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# **Acts of Parliament**

## **Descriptions**

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**[000324] . AN ACT FOR ENLARGING THE TERMS OF LETTERS PATENT GRANTED ... TO ELIZABETH TAYLOR ... WIDOW, FOR THE SOLE USE AND EXERCISE OF CERTAIN ENGINES, TOOLS, INSTRUMENTS, AND OTHER APPARATUS ... USED IN THE RIGGING OF SHIPS. \$500.00**

London: Printed By Charles Eyre and William Strahan, Printers to the King's Most Excellent Majesty, 1776. 10 pages including separate printed cover sheet, folio, 17 George III Cap.18, removed. An interesting act. Evidently Elizabeth's husband had been providing the Navy with blocks, tackle, etc., which were superior to all others. When he died, Elizabeth stopped production until her late husband's inventions were protected. By this Act, Liz got her protection and we assume she went back to making blocks and tackle. Not only was Elizabeth shrewd and gutsy, she was also of good mind and mechanically inclined. From this Act it may be inferred that Liz knew full well how to implement her husband's inventions, knowledge that was hers alone. Otherwise, since the inventions were not protected prior to this act, anyone knowing them could have proceeded with manufacturing. Let's lift a cup to Liz. 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 Acts Act Documents Law Legal England English Britain Great Britain British Bills House of Commons

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