



Worst Jobs In History: The Most Unenviable Jobs Of The Last Two Thousand Years

Tony Robinson

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As befits the man behind Baldrick, Tony Robinson sets out to investigate life in the underbelly of history. Whether it's swilling out the crotch of a knight's soiled armour after the battle of Agincourt, risking his neck in the rigging of HMS Victory, or as 'Groomer of the Stool' going to places where none of Henry VIII's six wives would venture - Tony endures it all to get to the bottom (sometimes literally) of the story. Covering the Roman invasion to the reign of Queen Victoria, Tony's challenge is to seek out the worst jobs of each era. The very names Scab Eater, Powder Monkey and Seeker of the Dead underline the fact that the past is a different and fairly disgusting country. The Gunpowder Plot drew Tony to the role of the Saltpetre man who collected human waste for its nitrate content to turn into gunpowder. In the same vein, there's a look at some of the worst jobs behind the building of the great medieval cathedrals. We look at the dire conditions on Nelson's Victory where the most common form of retirement was being sewn into your hammock with a couple of cannon balls and dropped over the side. Then there's the impact of the Industrial Revolution, a source of wealth and power for the few, but a cornucopia of lousy jobs for the many. Richly illustrated with artwork, photographs and diagrams, "The Worst Jobs in History" really gets into the grime of how life was for ordinary people and provides a vivid, alternative and fairly disgusting history of Britain.

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