 237–85.

102 See J. Sears McGee, *An Industrious Mind: The Worlds of Sir Simonds D’Ewes* (Stanford, 2015), 359–60.

103 See above, ###; *Proceedings in the Opening Session of the Long Parliament*, ed. Maija Jansson with Jennifer Klein Morrison, Alisa Plant, Shawn Smith and Carol Inskip (7 vols, Rochester and Suffolk, 2000–7), ii. 251, 399, 480.

104 Sharpe, *Reading Revolutions*, 83, 98–9, 116, 146.

105 BL, Stowe MS 359, ff. 13, 301.

106 Sir Roger Twysden, *Certaine Considerations Upon the Government of England*, ed. John Mitchell Kemble (Camden Society, xlv, 1849), 163, 169–70; ‘Sir Roger Twysden’s Journal’, ed. Lambert Blackwell Larking, *Archaeologia Cantiana*, i–iv (1858–61), iv. 150–60.

107 Millstone, *Manuscript Circulation*, 19–20.

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<sup>108</sup> *HPC, 1604–29*, iii. 696; iv. 492; Sharpe, *Reading Revolutions*, 158–63; McGee, *Industrious Mind*, 308.

<sup>109</sup> Eric Ketelaar, ‘The Genealogical Gaze: Family Identities and Family Archives in the Fourteenth to Seventeenth Centuries’, *Libraries and the Cultural Record*, xlv (2009), 10–28. Cotton, Grosvenor and D’Ewes were among those who also researched their family histories: Sharpe, *Sir Robert Cotton*, 41–2; *Papers of Sir Richard Grosvenor*, ed. Cust, xii; *Autobiography of Sir Simonds D’Ewes*, ed. Halliwell, i, 6–23.