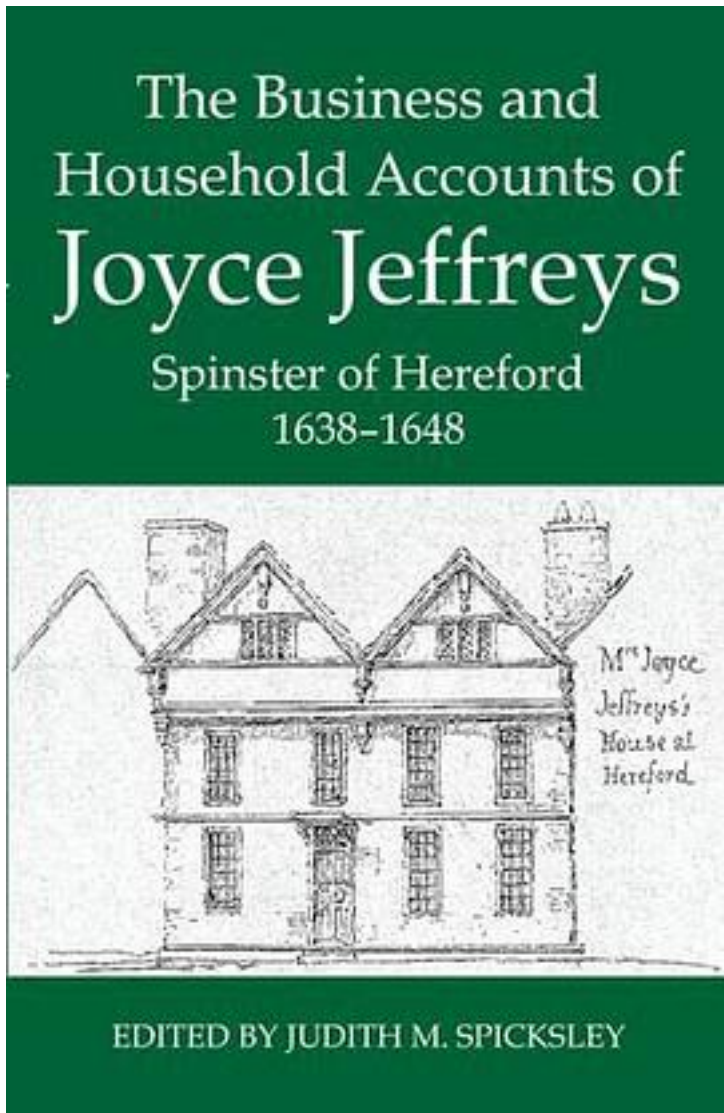


The Business and Household Accounts of Joyce Jeffreys, Spinster of Hereford, 1638-1648



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出版者:

出版时间:2012-5

装帧:

isbn:9780197264324

The accounts of Joyce Jeffreys offer a rare opportunity to enter the social world of the early modern spinster - her daily life, personal circumstances, social activities and family relationships are all reflected through the entries in her manuscript. The accounts also reveal extensive evidence of Joyce's business dealings, most prominently as a moneylender in and around the Hereford and Worcestershire region, but also as a farmer, market gardener, landholder, and horse and livestock dealer. The income or receipts section details loan arrangements and provides evidence of rental and other income. The expenditure or disbursements section provides a wealth of information on a range of contemporary expenses, including the cost of wages, food, drinks, clothing, textiles, medicines and medical care, the training and care of horses, and even stud fees. Further entries relate to amounts paid out in the form of gifts and gratuities, litigation fees, local and national assessments, and church dues. Joyce Jeffreys appears at the centre of a large, vibrant kinship network, in which she was an active participant. This gave her access to regional gentry affiliations, and linked her with some of the most prominent local people. Although Joyce's business dealings may have centred on the Hereford area, they reached as far as London. She travelled regularly to visit relatives and friends, to listen to lectures, and to attend social events until her health prevented her from doing so. Royalist by inclination, Joyce decided to abandon Hereford before the Parliamentary army arrived and the social as well as economic costs of the civil war are a further feature of her accounts. Published in their entirety for the first time, these accounts suggest that Joyce Jeffreys was neither as culturally or intellectually isolated as the historiography of spinsterhood would have us believe.

作者介绍:

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