

LEGAL  
FOUNDATIONS  
OF TRIBUNALS IN  
NINETEENTH  
CENTURY ENGLAND  
CHANTAL STEBBINGS

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NINETEENTH-CENTURY  
ENGLAND

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CAMBRIDGE  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS  
Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo

Cambridge University Press  
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org  
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521869072

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First published 2006

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library*

ISBN-13 978-0-521-86907-2 hardback  
ISBN-10 0-521-86907-2 hardback

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## LEGAL FOUNDATIONS OF TRIBUNALS IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY ENGLAND

Nineteenth-century governments faced considerable challenges from the rapid, novel and profound changes in social and economic conditions resulting from the industrial revolution. In the context of an increasingly sophisticated and complex government, from the 1830s the specialist and largely lay statutory tribunal was conceived and adopted as the principal method of both implementing the new regulatory legislation and resolving disputes, between the state and the subject, or between subject and subject. The tribunal's legal nature and procedures, and its place in the machinery of justice, were debated and refined throughout the Victorian period. In examining this process, this book explains the interaction between legal constraints, social and economic demand and political expediency which gave rise to this form of dispute-resolution. It reveals the imagination and creativity of legislators who drew on diverse legal institutions and values to create the new tribunals, and shows how the modern difficulties of legal classification and analysis were largely the result of the institution's nineteenth-century development.

CHANTAL STEBBINGS is Professor of Law and Legal History at the University of Exeter. Her research is in the commercial legal history of the nineteenth century, with special reference to the law of taxation, trusts and commercial property. She has written extensively in this field, including *The Private Trustee in Victorian England* (Cambridge University Press, 2002).

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This project was made possible by the generous funding of the British Academy, whose support, both financial and otherwise, I gratefully acknowledge. I would like to thank Dr Ken Emond of the British Academy for his patient efficiency, Mr Roger Brien of the Devon and Exeter Institution for providing the perfect working environment, and a great many friends and colleagues in many universities in legal history and in tax law who have patiently discussed aspects of this work with me. Their interest and advice have been invaluable. Any remaining errors are, of course, my own. My special thanks to my husband Howard who, while far from his own field of cell biology, has read every draft of every chapter with unflinching patience, care, humour and wise counsel.

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