

Chris R. Kyle, ed. *Parliament, Politics, and Elections, 1604-1648*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001. xi + 355 pp. \$65.00. Review by SIMON KOW, UNIVERSITY OF KING'S COLLEGE, HALIFAX.

*Parliament, Politics, and Elections, 1604-1648* attempts to redress the neglect of important parliamentary documents in political histories of early modern England. The authors in this volume have reproduced documents which reveal additional aspects of Parliament in this period to those addressed in studies of MP's diaries, though consideration of diaries and journals is not excluded. The volume thus brings out the complex dynamics within and without Parliament in the Jacobean and civil war eras. The emphasis, however, is on reproducing primary sources rather than detailed analysis of them. The volume should therefore be regarded principally as a resource for specialists in seventeenth-century parliamentary history.

The introduction explains the focus of the volume. Kyle writes that the entries seek to "discuss and deconstruct the nature of parliamentary sources and how they can be utilised in the study of parliamentary history" (1), though discussion and deconstruction of sources is less ambitious than the reader might expect. Kyle assesses the "problematic nature of many of the parliamentary diaries" (4), given the subjective character and thus frequent unreliability of the authors' accounts. But he concludes that such problems have been exaggerated. Accordingly, the subsequent chapters are intended not to displace but rather to balance the current scholarship focusing exclusively on diaries. The neglected documents thus more fully show how "[e]arly modern English Parliaments were institutional events" (1), in that they were both established institutions by the time of James I's reign and loci of political activity throughout this turbulent period.

The first chapter, by far the longest, is a collection of four diaries by MPs which provide a window on the proceedings of the first session under James I (1604-1607). As such, Simon Healy writes, they reveal "the active role played in the politics of these

sessions by the King" (13). Parliamentarians debated not only over the King's accession speech, particularly in regard to the union of England and Scotland and the question of religion, but also over Parliamentary privilege and the Buckingham election dispute, of which the King offered his own opinions. The chapter also serves to elucidate how the different authors of the diaries and journals—Sir George Manners, Sir Robert Cotten, and Sir Edward Montagu—give differing accounts of the session with emphases placed on certain issues according to their particular interests and perceptions.

The remaining chapters reproduce less conventional documents in parliamentary history. Two letters written by Count Gondomar, the Spanish Ambassador in James I's court, are edited and translated by Brendan Pursell. They relate James's efforts to assuage an anti-Spanish Parliament on the one hand while reassuring Gondomar on the other in 1621, in the midst of the Thirty Years War. Kyle selects and transcribes 33 House of Commons Attendance Lists from 1606–1628 which indicate poor attendance except at committees on local issues. Kyle's point is exhibited by the scant interest and participation in the committee on "An Act for the Better Attendance of the Members of the House of Commons" (184–85). Jason Pearcey reproduces a document unusual for the time: Sir Edward Dering's list of freeholders and their (in some cases speculated) voting preferences in the 1640 election at Kent. For Pearcey, the list suggests no clear ideological division between the candidates.

The final chapter is a selection of letters from Hull MPs Peregrine Pelham and Francis Thorpe to the corporation of Hull in 1644–1648. The letters are notable for the light cast on the use of bribery—including "Hull ale"—in order to advance the local interests of Hull in the midst of civil strife. Despite the pressing public affairs surrounding the war with the King, the Hull mayor and aldermen displayed a persistent preoccupation with protecting local business and trade. As the letters show, the corporation even entreated its MPs to persuade Parliament to exempt Hull from the

Northern Association, proposed by the Long Parliament to strengthen parliamentary forces in northern England.

The documents, while occasionally elucidating and even amusing, make for generally tedious reading. Nevertheless, the editorials competently address major themes and issues. The volume will be chiefly of interest to scholars of parliamentary history. For a wider audience, a cursory reading of the contents is sufficient to convey the sense of Parliament's growing importance in early modern England, a thesis quietly reflected in the book's cover—a mischievously altered reprint of an engraving from Robert Glover's *Nobilitas Politica et Civilis*. The original, which depicts Elizabeth I's recognition of the need for Parliament's consent in passing legislation, is reproduced with the substitution of James I on the throne.

Alan Marshall. *The Age of Faction: Court Politics, 1660-1702*. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1999. x + 234 pp. \$79.95. Review by MOLLY MCCLAIN, UNIVERSITY OF SAN DIEGO.

Alan Marshall has produced a well-researched and entertaining survey of the later Stuart court. He writes with considerable authority on the politics and personalities in the reigns of Charles II, James II, William III, and Mary II. In Part I, the author provides a brief survey of recent historiographical controversies before turning to a description of the machinery of government. He describes the royal residences, the major household offices, the rituals of court life and the system of patronage which linked the king to his leading subjects. He also includes information on the much-neglected subject of "female politicians" such as Louise de Keroualle, duchess of Portsmouth, and others (49).

The later Stuart monarchs, like their continental contemporaries, often used visual means to display their power. For example, Charles II hired the Italian painter Antonio Verrio to create Baroque illusions on the ceilings and walls of his chambers at Windsor Castle and Whitehall Palace. In St. George's Hall, the