



Seminar in Early Modern Economic and Social History Faculty of History, University of Cambridge, Easter 2014

The seminar meets Thursdays at 5pm in the Linnett Room in Robinson College
We normally have dinner with the speaker afterwards. All welcome.
Convenors: Amy Erickson and Leigh Shaw-Taylor



1st May: John Walter (Essex)

'Know all men whom this may concerne ...'

The Protestation returns and early modern social and economic history

In 1641 and in 1642 Parliament used the Protestation oath to swear the nation. Taken at parish level, this required returns listing those taking (or refusing) the oath. This paper provides an introduction to these little-known and under-used sources. Surviving in their thousands and providing for some counties complete coverage, the returns provide a partial census. In some parishes, the returns were ordered either by family, household, occupation or gender and/or age categories. In others, the silent ordering principles by which the names were returned (topography or status hierarchies) can be recovered. A rich cluster of contemporaneous parish-level fiscal listings (poll tax, subsidy, Collections for Ireland) offer possibilities for comparative record linkage.

15th May: Andrew Burn (Durham)

'Pity the poor keelmen'

Modelling seasonal work and annual income in early industrial Newcastle upon Tyne

Newcastle was transformed in the century after 1560 as industrial labourers arrived to keel its coal. Earlier migrants were often seasonal, returning home in winter when trade was slack; but by the 1660s workers were more likely to settle permanently in the town, begging the question 'how could they afford to survive the winter'? Working backwards from trade accounts and other sources, I offer an assessment of daily wages, perks, and the seasonal distribution of annual income, showing that the number of days worked, as well as the rising nominal wage, was crucial in this survival. This in turn provides a new north-eastern perspective on living standards debates that still tend to be dominated by southern England's agricultural and building labourers.

The support of the Trevelyan Fund (Faculty of History) is gratefully acknowledged.