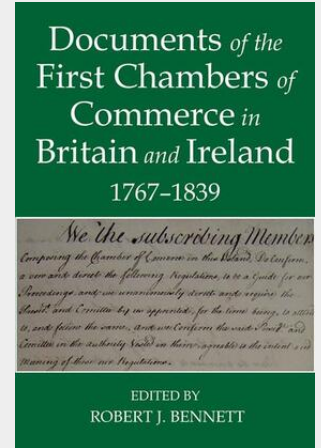


Documents of the First Chambers of Commerce in Britain and Ireland, 1767-1839

This book is the first systematic collection of documents for the history of early chambers of commerce. The documents cover all local chambers founded 1767-1839 as well as those that were unsuccessful in establishment. It covers all chambers in the UK and Ireland, and the significant developments in the early USA, Canada, and Jamaica. This provides to other researchers, local libraries, and archives a firm foundation of aligned local information. The documents include the rules, charters, and founding process of all chambers, which are analysed in the Introduction. The documents also cover the wider discourse from the 1690s that preceded chamber foundation, how differences of opinion and disputes between members were managed, their main political campaigns, their most significant services and activities, how parliamentary law agents were deployed, and their relation with the General Chamber of Manufactures 1785-7 and the union of chambers 1790-1805. An appendix lists all known early chamber members 1767-1839 and provides information on their business characteristics. The documents and the commentary challenge previous academic assessments offering important new insights into chamber persistence and interrelations with protest and 'reform' agendas. The English-law chambers have common origins and retain the unifying characteristic of being formed under common law as independent voluntary bodies. This contrasts with most European chamber models. With no compulsory membership, the documents evidence how early chamber leaders developed methods to manage the dynamics of exit, voice, and loyalty, and encourage involvement in order to limit free riding.



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