

**Citation for published version:**

Anne L. Murphy, “You do manage it so well that I cannot do better’: the working life of Elizabeth Jeake of Rye (1667–1736)’, *Women’s History Review*, March 2018.

**DOI:**

<https://doi.org/10.1080/09612025.2018.1455569>

**Document Version:**

This is the Accepted Manuscript version.

The version in the University of Hertfordshire Research Archive may differ from the final published version.

**Copyright and Reuse:**

© 2018 Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group

Content in the UH Research Archive is made available for personal research, educational, and non-commercial purposes only. Unless otherwise stated, all content is protected by copyright, and in the absence of an open license, permissions for further re-use should be sought from the publisher, the author, or other copyright holder.

**Enquiries**

If you believe this document infringes copyright, please contact Research & Scholarly Communications at [rsc@herts.ac.uk](mailto:rsc@herts.ac.uk)

**‘You do manage it so well that I cannot do better’: the working life of Elizabeth Jeake of Rye (1667-1736)**

Anne L. Murphy  
Reader in History  
University of Hertfordshire  
De Havilland Campus  
Hatfield  
Herts  
AL10 9AB  
Phone: 07986 753582  
Email: [a.l.murphy@herts.ac.uk](mailto:a.l.murphy@herts.ac.uk)

**Abstract:**

This article contributes to the debate around early modern women’s work. It concerns not waged labour but rather the unpaid contributions made by women to both home and the business undertaken by their husband. It focuses on Elizabeth Jeake, the wife of Samuel Jeake, a merchant from the Sussex port of Rye. Through the letters exchanged between the family, it explores Elizabeth’s skilled work in support of her husband. This included giving instructions to contractors, gathering and disseminating business and investment information, negotiations with Samuel’s business partners and acquaintances, managing property and tenants, negotiating credit relationships and purchasing and selling commodities.

**Key words:** women’s work; early modern; unwaged labour; skill

In October 1697 Samuel Jeake wrote from London to his wife Elizabeth at home in Rye. The letter touched on the subject of her management of the purchase of a quantity of flaxseed. He told her: 'You have done as well as if I had made him the answer, for unless it be extraordinary good it will be too dear at that price...You do manage it so well that I cannot do better'.<sup>1</sup> Samuel's acknowledgement of his wife's business competence was not an isolated occurrence. It appears that both at times when Samuel was staying in London and when he was at home in Rye, Elizabeth contributed to the maintenance and management of the marital economy. The work that supported the family was a shared endeavour.

The nature of women's contribution to the early modern and industrial economy has been generating lively debate for nearly a century. The work that was begun by Alice Clark and Ivy Pinchbeck was extended significantly during the 1970s and 1980s and the subject has seen a recent revival.<sup>2</sup> It has been shown that women's work was essential to the marital economy and that their contributions were made both through unpaid and waged labour. Scholarship has been advanced by innovative methods of both understanding the nature of work and its incidence. In particular the *Gender and Work* project, based in Sweden, has developed a 'verb-oriented' method of understanding work through descriptions of what people were doing, rather than through 'noun-oriented' occupational titles.<sup>3</sup> The verb-oriented method uses numerous narrative sources, such as court records, to acquire a sense of what people did from the ways they described their activities during the day. Among the more notable findings of this project is the ubiquity of the 'two-supporter' model of the household in which 'both husband and wife contributed to the economy and, often, neither of them was occupationally specialized'.<sup>4</sup> Equally, the project has highlighted the need to reconceptualise the household as the 'focus on people's doings foregrounds networking and sociability across household boundaries'.<sup>5</sup>

Scholars working on other European countries have made similar findings.<sup>6</sup> Erickson has shown that, in London at least, the proportion of married women not involved in the labour market was small and that women did not necessarily work in the same occupations as their husbands.<sup>7</sup> Indeed, women from all strata of society operated autonomously in business and displayed competence both in running their own enterprises and contributing to those operated by others.<sup>8</sup> The work of women as business agents and financial intermediaries has been investigated and it has been shown that women could embed themselves even in overwhelmingly male-dominated networks and business environments.<sup>9</sup> It has also been noted that widows, at their own deaths, not infrequently left the same or greater wealth than their husbands had left them, denoting both business and money-management skills.<sup>10</sup>

Yet there still remains a significant gap in our knowledge of how early modern women contributed to their husband's businesses while those husbands lived, what has been labelled by Schmidt 'assisting labour'. We know that a significant proportion of women did work alongside their husbands. In the words of Mendelson and Crawford the labour of their wives 'was frequently a taken-for-granted component of their husband's employment'.<sup>11</sup> It could also be an expected aspect of some forms of employment.<sup>12</sup> Even where it was not, we nonetheless know that their wife's assisting labour was highly valued by some men. John Dunton, the founder of the Athenian Society, praised his wife who was 'bookseller, cash-keeper, [and] managed all my affairs for me'.<sup>13</sup> Yet, because of the difficulties of locating sources in which their labour is revealed, little is known about the specifics of wives' contributions to their husband's work.<sup>14</sup> The Jeake family, therefore, can provide us with a unique and informative case study.

Samuel Jeake (1652-1699) described himself as a merchant. He mainly engaged in inland trade but specialised in no particular commodity. Over the course of his active life he bought and sold a range of textiles, foodstuffs, raw materials and, occasionally, fancy goods, like gloves and fans. He lent money, discounted bills of exchange and he had a small property portfolio that was rented out. Samuel also became an investor in the new national debt during the 1690s. He bought life annuities, lottery tickets and shares in various companies, including the Bank of England.<sup>15</sup> Much is known about Samuel Jeake and his father, also Samuel, mainly thanks to the work of Michael Hunter and his collaborators.<sup>16</sup> Yet, Samuel's *Astrological Diary* was an insular document, focused on the author's life and concerns. His wife Elizabeth is mentioned on a number of occasions but usually only as 'my wife' and the mentions of her are incidental rather than instrumental. Samuel often was noting merely that she accompanied him on a trip or was present at an event. More specific mentions of Elizabeth relate to her pregnancies and child-bearing but again few details were given.<sup>17</sup>

Our knowledge of Elizabeth's contributions to the marital economy comes from the lesser-known collection of letters preserved at the East Sussex Record Office. In particular, this article relies on a series of thirty-three letters written when Samuel was in London on business in March and April of 1696, from September to December 1697 and from March to May 1699. We do not have Elizabeth's responses to these letters but some sense of her views can be gained from reading between the lines. The letters concentrate primarily on business, especially those written during 1696 and 1697 in the later stages of the Nine Years' War (1689-1697). By 1699 war had passed, the family's finances were on a more sound footing and the letters reflect an interest not just in business but also family, home and the lives of others. Family matters are

also the subject of Elizabeth's letters preserved in other sections of the family archive. These relate both to her marriage to Samuel Jeake, who died in 1699, and to her second marriage to Joseph Tucker in 1703. Tucker died in 1733 and Elizabeth in 1736.

This article will draw primarily on the descriptions of Elizabeth's labour contained in her husband's instructions, discussions of, and validation of, her actions. Essentially, a 'verb-oriented' methodology is adopted to reveal Elizabeth's working practices. There are, of course, notable biases in the available data since the most useful letters cover only a short span of time and represent Samuel's views of his wife's work. Nonetheless, without the detail preserved in the letters, Elizabeth's labour, like that of many middling sort women, would be hidden behind the designation 'wife'. What follows will commence with a discussion of the circumstances of the Jeakes' marriage. It will then offer an account of the management of their household, showing that here too there was shared endeavour. The third section will give an account of Elizabeth's contribution to the management of Samuel's business affairs.

## **ADAPTING TO MARRIAGE**

Elizabeth was born 2 October 1667. She was the daughter of Barbara and Richard Hartshorne. Richard was the local schoolmaster and not affluent. He was assessed in the 1660 demobilisation tax as an unmarried man and at the rate of one shilling. He owned no taxable real or personal estate.<sup>18</sup> He was, however, regarded as a dedicated teacher. The testimonials that accompanied him when he moved to Rye from Leigh in Staffordshire described him as 'able, industrious, & successfull in the education of the Youth committed to his charge: as also of a temperate & unblameable conversation'.<sup>19</sup> Barbara had already been widowed twice when she married Richard. She was evidently an eligible widow. One of her suitors described her as 'havens choolest jewell ... Locked up in Erthes Richest Cabbinet'.<sup>20</sup> The dowry offered to Samuel at Elizabeth's marriage also suggests Barbara was much more affluent than her new husband.

Richard died in 1680, leaving Barbara with two surviving children, Elizabeth and Nathaniel. Nathaniel was sixteen at that time and Elizabeth was twelve. Nathaniel was already proving difficult to manage and soon after the wedding he was sent away from Rye because of 'a report of Infamy' that his mother had heard.<sup>21</sup> Nathaniel's behaviour might have influenced Barbara's decision to allow Elizabeth to marry. It seems likely that, following the death of her husband, she sought a positive male influence for her household. Nonetheless, this meant that Elizabeth was an exceptionally young bride, betrothed at the age of twelve years and eight months and married just under a year later to a bridegroom fourteen years her senior. This was

unusual. The majority of early modern women married in their early to mid-twenties and, even among the nobility and gentry, child marriages were not common by the end of the seventeenth century. The age gap between partners was generally no more than a few years.<sup>22</sup>

Samuel noted in his diary that he had regarded Elizabeth with ‘Affection from her Infancy’.<sup>23</sup> Yet, it is likely that the dowry that Elizabeth brought was a greater motivation for him. Samuel had been disappointed in love before. His first, and unsuccessful, courtship was of Mary Weeks. Samuel met with the disapproval of Mary’s family and this ultimately prevented the match.<sup>24</sup> In the case of his courtship of Elizabeth, Samuel went first to her mother and negotiated for his bride including discussion of the dowry in which Samuel insisted ‘upon £1200 [while Elizabeth’s mother, Barbara Hartshorne] first offered £500 in money, & the house she lived in (one of the best in the Towne)’.<sup>25</sup> They eventually agreed on a dowry of £1,000: £700 in cash, £100 in household goods and the house, valued at £200, and after significant further negotiations ‘a reservation of £40 per annum’ to Barbara in case Elizabeth died without issue.<sup>26</sup> It was only once negotiations with Barbara were underway that Samuel approached Elizabeth. Samuel’s pragmatism should not surprise. In an economy that remained heavily dependent on access to informal credit networks and inherited wealth, for most married couples ‘love was desirable in marriage, but labour and property were essential’.<sup>27</sup> This was certainly the case for the Jeakes and thus, at the most basic level, Elizabeth made a significant monetary contribution to the marital economy through the capital and property she brought with her on marriage. Up until his marriage Samuel had been operating with relatively little capital. In January 1680 his stock stood at £685, with nearly £370 in cash, gold, annuities and on account with a London agent. The remainder was either employed in trade or lent out.<sup>28</sup> Marriage to Elizabeth effectively doubled his capital.

When Samuel did approach Elizabeth, she asked for time to consider but did consent to the marriage within two days of the meeting.<sup>29</sup> There is no record of Elizabeth’s initial views on the marriage but it has been suggested that early modern women might have experienced the first phase of their marriage as a ‘violent discontinuity’, a transition which gave their husband sexual access to their bodies and the right to inflict physical chastisement.<sup>30</sup> Elizabeth certainly experienced significant disruption during her betrothal. Samuel and his father moved into the Hartshorne house as soon as the marriage was agreed. It was at this time that Samuel experienced a bout of the depression that afflicted him throughout his life but was especially pronounced in his late teens and twenties. This caused ‘great displeasure and difference between me & my intended Mother in Law & Wife’.<sup>31</sup> Although the rift was mended before

the end of that year, with that experience in mind Elizabeth may have approached her wedding with some trepidation.

The marriage took place on 1 March 1681 and Samuel compiled a horoscope for that moment in which was predicted ‘divers troubles & discontents...variance about parsimoniousness, or indigence of money...Violences, Death or mischief to Children.’ But these rather dire predictions were offset by the ‘Sun & Mercury in the 11<sup>th</sup> [which] prenote good friends, & Venus & Jupiter in the 12<sup>th</sup> take off all mischief by Enemies’.<sup>32</sup> There are few signs of discontent with the marriage recorded in the *Astrological Diary*. The only quarrel relating to Elizabeth concerned a dispute between her and a cousin who objected to her letting ‘the child go into rude company’. Samuel was ‘extremely vexed’ about this but made no further mention of the incident.<sup>33</sup> The letters the couple exchanged offer a more intimate picture than the *Diary* and one exchange in early 1685 suggests a truly affectionate match. In the letter Elizabeth expressed herself ‘extreamly dissatisfied at [Samuel’s] so long absence’. She asked him to ‘write me a letter to last a day ere it be read’. A postscript blamed her ‘evil writing’ on a lack of sleep but her husband reassured her in his response that he had read her letter ‘with great satisfaction, and as I doubt not of the sincerity of your affections. So assure your selfe my dearest that nothing can alienate mine from you. I think my time as long ere I revisit you, as you can possibly before you see me’.<sup>34</sup> Elizabeth’s desire for contact with her husband did not abate and in 1697 Samuel added a postscript to one lengthy letter with the hope that she would not now complain ‘of a short lett[er]’.<sup>35</sup> Elizabeth had also resigned herself early in the marriage to Samuel’s bouts of depression. She wrote to him in July 1683 to ‘Be sure make much of yourself and be not to Melancholy’.<sup>36</sup> The union, therefore, appears to have been a successful, cooperative and affectionate one.

## **MANAGING THE HOUSEHOLD**

No discussion of economic life should exclude household management and reproductive activities, including not just the bearing but also the care of children.<sup>37</sup> In these areas of married life, early modern wives, whilst subordinate to their husbands in most respects, could enjoy some autonomy.<sup>38</sup> However, it can have been no easy task for such a young bride to gain power over her household. Although it was more usual for an early modern couple to set up a separate household at their marriage, the Jeakes were not a nuclear family.<sup>39</sup> Because Samuel moved into his mother-in-law’s house, the family unit included not only him and his wife but also his father and his mother-in-law. Thus Elizabeth’s mother, in all likelihood, would have held sway in the household during the early years of the Jeake’s marriage.

While the family were sufficiently affluent to employ at least one maid, Elizabeth's regular tasks would have involved provisioning the household, cooking, washing and cleaning the house. Standards of cleanliness might have been lower than they are today but it is clear that caring for the house was part of a daily, and labour-intensive, regime.<sup>40</sup> Although the time all this would have occupied would have varied depending on the input of servants and possibly the cooperation of Elizabeth's mother, it has been estimated that, in general, household management occupied around six or seven hours every day.<sup>41</sup> Moreover, sources emphasise the increasing difficulty of household management during the later seventeenth century as households accumulated more consumer goods and dress became more elaborate.<sup>42</sup>

Examples of domesticity in the Jeake family letters are relatively few but letters written during the later 1690s by Elizabeth's mother, Barbara Hartshorne to her granddaughter Betty Jeake show us that Elizabeth was an active housewife. In one letter Barbara explained, 'Mother is busi a baking' and on another occasion 'Mother says she is busie, she cannot write, folding clothes take up her time at present'.<sup>43</sup> That laundry should take up so much time should not surprise. Even with maids to assist, washing day was labour-intensive. Samuel Pepys noted in his diary one occasion when he retired after 1.00am leaving his wife and the maid 'washing still'.<sup>44</sup> Aside from general domestic duties, Elizabeth might have made or raised goods and foodstuffs for the household. She was fashion-conscious and sourced her own clothes from London to keep up with the latest fashions, as did her husband.<sup>45</sup> Yet, she undoubtedly still made clothes for her family and recycled clothes, especially for the children. On one occasion Barbara Hartshorne wrote to her granddaughter about reusing old lace to make a 'tucker', noting that it was not really sufficient for the task and, although Elizabeth would have used it, Barbara had decided to buy her granddaughter lace of a better quality.<sup>46</sup> There is mention of Elizabeth's oldest surviving daughter Betty making 'bone lace' but she was encouraged to make bone, rather than point 'which is quite out of voge', suggesting that this was a diversion rather than a necessity.<sup>47</sup> The only mention of spinning that can be found in the letters makes reference to the maid spinning. In a letter written in May 1701, Elizabeth wrote to remind her mother that, with regard to Sarah, probably a new maid in the family, she expected when she came home to see 'the effect of her diligence in spinning these long days'.<sup>48</sup> It appears, however, that Sarah was not diligent. The following month Elizabeth wrote to her mother, 'I am sorry to hear Sarah makes out so badly I hope when return to quicken her or get another'.<sup>49</sup> Whether Elizabeth acted as a producer in any other respect is not clear. She was offered thanks in one letter for the gift of a goose sent to Samuel's cousins.<sup>50</sup> This might imply a household



in which some livestock was raised for domestic use but there is no other evidence to corroborate this assumption.

At some stages of her lifecycle childbearing and rearing would have occupied the majority of Elizabeth's time. Elizabeth had eight children during her lifetime, six with Samuel and two children with her second husband, Joseph Tucker. Although her first marriage was consummated soon after the wedding, it was a year before Elizabeth conceived a child that she carried to term. It has been suggested that most early modern women bore their first child within ten months of their marriage and thus this later conception might be an indication of Elizabeth's reproductive health.<sup>51</sup> Estimates suggest that during the late seventeenth century most women did not start to menstruate until the age of fourteen or fifteen, although, of course, it could have been earlier or later.<sup>52</sup> The question of whether or not Elizabeth had begun to menstruate at the time of her marriage is impossible to answer but she was just thirteen years and three months at that time. Moreover, her relatively long betrothal might suggest delay for a purpose. Medical advice was certainly clear that there was a risk of damage to the girl's reproductive health through intercourse prior to sexual maturity.<sup>53</sup> Elizabeth's youth at first pregnancy might also have been a contributing factor in the death of the child. Her daughter, also named Elizabeth, lived only eight days having been 'hurt in the Birth in the right Temple; died of that hurt and of the Thrush'.<sup>54</sup> Elizabeth was, however, pregnant again six months later with a child she successfully carried to term. The infant Elizabeth (known to the family as Betty) was born in March 1684.<sup>55</sup> It was not until 1688 that Elizabeth carried another child to term, that child Manasseh died of a fever in 1690.<sup>56</sup> Elizabeth's next pregnancies were in the mid- to late-1690s. Barbara was born in 1695, Samuel in 1697 and Francis in early 1700. One miscarriage was noted by Samuel in his diary in November 1692.<sup>57</sup> Of her eight children, six survived to adulthood.

Motherhood was 'a job' that required significant and intensive labour but it also brought relationships of 'profound significance' for both the woman and her offspring.<sup>58</sup> There can be no doubt of Elizabeth's affection for her children. She wrote lovingly of them when they were young, calling them variously her 'little tribe', her 'cubbs', and her 'two pair of illmatched clogs'.<sup>59</sup> When they were older that affection persisted with Elizabeth often writing of her 'dear children' and expressing her desire to see them when they were apart. Yet, most early modern mothers would have subscribed to the adage 'spare the rod and spoil the child'.<sup>60</sup> And Elizabeth did show herself to be aware of her children's faults, mentioning her daughter, Betty, as a poor correspondent and impatient.<sup>61</sup> As part of her care-giving Elizabeth would have been instrumental in the education of her children, at least giving them moral instruction.<sup>62</sup> From her

letters to her adult children, it is evident that her expectations of them were consistent with what is known about early modern motherhood. Indeed, her greatest disapprobation was reserved for her son Samuel who, in adulthood at least, was neglectful of his mother and step-father.<sup>63</sup> Elizabeth might also have been involved in the more formal education of her children. In one letter Samuel requested, 'If you can spare so much time hear Betty to construe some Latine & to say over the declensions & conjugations, else I shall have all to begin again at my Return'.<sup>64</sup> Interestingly, this implies it was Samuel who generally took charge of the education of his daughter.

Whether or not this was an indicator of a wider involvement in his children's care is more difficult to determine. There are relatively few mentions of his children in either the *Astrological Diary* or Samuel's letters. Those that survive do show an active concern in the health of his children and the provision of advice about how to medicate them. Thus in one letter he wrote 'I hope you are better in health & am glad to hear my little girl is mending. Madam Thompson says bole Armoniack & white sugar candy powdered & blown through a quill into her mouth is good if it be of the nature of the Thrush'.<sup>65</sup> Nonetheless, there is only evidence of a more developed relationship with his oldest daughter, Betty, who was fifteen at the time of his death. Their connection was a close one, as is attested by the one surviving letter from father to daughter. The letter focused on offering spiritual guidance and Samuel told his daughter 'It is a comfort to me that I have observed in you some good thing towards the Lord God of Israel & I trust he will perfect that good work he has begun in your conversion to him to serve the living God'.<sup>66</sup>

In other respects Samuel's contributions to the management of the household are easier to recover. Choosing decorations for the house, for example, was discussed and negotiated between the couple. During most of Samuel's trips to London he undertook to shop for things that, perhaps, could not be purchased in Rye. The letters show that Elizabeth gave Samuel instructions both prior to the trip and in reminders in letters. She reminded him in one series of letters to make sure that he did not forget the hangings and carpet they had discussed. And in the following letter she noted 'I forgot to instance in my last to you when I mentioned my hangings I must desire you to buy some of the same of the carpet enough to cover three of the little stools'.<sup>67</sup> Samuel responded that he had complied and had gone further, 'There is in the Box the hangings which are green & white a very large leaf & pretty figure, which I liked so well that I bought 24 yds and judged that it would do better to cover the Stooles & for a Carpet & every thing else of the same'. He went on to say 'But I suppose you will do nothing about it till I come home' implying that such things were choices that were made together.<sup>68</sup> Likewise

choices about practical domestic goods needed to be made by both partners when shopping had to be done at a distance. A very lengthy shopping list purchased during Samuel's final trip to London included a new watch for Samuel, numerous items of clothing, fabric, cut out gowns, shoes and hair powder. Samuel also bought books, a new oven door, and other household items including '4 pillowcoats...2 pewters for washbals...a brass potlid & a whisk...an armed chair black with rush bottomed & also an iron kettle, which will be too little I fear but I could meet with no bigger though were at a many shops'.<sup>69</sup> This would seem to indicate Samuel's awareness of the practical needs of the household.

The majority of the letters in the Jeake archive do not focus on domestic matters but where they do, they indicate that the management of the household was a shared concern. Notably, the letters show discussion between the couple, especially when it came to provisioning the home. They also hint at Samuel's knowledge of some of the practicalities of managing the household and his care over its appearance and comfort. While evidence is not abundant, the letters do point to what Grassby has described as a 'bustle of shared activity' with regard to the household rather than a strictly gendered delineation of tasks.<sup>70</sup> A similar bustle of shared activity can be observed in the family's business affairs.

## **MANAGING THE BUSINESS**

This article does not, and cannot from the surviving evidence, argue that Elizabeth's involvement in Samuel business represents a consistent partnership between husband and wife in the family's external economic activity. Yet it is clear that there was a necessary flexibility in the way their work was organised, such as has been observed by in a number of other studies.<sup>71</sup> In the case of the Jeakes, it was Samuel's absences from home that placed Elizabeth in the position of managing the household, her growing family and their business concerns at Rye. As we shall see, the latter included giving instructions to carriers and messengers, gathering and disseminating business and investment information, negotiations with Samuel's business partners and acquaintances, managing property and tenants, negotiating bills of exchange, borrowing and lending money, tending to the preservation of hops and flaxseed stored against future sales, the employment of men to help with those various tasks and the negotiation of the complex monetary environment of the late 1690s.

Generally accepted early modern gender roles did not necessarily allow for female power and authority. The household was imagined to be to be 'a miniature commonwealth in which the father was king'.<sup>72</sup> Yet, while women did not overtly contest this paradigm, as Elizabeth's experiences attest, the reality was much different from what might have been

expected. In a godly household, like the Jeakes', marriage might have been regarded as a partnership and Elizabeth as a 'helpmeet' to her husband.<sup>73</sup> Moreover, the wives of merchants and other tradesmen commonly found themselves in charge at home while their husbands were away.<sup>74</sup> The practicalities of life, and especially a domestic life which took the husband away from home for extended periods of time, required cooperation and a degree of female authority both within and outside of the household.<sup>75</sup> The fact that the wives of merchants often worked jointly with their husbands also ensured that they would have been comfortable supervising business, negotiating credit and making and receiving payments.<sup>76</sup>

There are indications in the letters and diary that from very early in the marriage while Samuel was away from home, Elizabeth stepped into his shoes to manage ongoing business affairs. A letter written in 1683 when Elizabeth was just 16 offered a solution to a problem for Samuel's approval. Elizabeth noted, 'I do intend if Knight and Videan come before you come home, I will get them to leave the money with Mr Smith and they to speake to Mr Finch to let the suit rest till he hear further from you if you dislike it pray contradict it speedily'.<sup>77</sup> Since Elizabeth married so young the question of what skills she might have brought to the marriage is pertinent. In the *Complete English Tradesman*, published in 1725, Daniel Defoe dedicated a chapter to the need to encourage wives to become acquainted with their husband's business, especially in order to prepare them to manage the business, or its winding down, after their husband's death.<sup>78</sup> Defoe expected women to be sufficiently familiar with a business's accounts, management, costs and customer base to assume management of it at little notice. This, of course, required that the wife have a basic level of literacy and numeracy. As a school master's daughter, Elizabeth probably received a basic education from her father but this is unlikely to have been directed towards fitting her to manage matters of business. Grassby argues that very few women would have received that sort of education.<sup>79</sup>

There is a hint in a letter written in late 1682, around eighteen months into the marriage that Elizabeth's education was continuing. Her father-in-law, Samuel senior, commented that he was pleased she had 'mended [her] hand in writing'.<sup>80</sup> Good letter-writing skills were essential for managing business and ensuring good relationships with contacts. Pat Hudson has noted the key role business letters played in establishing reputation at a distance.<sup>81</sup> In addition to tacit signifiers, such as handwriting and orthography, writers had to be able to employ 'particular vocabularies' to prove their trust-worthiness and help build the communities on which trade was based.<sup>82</sup> Numeracy would have been essential for a merchant's wife both for managing household accounts, which was usually a woman's domain, and for interaction with her husband's business world. Since girls would not have generally received a great deal of

instruction in numerate skills we can suppose that these too were skills acquired within the marriage.<sup>83</sup> Many women would have kept accounts for their husbands.<sup>84</sup> Alice Le Strange, for example, managed both the household and estate accounts for more than thirty years bringing far more clarity and efficiency to the task than had her husband.<sup>85</sup> However, all the surviving Jeake business accounts are in Samuel's hand and, if Elizabeth did keep household accounts of her own, they did not survive.

It is possible to observe through the letters that Elizabeth's handwriting and confidence matured over the early years of her marriage. Although we cannot more directly judge Elizabeth's skills, her husband did praise her business acumen.<sup>86</sup> Moreover, that her husband regarded Elizabeth as intelligent and interested in the world outside of Rye is indicated by his regular discussions in the letters not just of commodity markets but also of local and national politics. Sometimes this was done to reassure, as in April 1696, when he wrote to say 'we are not under any apprehensions of any thing the Jacobites or French can do'.<sup>87</sup> At other times the conversation seemed to reflect a belief that Elizabeth would be engaged with these matters, as in September 1697 in a letter which discussed the current leadership of the Corporation of Rye, noting that 'I find our management is very well liked of'.<sup>88</sup> Similarly Samuel's sending to Rye of the 'The Resolutions of Parliament' and the Kings speech 'which is worth you reading' implies high expectations of his wife's interest in matters of politics.<sup>89</sup>

The majority of our evidence for Elizabeth's roles in her husband's business comes from the periods during 1696, 1697 and 1699 when Samuel spent time in London managing his business affairs there. Samuel's principal concerns at this time were the management of his investments in the new national debt. This investment had been prompted by the fact that the Nine Years' War had 'spoiled all my Trade at Rye & I making but 5 per cent of my money at Interest upon Mortgages and Bonds, upon which I could but hardly maintain my family'.<sup>90</sup> As Parliament began to issue long-term debt instruments to fund the war, Samuel, prompted by his friend and contact in London, Thomas Miller, invested in annuities, the Million Adventure lottery and the Bank of England.<sup>91</sup> Although the prospects for these investments seemed very good in 1694, by 1696 Parliament was struggling to keep up payments on its annuities and the Million Lottery and the Bank of England's share price was in decline while the institution was not paying any dividends.<sup>92</sup> Having invested around £1,000 in the national debt and encouraged his mother-in-law to do likewise, Samuel could rightly say to Elizabeth in a letter dated 4 November 1697, 'You know the greatest of our concerns are now here. If they were not I should not stay from you'.<sup>93</sup>

Yet, despite Samuel's pessimism about trade, inland trade continued and during the war years he was active in buying and selling both hops and flaxseed, in addition to some small scale lending and the continuing management of his property portfolio. This work depended not on physical labour but primarily on information-gathering and dissemination and on negotiation. This type of labour needed to be managed by an individual with a stake in the business at hand, it could not easily be contracted out. However, it would have been extremely difficult for Samuel to manage his affairs in Rye at a distance. The postal service was certainly regular but it took around two days for letters to be delivered from London. Samuel experienced the difficulties this could create when in 1694 he missed the opportunity to purchase East India Company shares at a particular price because of the slowness of corresponding by post with his agent in London.<sup>94</sup> When he spent time in London, he was, therefore, obliged to place his business in the hands of someone in Rye. Interestingly, he did have a choice. He often operated in partnership with Joseph Tucker, another Rye resident, who might have overseen affairs at home. Samuel instead chose to entrust his wife with the management of his business.

The letters show that in order to replicate Samuel's labour, not only did Elizabeth work regularly outside of her home but also that the family's domestic space operated as business space. Business contacts visited the Jeake house and, at times when Samuel was away, Elizabeth was expected to greet them, possibly with the assistance of her mother and possibly alone.<sup>95</sup> Work clearly intermingled with sociability on these occasions and evidently Elizabeth was either comfortable, or expected by her husband to be comfortable, with this. The question of whether and how women could operate outside of the domestic space is one that has exercised scholars. Arguments have ranged around the question of the extent to which the home was a space from which the public were excluded and in which feminine domesticity ruled. Conduct books and advice manuals certainly acknowledged times when women's economic activities took them outside of the home, such as going to market, or engaging in agricultural tasks, but still made it clear that 'affaires abroad do most appertaine to the man', while the wife was responsible for the business of the house.<sup>96</sup> Grassby has asserted that women in business faced male hostility, and that 'chaste women' were expected to stay close to home. To do otherwise was to risk their reputation.<sup>97</sup> Yet this notion has been challenged in two respects. First, scholars have argued for there having been a great deal of diversity in both the nature of male and female work and in the location of that work.<sup>98</sup> Indeed, Lindström et al. have argued for the conceptualisation of families and households as 'interacting and networking units of work'.<sup>99</sup> Secondly, the rhetoric of marriage in much of early modern Europe was more diverse than is implied from a study of conduct books. There was, in many cases, emphasis on the

value of the labour of wives and an assertion that the financial stability of the family was to be secured 'by mutual hard work and cooperation'.<sup>100</sup>

Elizabeth was certainly expected regularly to work and network outside of the family home. In October 1697 Samuel asked her to 'enquire among the shopkeepers & assoon as you will draw Thirty pounds on me'.<sup>101</sup> Elizabeth was also frequently charged with the delivery of information to Samuel's business contacts in Rye, and especially to Joseph Tucker who bought and sold hops and flaxseed in partnership with Samuel.<sup>102</sup> While in London, Samuel was charged with a variety of business by friends, family and acquaintances at home. Many of the residents of Rye had frequent business dealings in London, used the city for purchases and, of course, there were matters like the purchase of the instruments of the national debt that could only be done there. It appeared to be common to entrust such business to those either resident or visiting London. Elizabeth was thus given frequent instruction to pass on messages from Samuel when a task was complete or to request further information. Some correspondents were expected to come to her for information but in other instances it was implied that she should seek them out.<sup>103</sup> Such arrangements were clearly not uncommon. Schmidt's studies, albeit relating to the Dutch economy, have suggested that it was typical for wives to undertake the labour of maintaining and supplying contacts.<sup>104</sup>

Implicit in that type of labour is that wives had authority to act on behalf of their husbands and that contacts accepted that authority. Ling et al. identify this as 'a considerable boon of the marital estate', arguing that within the verb-oriented studies undertaken by the *Gender and Work* group unmarried women's work was poorly represented within categories that required authority and the exercise of power.<sup>105</sup> Marriage apparently conferred a certain power in business relations. There are numerous indications in the letters that Elizabeth acted on her own authority. This was particularly the case when managing the purchase of commodities. Advice from Samuel was forthcoming but clearly Elizabeth still had to have the experience to make judgments about the quality of the commodities, the integrity of the contacts that had been made and the general state of the market. These were no easy tasks and purchases could be risky, especially when buying by sample. Indeed, Samuel noted specifically that contacts with goods to sell 'sometimes [were] apt to bring samples better than their goods are'.<sup>106</sup> Politics too influenced price movements. With regard to hops, after peace had been declared in September 1697 Samuel warned 'I think it not prudence to run much above 9 in the country, for now there is a peace there will be a noise made of the importing of forrain hops'. Similarly with regard to flaxseed Elizabeth was instructed to 'buy what you can, but do not exceed what I ordered for now forrain flaxseed will be imported'.<sup>107</sup> Thus watchfulness and

assertiveness was required in order to ensure that quality was preserved and price risks managed.

The family's dealing in commodities like hops and flaxseed, which formed the majority of their trade during the 1690s, required the employment of labour to assist with jobs that Elizabeth either could not manage or would have considered inappropriate. It is notable that there is no suggestion in the letters that Elizabeth herself should engage in any forms of manual labour. Thus, when the flaxseed stored by Samuel in Rye required turning, 'lest it heat', Elizabeth was instructed to hire 'Goddin' to do it.<sup>108</sup> Elizabeth also recruited and instructed the carriers who transported both flaxseed and hops to the London markets when it was required. This required her to give instructions to male contacts and ensure those instructions were carried out. There is no mention of any of these arrangements going awry so Elizabeth's authority in such matters was clearly well established.

Elizabeth's endeavours on Samuel's behalf also embedded her in the complex monetary and credit environment of the late seventeenth century. Because of its scarcity, and difficulties and dangers of transporting specie, almost all transactions in the early modern economy were based on credit, either in the form of informal notes or verbal promises to pay.<sup>109</sup> As such, Elizabeth was instructed from time to time to borrow money.<sup>110</sup> The formality of these arrangements is indicated by Samuel giving her written instructions about how to draw up a bill, which he instructed to be signed in her name and on his behalf thus:

Rye Oct: th 1697 per £30

At three days sight hereof pay to Mr A.B. or order the summe of Thirty Pounds Sterling value of himself as per advice of

Your Lo Wife E. J.

To S J at Mr T Ms merch<sup>111</sup>  
in Dunster Court Mincing Lane London<sup>112</sup>

In April 1699 regarding the arrangements to borrow £100 she was encouraged to apply 'of Nic Stone, Mr Wilmshurst, John French or Robt Brown or some other that you know is sure, and assoon as you can'.<sup>113</sup> In another letter Samuel noted that a bill had been drawn on Elizabeth on his behalf by his acquaintance Thomas Miller and to pay another individual who, it seems, was not known to either of the Jeakes.<sup>114</sup> This indicates Elizabeth's part in a complex web of



formal financial obligations, in which was bound up not just the reputation of her husband but also the family's friend and London agent, Thomas Miller.

The fact that Elizabeth was made party to such devices indicates the trust her husband reposed in her. Legally Elizabeth, as a married woman, could not make a contract in her own right. There were jurisdictions, such as the City of London, where married women could trade, sue and be sued as a *feme sole*, a single woman, but, as McIntosh has argued, the benefits this conferred were qualified and the status would, in any case, not have applied in Rye.<sup>115</sup> A *feme covert*, a married woman, in the words of the Earl of Clarendon, Lord Chancellor during the 1660s, 'cannot give a mutual assent of her mind, nor do any act without her husband; for her will and mind, as also herself, is under, and subject to the will and mind of her husband'.<sup>116</sup> Yet, this does not mean that a wife contracting on behalf of her husband would not be subject to scrutiny nor dependent on maintaining a good reputation in her own right. Muldrew has shown that credit was inextricably bound to reputation for early moderns.<sup>117</sup> Any lapse of Elizabeth's part would have had a negative impact upon Samuel's ability to obtain credit.

In addition to managing credit relationships, Elizabeth was placed in the much more difficult position of having to manage transactions in specie. This was complicated because the Nine Years War had acted as a serious drain on the currency as bullion was shipped to the Low Countries to pay troops and fund provisions and supplies.<sup>118</sup> A recoinage, undertaken to address the problem, merely created a further drain on the currency and caused a severe shortage of coin in circulation.<sup>119</sup> In total silver coin worth around £5.7 million in nominal value was called back to the Mint. When recoined and reissued it amounted to just £3.3 million.<sup>120</sup> It is little wonder that vigilance regarding the value of coin was a regular theme in Samuel's letters during this period.<sup>121</sup> In one letter written in May 1696 Samuel informed Elizabeth 'If Goody Pavis have not paid her money before you receive this don't take it at all Because now Guineas are settled, clipt money will not be current'.<sup>122</sup> The problem was a persistent one and in December 1697 Samuel noted, 'I would not have you take the Guineas unless you could put them away immediately as you took them. Nor meddle with any Pistols for they are worth but 17s 4d'.<sup>123</sup> Managing such transactions would have required careful negotiation, an understanding of what was a highly complex coinage made up of English and foreign, clipped, counterfeit and sound currency and knowledge of where coin might be passed off before its value dropped.

Indeed, Elizabeth must have been a skilled negotiator, as the letters suggest that much of her time was taken up with potentially disputatious situations. With regard to the purchase of flaxseed from Mr Snoad, Samuel reminded her that 'if he should bring it in & insist upon your agreement I would have no difference with him but would give him 34s p quarter if he be

so satisfied. For I would have every body easy that I deal with. Or if you find him much dissatisfied (as you know at the return of your messenger) I had rather give 36s then have any brawling about it'.<sup>124</sup> When further negotiations with Snoad were deemed necessary, Elizabeth was asked to write the letter containing Samuel's decisions.<sup>125</sup> Protracted negotiations with Samuel's tenants were also left in Elizabeth's hands. In September 1697 Samuel offered detailed instructions:

I would have you send to Colman the Tailor & tell him before my Mother (who may be a witness) that if he intend to stay in my house I shall not let it under 50s per year. Only because he may be unprovided I will condescend that he may tarry till Ladyday at the rate of 40s per annum. And know his mind one way or other before Michaelmas day. Then after you have done this send to Mr John Curteis junior or his wife & give them warning either to continue in my house at £4 per annum or else to leave it at Ladyday, be sure give warning before Michaelmas. I shall never get any rent of them & therefore I must take this occasion & now there is peace I do not fear a Ten[an]t. If Colman refuse to continue as above then you may tell Mrs Curtis if she will remove thither at 50 s per year, she may which I will admit of because she was your midwife, for I shall be always troubled to get the Rent. But that keep to your self. If Col[man] leave his house its like he will go back into his own & [word lost] perhaps Smith may hire or buy mine, which my Mother m[ay] mention to them if it should so fall out.

Such negotiations must have placed an emotional strain on Elizabeth. In a society so heavily dependent on the maintenance of social networks, conflict among friends and neighbours was fraught with difficulties. In other ways too, there was emotional labour associated with taking an equal share in managing the family's economic concerns. Samuel sometimes wrote to his wife of his worries about the state of the various markets in which he was concerned. In October 1697 he informed her, 'There's no money on the Million Lottery. Several of the Proprietors are to meet next Wednesday to concert the best methods to obtain the Arrears where I intend to be with them'.<sup>126</sup> And then a month later he wrote to say, 'I have been fain to sell some of our hops to loss, but I would not have you discouraged about that it being no more than what I hope we may well bear & recover again without much feeling it'.<sup>127</sup> Moreover, whatever Samuel's praise for Elizabeth's skills, reading between the lines in the letters reveals that she was not always happy with the extra responsibilities she was given. It could cause disputes between them, as is implied by Samuel's apology for a seeming failure to keep Elizabeth informed. He told her, 'I thought I had wrote you every week if not I forgot my self. But if Mr Tucker did not tell you about Guineas it was his fault for I desired him particularly to acquaint you & I thought he might have done so much'.<sup>128</sup> The strains on Elizabeth were most evident during Samuel's three-month sojourn in London at the end of

1697. He wrote to reassure her that he would not stay away were it not for the importance of the business in London and to apologise for the trouble he was giving. But, at that time, the burdens on Elizabeth were indeed great. In addition to having to manage business and the household, she was just recovering from the birth of her son Samuel, born in June 1697.<sup>129</sup> Elizabeth was clearly a skilled businesswoman but that does not necessarily mean that, at all times, she relished the role.

The Jeake marriage was obviously an active partnership which benefited the household but this does not imply the marriage was egalitarian. It has been asserted that such shared endeavour within the household meant that the subordination of early modern women was ‘less problematic than it might have been because, in the end, “the family’s joint economic activity was the first priority for everyone”’.<sup>130</sup> As Hunt reminds us, this kind of assumption risks obscuring the extent to which decision-making benefited the male members of the family and, it might be added, privileged male views of the economic priorities for the household.<sup>131</sup>

## **CONCLUSION**

Amy Louise Erickson argues that the marital economy in the early modern period ‘depended overwhelmingly on the industry of husband and wife, and on their capacity to cooperate’.<sup>132</sup> Yet, we have not paid sufficient attention to the labour of married women on behalf of their husbands. Historians concerned with the work of early modern women have been more likely to focus on those with their own occupational identity. This is understandable. The type of labour performed by Elizabeth Jeake is invariably lost because where it appears in the official record, or in accounts, it is recorded as work performed in the name of the husband. Where it can be recovered, notably through verb-oriented data collection, the sources used do not often yield detailed studies of individuals at work. There are indeed few collections of sources that give us the kind of insight into a wife’s ‘assisting labour’ that is presented by the Jeake letters.

Of course, the Jeake family offers just one case study and for every husband dependent on the labour of his wife there might have been another who, like Thomas Pitt, found ‘great inconvenience by trusting a woman with busyness’.<sup>133</sup> Moreover, many of the tasks performed within the Jeakes’ marital economy remained gendered. Elizabeth still did take primary responsibility for the home and the childcare while Samuel took primary responsibility for business endeavours. Nonetheless, this account of Elizabeth Jeake’s work with, and for, her husband is suggestive of the need to pay more attention to this aspect of early modern women’s lives. Elizabeth never engaged in paid labour but she worked to support the marital economy.

Moreover, this was highly skilled work, requiring literacy, numeracy, knowledge of the business environment, complex decision-making, authority and power.

---

<sup>1</sup> East Sussex Record Office, Frewen Archive [hereafter ESRO FRE] 5312

<sup>2</sup> Alice Clark (1918), *Working life of women in the seventeenth century* (London: Routledge); Ivy Pinchbeck (1930), *Women Workers and the Industrial Revolution, 1750-1850* (London: Routledge); Louise A. Tilly and Joan W. Scott (1978), *Women, Work and Family* (London: Methuen); Bridget Hill (1989), *Women, work and sexual politics in eighteenth-century England* (Oxford: Blackwell); Peter Earle (1989), 'The female labour market in London in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries', *Economic History Review*, 42, pp. 328-353. For more recent work see also Amy Louise Erickson (2008), 'Married women's occupations in eighteenth-century London', *Continuity and Change*, 23, pp. 267-307; Jane Whittle (2005), 'Housewives and servants in rural England, 1440-1650: evidence of women's work from probate documents', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 15, pp. 51-74; Jane Whittle (2014), 'Enterprising widows and active wives: women's unpaid work in the household economy of early modern England', *The History of the Family*, 19, pp. 283-300; M. E. Wiesner-Hanks (2008), *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe*, third edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press). See also the ongoing Women's Work in Rural England, 1500-1700 project: <https://earlymodernwomenswork.wordpress.com/>

<sup>3</sup> Gender and Work, Uppsala University: <http://gaw.hist.uu.se/?languageId=1>, last accessed 14 January 2018.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 216.

<sup>5</sup> Maria Ågren (2017), 'Conclusion' in Maria Ågren (ed.) *Making a Living, Making a Difference* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), p. 212.

<sup>6</sup> Danielle van den Heuvel (2007), *Women and entrepreneurship. Female traders in the Northern Netherlands c. 1580-1815* (Amsterdam: Aksant); Ariadne Schmidt and Elise van Nederveen Meerkerk (2012), 'Reconsidering the "First Male-Breadwinner Economy": Women's Labor Force Participation in the Netherlands, 1600-1900', *Feminist Economics*, 118, pp. 69-96; Ariadne Schmidt (2014) 'The profits of unpaid work. "Assisting" labour of women in the early modern urban Dutch economy', *The History of the Family*, 19, pp. 301-322; Deborah Simonton (1998), *A History of European Women's Work 1700 to the Present* (London and New York: Routledge).

<sup>7</sup> Erickson, 'Married women's occupations', pp. 292-294.

<sup>8</sup> See, for example, See also Nicola Phillips (2006), *Women in Business, 1700-1850* (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer); Hannah Barker (2006), *The Business of Women: female enterprise and urban development in northern England 1760-1830* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

<sup>9</sup> See, for example, Margaret Hunt (2004), 'Women and the fiscal-imperial state in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries' in Kathleen Wilson (ed.), *A New Imperial History: culture, identity, and modernity in Britain and the Empire, 1660-1840* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 29-47; Amy Froide (2017), *Silent Partners: women as public investors during Britain's financial revolution, 1690-1750* (Oxford: Oxford University Press); Anne Laurence (2006), 'Lady Betty Hastings, her half-sisters and the South Sea Bubble: family fortunes and strategies', *Women's History Review*, 15, pp. 533-40.

<sup>10</sup> Amy Louise Erickson (1993), *Women and property in early modern England* (London: Routledge); Whittle, 'Enterprising widows and active wives'.

<sup>11</sup> Sara Mendelson and Patricia Crawford (2000), *Women in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), p. 303.

<sup>12</sup> Sofia Ling, Karin Hassan Jansson, Marie Lennersand, Christopher Pihl, and Maria Ågren, 'Marriage and Work: intertwined sources of agency and authority' in Ågren (ed.) *Making a Living*, p. 83.

<sup>13</sup> Quoted in Richard Grassby (2001), *Kinship and Capitalism: marriage, family and business in the English-speaking world 580-1740* (Cambridge: Woodrow Wilson Center Press and Cambridge University Press), p. 324.

<sup>14</sup> Grassby, *Kinship and Capitalism*, pp. 322-325; Margaret R. Hunt (1996), *The Middling Sort: commerce, gender and the family in England 1680-1780* (Berkeley: University of California Press), chapter 5; Cathryn Spence (2017), 'Women, Gender and Credit in Early Modern Western European Towns' in Deborah Simonton (ed.), *The Routledge History Handbook of Gender and the Urban Experience* (London and New York: Routledge).

<sup>15</sup> Anne L. Murphy (2006), 'Dealing with uncertainty: managing personal investment in the early English national debt', *History*, 91, pp. 200-217.

<sup>16</sup> Michael Hunter and Annabel Gregory (1988), *An Astrological Diary of the Seventeenth Century: Samuel Jeake of Rye 1652-1699* (Oxford: Clarendon Press); Michael Hunter, G. Mandelbrote, R. Ovenden and N. Smith (eds.) (1999), *A Radical's Books: the library catalogue of Samuel Jeake of Rye, 1623-90* (Woodbridge: Boydell

- and Brewer). See also: T. W. W. Smart (1861), 'A Biographical Sketch of Samuel Jeake, senr. of Rye', *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, 13, 57-79.
- <sup>17</sup> Hunter and Gregory, *Astrological Diary*, p. 162; p. 168; p. 194.
- <sup>18</sup> M. J. Burchall (1982), 'Inhabitants of Rye in 1660', *Sussex Genealogist and Local Historian*, 4, p. 103.
- <sup>19</sup> ESRO, RYE 47/162/11, General Files, Mayoralty of Thomas Greenfield; uncalendared, 1659-60.
- <sup>20</sup> ESRO FRE 5264.
- <sup>21</sup> Hunter and Gregory, *Astrological Diary*, 156.
- <sup>22</sup> E. A. Wrigley and Roger Schofield (1989), *The Population History of England 1541-1871: a reconstruction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p. 423-435
- <sup>23</sup> Hunter and Gregory, *Astrological Diary*, p. 151.
- <sup>24</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 129-131; pp. 148-49.
- <sup>25</sup> The house is still standing on Mermaid Street in Rye. Hunter and Gregory, *Astrological Diary*, p. 150.
- <sup>26</sup> Hunter and Gregory, *Astrological Diary*, pp. 150-53.
- <sup>27</sup> Amy Louise Erickson (2005), 'The marital economy in comparative perspective' in Maria Ågren and Amy Louise Erickson (eds.), *The Marital Economy in Scandinavia and Britain 1400-1900* (Aldershot: Ashgate), p. 1.
- <sup>28</sup> Rye Museum Archive, Selmes Manuscripts, Stock Accounts RYEYT, N39.39.1-5; Profit Accounts N39.41.1-6.
- <sup>29</sup> Hunter and Gregory, *Astrological Diary*, pp. 151-2.
- <sup>30</sup> Mendelson and Crawford, *Women*, p. 129.
- <sup>31</sup> Hunter and Gregory, *Astrological Diary*, p. 153.
- <sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 155.
- <sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, *Astrological Diary*, p. 192.
- <sup>34</sup> ESRO FRE 5241; FRE 5242.
- <sup>35</sup> ESRO FRE 5303.
- <sup>36</sup> ESRO FRE 5107
- <sup>37</sup> Wiesner-Hanks, *Women and Gender*, p. 101.
- <sup>38</sup> Antony Buxton (2015), *Domestic Culture in Early Modern England* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press), p. 79.
- <sup>39</sup> Keith Wrightson (2002), *Earthly Necessities: economic lives in early modern Britain, 1470-1750* (London: Penguin), p. 31.
- <sup>40</sup> Amanda Flather (2007), *Gender and Space in Early Modern England* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press in association with the Royal Historical Society), p. 80.
- <sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 81.
- <sup>42</sup> Patricia Crawford and Laura Gowing (2000), *Women's Worlds in Seventeenth-Century England: a Sourcebook* (London and New York: Routledge), pp. 100-104.
- <sup>43</sup> ESRO FRE 5360 and FRE 5361.
- <sup>44</sup> Cited in Tim Reinke-Williams (2014), *Women, Work and Sociability in Early Modern London* (Basingstoke: Palgrave), p. 64.
- <sup>45</sup> D. Tankard (2016), 'They tell me they were in fashion last year': Samuel and Elizabeth Jeake and clothing fashions in late seventeenth-century London and Rye', *Costume*, 50, 20-41.
- <sup>46</sup> ESRO FRE 5361.
- <sup>47</sup> ESRO FRE 5341.
- <sup>48</sup> ESRO FRE 5340.
- <sup>49</sup> ESRO FRE 5353.
- <sup>50</sup> ESRO FRE 5141.
- <sup>51</sup> Mendelson and Crawford, *Women*, p. 149.
- <sup>52</sup> Sara Read (2013), *Menstruation and the Female Body in Early Modern England* (Basingstoke: Palgrave).
- <sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 44.
- <sup>54</sup> Hunter and Gregory, *Astrological Diary*, p. 162. The child was born on 10 December 1682 and died on the 18 December.
- <sup>55</sup> Hunter and Gregory, *Astrological Diary*, p. 162; p. 168.
- <sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 194; p. 206.
- <sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 219.
- <sup>58</sup> Mendelson and Crawford, *Women*, p. 148.
- <sup>59</sup> ESRO FRE 5343; FRE 5350: FRE 5348.
- <sup>60</sup> Mendelson and Crawford, *Women*, p. 161.
- <sup>61</sup> ESRO FRE 5338 and FRE 5347.
- <sup>62</sup> Kenneth Charlton (1994), 'Mothers as educative agents in pre-industrial England', *History of Education*, 23, pp. 129-56.
- <sup>63</sup> ESRO FRE 5389.
- <sup>64</sup> ESRO FRE 5308.

- 
- <sup>65</sup> ESRO FRE 5316.
- <sup>66</sup> ESRO FRE 5359.
- <sup>67</sup> ESRO FRE 5240 and FRE 5241.
- <sup>68</sup> ESRO FRE 5242.
- <sup>69</sup> ESRO FRE 5330.
- <sup>70</sup> Grassby, *Kinship*, 94. See also Flather, *Gender and Space*, p. 40.
- <sup>71</sup> Dag Lindström, Rosemarie Fiebranz, Jonas Lindström, Jan Mispelaere, and Göran Rydén, 'Working Together' in Ågren (ed.), *Making a Living*, p. 75.
- <sup>72</sup> B. Capp (1996), 'Separate Domains? Women and Authority in Early Modern England' in P. Griffiths, A. Fox and S. Hindle eds., *The Experience of Authority in Early Modern England* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 1996), p. 118.
- <sup>73</sup> Antony Buxton (2015), *Domestic Culture in Early Modern England* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press).
- <sup>74</sup> Spence, 'Women, Gender and Credit', pp. 25-28.
- <sup>75</sup> Grassby, *Kinship and Capitalism*, p. 92.
- <sup>76</sup> Spence, 'Women, Gender and Credit', p. 25.
- <sup>77</sup> ESRO FRE 5107.
- <sup>78</sup> Daniel Defoe, *The Complete English Tradesman* (London, 1725), chapter XXI.
- <sup>79</sup> Grassby, *Kinship and Capitalism*, p. 337.
- <sup>80</sup> ESRO FRE 5141.
- <sup>81</sup> Pat Hudson (2014), 'Correspondence and Commitment : British Traders' Letters in the Long Eighteenth Century', *Cultural and Social History*, 11, pp. 527-553.
- <sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 535-537.
- <sup>83</sup> B. Lemire (2012), *The business of everyday life. Gender, practice and social politics in England, c.1600–1900* (Manchester: Manchester University Press), p. 204.
- <sup>84</sup> Grassby, *Kinship and Capitalism*, pp. 336-37.
- <sup>85</sup> Jane Whittle and Elizabeth Griffiths (2012), *Consumption and Gender in the Early Seventeenth-Century Household: the world of Alice Le Strange* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), p. 28.
- <sup>86</sup> ESRO FRE 5320, see also FRE 5309; FRE 5312.
- <sup>87</sup> ESRO FRE 5302.
- <sup>88</sup> ESRO FRE 5303.
- <sup>89</sup> ESRO FRE 5302; FRE 5322.
- <sup>90</sup> Hunter and Gregory, *Astrological Diary*, 233.
- <sup>91</sup> Murphy, 'Dealing with uncertainty'.
- <sup>92</sup> Anne L. Murphy (2009), *The Origins of English Financial Markets: investment and speculation before the South Sea Bubble* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 53-58.
- <sup>93</sup> ESRO FRE 5318
- <sup>94</sup> Hunter and Gregory, *Astrological Diary*, pp. 244-246.
- <sup>95</sup> ESRO FRE 5312.
- <sup>96</sup> Jane Whittle (2011), 'The House as a Place of Work in Early Modern Rural England', *Home Cultures*, 8, p. 137.
- <sup>97</sup> Grassby, *Kinship and Capitalism*, p. 335.
- <sup>98</sup> Flather, *Gender and Space*, pp. 75-93.
- <sup>99</sup> Lindström et al. 'Working Together', p. 60.
- <sup>100</sup> Quoted in Ling et al., 'Marriage and Work', p. 87.
- <sup>101</sup> ESRO FRE 5311.
- <sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>103</sup> See for example ESRO FRE 5306.
- <sup>104</sup> Schmidt, 'Profits of unpaid work', p. 312.
- <sup>105</sup> Ling et al., 'Marriage and Work', p. 95.
- <sup>106</sup> ESRO FRE 5307.
- <sup>107</sup> ESRO FRE 5306.
- <sup>108</sup> ESRO FRE 5314.
- <sup>109</sup> Craig Muldrew (2003), "'A Mutual Assent of Her Mind'?" Women, Debt, Litigation and Contract in Early Modern England', *History Workshop Journal*, 55, p. 48.
- <sup>110</sup> See, for example, Hunter and Gregory, *Astrological Diary*, p. 233; p. 237.
- <sup>111</sup> Thomas Miller, merchant.
- <sup>112</sup> ESRO FRE 5311.
- <sup>113</sup> ESRO FRE 5327.
- <sup>114</sup> ESRO FRE 5329.

---

<sup>115</sup> Marjorie K. McIntosh (2005), 'The Benefits and Drawbacks of Feme Sole Status in England, 1300-1630', *Journal of British Studies*, 44, pp. 410-438.

<sup>116</sup> Quoted in Muldrew, "Mutual Assent of Her Mind", p. 48.

<sup>117</sup> Craig Muldrew (1998), *The Economy of Obligation: the culture of credit and social relations in early modern England* (Basingstoke, Palgrave).

<sup>118</sup> D. W. Jones (1998) *War and Economy in the Age of William III and Marlborough* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).

<sup>119</sup> M. H. Li (1963), *The Great Recoinage of 1696-9* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson).

<sup>120</sup> P. G. M. Dickson, (1993), *The Financial Revolution in England: A Study in the Development of Public Credit 1688-1756* (London: Routledge).

349.

<sup>121</sup> See ESRO FRE 5301; FRE 5313; FRE 5315; FRE 5316; FRE 5322).

<sup>122</sup> ESRO FRE 5301.

<sup>123</sup> ESRO FRE 5322.

<sup>124</sup> ESRO FRE 5316.

<sup>125</sup> ESRO FRE 5318.

<sup>126</sup> ESRO FRE 5315.

<sup>127</sup> ESRO FRE 5319.

<sup>128</sup> ESRO, FRE 5315.

<sup>129</sup> Mendelson and Crawford, *Women*, p. 308.

<sup>130</sup> Tilly and Scott, *Women, Work and the Family* quoted in Hunt, *Middling Sort*, p. 135

<sup>131</sup> Hunt, *Middling Sort*, p. 135.

<sup>132</sup> Erickson 'Marital economy', p. 1.

<sup>133</sup> Quoted in Grassby, *Kinship and Capitalism*, p. 323.