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Acts of Parliament

Descriptions

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[000287] AN ACT FOR BETTER ENABLING THE MASTER, WARDENS AND ASSISTANT OF TRINITY HOUSE, TO REBUILD THE LIGHT-HOUSE ON THE EDYSTONE ROCK

- \$200.00

. London: Charles Bill, and the Executrix of Thomas Newcomb, Deceas'd: Printers to the Queens Most Excellent Majesty, 1705. 4 pages including separate printed cover sheet, folio, 4 x 5 Anne, removed. First edition, first issue. This Act was an epitaph extolling the virtues of the famous Edystone Light until "the late dreadful storm in November, One Thousand and Seventeen Hundred and three when the same was blown down and destroyed." This Act provides the raising of money to rebuild the lighthouse by a tax upon the cargo of every vessel passing the Edystone Point. This Act is printed on fine rag paper and is in excellent condition, never having been circulated. Original Acts of Parliament have long been valued and collected, appearing frequently in auction records and dealers catalogs. After an Act was passed by Parliament, it was printed by the Crown printers in London. Only a few Acts, perhaps the Acts for the week, were printed at one time, loosely sewn together at the inner margin. For this first printing, each Act had its own individual cover page. At the end of each year, all of the Acts were reprinted and issued in book form; in this annual compilation the Acts did not have individual title pages. It's not inappropriate to call the first printing of each account the first edition, first issue and the yearly printing in book form the first edition, second issue, explaining why some Acts have separate printed cover sheets and others do not. Thus Acts we describe as being "removed" have been taken out of a bound volume and as such may have small holes, notches or bits of glue in the inner margin where formerly sewn and glued. The Unknown English Bibliographer: Most of these Acts are from the library of Harvard University as attested by the small and faint blue exchanger stamp dated January 1, 1944 verso the title pages. Many of the Acts are in protective cream wrappers with the Act noted on the wrapper in black ink in a fine and elegant hand, as handsome a penmanship as I have ever seen. Furthermore, in many cases, the unknown English bibliographer penned succinct comments, which place the Acts in historical perspective and evaluated their importance. I'm indebted to this person and thus let us raise a toast in thanks to him, "the unknown English bibliographer." I doubt this person was head of the library and perhaps this may be the greatest recognition he received for a job well done. I can well envision someone during the war years deep in the catacombs of London, sitting on the high stool a la Bob Cratchitt, writing up endless stacks of Acts of Parliament by a dim light. If any of you can perhaps determine who this person might have been and if he still breathes, I should like to send him best wishes and a bottle of the South's finest. Sometimes we fail to identify these Acts for Chapter numbers as the Chapter number is not printed on all Acts. **KEYWORDS:** Parliament Legal Documents British English Britain Bills house of Commons house of Lords Parliamentary Papers Act Acts Law Legal England Trinity House Lighthouse Lighthouses Nautical edystone Light Ships Scotland Navigation Laws

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