



Useful Toil: Autobiographies of Working People from the 1820s to the 1920s (Modern British History)

By Professor John Burnett, John Burnett

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Useful Toil engages freshly and directly with the 'ordinary' people of the nineteenth century. John Burnett has assembled twenty seven telling extracts from the diaries and autobiographies of working people - wheelwrights and stone-masons, miners and munition workers, butlers and kitchen maids, navvies, carpenters, potters and ship assistants to list only a few. The men and women who speak in these pages concentrate on their working experiences, though they also write about their homes and their fears. They thus reveal, often unconsciously, the essence of their attitudes, values and beliefs.

Burnett's broad and sympathetic introductions focus and contextualise the wealth of material. These stories provide the antithesis of 'great name' history, yet they constantly touch on human experiences that are timeless and universal.

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