

Workshop seven

Images of Parliament

There are not a large number of images of the old Scottish parliament, but what does exist provides a useful indication of where and how the assembly met. Details of the locations and working of parliament can be found in other sections of this website, and those illustrations referred to are numbered. Some images of the records of the parliament are also provided. In addition, click 'Images' on the Home Page for a wider selection.

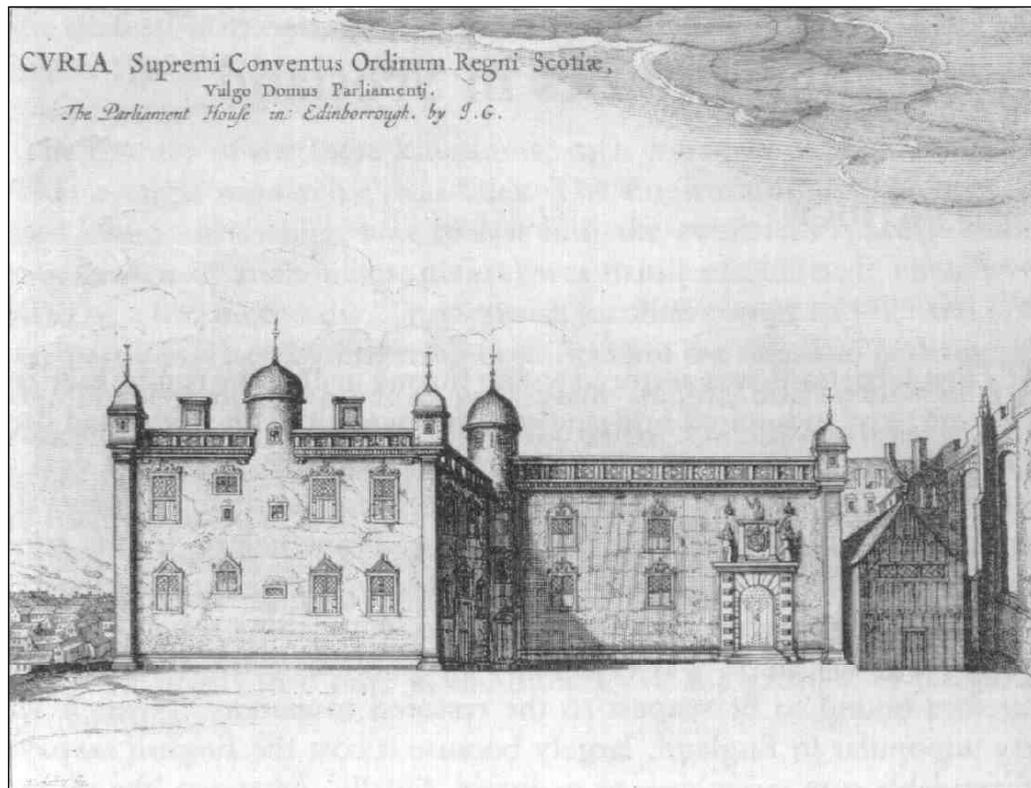
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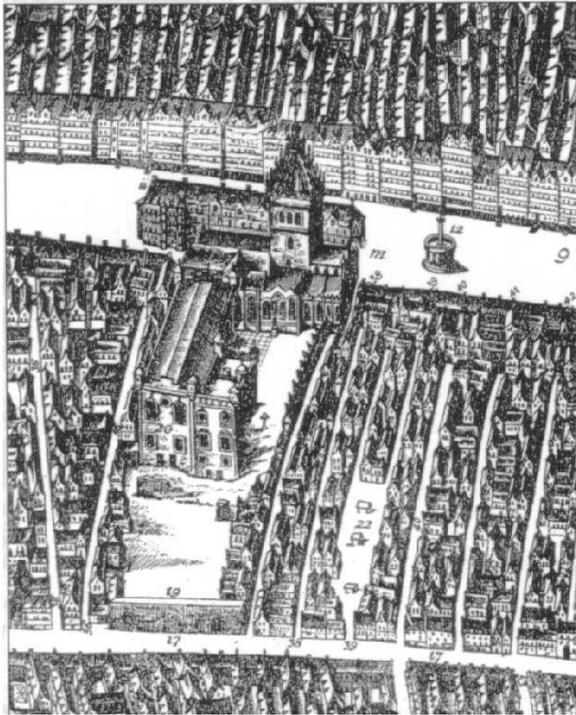
- 1) The title page from the first printed edition of the acts of parliament produced in 1542 and printed by the royal printer of Scotland Thomas Davidson. The statutes are those of the preceding 1540 parliament under James V. It would be the 1560s before an edition was printed which covered all legislation going back to 1424 and James I. The playwright Sir David Lindsay of the Mount, Lyon King of Arms, may have designed the woodcut.



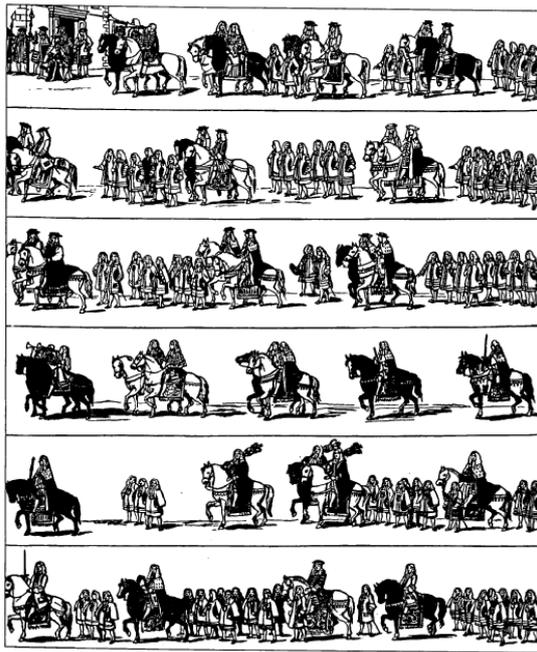
- 2) Parliament met at a variety of towns and places before the 1630s, but its most common venue was the Tolbooth of Edinburgh, normal home of the town council, burgh court and chief prison of the capital. The above engraving from the eighteenth century/early nineteenth shows the Tolbooth to the north of St. Giles Cathedral by which time it was merely a prison. The building, considered to be an eyesore, was destroyed in 1817, although the position of its front door (visible in this picture) is still marked by the 'Heart of Midlothian', a pattern of stones in the pavement by the cathedral.



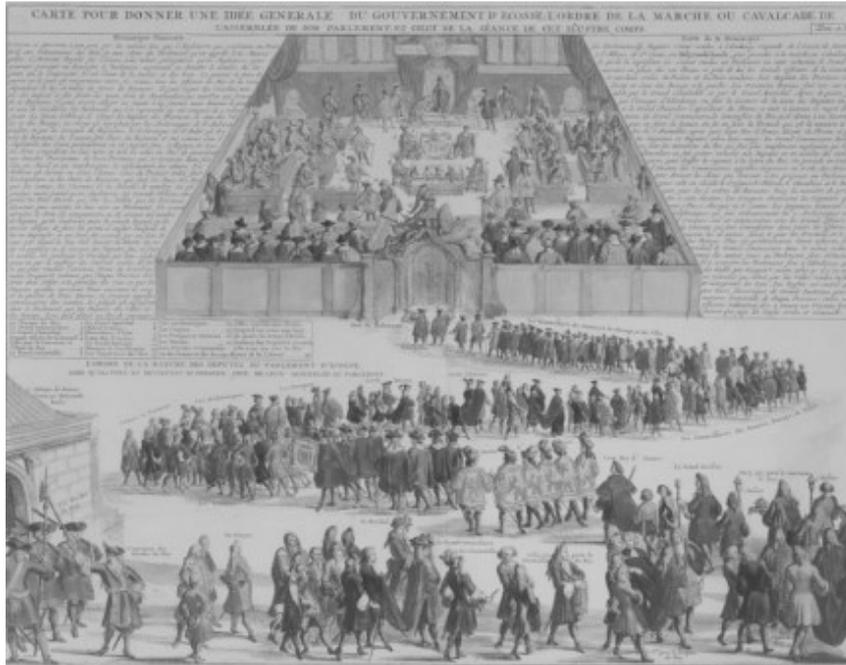
- 3) The parliament at last had a permanent home with the opening of the Parliament House above which was begun in 1632 and completed in 1639. This building still survives, though not much of the grand courtyard to the east, and has since 1707 been the home of the Court of Session, the Parliament Hall forming a grand lobby for the court. The above engraving was completed by James Gordon of Rothiemay (1615-86) shortly after the building was completed. To the right can be seen the great door of parliament at which proclamations and summonses were read.



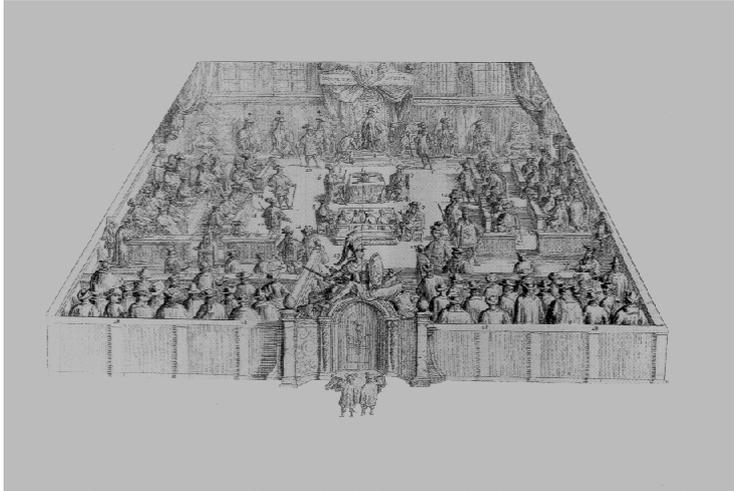
- 4) The above plan of Edinburgh, penned by James Gordon of Rothiemay in 1647, shows St. Giles Cathedral sandwiched between the Tolbooth to the north and the Parliament House to the south running at right angles to the cathedral.



- 5) The greatest ritual of the Scottish parliament was the 'Riding of parliament' in which the members moved by procession to and from the parliament whether it met at the Tolbooth or Parliament House. This illustration by Chalmers, herald painter of James VII, is one of a series which captures the procession by foot and by horseback of members and their retinue making their way to the parliament of 1685. [Grants, *Old and New Edinburgh*, I, 61, original in National Library of Scotland.]



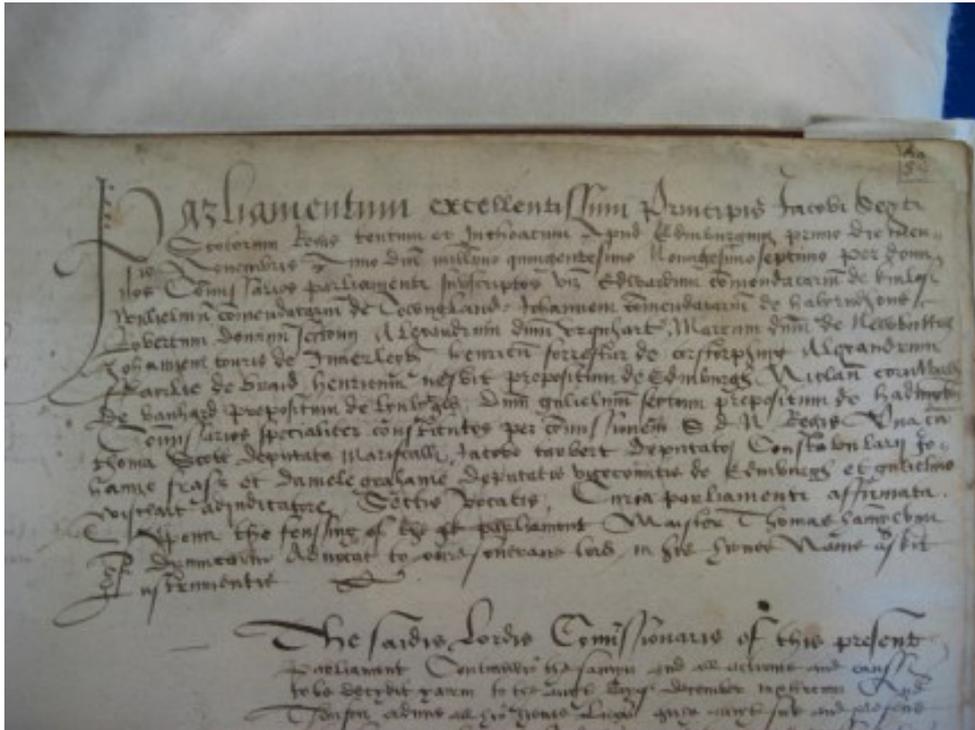
- 6) The above illustration taken from Nicolas de Gaudeville's *Atlas Historique* (1708) shows the procession on foot to the parliament house after dismounting at the east end of St. Giles. The picture shows parliament as it would have been in the 1680s. (A colour version of this illustration, copyright the National Museums of Scotland, can be seen on the *RPS* website).



- 7) The above detail, from the Gaudeville illustration, shows the internal layout of the parliament chamber. The throne to the top centre, clergy to the left, earls and barons to the right and the shire and burgh commissioners at the back (foreground) facing the throne.



- 8) This painting illustrates the presentation of the articles of union of 1707 to Queen Anne. [Walter Thomas Monnington 'The Parliamentary Union of England and Scotland 1707', oil on canvas, 1925-27, St. Stephen's Hall, House of Commons, Palace of Westminster (WOA 2599).Reproduced by permission of the Palace of Westminster.]



- 9) The register recording the opening of the Edinburgh parliament of 1597. Below is the Latin text and English translation. (NAS, PA2/15, f.59r. Reproduced courtesy of the National Records of Scotland). [RPS, 1597/11/1]

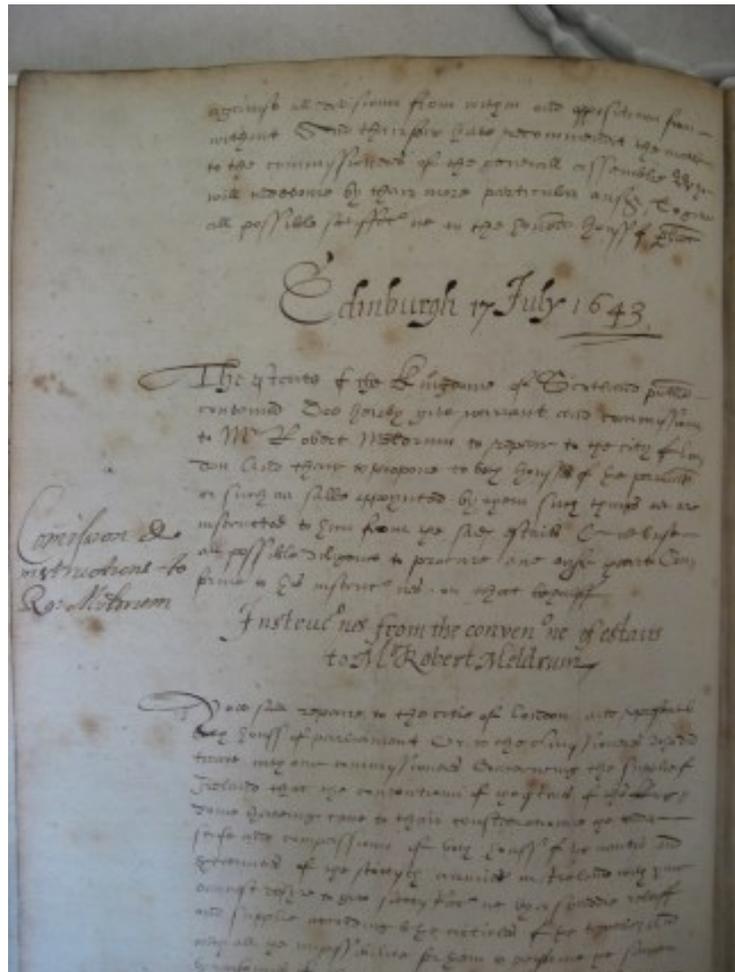
Manuscript:

Parliamentum excellentissimi principis Jacobi sexti Scotorum regis tentum et inchoatum apud Edinburgum primo die mensis Nouembris anno domini millesimo quingentesimo nonagesimo septimo, per dominos commissarios parlamenti subscriptos, viz Edwardum commendatarium de Kinloss, Willielmum commendatarium de Towngland, Johannem commendatarium de Halyrudhous, Robertum dominum Seytoun, Alexandrum dominum Urquhart, Marcum dominum de Newbuttill, Johannem Touris de Inuerleyth, Henricum Forrestar de Corstorping, Alexandrum Fairlie de Braid, Henricum Nesbit prepositum de Edinburgh, Nicolau Cornwall de Banhard prepositum de Lynlytgw, dominum Gulielmum Seytoun prepositum de Hadington, commissarios specialiter constitutos per commissionem supremi domini nostri regis, unacum Thoma Scott deputato mariscalli, Jacobo Tarbert deputato constabularii, Johanne Fraser et Daniele Grahame deputatis vicecomitis de Edinburgh, et Gulielmo Wischart adjudicatore; sectis vocatis, curia parlamenti affirmata. Upoun the fensing of the quhilk parliament, Maister Thomas Hamyltoun of Drumcarne, advocat to ourre soverane lord, in his hienes name, askit instrumentis.

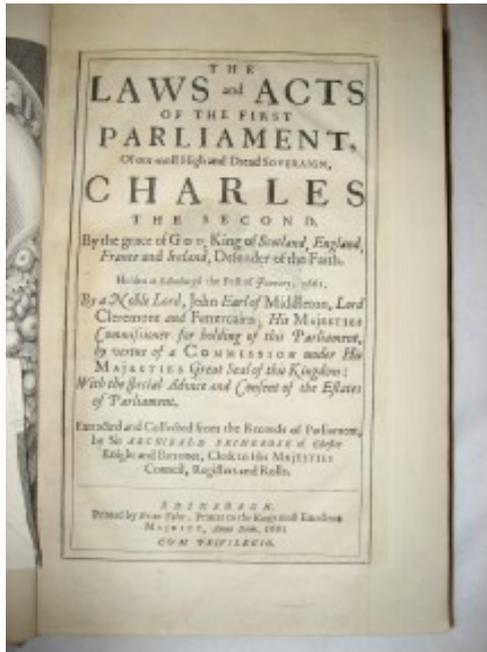
Translation:

The parliament of the most excellent prince James VI, king of Scots, held and opened in Edinburgh on 1 November in the year of the Lord 1597, by the undernoted commissioners of parliament, namely Edward [Bruce], commendator of Kinloss, William [Melville], commendator of Tongland, John [Bothwell], commendator of Holyroodhouse, Robert

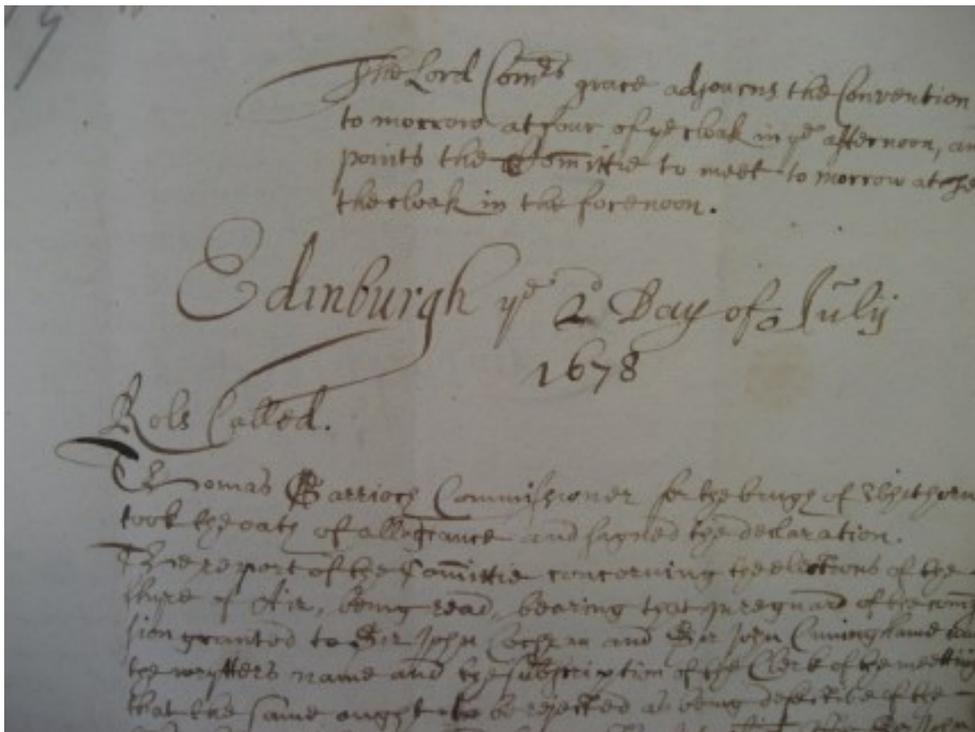
[Seton], lord Seton, Alexander [Seton], lord Urquhart, Mark [Kerr], lord Newbattle, John Touris of Inverleith, Henry Forrester of Corstorphine, Alexander Fairlie of Braid, Henry Nisbet, provost of Edinburgh, Nicholas Cornwall of Bonhard, provost of Linlithgow, Lord William Seaton [of Kylesmure], provost of Haddington, commissioners specially constituted by the commission of our supreme lord the king, together with Thomas Scott, marischal depute, James Tarbert, constable depute, John Fraser and Daniel Graham, sheriffs depute of Edinburgh, and William Wishart, dempster; suits were called and the court of parliament affirmed. Upon the fencing of the which parliament, Master Thomas Hamilton of Drumcarnie, advocate to our sovereign lord, in his highness's name, asked instruments*.



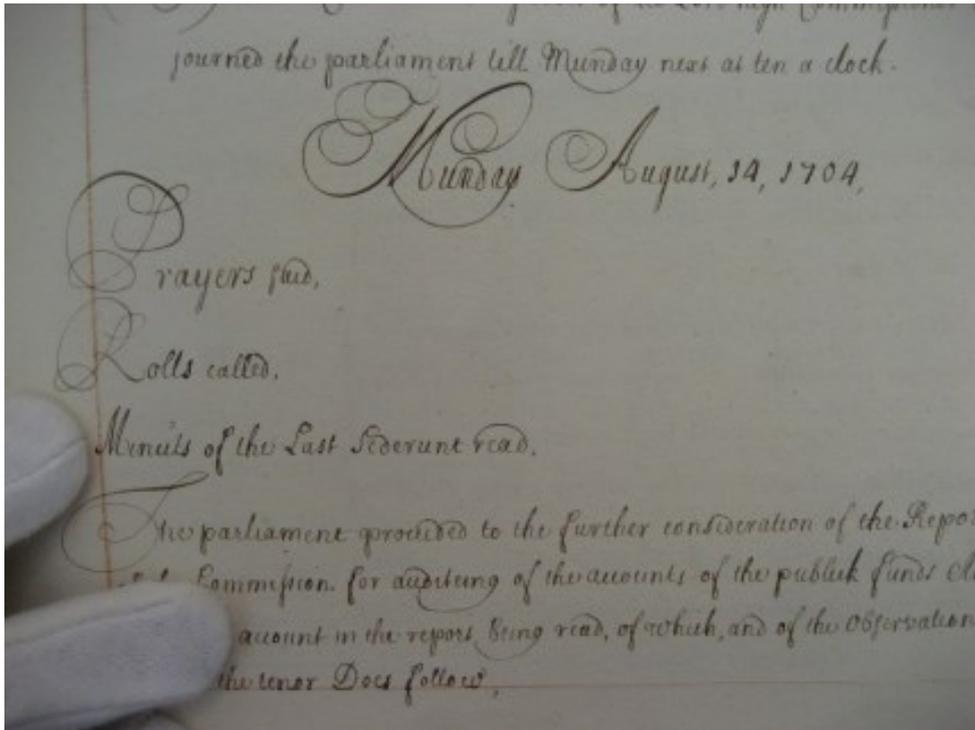
10) The estates send negotiators to the English parliament to agree the Solemn League and Covenant (1643) (NAS, PA2/15, f.59r. Reproduced courtesy of the National Records of Scotland). [RPS, 1643/6/33].



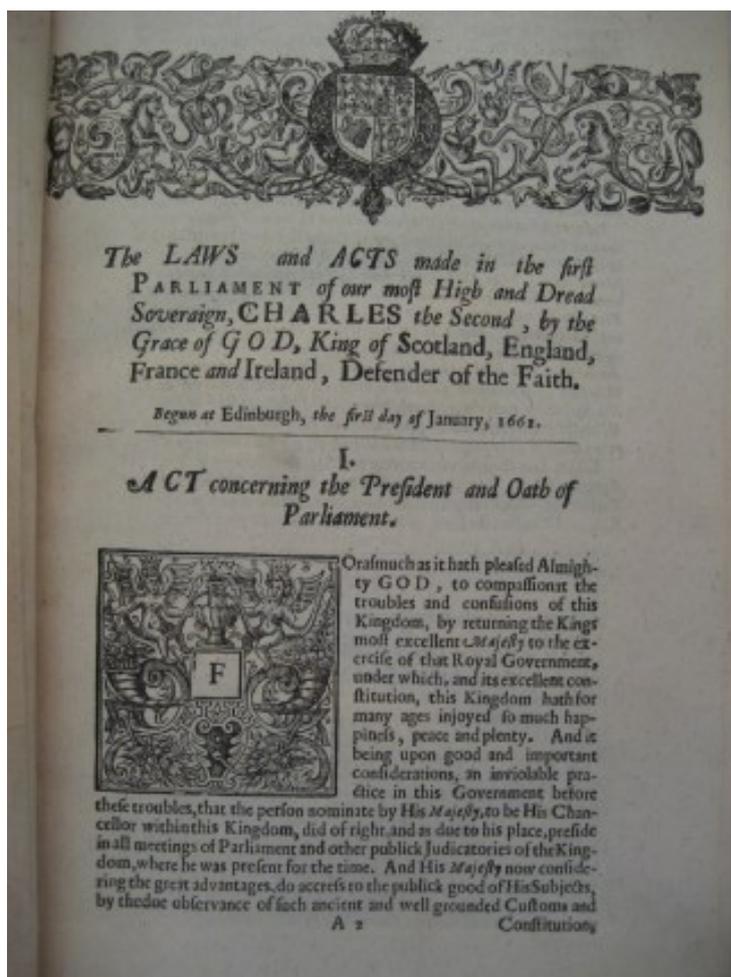
11) The title page above from printed acts of parliament of the 1661 session in the reign of Charles II. (Reproduced courtesy of the National Records of Scotland).



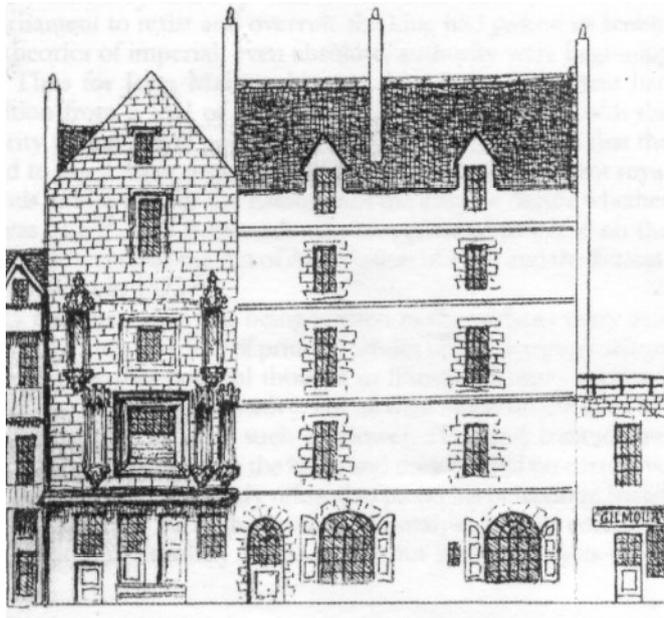
12) The record of a day in a convention. The roll is called before business proceeds at the convention of estates, 2 July, 1678. Also the convention is adjourned the day before. (NAS. PA8/1, f.179. Reproduced courtesy of the National Records of Scotland). [RPS, 1678/6/12-13]



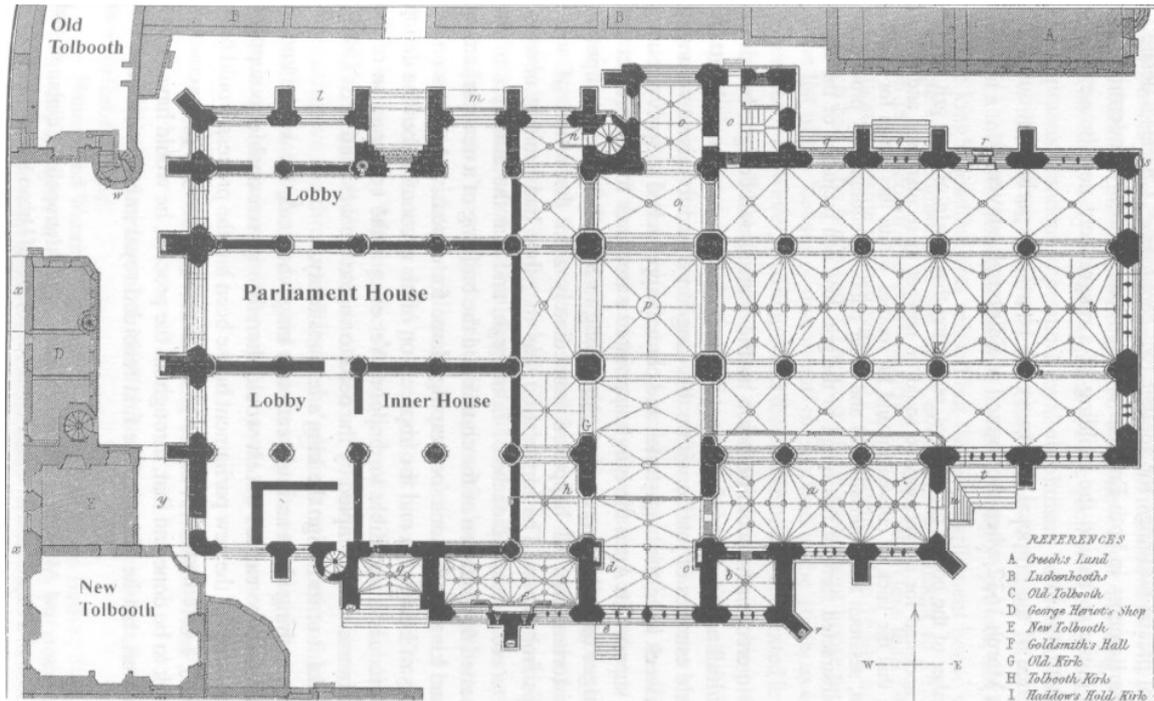
- 13) The record, above, of a day in parliament. Prayers are said, the roll is called and, in a growing sense of procedure, the minutes of the previous day are read before business begins on 14 August, 1704. (NAS. PA2/38, f.204. Reproduced courtesy of the National Records of Scotland). **[RPS, 1704/7/85]**



- 14) Above the first act of the session of parliament in 1661 which confirms the oath that all who attended had to take. This replaced that agreed in August 1641 [RPS, 1641/8/4] as the restored monarchy under Charles II wished to introduce a version which more clearly declared loyalty to the crown. Some form of oath had been a feature of all parliaments since at least the 15th century. (Reproduced courtesy of the National Records of Scotland). [RPS, 1661/1/7]



- 15) A sketch above of the northern elevation of the Old Tolbooth, Edinburgh, before it was demolished in 1817. The estates frequently met in the older structure to the left (East) throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, probably in the 'Common Hall' behind the ornate square window on the first floor.[Image from *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, xx (1885-6), facing p.366]



16) A plan of St Giles Cathedral with an indication of probable internal arrangements when parliament met there, as it did frequently from 1563 to 1633. [Plan from D. Wilson, *Memorials of Edinburgh in the Olden Times* (Edinburgh, 1891), vol.2, p.296]