The Experience of Work in Early Modern England

This book applies the innovative work-task approach to the history of work, which captures the contribution of all workers and types of work to the early modern economy. Drawing on tens of thousands of court depositions, the authors analyse the individual tasks that made up everyday work for women and men, shedding new light on the gender division of labour, and the ways in which time, space, age, and marital status shaped sixteenth- and seventeenth-century working life. Combining qualitative and quantitative analysis, the book deepens our understanding of the preindustrial economy and calls for us to rethink not only who did what but also the implications of these findings for major debates about structural change, the nature and extent of paid work, and what has been lost as well as gained over the past three centuries of economic development. This title is also available as open access on Cambridge Core.

Jane Whittle is Professor of Economic and Social History at the University of Exeter, and her publications include *The Development of Agrarian Capitalism* and *Consumption and Gender in the Early Seventeenth-Century Household*.

Mark Hailwood is Senior Lecturer in Early Modern History at the University of Bristol and author of *Alehouses and Good Fellowship in Early Modern England*, as well as a number of articles on everyday life in the period.

Hannah Robb is a Postdoctoral Research Associate at Birkbeck, University of London, and has published in leading journals on micro-credit and debt litigation.

Taylor Aucoin is a British Academy Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the University of Edinburgh and has published on topics ranging from Carnival, pancakes, and football to labour laws and magic.

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Jane Whittle
University of Exeter

Mark Hailwood
University of Bristol

Hannah Robb
Birkbeck, University of London

Taylor Aucoin
University of Edinburgh



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