

The 1363 English Sumptuary Law:  
A comparison with Fabric Prices of the Late Fourteenth-Century

Thesis

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Master of Science in  
the Graduate School of The Ohio State University

By  
Sarah Kelly Silverman

Graduate Program in Human Ecology

The Ohio State University  
2011

Master's Examination Committee:

Patricia Anne Cunningham, PhD. - Advisor  
Sarah-Grace Heller, PhD.  
Gayle M. Strege

Copyrighted by  
Sarah Kelly Silverman  
2011

## Abstract

The 1363 English Sumptuary law was put in place to control the consumption of fabrics and related goods based on social class. The social implications of such laws have been discussed previously as reviewed in the literature. But there is a need to better understand the context, purpose, and function of these laws through examination of the prices of fabrics compared with the limits on cloth expenditure set out by the sumptuary laws.

This thesis provides a comparison of the 1363 English sumptuary law, the most comprehensive of the fourteenth-century English sumptuary laws, with available fabric prices from the fourteenth century. The fabric prices come from transcriptions of fourteenth-century documents that record fabric purchases for making clothing. Through a comparison of these documents it is possible to gain some understanding of the fabrics available to people based on the restrictions in the 1363 sumptuary law.

## **Acknowledgments**

I wish to acknowledge all who have helped toward the successful completion of this thesis: my advisor, Dr. Patricia Cunningham, for her time, guidance, and encouragement; to Dr. Sarah-Grace Heller for her help in getting me back on track when I went on tangents; to Gayle Strege for her suggestions and help in sorting ideas; and to Kristine Kearney for her understanding and for helping out at the last minute when her assistance was needed.

## Vita

May 2006 .....B. S. The University of Texas at  
Austin

September 2009 to present .....Graduate Associate, Department of  
Consumer Science, The Ohio State  
University

## Fields of Study

Major Field: Human Ecology

## Table of Contents

Abstract.....	ii
Acknowledgments.....	iii
Vita.....	iv
Fields of Study.....	iv
Chapter 1 - Introduction.....	1
Statement of Problem.....	5
Objectives.....	6
Literature Review.....	7
Limitations.....	12
Method.....	13
Chapter 2 - A History of English Sumptuary Laws.....	17
Introduction.....	17
Overview of previous works on English sumptuary laws.....	17
The 1336 Law.....	19
The 1363 Law.....	21
Sumptuary laws in other countries.....	24
Chapter 3 - The English Textile Industry.....	27
Statutes Related to the Production and Sale of Textiles and Fiber.....	37
Other fabrics.....	39
Chapter 4 – Sources for Fabric Prices.....	42
The Black Prince’s Register.....	43
The Chamberlains’ Accounts from Chester.....	46
Abingdon Abbey Account Book.....	47
Chapter 5 - Comparison with the 1363 Law.....	48
Chapter 6 - Conclusion.....	55
Appendix A - Statutes.....	58
Apparel.....	58
Cloth.....	60

Summary of the 1363 Sumptuary Law .....	62
Appendix B - Documents.....	64
Summary of the Black Prince's Register .....	68
Appendix C - Commonly Used Conversions.....	73
Glossary .....	74
Bibliography .....	78
Primary Sources .....	81

## Chapter 1 - Introduction

Fourteenth-century Europe saw an increase in wealth for most of the social classes, especially among those of the middle classes, the artisans, craftsmen, and merchants. The fourteenth century also saw a stronger shift toward a merchant based economy in which the influx of gold into a country was often related to the amount of trade in finished goods the country was exporting. England was one of the last of the European countries to build a strong merchant economy with the export of finished woolen cloth, although they began to see the beginnings of it with the large trade in wool fiber from the thirteenth century onwards.

Edward III, who reigned from 1327 to 1377, kept trying to find ways to increase the amount of bullion coming into England to fund his war with France. With the increase of bullion into England, an overall increase in wealth of its inhabitants would be expected. This would mean that those of the lower and middle classes would also have experienced increased wealth, and would be able to acquire more expensive goods and food.

While today it is possible to make assumptions about someone's wealth by looking at their car or house, in the Middle Ages people could determine the wealth of another by looking at their clothing. The fabrics, embroidery, and other elements from which the clothing was constructed, would all be considered in determining someone's wealth. Additionally, the amount of fabric used in a garment would also be considered. Until the more revealing clothing styles became fashionable voluminous clothing was



more popular. How can the 1363 sumptuary law, the focus of this thesis, be reconciled with the available data on fabric prices in the late fourteenth-century to better understand how the statute impacted the lives of those to whom it pertained?

The increases in wealth throughout Europe meant that more people were able to afford more costly goods, including better quality fabrics for their clothing. Sumptuary laws, which were designed to limit people's display of goods, and purportedly to limit excessive expenditures, can often be found when a country or region appears to be experiencing an increase in wealth.<sup>1</sup> Increased spending on clothing can also be seen as a way to display one's social status through consumption of goods, especially fabrics. The sumptuary laws covered more than just the clothing people wore; they might include food and funerals, and later even the type of carriage they could own. For the purpose of this thesis only those laws directly related to fabrics and clothing will be considered. Some sumptuary laws begin by saying that people are spending too much money, and to prevent them from spending wastefully the laws were being put into place. This is true of the 1363 law which is the focus of this study.<sup>2</sup> Compared to more prosperous areas, such as the Italian states, England had very few sumptuary laws during the middle ages, with only one preceding the 1363 law, and only a few afterward, although more were enacted in the sixteenth century under the Tudor reign. By comparison the principalities in Italy would enact new sumptuary laws, or amendments to laws, every few years.

While sumptuary laws in England were often put into effect to control excessive spending, it is apparent that the need to control consumption centered most prominently

---

<sup>1</sup>The 1363 sumptuary law begins by saying that it was to limit excessive spending.

<sup>2</sup>*The Statutes of the Realm*, Printed by command of his majesty King George the Third. In pursuance of an address of the House of Commons of Great Britain. From Original Records and Authentic Manuscripts, Volume 1, (Buffalo, N.Y.: William S. Hein and Company, Inc., 1993.), 380.

on clothing and appearance. Reasons stated in the sumptuary law for enacting them were, first, to control the excessive amounts of money that people were spending on their clothing, as in the case of the 1363 law, and second, to maintain a visual separation between classes. The idea of perceived visual separation between classes was important to those of the upper classes, as well as the clergy. Sermons and related literature often derided the wearing of sumptuous clothing or wearing clothing that was above one's social class.<sup>3</sup> Additionally, some unstated reasons for the sumptuary laws included tensions between the lower nobility, represented by the Gentlemen and Esquires in the 1363 law, and the merchant class. Those of the lower nobility often lived on fixed incomes from their lands, where as the merchants could increase their incomes by increasing their business and therefore had the ability to make more money than many of the lower nobility.

There are several possible factors that may have contributed to the implementation of the laws. Clothing for both men and women had become very tight fitting in the early fourteenth century and men's clothing became increasingly shorter.<sup>4</sup> The tighter and shorter garments for men would allow them to use more expensive fabrics, since less fabric was needed to produce the garment. This may have contributed to the enactment of some of the sumptuary laws. The upper classes, those in power, could have felt threatened by these displays of wealth by those below them in status. Expensive fabrics were no longer their exclusive right to purchase, and thus the display of expensive fabrics was no longer a distinctive feature of their appearance. It is interesting that the English sumptuary laws focus primarily on the clothing of men, with women's clothing

---

<sup>3</sup> Margaret Scott, *Medieval Dress and Fashion* (London: The British Library, 2007), 40-41.

<sup>4</sup> It also became increasingly popular to show the fur linings on clothing, by turning up the fur around the edges of the garment. This display of fur to denote wealth was also regulated by the sumptuary laws.

usually mentioned in reference to that of their father's or husband's. That men now needed less fabric to make a garment may also explain the focus on men's fabrics over women's as the amount of fabric needed for women's clothing had not changed over the course of the previous century.<sup>5</sup>

While the English laws only specified the types of fabrics which were restricted. Laws from other places focused more on the specifics of clothing, many of the laws from Italy focused on the clothing of women, giving specifics as to how much fabric could be used in their gowns in addition to the types of fabrics. The English laws are similar to those of southern France in the Occitan region, whereas the laws of the Parisian region of France are more similar to the laws of Italy, although none of the western European countries are as detailed as the Italians in their laws. One possible reason for the focus on women's clothing by the Italian laws in particular, and possibly also the French laws, is the clothing was a large part of women's dowries and the expense became exorbitant as more and more was expected. So while these women did not have as much power economically, socially, or politically as men, they still became the focus of these laws.

The use of sumptuary laws as a means of controlling the lower classes has been discussed in other places, but will not be the focus of this thesis. However, very little has been written on the English sumptuary laws in reference to actual goods, especially regarding the fabrics available in the fourteenth century. While the 1363 law neatly lays out the maximum one could spend on cloth for one's clothing, no comprehensive comparison has been done between the spending cap and contemporary prices of available fabrics. Additionally, very few scholars seem to have looked into identifying

---

<sup>5</sup> Scott, *Medieval Dress*, 97.

and transcribing actual fabric prices during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, outside of the comprehensive work on wool prices available through the research of John Munro and others. Stella Mary Newton includes some prices in *Fashion in the Age of the Black Prince*, from the Great Wardrobe Accounts of Edward III dated to 1343.<sup>6</sup> The few other transcribed and translated sources available for fabric prices include some wardrobe accounts and a few trade documents.

This study relies heavily on a comparison of the types of fabrics available in England during the 14th century with the fabrics listed in the 1363 sumptuary laws that set the maximum limit on allowable expenditure on fabric based on social class. Yet the study also deals with issues that go beyond the simple limits on consumption. It considers, for example, whether or not certain fabrics would have been prohibited to any social class despite being affordable to those of that class. For instance, in the case of Gentlemen and Esquires, those in the lower income bracket were allowed cloth up to “four and a half marks the whole cloth,” yet they were specifically being prohibited from purchasing silk. Those of the higher income bracket, who made more than 200 marks per year, were allowed cloth up to “five marks the whole cloth.” This might only be a difference of six shillings and eight pence, not even half a pound, but those in the higher income bracket were allowed silk, a difference that would be immediately apparent to their contemporaries.

### Statement of Problem

The 1363 English Sumptuary law was put in place to control the consumption of fabrics and related goods by individuals based on social class. The social implications of such laws have been discussed previously as reviewed in the literature. But there is a

---

<sup>6</sup> Stella Mary Newton, *Fashion in the Age of the Black Prince* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1980).

need to better understand the context, purpose, and function of these laws through examination of the prices of fabrics compared with the limits on cloth expenditure set out by the sumptuary laws.

## Objectives

The objectives of this thesis are to better understand the sumptuary laws and their purpose in controlling what fabrics people used. The objectives are presented as the following set of questions.

1. What is the history of sumptuary laws, and how were they developed? What social situations caused them to be implemented?
  - a. Why focus on the 1363 law? What makes it different from other laws put into effect from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries? What was the stated purpose of the laws?
2. What types of cloth were available in the late fourteenth century in England, and where did those cloths come from? What were the prices for the different types of cloth, and did the prices vary by town? It is known that the following cloth was available: woolens, worsteds, imported silk cloth, and linen. What were these fabrics used for, and how much cloth was needed for garments?
3. Compared with the stated maximums listed in the 1363 law what type of cloth could be purchased by each of the social classes listed in the law?
  - a. For instance what kind of fabric would 40 shillings buy, or 2 marks?
  - b. Would a given purchaser be able to buy high quality woolens or silks, or be restricted to simpler fabrics such as worsteds?
  - c. What quality of linen would they be able to purchase?
  - d. Was there a purposeful maneuvering on the part of those writing the law to

keep a visual separation between classes, such as in the case of those of the lower income bracket of the Gentlemen and Esquires being prohibited silk?

- e. Are there other cases within this law where similar maneuvering is found?

### Literature Review

Little has been written about the fabrics used in clothing during the fourteenth century in England; still less is known about sumptuary law restrictions on fabrics and consumption. One of the few references to a sumptuary law being quoted in reference to the clothing being worn appears in Laura Hodges' *Chaucer and Clothing*.<sup>7</sup> She references the 1363 sumptuary law when talking about the cote of faldyng that the Shipman is described as wearing, in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. Hodges likens faldying to russet and blanket, two other coarse wools that are specifically named in the 1363 law as allowable for the lowest class of artisans and handi-craftsmen, to which the Shipman would have belonged. The law also gives a price of not more than twelve pence for these fabrics. It is also the only part of the law that does not specify the whole cloth.

Considering the very low price of the cloth, the cost is given as "by the yard," not as a whole cloth. This correlates with Wendy Childs' discovery in her article "The English Export Trade in Cloth in the Fourteenth Century."<sup>8</sup> Childs identifies some blanket as costing between eight and twelve shillings, for the whole cloth, which comes out to less than twelve pence per yard. However, the prices she quotes are from the first third of the fourteenth century so cannot be considered an accurate representation of cloth prices in

---

<sup>7</sup> Laura F. Hodges, *Chaucer and Costume: The Secular Pilgrims in the General Prologue* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2000).

<sup>8</sup> Wendy Childs, "The English export trade in cloth in the fourteenth century," in *Progress and problems in medieval England*, eds. Richard Britnell and John Hatcher (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

the 1360's.

The 1363 English sumptuary law details the maximum allowable amount that each social class could spend on fabric. The amounts are usually given as price per whole cloth, meaning anywhere from twenty to thirty yards of fabric. For instance a 1328 royal statute states that ray cloths were to measure twenty-eight yards long and “coloured cloths” to measure twenty-six yards long.<sup>9</sup> This statute was reinstated in 1358 and 1363, the same year as the sumptuary law that is the focus of this thesis.<sup>10</sup> It should be noted that the 1353 and 1363 statutes allowed for cloths less than full length to be sold if they were marked as such, so not all cloths on the market can be assumed to be of the same length. While very few people would have purchased a full length of cloth for their own use, this practice does occasionally appear in wardrobe accounts, usually listed as livery for the household. Regulating the allowable expenditure for cloth through this method possibly could have simplified the understanding of which cloths were acceptable for each social class.

The most common references to the sumptuary laws mention them as a means to visually separate social classes, pointing out that the laws limit by class what people were able to purchase. Newton speaks more to the overall social implications and responses to the sumptuary laws than to their specifics. While providing an in-depth account of the changes in fashions during the fourteenth century and the reign of Edward III and commenting on the purposes of the sumptuary laws, Newton mentions very little about the fabrics available in fourteenth-century England. Margaret Scott also mentions the social implications of the sumptuary laws in *Medieval Dress and Fashion* commenting

---

<sup>9</sup> *The Statutes of the Realm*, Volume 1, 260.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 330.

that the medieval sumptuary legislation suggests an increase in wealth within the country, but she does not go into detail about the specifics of any of the laws.<sup>11</sup>

Frances Elizabeth Baldwin's 1926 book *Sumptuary Legislation and Personal Regulation in England* was one of the first works to cover the topic of medieval and Renaissance sumptuary laws.<sup>12</sup> While Baldwin's primary focus is on the later laws, those from the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, her study is one of the first works to address the laws in any capacity and is often referenced. The book provides a summary of the medieval laws with little commentary on the social implications or explanation of terms.

Alan Hunt in *Governance of the Consuming Passions: A History of Sumptuary Law* only briefly touches on the medieval English sumptuary laws in comparison with other laws that existed throughout Europe in the late medieval period.<sup>13</sup> Hunt discusses the possibilities of enforcement of sumptuary law, coming to the conclusion, like many historians, that due to the lack of available documentation of enforcement it is very likely that the sumptuary laws were rarely enforced. Hunt theorizes that otherwise there would be records of cases being brought before the higher courts for review.

Those who have written on sumptuary laws in general often mention the 1363 law since it is one of the more detailed of the English sumptuary laws. One of the most comprehensive books on sumptuary law in general, and the English laws specifically, is Claire Sponsler's book on sumptuary laws, *Drama and Resistance: Bodies, Goods, and*

---

<sup>11</sup> Scott, *Medieval Dress*, 80.

<sup>12</sup> Frances Elizabeth Baldwin, *Sumptuary Legislation and Personal Regulation in England* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1926).

<sup>13</sup> Alan Hunt, *Governance of the Consuming Passions: A History of Sumptuary Law* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996).



*Theatricality in Late Medieval England*.<sup>14</sup> Sponsler discusses the attempt by the writers of the 1363 law to correlate factors such as wealth, occupation, and rank to determine a person's absolute social standing. Sponsler also discusses the idea of "counterfeiting of identity" through the use of clothing, that is portraying oneself as being of a higher class through clothing, and mentions that while the laws are designed to prevent counterfeiting from happening, it was still possible to counterfeit one's identity through the purchase of second hand clothing and gifts of clothing. Also discussed in *Drama and Resistance* is much of the literature related to the sumptuary laws, specifically sermons, and what Sponsler calls "social advice literature". These types of literature often derided contemporary fashions and created theoretical pasts in which everyone was easily identified by the clothing that they wore. The purpose of this literature was to promote the idea of living within one's means, but also to dress piously, or humbly, not in a manner that would bring attention to oneself through the use of fashionable and bright colored clothing, which the writers of the literature claimed was the purpose of fashionable clothing.

Other notable references to the English sumptuary laws include those about the furs mentioned in the laws. For instance, in the article "What Becomes a Legend Most?: Fur in the Medieval Romance" Reginald Abbott discusses the different types of furs mentioned in the laws and why they would have been exclusive to particular social groups.<sup>15</sup> While Abbott gives a detailed account of the different types of furs and why they would have been available to the different social classes, the article does not address

---

<sup>14</sup> Claire Sponsler, *Drama and resistance: bodies, goods, and theatricality in late medieval England* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997).

<sup>15</sup> Reginald Abbott, "What Becomes a Legend Most?: Fur in the Medieval Romance," *Dress*, 21(1994): 4-16.

fabrics and so is only helpful in identifying the furs mentioned in the 1363 statute.

The wool trade has been closely studied, with the price and volume fluctuations recorded by those researching the international market surrounding the English wool trade. The most prolific writer is John H. Munro, whose books provide invaluable information on not only the price and volume fluctuations of the wool trade, but also the social, political, and economic factors that influenced the industry. Other authors have also contributed to the information available on the wool industry.<sup>16</sup> By comparison, the woolen and worsted fabric trades have not been nearly so closely studied and very little information is available. While Munro does touch on some of the aspects of the cloth trade that overlapped with the wool trade, he primarily discusses woolen cloths with little information on worsted cloths, and does not provide the pricing information for either type of wool cloth as he does for wool fiber.

The most commonly used fabrics in the late fourteenth century were linen, wool, and silk. Linen was used almost exclusively for undergarments and household textiles, whereas wool and silk were both used for outer garments. Wool fabrics, woolens and worsteds, came in many qualities from coarse to very fine.

England developed its own strong woolen industry over the course of the fourteenth century, culminating in exports of woolen cloth that exceeded, by the early fifteenth century, their exports of wool fiber. Until then the finest and most expensive woolens were produced in the Low Countries from English wool fiber. Conversely, silk,

---

<sup>16</sup> John Muendel, "The Orientation of Strikers in Medieval Fulling Mills: The Role of the "French" *Gualchiera*," in *Medieval Clothing and Textiles*, Volume 1, eds. Robin Netherton and Gale R. Owen-Crocker (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2005), 97-118; John Oldland, "The Finishing of English Woolens , 1300-1550," in *Medieval Clothing and Textiles*, Volume 3, eds. Robin Netherton and Gale R. Owen-Crocker (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2007); Eleanor Quinton and John Oldland, "London Merchants' Cloth Exports, 1350-1500," in *Medieval Clothing and Textiles*, Volume 7, eds. Robin Netherton and Gale R. Owen-Crocker (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2011).

by the fourteenth century was mostly imported from Italy, rather than Byzantium, and was very expensive. It was not until the eighteenth century that England developed its own silk cloth production at Spitalfields, although raw silk was imported earlier and used in the production of other goods.<sup>17</sup>

### Limitations

Due to the relatively few sources available a detailed correlation between the fabric prices laid out in the sumptuary laws and the fabric prices in the 1350's and 1360's would be difficult to determine. However there is ample information to understand what these laws meant in terms of actual goods.

As there is a risk of error occurring from fluctuations in prices over more than a ten to fifteen year span, only price schedules and fabric prices from the 1350's and 1360's will be considered in this paper. Other prices dated earlier and later may be used for comparison. This is to limit any chance of error in the evaluation of the sumptuary law fabric prices. Consideration also will be given to any fluctuations in cloth prices between towns, and will be noted. Due to the very limited available resources it will be necessary to consider prices from most of the late fourteenth century for comparison with the sumptuary law, but those from the 1350's and 1360's will be given more weight as evidence than those from later decades, as the prices of the 1350's and the early 1360's are the prices that would have been considered by those making laws in 1363.

While some imported fabrics will be considered, such as silk and high quality fine linens, the primary focus will be on domestically produced English fabrics. Domestic

---

<sup>17</sup> Maryanne Kowaleski and Judith M. Bennett, "Crafts, Guilds, and Women in the Middle Ages: Fifty Years After Marian K. Dale," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 14, no. 2 (1989); Marian K. Dale, "The London Silk Women of the Fifteenth Century," *The Economic History Review* 4, no. 3 (Oct. 1933): 324-335.

fabrics include woolens, worsteds, and linens of varying quality. There are several reasons for focusing on domestic fabrics. First, very few people would have been able to purchase imported fabrics such as silk, as silk was ostensibly restricted to the higher income bracket of Gentlemen and Esquires, and Knights, the two highest social classes covered by the sumptuary law, which also included the wealthier Merchants. Second, England produced almost all of its own wool fabric by the mid-fourteenth century. Fabrics from wool were therefore the most commonly purchased fabric, including everything from inexpensive fabrics such as russet and blanket to the far more expensive scarlet woolens. England also produced a large amount of linen, in many qualities and prices. Linen was the second most commonly purchased fabric. Ireland produced linen that was considered high quality from as early as the thirteenth century. It would have been considered a domestically produced cloth as Ireland was subject to English rule in the fourteenth century.

## Method

The research approach taken for this thesis is the historical methodology as applied to dress studies, drawing on primary social and economic sources, as well as some contemporary imagery. The transcribed medieval documents being used include trade documents, *The Statutes of the Realm*, and wardrobe accounts from Edward III's register,<sup>18</sup> as well as other documents and secondary sources such as medieval social histories. Through the use of these sources a comparison of the fabrics available in fourteenth century England with the 1363 Sumptuary Law will allow me to determine

---

<sup>18</sup> *Register of Edward, The Black Prince Preserved in the Public Record Office*, Prepared under the superintendence of the deputy keeper of the records. Part IV (England) A.D. 1351-1365. Published by authority of his majesty's principal secretary of state for the home department, (London: His majesty's stationery office, 1933).

which fabrics would have been available and to whom. While the focus will be on the use of primary sources to identify the needed information, some secondary sources and commentary will be used as well.

In an effort to satisfy the objectives of this study the method will include an examination of the following:

1. The Sumptuary Laws: Through comparison of previous laws and laws from other countries a history of the English sumptuary laws can be understood. It is also important to consider the sumptuary laws within the context of the political and social events of the time in which they were written. The fourteenth century English laws are found in *The Statutes of the Realm - Volume 1*. Sumptuary laws from other countries are found transcribed in the studies referenced in the Literature Review.
  - a. The 1363 law is the most comprehensive of the English sumptuary laws and therefore is the most likely to answer the question of how fabric was used to indicate social class. The stated purpose of the law is to prevent people from spending more than they were able on expensive goods.
2. The Fourteenth Century English Textile Industry: The types of cloth available in late fourteenth century England were all natural fiber fabrics, made from wool, linen, silk, or cotton. Wool and flax were both readily available for producing fabric as both were grown and processed in the British Isles. Through the use of trade documents and wardrobe accounts, the most commonly used fabrics can be determined, as well as the prices for the fabrics. It will also be possible to determine which fabrics were imported, and which were domestically produced.

Wardrobe accounts should also give an indication of what the different fabrics were used for, as well as how much fabric was usually needed for different garments.

3. Cloth Prices: The prices of fabrics will be determined from available transcriptions and translations of primary sources. While there are few trade documents related to the prices of fabrics, available sources are wardrobe accounts which detail what fabrics were purchased, how much was paid and for how much, and what the final use was. The combination of trade documents and wardrobe accounts will help in understanding what types of fabric were available and for how much, and by comparing them price ranges can be found for the different fabrics. Additionally, they also may give an indication of how much was usually purchased of different types of fabrics.
  - a. Through the use of prices for fabrics, primarily from the 1350's and 1360's as well as related documents available, a comparison will be made with the 1363 law to determine what the maximum allowable amounts equate to in terms of available fabrics for purchase. This comparison should allow for the determination of who would have been able to buy what type of cloth as determined by each of the social classes listed in the law, as well as determine the extent of the law's ability to create a visual separation between classes by controlling what people would have been able to wear.
4. Comparison of Prices with the 1363 Law: Additionally, through comparison of the 1363 law with fabric prices some determination of purposeful maneuvering on the

part of those writing the laws to keep a visual separation between classes should be possible. Fabric that otherwise would have been affordable to those of a certain class, but is forbidden for them to purchase, would be an example of maneuvering to create a visual separation between classes.

5. Summary and Conclusion: It is hoped that this research will provide a greater understanding of how the laws compare with the fabric prices of the late fourteenth century, and therefore provide an overview of which fabrics each social class would have been purchasing, it should be easier for costume historians to interpret what people in the late fourteenth century were wearing based on class or social standing. This will create a wider understanding of clothing by being able to interpret not only clothing style and construction, but also fabric and visual appearance through primary sources. In addition it will create a better understanding of the effectiveness of the laws in creating and keeping a visual separation between social classes.

## Chapter 2 - A History of English Sumptuary Laws

### Introduction

The lack of information related to the social and economic side of the medieval English sumptuary laws is what began the original questioning behind this thesis. The goal is to better understand the interplay between social and economic forces and the purchase of fabrics for clothing. While others have given histories of the English sumptuary laws, some more in depth than others, this chapter offers an overview of English sumptuary law history and expands on the parts that relate to the purchase of textiles for clothing in the fourteenth-century. Consideration will be given to social events primarily before and also after implementation of the 1363 sumptuary law, although the 1336 law will also be considered. This approach will identify those laws that are reactions to large social changes versus those that are responding to smaller social changes. These inquiries focusing on the textiles bought for use in clothing will also help to identify the importance of the 1363 English sumptuary law from a social and economic standpoint.

### Overview of previous works on English sumptuary laws

Claire Sponsler, Alan Hunt, and Frances Baldwin all discuss sumptuary laws in general, but Sponsler is the only one who goes into detail about the medieval English laws. Baldwin's treatment of the 1363 sumptuary law consists mostly of summarizing the law. Although, she does point out that many of the garments that were forbidden to people in the law would not necessarily have been bought new.<sup>19</sup> The garments could

---

<sup>19</sup> Baldwin, *Sumptuary Legislation*, 48.



have been bought from a second hand source or have been given to them rather than purchased new. Baldwin also mentions that the law seems to serve two purposes. First it restricted extravagances of spending and second it maintained class distinctions. Of note is that while Baldwin's book is about the English sumptuary laws, the focus of the book centers on the laws of the late fifteenth-century and the sixteenth-century rather than the medieval laws.

Hunt's response to the 1363 law is equally limited although he does address the treatment of merchants who were subject to the same laws as esquires, except that they were required to have a higher income, or more total wealth.<sup>20</sup> Hunt also addresses the lack of preciseness regarding the categories to which people were assigned by the sumptuary laws, noting the fluidity of social status that could change should one inherit land or have success in their business<sup>21</sup>. These categories are still used by historians to separate the social classes and to have a basis of understanding the laws in which they are mentioned, but it is important to remember that the categories are correct only in context of the laws.

Sponsler's focus is on the cultural impacts of the laws, and a social reading of them through comparison with contemporary popular literature. Sponsler references the denunciation of new clothing styles by the clergy especially, but also others, as a changing point in perspectives on clothing, but also suggests that the attacking of new clothing ideas and the creating of "an imaginary past in which the visible signs of identity coincided with innate identity," is by no means a new idea in the fourteenth century.<sup>22</sup> Other examples of members of the clergy and others decrying the "new" dress of their

---

<sup>20</sup> Hunt, *Governance of the Consuming Passions*, 304.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 296.

<sup>22</sup> Sponsler, *Drama and Resistance*, 4-5, and 11.

times are available. Margaret Scott mentions several twelfth century religious figures, such as the Archbishop of Canterbury and a monk named William of Malmsbury, who demonized new fashions and dress, saying many of the same things that those of the fourteenth century repeated as to the blurring of lines between social classes and excessive spending on clothing.<sup>23</sup>

### The 1336 Law

While this paper will focus on the 1363 law, as it is the most comprehensive of the English fourteenth century laws, another law was passed almost thirty years earlier in 1336. This law specifically prohibited the purchasing or wearing of foreign cloth by all who were not members of the royal family. Part of the law was a vaguely worded prohibition on the wearing of fur by those below the class of knights.<sup>24</sup> It is suggested that the law does not refer to all furs, but rather to those not commonly available within England.<sup>25</sup> During a time when Edward III appeared to be trying to prevent imports of foreign merchandise, it would make sense that if cloth from other countries was banned, then other types of merchandise, including furs, from other countries also would be banned.

While the 1363 law deals with creating visual separation between classes, and will be discussed in more detail later, the 1336 law very specifically deals with the purchasing of cloth from anywhere outside of England or one of its holdings, Scotland, Wales, or Ireland. The prohibition on purchasing foreign cloth meant that the money people would have spent on that cloth was now being spent on domestically produced cloth, and therefore less English money was leaving the country. This combined with the

---

<sup>23</sup> Scott, *Medieval Dress*, 40-41.

<sup>24</sup> *The Statutes of the Realm*, Volume 1, 280-281.

<sup>25</sup> Abbott, "What Becomes a Legend Most?" 4-16.

tax levies for exporting wool fiber would have increased the amount of money in the country and allowed Edward III to collect more money in taxes, as he prepared for war against France.<sup>26</sup> Diana Wood in her book *Medieval Economic Thought* suggests that the law was related to protectionist policies to increase the export of English cloth after Edward III had damaged the wool industry through export taxes.<sup>27</sup> While the wool export industry was damaged through export taxes, the full effect of that was probably not felt until the mid-fourteenth century, after the 1336 law was enacted.<sup>28</sup> According to Munro, the first large increase in the wool export tax was enacted in 1336. While there had been previous tax increases this one was significant, raising the tax from 6s. 8d. per sack to 1l. 6s. 8d. per sack. This was almost triple the previous export tax making the purchasing of English wool by foreign merchants very expensive and thus encouraging the practice of only purchasing the highest grades and most expensive wools.<sup>29</sup> While the 1336 law could be seen as protectionist, it is more likely that with the limited amount of English cloth being exported in the 1330's that it was not seen as an area for cash flow.<sup>30</sup> Rather than expecting income from taxes on exports it would be better for citizens to buy domestic cloth to keep the money spent on cloth within the country.

The beginning of the Hundred Years War is usually dated to 1337, but as early as 1330 when Edward III became ruler of England in his own right by overthrowing the Regency court of his mother Isabella and Roger Mortimer, he refused to recognize the

---

<sup>26</sup> John H. Munro, *Wool, Cloth, and Gold: The Struggle for Bullion in Anglo-Burgundian Trade* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972).

<sup>27</sup> Diane Wood, *Medieval Economic Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 124.

<sup>28</sup> John H. Munro, "Bruges and the Abortive Staple in English Cloth", in *Textiles, Towns, and Trade*, ed. John H. Munro (Hampshire: Variorum, 1994), 1140.

<sup>29</sup> John H. Munro, "Industrial Transformations in the North-west European Textile Trade, c. 1290 - c. 1340: Economic Progress or Economic Crisis?" in Munro, *Textiles, Towns, and Trade*, 135, 137.

<sup>30</sup> Munro, *Wool, Cloth, and Gold*, 6-7.

legitimacy of the French throne held by Philip VI.<sup>31</sup> This created tensions between the two countries that eventually led to the beginnings of the Hundred Years War. When these events are considered, it brings into light why Edward III would have wished to keep money within England rather than letting it go to foreign merchants selling clothing to the English and therefore leaving the country. Financing a war was expensive and if Edward III was aware that he would be going to war with France soon then he would have desired to raise as much money before then as possible.

### The 1363 Law

Financing a war would not have been the only reason to enact sumptuary laws, for according to the preface of the 1363 law, it was enacted because of “the Outragious and Excessive Apparel of divers People, against their Estate and Degree, to the great Destruction and Impoverishment of all the Land.”<sup>32</sup> The king, or his councilors and parliament, felt that people were spending too much on their clothing. Whether or not that was the case, and people were spending too much, will be considered later. The law very closely lays out what people of each specific social group of the middle class could purchase and wear for clothing. It is notable that this law does not mention anyone of the upper nobility or those of the lowest classes. The 1363 law seems to be mostly concerned with the creating “an absolute social standing,”<sup>33</sup> in which wealth, occupation, and rank are all combined to create one’s social standing. The law breaks down the social classes based on a combination of rank and occupation. Knights were the highest social class, by rank, and Merchants were the highest by occupation, but still below knights. Some of the social classes, such as Knights and Merchants are further divided by their wealth, with

---

<sup>31</sup> W. M. Ormrod, *Edward III* (Stroud, England: Tempus, 2005), 21-22.

<sup>32</sup> See appendix A.

<sup>33</sup> Sponsler, *Drama and Resistance*, 12.

some being afforded more expensive cloth for their clothing based on wealth. In this way money is used to allow a more privileged style of dress to those within a social class, but without overlapping into the lowest income of the social class above them. This would help to create a visual separation between classes, and a marketability of status through the use of income as a factor in determining final social status.<sup>34</sup> However, even attempts at using multiple factors for determining a final social status, as Sponsler suggests, were not always accurate since any one of those factors could change. The factors should only be used to determine social status at a particular point in time, since anyone could easily gain or lose money very quickly thus altering their social status.

Determining factors that could have influenced the enactment of the 1363 law include England's increase in cloth exports over the course of the fourteenth century, probably increasing the wealth of its merchant class.<sup>35</sup> While the cloth exports did not necessarily bring in more money to the government as the taxes on cloth exports were fairly low, an increase in exports would create more demand for the product, a demand that would work its way backward to those producing the cloth. Merchants exporting the cloth would request more from the drapers and fullers, who would request more from the weavers, who would request more raw material from the spinners and others whose work helped in the production of cloth. The increased demand for cloth would not only bring more money to the merchants exporting the cloth, but also to all of the craftsmen and women who worked in the production of cloth. With the Black Death and the extreme decrease in population experienced in England afterwards, labor costs increased as the supply of labor had trouble meeting the demand. It should be noted that the craftsmen

---

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 12.

<sup>35</sup> J. L. Bolton, *The Medieval English Economy: 1150-1500* (London: Billing & Sons Ltd., 1980), 287, 290, 292; Munro, *Wool, Cloth, and Gold*, 6-7.

producing the cloth were considered the lowest of the middle classes mentioned according to the 1363 law.<sup>36</sup> The classes not mentioned in the law were the peasants and servants that were below the craftsmen in social standing, and those above the Knights, the upper nobility. This suggests that any increase in wealth experienced by the merchants was trickling down to those who worked as craftsmen and that they were possibly also using their new found wealth to buy more expensive fabric for their clothing.

Other factors to consider include included the Black Death Plague Epidemic of the late 1340's during which between 30% and 50% of the English population died. With a large loss of population it would be expected that there would be a realignment of wealth amongst those whose families had died during the plague. This combined with the focus on the middle class, by the law, leads to the idea that there could have been a significant increase in wealth amongst the middle classes, and that they were spending their new wealth on clothing. While a realignment of wealth is suspected in this case, it cannot be confirmed without further research into mid-fourteenth century social economics and the effects of the Black Death on redistribution of wealth. What is known is that there had been a gradual increase in the wealth of merchants and others of the middle class during the twelfth and thirteenth-centuries. As early as the eleventh-century fairs increased in size and number in order to accommodate the growth in commerce and trade of the high Middle Ages. Although, by the fourteenth-century commerce began to be centered around the cities rather than the rotating fairs.<sup>37</sup>

The English royal laws can be found translated from French and transcribed in a

---

<sup>36</sup> See appendix A.

<sup>37</sup> Lester K. Little, *Religious Poverty and Profit Economy in Medieval Europe* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1978), 11-13.

series titled *The Statutes of the Realm*. The transcriptions were requested by King George III of England in the first decade of the nineteenth century. The available volumes are facsimile copies of the originals and were printed in 1993. The laws from the fourteenth century were written in French and in the transcription are shown side by side with an English translation. Unfortunately the *Statutes of the Realm* volumes do not cite the names of the original documents, and it is unknown how many of the original documents still exist as they are somewhat difficult to locate. Even an inquiry to the British Library did not return any results regarding which manuscripts might contain the original documents.

### Sumptuary laws in other countries

It is important to have a basic understanding of the sumptuary laws of other countries for comparison, so that anyone of the laws is not studied in a vacuum and assumptions are not made through lack of comparison. England was by no means the only country to enact sumptuary laws. Many other sumptuary laws were put in place in Italy and France, some similar to the English laws, yet they had a somewhat different focus. France often had royal laws similar to England, but also had regional laws in areas that are now considered part of France, but were not at that time. Italian laws were passed by the principalities, duchies, and other states, such as Florence, Lucca, and Milan, (Italy did not become a unified country until the nineteenth-century.) Compared with the English laws, the Italian laws dealt more with specific parts of clothing, stating how many buttons could be on the front of a dress or a sleeve, or how many yards of fabric could be used. There was less concern about the price of the fabric that could be used. Also, it is clear that there was a difference in how the laws were enforced in Italy, and England. In England there were no known cases of someone being fined for being in

violation of a sumptuary law. Yet the Italians often had law enforcement divisions that were responsible for fining people for sumptuary law violations, and kept records of the violations and fines.<sup>38</sup>

The French laws, as previously mentioned, vary in that there are both royal laws from Paris, and other laws from some of the French regions not directly under the rule of the king. The Occitanian region of France is one for which municipal records still exist, and the thirteenth century laws from there show more similarity to the Italian laws, with a focus on women's clothing over men's as well as on the types of fabrics used in the clothing. In comparison the French royal laws from Paris focused more on the clothing of men, similar to the English 1363 law.<sup>39</sup> The Italian laws are probably the most prolific of any of the medieval sumptuary laws, but cannot be fully compared with the English laws because of the difference in focus. They should not be assumed to function in exactly the same way as the English laws or vice versa. The largest difference between the Italian and English laws is the gender focus, the Italian laws cared more about the women's dress, (how many buttons on a dress or how many yards of fabric were used to make it,) while the English laws refer the social status of the men and listed their wives and daughters in a sub-section of the restrictions. The only time the English law singles out women is to tell them what kinds of fabrics they can use for their veils.

Through the study of the sumptuary laws in their broader context of the cultural and economic events of the mid-fourteenth century a better understanding of the laws as both reactionary measures and social control mechanisms can be found. The sumptuary

---

<sup>38</sup> Catherine K. Killerby, *Sumptuary law in Italy, 1200-1500* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002).

<sup>39</sup> Sarah-Grace Heller, "Limiting yardages and changes of clothes: Sumptuary Legislation in Thirteenth-Century France, Languedoc and Italy" in *Medieval Fabrications: Dress, Textiles, Clothwork, and Other Cultural Imaginings*, ed. E. Jane Burns (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 127.



laws can provide important information for dress historians regarding the fabrics purchased for making clothing, what fibers were most common, and what types of cloth were most common. This information would also be helpful to historians of economics and culture.

### Chapter 3 - The English Textile Industry

Fiber and textile exports were important to the English economy throughout the fourteenth-century. This section will endeavor to explain the statutes related to the exports of wool fabric and fibers and their impact on trade and economy. Much of this discussion is based on the work of John Munro, who pioneered research into the English wool fiber trade of the late medieval period.

Wool fiber varies in type and quality depending on the type of sheep, and environmental conditions. These factors determined both the length of the fibers as well as their thickness. The most valuable of these fibers were the short thin fibers from western England and Wales, where there was sparse feeding, and the climate was often damp and chilly. Wool was sold by the sack, and one sack of wool was equal to the wool from about 200 sheep.<sup>40</sup> A single sack of wool weighed about 364lbs. and could sell for 4 to 9 marks.<sup>41</sup> Large producers usually sold 50 or more sacks of wool per year and had more than 10,000 sheep.<sup>42</sup> These large producers were often either lay or ecclesiastical estates that could afford to keep their sheep separate, and therefore control the quality of the wool through selective breeding. With the decline of these estates in the fourteenth century, and the increase in peasant farmers, there seems to have been a slight decline in

---

<sup>40</sup> A.R. Bridbury, *Medieval English Clothmaking* (London: Heinemann Educational Books, Ltd., 1982), 3-4

<sup>41</sup> John H. Munro, "The Medieval Scarlet and the Economics of Sartorial Splendour" in *Textiles, Towns, and Trade*, ed. John H. Munro (Hampshire: Variorum, 1994), 65; John H. Munro, "The 1357 Wool-Price Schedule and the Decline of Yorkshire Wool Values" in *Textiles, Towns, and Trade*, ed. John H. Munro (Hampshire: Variorum, 1994), 212-214.

<sup>42</sup> Bridbury, *Medieval English Clothmaking*, 3.

the quality of Welsh wools, because of less selective breeding.<sup>43</sup>

After shearing, the wool was cleaned and processed before it could be spun and ultimately woven into fabric. The first step was to wash the wool to remove the dirt, grass, and other particles from the fiber. After cleaning, the wool was then either combed or carded to create roving ready for spinning. The combing and carding processes, while similar, create different types of roving, the thick strands of wool ready for spinning. Combing, the tools for which can be documented to antiquity, is a process by which the wool fibers are pulled through a pair of combs to straighten and align the fibers so that they are all running in the same direction, much like combing one's hair. Carding was developed much later than combing, sometime around the early twelfth-century. Cards had short metal wires the teeth of the cards caught the wool fibers. Instead of lining up the hairs, carding allowed them to become crossed and begin matting together. Some of the Low Countries were initially skeptical of the ability of carded wool fibers to hold up under the strain that weaving naturally applied to the wool thread, and thus would occasionally ban the practice for making higher quality woolens.<sup>44</sup> Eventually, in the fifteenth-century, carding became slightly more common than combing for preparing the wool fibers for woolens because carding produced a fuzzier thread that was better for fulling.

After combing or carding the wool fibers were then spun to create the thread for weaving. This step was usually contracted out to women in the area. Hand spinning with a weighted spindle can also be documented to antiquity and was the preferred method of

---

<sup>43</sup> Munro, John H., "Wool-Price Schedules and the Qualities of English Wools in the Later Middle Ages c. 1270-1499" *Textiles, Towns, and Trade*, (Hampshire: Variorum, 1994), 156-157; Munro, "The 1357 Wool-Price Schedule" in Munro, *Textiles, Towns, and Trade*, 217-218.

<sup>44</sup> Munro, John H., "Textile Technology in the Middle Ages", in *Textiles, Towns, and Trade*, ed. John H. Munro (Hampshire: Variorum, 1994), 4-5

spinning well into the fourteenth-century, despite the invention of the spinning wheel. The first spinning wheels tended to be inconsistent in speed and tension and therefore could not spin as fine a thread as a drop spindle. The use of thread from spinning wheels was initially restricted to the lesser quality fabrics, such as blankets and russets, as the wheel could not produce the very even and fine threads needed for making woolens<sup>45</sup>.

After spinning the thread was ready to be woven. This part was done by drapers or independent weavers. A draper would employ several weavers and apprentices in a workshop, whereas independent weavers would usually work out of their homes with maybe a single apprentice. There is far more evidence of drapers in the Low Countries, but that does not mean that they did not exist in England, they were just fewer in number. Independent weavers received contract work in their homes, where they would have a loom, and then would deliver the woven cloth back to their employer. The drapers often had large workshops where the weaving and some finishing was completed. Most of the woolens were produced in larger draperies where the weavers were better skilled, whereas independent weavers did not always have the skill to produce woolens.

After weaving, if the fabric was a woolen the finishing process would begin. First the fabric would be dyed, although the dyeing process was done before the weaving if a striped cloth was desired. The color of the dye could have some impact on the final cost of the fabric, the most notable being the reds. Madder red, from the Madder plant, was usually less expensive, while the more vibrant reds from the kermes beetles were very expensive, 60 - 80 female beetles with un-laid eggs are required to make one gram of dye stuff, which is why it is no longer used.<sup>46</sup> They had to be imported from the

---

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 6-10.

<sup>46</sup> Dominique Cardon, *Natural Dyes: Sources, Tradition, Technology, and Science*, (Paris: Archetype

Mediterranean to the Low Countries and England and both required large quantities and very specific processing to produce their colors.<sup>47</sup> These colors were reserved for the highest quality woolens, the scarlets, and would be dyed then finished.

The finishing process for woolens began with fulling. The fulling process involved first washing the wool using “fuller’s earth,” something similar to clay, and was usually combined with foot treading to aid in the felting process. It was then fully rinsed in cold water before being put back in a vat with hot water and again foot treaded to felt the fibers together. The foot treading was later replaced with a mechanical beater that was initially unpopular because the design often inconsistently felted the fabric and could twist it during the felting process reducing the quality of the final fabric. Fullers could work with a draper in the same workshops, or more often, in their own workshops and were hired by the drapers to complete the finishing process.<sup>48</sup>

After the fulling process woolens would be teased and sheared. The teasing was the process through which the wool fibers were raised up from the surface of the fabric with teasels, small plant burs. When the fibers had been raised they would then be sheared to create a smooth surface. This process could be repeated as many times as needed to create the required finish for the fabric. Some such as the scarlets are described as having an extremely smooth finish similar to silk. Indeed, depending on the final quality of the fabric the raising and shearing process could be completed one time on one side or up to three times on each side.<sup>49</sup> Those doing the raising and shearing were often in the employ of the fullers, or working in the same workshops.

---

Publications, 2003), 613.

<sup>47</sup> Munro, “Textile Technology”, 23-24; Munro, “The Medieval Scarlet”, 14-16.

<sup>48</sup> Munro, “Textile Technology”, 18-19.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 22-23

At this point, the merchants and mercers could purchase the final products from the drapers and weavers to sell. If they had facilities for completing the entire finishing process in their workshops, they would sometime purchase the fabric after it was woven and before it was finished, or they could outsource the finishing process to first dyers, then fullers. The fabrics also could be purchased directly from the dyers if they were buying solid color worsted cloths, or from the fullers if buying woolens. Some fullers would purchase the fabrics, finish them, and then sell them to the mercers and merchants, instead of contracting with the drapers to finish the fabrics.

The mercers and merchants would sell the fabric to consumers for clothing, household textiles and linens, bedspreads, wall hangings, and other uses. In the case of fabrics intended for clothing, the purchasers could be for an individual consumer or a tailor. If the fabric was purchased by the final consumer, and they were not making the garment they would send it to a tailor or seamstress to make up the garment. In the case of a tailor they might keep the fabric on hand until a request was made for that fabric, and then make it up into the desired garment for the customer.

Beginning in the thirteenth century England was well known for its wool fiber exports and by the mid-fourteenth century became well known for its wool cloth exports. Beginning in the early thirteenth century England was the primary supplier of wool fiber to Europe, and continued to supply wool fiber until the late fifteenth century when the Spanish merino wools became a competitive alternative.<sup>50</sup> The short staple English wool was required for the production of the very fine woolens that initially made the Low Countries famous. These same woolens later helped to expand English trade. Other

---

<sup>50</sup> Munro, "Bruges and the Abortive Staple in English Cloth", 1140; Munro, "Industrial Transformations", 135.

countries that produced woolens included Italy, France,<sup>51</sup> and Spain, although it was initially the Low Countries and then England that produced higher quantities and quality of these goods<sup>52</sup>.

English wool was so highly regarded that a late thirteenth-century regulation from the city of Bruges required cloth to be ranked for quality based on the place of origin of the wool used for the cloth. England was ranked first, followed by Scotland, Ireland, and Flanders, and the cloths were to be marked accordingly<sup>53</sup>. Similarly, late fourteenth-century laws from Bruges, Leyden, and Brussels, stipulated that only English wool was to be imported, and furthermore it must be purchased from the official English Staple in Calais<sup>54</sup>. They often stipulated which qualities of English wool fiber could be used for various types and qualities of woolen fabrics<sup>55</sup>.

England exported more than just short staple wool fiber, but by the early fourteenth century it was England's best known export and most profitable. Export records from the 1350's indicate that England was exporting an average of 31,500 sacks of wool per year<sup>56</sup>. By the end of the fourteenth century that number would drop significantly due to export tariffs and the English bullion policy of the late fourteenth century. It is suggested that Edward III relied heavily on the English wool export to fund his wars with France in the early fourteenth century. These conflicts led to the Hundred Years War. By the late fourteenth century, in an effort to bring more gold into the country,

---

<sup>51</sup> Sharon Farmer, "*Biffes, Tertaines, and Aumonieres: The Role of Paris in the International Textile Trades of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries*" in *Medieval Clothing and Textiles*, Volume 2, eds. Robin Netherton and Gale R. Owen Crocker (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2006), 74-75.

<sup>52</sup> Munro, "Industrial Transformations," 110, 118-119, 135, 136.

<sup>53</sup> Munro, *Wool, Cloth, and Gold*, 2.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 2-3. The English Staple in Calais was established by Edward III in March 1363, as the official trading port for English wool fiber. Munro gives several accounts of the effectiveness and uses of the Calais Staple in the English economy.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 3

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 6-7; Munro, "Bruges and the Abortive Staple in English Cloth", 1140.

he began requiring that all trade of English wool be made through the official Staple in Calais, and later that no credit was allowed, and that all purchases of wool be made in either bullion or the official Calais coin.<sup>57</sup>

The highest quality wool exports were from the western portion of England and Wales, followed by those from Scotland and Ireland. While all of these wools were used for making woolen cloths, only those from western England and Wales could command the highest prices. In 1357 the highest quality wool could command prices up to 9 and a half marks per sack, and those of lesser quality, still considered high quality in the overall market, commanded prices around 6 marks per sack.<sup>58</sup> A mark was equaled to 13 shillings and 4 pence at this point, therefore 9 and a half marks would be equal to 6 pounds, and 6 marks would be equal to 4 pounds. Price schedules for wools from other areas are scarce, but in the same 1357 schedule, wool sacks from Kent, a less desired wool, are listed at 4 marks per sack, approximately 2 pounds, 13 shillings, and 4 pence, a little more than half of what any of the lesser quality western wools could command at market.<sup>59</sup>

In 1338 when the tariff had been increased from 6 shillings and 8 pence per sack to 2 pounds per sack it would most likely cause a decrease in demand and thus diminish the export of these goods. Therefore only the most expensive wools would continue to be purchased, so that the buyer would be able to maximize his profit, and not be obliged to absorb as much of the tariff into his own costs.<sup>60</sup> While there is an overall decrease in the

---

<sup>57</sup> Munro, *Wool, Cloth, and Gold*, 38.

<sup>58</sup> The price schedule referenced here was found and compiled by John Munro and compares price fluctuations between 1294, 1337, 1357, 1454, it can be found in his article "The 1357 Wool-Price Schedule", 211-219.

<sup>59</sup> Munro, "The 1357 Wool-Price Schedule," 212-214.

<sup>60</sup> Munro, "Industrial Transformations", 135, 137.



export of English wool over the course of the fourteenth century, there is also a marked increase in the export of cloth, both finished and unfinished. Also, the 1376 statute states that no woolen cloth could be carried into any part of the country without first being fulled, which suggests that there had been an increase in the production of fabrics.<sup>61</sup>

In 1347 the export tariff for broadcloth was only 1 shilling and 2 pence, significantly less than the 2 pounds required for wool sacks.<sup>62</sup> Four to six woolen cloths, the equivalent of what would be produced from one sack of wool would cost between 4 shillings and 8 pence to 7 shillings in tariffs, still half the cost of tariffs for one sack of wool. While England had been the foremost exporter of wool fiber for almost a century, its merchants had not focused on expanding their cloth industry until the early to mid-fourteenth century. With the shift towards exports of cloth, another slow shift in the late fourteenth century occurred; this shift was towards a focus on exporting woolens.

While England, and other countries, did export worsteds, they were never as highly prized as the woolens. Worsted cloth was made from longer staple fibers that were readily available in most areas and usually available domestically. England exported more worsted cloth than woolens in the early fourteenth century. A 1347 schedule identifies the ratio as 7,256 worsted cloths to 4,423 woolen cloths.<sup>63</sup> This, coupled with the less labor intensive process of producing the worsted, made them much less expensive. The extensive finishing process required for the woolen cloths did increase the cost of those cloths over the worsteds, in addition to the much higher cost of the wools used for the woolen cloths.

---

<sup>61</sup> See Appendix A: Cloth, 1376.

<sup>62</sup> Munro, "Industrial Transformations", 135. A sack of wool weighing about 364lbs. could be expected to produce between 4 and 6 cloths of about 24 -26 yards in length; Munro, "The Medieval Scarlet", 65.

<sup>63</sup> Munro, "Industrial Transformations", 134.

Woolen cloths required a multi-step process to reach completion. After weaving, the fabric would be fulled, wherein it was put in hot water and then agitated until the fibers were felted together. Then, the fabric would be teased, or combed, to create a nap on the fabric. More expensive woolens would have this done to both sides, whereas some of the less expensive ones would only be teased on one side. After teasing, the fabric would then be sheared with razor sharp shears to make the nap as short as possible. This process was often repeated up to three times to create a very smooth surface that obscured the original weave. This process was very labor intensive and attributed to the higher cost of the woolen cloths.<sup>64</sup>

Until the mechanization of the fulling and teasing processes in the late fourteenth century the entire process was completed by hand. But these mechanization processes brought with them their own difficulties. The mechanized fulling process was initially somewhat uneven and could distort the fabric creating weak spots, thus it was only used for lesser quality woolens until the process was refined in the mid-fifteenth century.<sup>65</sup> Similar complaints were leveled against the mechanized teasing process. Although there was less chance of damaging the cloth, the new mechanized process could not create the same even finish that hand teasing the cloth produced.

Prior to the mid-fourteenth century the English woolen industry was very small and many of the English woolens were exported prior to fulling and finishing, which was often done in the Low Countries, and then sold on the international markets. Mostly only those cloths intended for the domestic market were fulled and finished in England. However, over the second half of the fourteenth century, this practice began to change as

---

<sup>64</sup> Munro, "Textile Technology", 48.

<sup>65</sup> Muendel, "The Orientation of Strikers in Medieval Fulling Mills", 97-118; Oldland, "The Finishing of English Woolens", 67-80.

England expanded the cloth industry and more fullers and finishers were available. Thus with the expansion of the English cloth industry and trade there was an increase in the numbers of textile workers in the finishing process - fullers, teasers, and dyers.

English produced woolens were lower priced than their counterparts from the continent, as the exceptionally high tariffs only applied to wool fiber export. This allowed England to easily compete with other countries in the international cloth markets. While being popular for their low cost, and being of an equal quality to many of the Low Country woolens, the English woolens never quite reached the export levels of other countries, although there was a significant increase in export over the second half of the fourteenth century. In the 1350's England was only exporting approximately 4,300 pieces of broadcloth per year, but by the early fifteenth century they were exporting close to 39,000 pieces of broadcloth per year.<sup>66</sup> The increase in export strongly suggests an increase in manufacturing, and while increases in production will often relate to reductions in quality, the English cloth production does not seem to show this, as the much of what was sold early in the fourteenth century was less expensive worsted wools. By the mid-fourteenth century sales of higher quality woolens had met or exceeded the amount of worsteds being exported.

Many of the cities in the Low Countries viewed the increase in English woolen cloth production as a threat to their own market viability and therefore banned the importation of English woolen cloth in the later fourteenth century. This was in addition to requiring that their higher quality and priced woolens be made only from English wool. There was some effort to increase the difficulty for English woolens to be exported

---

<sup>66</sup> Munro, "Bruges and the Abortive Staple", 1142; Munro, *Wool, Cloth, and Gold*, 6.

by not allowing them to be traded or transported through some of the Low Country cities, specifically Bruges and Leyden, in addition to the ban on not being sold. This led to Antwerp becoming a large trading center in the fifteenth century. With no large woolen trade of their own they did not view the English woolens as a threat to their own economy, and instead welcomed the opportunity to expand their market.<sup>67</sup> With the expansion of the English woolen industry more and more regulations were put forth to maintain the quality of what was being exported so that they could remain competitive with other manufacturers of woolen cloth.

### Statutes Related to the Production and Sale of Textiles and Fiber

A 1336 English statute prevented anyone not of the royal family from purchasing or using cloth made outside of England or its holdings, which included Scotland, Ireland, and Wales.<sup>68</sup> This statute seems to have been designed with a two-pronged intention: first, to build up the English economy by forcing people to spend their money on cloth made in England and second, by cutting off the importation of fabrics and reducing reliance on foreign cloth.<sup>69</sup>

The 1336 law is the only English statute that specifically prohibits the use of foreign cloth in one's clothing, and states that all foreign cloth purchased after the Feast of Saint Michael of the year 1337 was prohibited to all except the royal family, specifically the "king, queen, and their children". The enactment of this statute seems to indicate that the king was trying to set apart himself and his family from others close to the throne, since this was shortly after he declared himself heir to the French throne. The wording of the statute would appear to make allowance for those cloths purchased prior

---

<sup>67</sup> Munro, *Wool, Cloth, and Gold*, 7.

<sup>68</sup> See Appendix A; Apparel, 1336

<sup>69</sup> See Appendix A; Apparel, 1336

to the Feast of Saint Michael, and so those cloths would not have been subject to forfeiture if used or worn. Any cloth purchased after the stated date would be subject to forfeiture if used or worn. Additionally, the statute prohibits the importing of foreign cloths at the same date and bans the export of English wool fiber. The ban on the export of English wool is the oddest of the three, as the English wool fiber trade was a very large trade that brought in a great deal of money to England through export tariffs. The bans on importing foreign cloths and on purchasing foreign cloths make sense together. Neither appear to have an expiration date or have been expressly revoked. However based on the 1363 law, the statutes of 1336 must have either expired or been revoked at some point between those two dates, as some of the allowed fabrics in the 1363 law would not have been allowed under the 1336 law. Conversely the ban on the export of English wool must have been rather quickly revoked, for by 1338 the tariff on wool fiber export is listed at 2 pounds per sack.<sup>70</sup> Both prior to the 1336 statute and after, related statutes were enacted that affected the wool fiber and cloth trades, but not the wearing or purchasing of cloth expressly based on its country of origin.

Throughout the fourteenth century different laws were enacted that dictated how wool fiber and cloth could be sold, including what the tariffs were. The first fourteenth century law in 1328 dictated instructions on how the woolens were to be measured and specified acceptable lengths and widths for different types of fabric. While the law focuses on imported cloths, as it says “all cloths in such Places where they shall be put to Land, shall be measured by the King’s Aulnegeours.”<sup>71</sup> Further wording is less specific and could indicate that any cloth for sale had to be measured prior to sale. The statute

---

<sup>70</sup> Munro, “Industrial Transformations”, 135.

<sup>71</sup> Alnegeours were the officials appointed to be in charge of the measurement of cloths, and are mentioned in several of the fourteenth century statutes; See Appendix A: Cloth, 1328

specifically lists “Ray Cloth,” a multi-colored striped cloth, and nonspecific “coloured cloths.” Ray cloths were to measure twenty-eight yards long by “six quarters of measure by the yard” approximately one and a half yards wide. And the colored cloth twenty-six yards long by “six quarters and a half” equaled to two yards. Both of these measurements are approximate widths for broadcloth. This statute was reinstated in 1353, but allowed for cloths less than full length to be marked as such and sold, whereas the earlier statute did not make any allowances for shorter cloths to be sold. A 1363 statute also indicates that these lengths were to apply to all cloths, not just imported. Again in 1373 the statute was repeated, but without the 1353 allowances, although in 1376 an exception was made for Irish wool cloths called Friseware, which according to the statute, were not made to the same measurements as other wool cloths.

The 1376 statute also states that no woolen cloths were to be carried out of the realm before being fulled, without giving a purpose for the statute. Prior to this date many English woolens were fulled and finished in the Low Countries, so by banning the export of cloth that was not finished this would seem to encourage the development of the fulling and finishing industries in England. Another possible reason for prohibiting the export of un-fulled cloth might be to prevent lower quality cloths from being sold as higher quality after being fulled. The first theory seems to be a more logical conclusion since other statutes were enacted that specifically expressed an intention of protecting the quality of English woolens. And while the English economy was hurting from trade regulations both domestic and foreign, fulling the fabric in the country probably would not have increased the economy enough to combat their economic woes.

### Other fabrics

While the English wool trade of the Middle Ages is one of the best known

industries in England they also produced linen fabrics. Linen fabric is a product, created from the flax plant that grows naturally in England. Linen cloth was produced in much of the country, although later Ireland would become well known for the high quality of the linen fabric they produced. Far less is written about linen cloth and production in medieval England than wool cloth, and so it is difficult to determine the extent of production in England, or even how much the linen cloth would have cost.

Almost all of the available sources about English linen production relate to production after the sixteenth-century, with the only references to previous production being discussed in more generalized terms. One book that shed some light on medieval English linen is Brenda Collins and Philip Ollerenshaw's *The European Linen Industry in Historical Perspective*, but it provides only limited information.<sup>72</sup> The text mentions that several towns or communities had been producing flax, since the ninth-century. The information was recorded in the *Domesday Book* of the eleventh-century, that had been completed by order of William I.<sup>73</sup> Collins and Ollerenshaw's book does mention that the strongest centers for linen trade in the fourteenth-century were Flanders and Northern France, and that the finest linens could be traded as far east as Peking.<sup>74</sup> The book suggests that the coarser linens, such as fustian, were not traded much over long distances, although the finer qualities could be. While some information is available about the main production centers for linen, there was no information about the linen prices, making it difficult to compare the prices of the linens to the woolens and worsteds.

---

<sup>72</sup> *The European Linen Industry in Historical Perspective*, eds. Brenda Collins and Philip Ollerenshaw (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

<sup>73</sup> Brenda Collins and Philip Ollerenshaw, "The European Linen Industry since the Middle Ages," in Collins and Ollerenshaw, *The European Linen Industry*, 2.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

Since the available information for the woolens and worsteds and the wool industry as a whole is much more complete than that for linen products, the focus of this thesis is necessarily on the wool industry and related products.



## Chapter 4 – Sources for Fabric Prices

A very limited amount of information is available for fabric prices in the late fourteenth century.<sup>75</sup> Often, when fabric purchases are listed in an account book either the total cost of the fabric is listed without information as to how much was purchased, or it is listed in a purchase with other items so it is difficult to determine what portion of the total applies to the fabric. Some documents do list the fabric purchases with how much was bought and for how much, so that the price per yard can be determined. The documents that provide this information include a portion of the *Register of the Black Prince: Volume 4*,<sup>76</sup> *Accounts of The Chamberlains and other Officers of The County of Chester, 1301 – 1360*,<sup>77</sup> and *Accounts of the Obedientiars of Abingdon Abbey, 1322-1479*.<sup>78</sup> The first two texts have been transcribed and translated into English, but the *Accounts of the Obedientiars*, while having been transcribed has not been translated, and so these translations belong to the author. Also referenced are fabric prices recorded in *Fashion in the Age of the Black Prince*, although those prices are from the 1330's.<sup>79</sup>

Many of the references describe the fabric's color and fiber content, but rarely do

---

<sup>75</sup> The information about fabric prices is difficult to come by as there are limited sources which have been identified, and of those only a few have been transcribed let alone translated.

<sup>76</sup> *Register of Edward, The Black Prince Preserved in the Public Record Office*, Prepared under the superintendence of the deputy keeper of the records. Part IV (England) A.D. 1351-1365. Published by authority of his majesty's

principal secretary of state for the home department (London: His majesty's stationery office, 1933)

<sup>77</sup> *Accounts of The Chamberlains and other Officers of The County of Chester, 1301 – 1360*, (From the Original Rolls preserved in the Public Record Office, London) The Record Society for the Publication of Original Documents Relating to Lancashire and Cheshire, Volume 59, Edited with an Introduction by Ronald Stewart-Brown, M.A., Honorary Secretary of the Society, Printed for The Record Society (1910)

<sup>78</sup> *Accounts of the Obedientiars of Abingdon Abbey*, ed. R. E. G. Kirk, Printed for the Camden Society (1892)

<sup>79</sup> Newton, *Fashion in the Age of the Black Prince*, 136-139.

they give a name to the fabric weave. The few references that do give a name for the fabric often use names that are no longer used to refer to those fabrics, or the fabrics are no longer produced as there is no demand for them. Additionally, finding a reference that gives the name or quality of a fabric, with its fiber content, length purchased, and price, is even more rare. The *Black Prince's Register* was the most likely to contain comprehensive information about the fabrics purchased.

Identifying the names of the fabrics adds another challenge to the research since not only are some of the words unfamiliar to modern readers, spelling is inconsistent. For instance the word 'camaca,' a type of silk fabric, is also found spelled 'kamaca' within the same document.

### The Black Prince's Register

Volume 4 of the *Black Prince's Register* includes information for many different types of purchases, including those for fabric for himself and others. The focus in reviewing this source was to find as many references to the purchase of fabric as possible. Those found are listed in Appendix B. The volume referenced covers 1352-1362, and while there are other volumes that cover both earlier and later dates, they do not seem to include the wardrobe accounts in the same detail as this volume, and unfortunately do not contain information about the purchase of fabrics. Since the fabrics recorded in the *Black Prince's Register* are mostly for Edward III and occasionally for gifts, this can not be considered a representative sample of all fabrics and prices.

The *Black Prince's Register* tells us that an ell of cloth (equal to 1 1/4 yards) can cost between 8 and 13 shillings. Two of the least expensive cloths at 8 shillings per ell are listed as mixed cloths. This could mean a few different things. They could be made from two or more different fibers, such as a wool and linen blend sometimes referred to as a

Fustian, or they could be made from different types of wool fibers, or even silk. Either way, at 8 shillings per ell (about 6 ½ shillings per yard), it was less expensive than some of the other fabrics, although still not an inexpensive fabric, judged by the terms of the 1363 sumptuary law.

The more expensive woolen fabrics in the *Black Prince's Register* are listed at 13 shillings and 4 pence per ell. They include a blue cloth, two different cloths of burnet, and a ray cloth, all from a 1357 entry. If the fabric regulations of 1353 were followed in this instance then the wool fabrics sold as pieces should measure 28 yards in the case of the ray cloths and 26 yards for the colored cloths, of which the blue cloth would be included. Unfortunately, many of the cloths listed as being bought by the piece are silk or linen and therefore do not have a standard length at which they were sold, so can only be considered as whole cloth prices when listed as such.

There is more information on wool cloths than any of the other types. The wools appear to range in price from 6 ½ shillings per yard to over 10 shillings per yard (prices were converted from the ell for ease of modern understanding), which means these cloths were equal to a minimum of 12 marks for a whole cloth. As none of the fabrics listed say they are of a lesser quality, such as worsted or russet, russet here refers to the fabric and not the color, and it must be assumed that these cloths are all woolen fabrics, and expensive as well. Several fabrics in the *Black Prince's Register* list their color as russet, a reddish-brown color, but are woolen fabrics. Russet can be used to refer to both the fabric, a very coarse wool, and the color, a reddish-brown. When referring to the fabric it is usually found written as 'russet cloth' whereas the color is typically found written "russet field" or "russet color."

There are several purchases of silk listed as well. Under a 1352 heading are purchases of *samit*, *sendale*, and *camaca* (*kamaca*), which amount to a total purchase cost of 43*l.* 10s. Unfortunately, since they are all purchased by the piece, and there is not a yardage amount given for the pieces, the price per yard cannot be determined. It is unknown if the “piece” as described in the records would be considered in the same way as a “whole cloth” in the *Statutes of the Realm*. If it is, then the fabrics would cost 17s. 6d. for the *samit*, 10s. for the *sendale*, and 1*l.* 10s. for the *kamaca*, making the *kamaca* the most expensive.

Other purchases are for *garde*, most likely fabric trim, and for *say*. There was no exact match in the *Middle English Dictionary* and *sai*, silkworms, is the closest entry. Most likely in this case it is silkworm cocoons or even silk fiber, as the entry says that there were 3 1/2 pounds purchased and fabric is not usually purchased by the pound. Another entry in the *Middle English Dictionary* that could be a match for *say*, is *saie*, a very expensive woolen, but it is unlikely that it would have been purchased by the pound, as there are no other instances of wool or other fabric being purchased by the pound in this account or the other covered here.

The *Black Prince's Register* also gives some information about what the fabrics were used for. In a 1352 entry three ells, approximately 3 3/4 yards, of cloth were bought for a coat, and nine *stik* for making a robe. A *stik* is a unit of measure equal to 3/4 of a yard; nine *stik* is equal to approximately 6 3/4 yards. Another entry from the Black Prince's Register is for three quarters of a rayed cloth for two of the prince's minstrels for making robes. Three quarters of a ray cloth would be equal to approximately eighteen yards, meaning that each would have received about nine yards. From this can be seen

that various amounts of fabric were used for different types of garments, a coat, most likely referring to a cotehardie, is listed with the least amount of fabric, whereas the entries listing fabrics for robes include significantly more fabric.

### The Chamberlains' Accounts from Chester

The Chamberlains' accounts from Chester in 1327 state that three ells of striped cloth were bought for 6s. 6d., meaning that the price per ell for this cloth was only 2s. 2d. per ell. Assuming the cloth was being sold according to the standard sizing of 28 yards for a ray cloth, which were striped cloths, a whole cloth would cost 2l. 8s. 6.4d. This fabric price fits within the constraints of the 1363 sumptuary law, unlike many of the entries in the *Black Prince's Register*. However, it must be noted that the date of the Chamberlains' cloth is over thirty years prior to the 1363 sumptuary law, and inflation could easily have increased the price on that fabric.

Another item in the Chamberlains' accounts is an entry for 5 ells of green striped cloth at 8s. 4d. per ell. This entry is dated 1359, around the same time as the *Black Prince's Register*, and the fabric is priced about the same as the Black Prince's less expensive wools. Many of the other entries in the Chamberlains' account book are confusing in that the entries combine the costs of two different items into one purchase, making the book less helpful in understanding the fabric prices as a whole.

The Chamberlains' accounts do not have any specific entries about clothing, although there is in two different entries for "striped cloth for covering the exchequer of Chester". The first from 1327 is for 3 ells of fabric, and the second from 1359 is for 5 ells of fabric. Three ells of fabric is the same as the entry for the coat in the *Black Prince's Register* and the five ells is in the range listed in the *Black Prince's Register* as the necessary purchase of fabric for robes. While these fabric amounts could have been

purchased for garments for the exchequer, this is still speculative, based on the lengths purchased for garments in the *Black Prince's Register*.

### Abingdon Abbey Account Book

Unlike the first two sources, the account book of Abingdon Abbey is the least helpful of the three, since it does not provide any information regarding basic prices. The entries consist of descriptions of the types of cloth purchased and the total amount paid. There is no information about quantities or how much per yard or ell it cost. For instance, in three different entries it is stated that linen cloth was purchased for Abbot Nicholas, for 12d. in 1355, 7l. 3d. in 1375, and 12s. in 1383. If the qualities were known as well as how much was purchased, they could be compared, and it would be possible to determine if the price variation was in part due to the differences in quality in addition to the differences in quantity.

These three sources have been helpful in identifying the information that is available on fabric types and prices in late fourteenth century. It is apparent that little is known about other sources that could reveal information about textile prices, types and usage. Very few of the potential documents and records have been transcribed, let alone translated, making the research and identification of potential sources more difficult. Research of original manuscripts is highly important to identifying other possible sources of information on fabric prices.

## Chapter 5 - Comparison with the 1363 Law

The fabric limitations of type and price permitted for different social classes stated in the 1363 sumptuary law were compared with information about the purchases of woolens, and some worsteds, silks, and linens. The information was from the previously discussed sources the *Register of the Black Prince: Volume 4, Accounts of The Chamberlains and other Officers of The County of Chester, 1301 – 1360*, and *Accounts of the Obedientiars of Abingdon Abbey, 1322-1479*.

Beginning with the least expensive fabrics, the blankets and russets, there are three entries in the document sources that could match with section XIV of the sumptuary law.<sup>80</sup> In the 1363 law the blankets and russets are listed as the only acceptable cloths for Carters, Ploughmen, Oxherds, Cowherds, Shephards and the like and that it must cost less than twelve pence. The entries in the document sources include a purchase of 44 pieces and 7 ells of ‘Elsham’ for 19s. 3 3/4d in the *Black Prince’s Register*, and two entries for canvas at 3.6d. and 4.8d. per yard in the *Chamberlains’ Accounts from Chester County*. Elsham is a village in North Lincolnshire on the eastern coast of England, and the entry most likely refers to wool cloth from that area, as Lincolnshire was a wool producing area. It also possibly falls within the cost constraints for the least expensive fabrics listed in the sumptuary law, but it is slightly unclear exactly how much 44 pieces refers to in this entry, but even if it only refers to 44 feet of cloth it still makes the cloth very inexpensive.

---

<sup>80</sup> See appendix A: Fabric: 1363.

The next expensive fabric is the listing for Grooms and Servants of Lords whose fabric for clothing was not to exceed 1l. 4s. 8p. the whole cloth. There are no entries in any of the documents that appear to fall between the maximum cost for the lowest class mentioned, the Carters and others previously mentioned, and the maximum costs for this class. There is one entry for the next most expensive listing in the *Statutes of the Realm*, that for People of Handicraft and Yoemen, who were limited to cloth not costing more than 1s. 6d. the whole cloth. One entry in the *Chamberlains' Accounts* is for "5 ells of green striped cloth" costing 1s. 4d. per yard. The striped cloth probably does not refer to ray cloth, as all of the ray cloths listed in the *Black Prince's Register* are well over the cost of this cloth per yard. Because it is inexpensive this could possibly be a worsted striped cloth, rather than the woolen ray cloths which were also striped and found in the *Black Prince's Register*. The green striped cloth then would be acceptable for the People of Handicraft and Yoemen.

The other entry in the *Chamberlains' Accounts* for striped cloth is for "3 ells of striped cloth" for 1s. 8 3/4d. per yard, while only slightly more than the previous listing from the *Chamberlains' Account* for the green striped cloth, it could possibly be included under the listing for Grooms and Servants of Lords, although it is slightly more expensive per yard than what would be expected. Once again this is more likely a worsted fabric than a woolen because of its price. In addition, it is not known what a whole cloth of the green stripe would cost since none of the statutes related to cloth give a measurement specifically for worsted fabrics. The statutes specifically list ray cloths, a type of woolen, and colored broad cloths, which were usually woolens as well.

The next entry in the 1363 sumptuary law is for Esquires and Gentlemen with an



income less than 100 pounds per year, and Merchants with an income of at least 500 pounds per year who were allowed fabric up to 3*l.* 1*s.* 6*d.* This is followed by the entry for Esquires and Gentlemen with incomes of over 200 marks per year (136*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) and Merchants with an income of more than 1,000 pounds per year. There are no entries in any of the three document sources that would be within the limitations of these sumptuary law entries, but more than the previously mentioned entries. There are no entries that fit the Knights with less income, those knights with an income of 200 pounds per year, who were allowed fabric up to 4*l.* 2*s.* the whole cloth. Even the least expensive of the woolen cloths listed in the *Black Prince's Register* are over 8 pounds for the whole cloth.

However the final group mentioned in the sumptuary law are those knights with an income between 500 marks (341*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) and 1,000 pounds per year who were allowed any type of cloth they wanted, which means that they could have purchased and worn the expensive woolens listed in the *Black Prince's Register*. Three of the woolens from the *Black Prince's Register*, all from the 1357 heading, are listed at 8 shilling per ell, a *sangwyn* mixed cloth, a mixed brown cloth, and a blue long cloth. With the first two cloths it is hard to say if the mixed cloth means that it is mixed with another fiber or another type of wool, or if it had mixed colors. It seems more likely that the fabric is mixed with another fiber or type of wool since those that are multi-colored are usually listed as ray cloths. The final cloth listed is a blue long cloth, with no other details, most likely a woolen cloth. The “long” could mean that it had been made longer than the standard length for colored cloths, or it could just mean that it had been made to full length.

Most of the other cloths listed in the *Black Prince's Register* are also woolen cloths of increasing expense. The most expensive woolens in the document can be found in the 1357 heading and the 1359 heading and are for both colored cloths and ray cloths. The two most expensive of these cloths are a scarlet bought for 18*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* and given to a knight as a gift from the prince, and a quarter of a *chokette* cloth for 6*l.* Entries for scarlet almost always refer to the very high quality woolen cloth that has been teased and sheared on both sides, often a couple of times, after fulling. While scarlet can sometimes refer to the red dye from the kermes beetles, a very expensive dye, it is more common to find it referring to the very highest quality woolens, the most expensive of which were dyed using the kermes beetles. While the scarlet cloth is easy to identify, the *chokette* cloth is a little more difficult. The *Middle English Dictionary* does not have an exact match for *chokette*, but does have two similar words. The first is *cokke* which is defined as scarlet cloth or a scarlet garment, the other is *coket* which is defined as goods that have been marked with the King's seal showing that the export duties on them have been paid. At 6*l.* for a quarter cloth, 24*l.* for a whole cloth, the *chokette* cloth is the most expensive item in the *Black Prince's Register*. It seems most likely that it is referring to, *cokke*, the scarlet cloths from the first definition because of the very high price for it. Also *coket* seems an unlikely choice in that it is doubtful that anyone would purchase cloth that had had the export duties paid, import duties yes, but not export duties.

Other items listed in the document sources include silks, and linens. Of the silks in the *Black Prince's Register* there are entries for velvet, *samite*, *baudekyn*, *sendel*, and taffeta. These entries are all a little more difficult to fully understand as they are less likely to include information about how much fabric was bought. Some of them list a

piece of cloth, which may be a whole cloth, and so can be somewhat compared to the *Statutes of the Realm*. The entry for velvet, from 1352, says that it was a piece of velvet for 54s. (2l. 14s.), which seems inexpensive when compared with the very expensive woolens discussed earlier. Additionally, at 2l. 14s. for a whole cloth it would have been affordable to the Esquires and Gentlemen with incomes less than 100 pounds per year and the Merchants. Velvet is never mentioned directly in the 1363 sumptuary law, although cloth of gold, cloth of silver, embroidered fabrics, and silk are all mentioned, but not velvet. Considering that velvet is often referred to as a luxurious fabric this is surprising. Also the price for the whole cloth is surprising, as much for it being a silk cloth that had to be imported, as for it being a difficult cloth to produce.

Also in the 1352 entry is a purchase of four pieces of samite for 70s., which would be 17s. 6d. per piece. The *Middle English Dictionary* describes samite as silk cloth embroidered or interwoven with threads of gold or silver, meaning that even if it were as inexpensive as it appears it would not have been available to any under the class of Esquires and Gentlemen worth over 200 pounds per year and the Merchants with an income of 1,000 pounds per year, and then only if it were silver and not gold. The gold would only have been available to the wealthier knights, those with 500 marks per year or more. A 1353 entry for two cloths of gold baudekyn, another type of metal and silk cloth, is for 22l. or 11l. per cloth. This entry is more similar to the prices seen for the woolens and would only have been available to the wealthier class of knights and those of higher incomes. However, this fabric seems intended for the prince's use based on the entry.

A 1359 entry lists three different silk purchases, but unfortunately does not give the prices for any of them. They include 11 cloths of baudekyn, 6 pieces of strengthened

sendel, and 16 ells of taffeta; these also seem intended for the prince's use. A final entry of silk to consider, purchased for the prince's use in 1357, included 16 ells of taffeta and 1 coif of red sandal for 25s. This again seems to be a low price for silk cloth, but is difficult to determine without any reference points for understanding how much per yard or ell it cost or whether or not this amount is representative of silks as a whole.

Finally the linens should be considered, however there are fewer entries for linen than for either the wool or silk fabrics. There is only one entry in the *Black Prince's Register*, for "13 ells of bokeram, price 13s." making the price per ell 1s. For fabric which is described as very fine linen in the *Middle English Dictionary*, this seems very inexpensive, although no use for it is given so it is hard to say what it is exactly.

*Bokeram*, named for the Bukhara area in Uzbekistan, is described as being a very fine linen or cotton. In England, it is more likely to be linen than cotton, unless it was imported and therefore very expensive, as cotton does not grow in England. Also, while it is named for an area in Uzbekistan that does not mean that it is from there. It is as likely, especially when the price is taken into consideration, that the fabric was produced in England in the style of the fabric from Bukhara.

The other entries for linen are in the *Accounts of Abingdon Abbey* and include three different entries of linen cloth for Abbot Nicholas and one for a white linen table cloth. While all of the entries tell us how much was paid for the purchases, none of them tell us how much cloth was purchased, making any comparison with the 1363 sumptuary law very difficult.

In conclusion, while some understanding of the fabric prices can be found from these documents, only a minimal comparison with the 1363 sumptuary law is possible.

Many of the woolens listed are well outside of the allowable maximums for all classes except the wealthiest knights, and there was only one helpful entry about linen. It is interesting that while silks are specifically banned to most of the social classes, according to the document sources they appear to be affordable based on the price restrictions in the 1363 sumptuary law.

## Chapter 6 - Conclusion

After comparing the available fabric prices with the 1363 English sumptuary law, it is possible to see that under the regulations of that statute many if not all of the woolen fabrics would have been above the price range of most of the social classes listed in the statute. The only class for whom any of the listed woolens would not have been too expensive was the wealthier class of knights, the highest social class addressed in the sumptuary law. From this it is possible to surmise that those of the classes below the wealthier knights, those earning more than 500 marks per year, were restricted to wearing worsteds. Conversely, based on their prices some of the silks listed would have been available to the Esquires, Gentlemen, and Merchants had the silks not been specifically banned in the statute.

Rather than create gradual visual indications of wealth amongst the middle classes the statute seems to instead push most of the middle class into one group that was only allowed worsteds and linens. Even though the wealthier Esquires, Gentlemen, and Merchants along with the Knights are allowed silk, they still do not seem to be able to purchase any woolens. If enforced, this would have created a hard divide between classes, rather than a natural gradation.

Specific items might have been considered to be more telling of excessive spending than the fabrics, specifically the woolens. The 1363 statute also restricted accessories such as silk veils, gold and silver rings, and the type and amount of embroidery that was allowed on clothing. While these were not covered in the study of

fabrics, they would make for interesting additional research.

It was also of note that none of the actual fabrics were priced in marks. While marks were used as a money of account, which could explain why they were used in the sumptuary law, and none of the fabrics were sold or purchased using the mark. Since the mark is only two-thirds of a pound it creates the impression that there is a large difference in fabric price maximums between classes, but when a price in marks is converted to pounds, the differences in maximums between classes are actually quite small, anywhere from 6s.18d. to a little over one pound. When reading the law there appears at first glance to be a gradual increase in the quality of the fabrics available to each social class, but that is not apparent when the maximum fabric prices have been compared with actual fabric prices.

It is unclear what role the increase in the English wool cloth trade and decrease in the wool fiber trade affected the income of the merchants. If those exporting goods shifted their primary exports to better support the demands, or if it allowed others to increase their businesses since they were already exporting fabrics.

There is still much more room for investigation in this topic, not only in identifying, translating, and transcribing documents with information about fabric prices, but also in better identifying some of the fabrics in the documents. While available lexicons such as the *Middle English Dictionary* provide some information about the fabric names, it sometimes will give multiple definitions, which the researcher must then try to interpret. Moreover the work of lexicographers always demands scrutiny from specialists. Identifying certain terms has proved a challenge, such as the case of trying to find a definition for *chokette*, which has two possible matches in the *Middle English*

*Dictionary*, *cokke* and *coket*, the first referencing a scarlet cloth, and the second referring to the King's seal certifying export duties had been paid on merchandise. Fabric names need further scrutiny so all researchers can have a better understanding of their meanings.

Overall the purpose of this thesis, identifying some sources for comparison of fabric prices with the 1363 sumptuary law, was successful. Three sources were found containing enough information to make comparisons with the statute and to make some evaluations about what fabrics would have been available to each social class. This is just a beginning of the possibilities for research in this area, which should be further explored to help not only costume historians, but also other historians by further defining the sumptuary laws in terms of economic and social trends.



## Appendix A - Statutes

*The Statutes of the Realm*, Printed by command of his majesty King George the Third. In pursuance of an address of the House of Commons of Great Britain. From Original Records and Authentic Manuscripts, Volume 1, Printed by William S. Hein and Company, Inc. (Buffalo, N.Y., 1993.)

### Apparel

#### **Vol. 1, p. 280-281 (1336 – The 11<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of Edward III)**

4. Item, it is accorded, That no Man nor Woman great nor small of England, Ireland, nor Wales not of out Sovereign Lord the King's Power in Scotland, of what Estate or Condition he be, the King, Queen, and their Children only except, shall wear no Cloth, which shall be bought after the Feast of Saint Michael next coming, other than is made in England, Ireland, Wales, or Scotland, within the King's Power, upon Pain of Forfeiture of the same Cloth, and further to be punished at the King's Will; and that in the said Land of England, Ireland, Wales, and Scotland, within the King's Power, a Man may make the Cloths as long and as short as a Man will.
  
6. Item, it is accorded, That no Man nor Woman of the said Lands of England, Ireland, Wales, or Scotland within the King's Power, of what Estate or Condition that he be, the King, Queen, and their Children, the Prelates, Earls, Barons, Knights, and Ladies, and People of the Holy Church, which may expend by Year an C li. (100 ...) Of Their Benefices at the least, (qi poent despendre p(er) an cent livres au meins a la vroie value de lor benefices, ...) to the very Value, only except, shall wear no Fur in his Clothes, that shall be bought after he said Feast of Saint Micheal, upon the forfeiture of the said Fur, and further to be punished at the King's Will.

#### **Vol. 1, p. 380 (1363 - 37<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of Edward III)**

VIII. Item, For the Outragious and Excessive Apparel of divers People, against their Estate and Degree, to the great Destruction and Impoverishment of all the Land; It is ordained, That Grooms, as well Servants of Lords, as they of Mysteries, and Artificers, shall be served [to eat] and drink once a Day of Flesh or of Fish, and the Remnant [of]other Victuals, as of Milk, Butter, and Cheese, and other such Victuals, according to their Estate: And that they have Clothes for their Vesture, or Hosing, whereof the whole Cloth shall not exceed Two Marks, and that they wear

no Cloth of higher Price, of their buying, nor otherwise, nor nothing of Gold nor of Silver embroidered, aimeled, nor of Silk, nor nothing pertaining to the said Things; and their Wives, Daughters, and Children of the same Condition in their Clothing and Apparel, and they shall wear no [Veils] passing xii.d. a Veil.

- IX. Item, That the People of Handicraft, and [] Yeomen, shall [not] take nor wear Cloth of an higher Price for their Vesture or Hosing, than within Forthy Shilling the whole Cloth, by way of buying, not otherwise; not Stone, nor Cloth of Silk nor of Silver, nor Girdle, [Knife [harnessed], Button,] Ring, Garter, nor Owche, Ribband, Chains, [Seal, Bendes,] nor no such other Things of Gold nor of Silver, nor no Manner of Apparel embroidered, aimeled, nor of Silk by no Way; and that their Wives, Daughters, and Childrean, be of the same Condition in their Vesture and Apparel; and that they wear no [Veil] of silk, but only of [Yarn] made within the Realm, nor no Manner of Furr, nor of Budge, but only Lamb, Cony, Cat, and Fox.
- X. Item, That Esquires and all Manner of Gentlemen, under the Estate of a Knight, which have no Land nor Rent to the Value of an Hundred Pounds by Year, shall not take nor wear Cloth for their Clothing or Hosing of an higher Price, than within the Price of Four Marks and a Half the whole Cloth, by way of buying nor otherwise; and that they wear no Cloth of Gold, nor Silk, nor Silver, nor no Manner of Clothing imbroidered, Ring, [Buttons,] nor owche of Gold, Ribband of Gold nor of Silver, nor nothing [of Stone] nor no manner of Furr; and that their Wives, Daughters, and Children be of the same Condition, as to their Vesture and Apparel, without any turning up or purple; and that they [wear] no Manner of Apparel of Gold, or Silver, nor of Stone. But that Esquires, which have Land or Rent to the Value of ii. C. [Marks] by Year and above, may take and wear Cloths of the Price of v. Marks the whole Cloth, and Cloth of Silk and of Silver, Ribband, Girdle, and other Apparel reasonable garnished of silver; and that their Wives, Daughters, and Children, may wear Furr turned up of Miniver, without Ermins or Letuse, or any manner [of apparel] of Stone but for their Heads.
- XI. Item, That Merchants, Citizens and Burgesses, Artificers, People of Handy-craft, as well within the City of London, as elsewhere, which have clearly Goods and Chattels, to the Value of v. C. (500) Pounds, and their Wives and Children, may take and wear in the Manner as the Esquires and Gentlemen which have Land to rent to the Value of C. li. by Year; and that the same Merchants, Citizens, and Burgesses, which have clearly Goods and Chattels, [to (above)] the Value of M. li. and their Wives and Children may take and wear in the Manner as Esquires and Gentlemen, which have Land and Rent to the Value of ii. C. li. by Year: And no Groom, Yeoman, or Servant of Merchant, Artificer or People of Handycraft shall wear otherwise in Apparel than is above ordained of Yeomen of Lords.
- XII. Item, That Knights, which have Land or Rent within the Value of ii. C. [li.] shall take and wear Cloth of vi. Marks the whole Cloth, for their Vesture, and of none higher Price: And that they wear not Cloth of Gold, nor [Cloths,] Mantle, nor

Gown furred with Miniver nor of Ermins, nor no Apparel broidered of Stone, nor otherwise; and that their Wives, Daughters, and Children be of the same Condition; and that they wear no turning up of Ermins, nor of Letuses, nor no Manner of Apparel of Stone, but only for their Heads. But that all Knights and Ladies, which have Land or Rent over the Value of iv. C. Mark by Year, to the Sum of M. li. [*by the year*] shall wear at their Pleasure, except Ermins and Letuses, and Apparel of [Pearls and Stone, but only] for their Heads.

XIII. Item, That Clerks, which have Degree in any Church, Cathedral, Collegial, or Schools, [or Clerk] of the King, that [hath] such Estate that requireth Furr, shall do and use according to the Constitution of the same; and all other Clerks, which have (*above*) ii. C. Marks of [Land] by Year, shall wear and do as Knights of the same Rent; and other Cleks within the same Rent, shall wear as the Esquires of C. li. Of Rent: And that all those, as well Knights as Clerks, which by this Ordinance may wear Furr in the Winder, in the same Manner shall wear [Linure (*lawn*)] in the Summer.

XIV. Item, That Carters, Ploughmen, Drivers of the Plough, Oxherds, Cowhers, Shephards, [Deyars, (*swineherds, dairymen,*)] and all other Keepers of Beasts, Threshers of Corn, and all Manner of People of the Estate [of a Groom, attending to Husbandry,] and all other People, that have not Forty Shillings of Goods, nor [of Chattels,] shall not take nor wear no Manner of Cloth, but Blanket, and Russet [Wool] of Twelve-pence; and shall wear [the] Girdles of Linen according to their Estate; and that [they come to eat and drink] in the Manner as pertaineth to them, and not excessively. And it is ordained, that if any wear or do contrary to any of the Points aforesaid, that he shall forfeit [against] the King all the Apparel that he hat so worn against the Form of the Ordinance.

## Cloth

### **Vol. 1, p. 260 (1328 - 2nd year of the reign of Edward III)**

XIV. Item, it is enacted by our Sovereign Lord the King, and his Council, that from the Feast of Saint Michael, next coming forward, all Cloths in such Places where they shall be put to Land, shall be measured by the King's Aulnegeours in the presence of the Mayor and Bailiffs, where there is a Mayor, and where no Mayor is in presence of the Bailiffs of the same Places; that is to say, the Length of every Cloth of Ray, by a Line of seven Yards, four times measured by the List, and the Breadth of every Ray Cloth six Quarters of measure by the Yard; and of coloured Cloths the Length shall be measured by the Back, by a Line of six Yards and a half, four times measured, and the breadth six Quarters and an half measured by the yard without [defoiling<sup>81</sup>] the Cloths.

### **Vol. 1, p. 280 (1336 - 11th year of the reign of Edward III)**

---

<sup>81</sup> A footnote in the *Statutes of the Realm* indicates that the word could also be 'marring'.

I. It is Accorded by our Sovereign Lord the King, his Prelates, Earls, and Barons, with the Assent of the Commons in the Parliament summoned at Westminster, the Monday next after the Feast of Saint [Matthew] the Apostle, in the xi Year of the Reign of our Sovereign Lord the King, That no Merchant, foreign or denizen, nor none other of what Estate or Condition that he be, upon pain of Forfeiture of Life and of Member, and of as much as he may forfeit towards our Sovereign Lord the King, shall [bring or cause to be brought,] by himself nor by other, privily nor apertly from henceforth any Wools out of the Realm, till by the King and his Council it be thereof otherwise provided.

III. Item, It is accorded and established, That no Merchant, foreign nor denizen, nor none other, after the said Feast of Saint Micheal, shall bring or cause to be brought privily nor apertly, by himself nor by other, into the said Lands of England, Ireland, Wales, and Scotland, within the King's Power, any Cloths made in any other Places than in the same, upon the Forfeiture of the said Cloths, and further to be punished at the King's Will.

**Vol. 1, p. 330 (1358 - 2nd year of the reign of Edward III)**

IV. Item, Whereas the Great Men and Commons have shewed to our Lord the King, how divers Merchants, as well Foreigners as Denizens, have withdrawn them, and yet do withdraw them to come with Cloths into England, to the Great Damage of the King and of all his People, because that the King's Aulneger surmiseth to Merchant Strangers, that their Cloths be not of Assise, that is to say, The coloured Cloth of the Length of Six and twenty Yards measured by the [Crest,] and of the Breadth of Six Quarters and an Half; and the Cloth of Ray, of the Length of Eight and twenty Yards measured by the List, and of the breadth of Six Quarters, and [whereas the same have been arrested] as forfeit to our Lord the King.

**Vol. 1, p. 398 (1376 - 50th year of the reign of Edward III)**

VII. Item, It is ordained and defended by our Lord the King, That no Woolen Cloths shall be carried into any Part out of our Realm of England before they be fulled; nor that any Subsidy be thereof demanded nor paid, before that they be fulled.

VIII. Item, It is ordained and established, That no Subsidy nor Aulnage shall be paid, levied, nor demanded of Cloths called Friseware, which be made in Ireland, or otherwise in England of Irish Wool, brought within the Realm of England, because that those Cloths do not contain the Length and Breadth ordained by the Statute; and for so much they ought not to be comprised in the Statutes late made of Ray Cloths and coloured Cloths.

## Summary of the 1363 Sumptuary Law

Social Class	Limitations	
Grooms, and Servants of Lords	Whole cloth shall not exceed 2 marks	1l. 4s. 8d.
Wives, Daughters, and Children	No Gold or Silver embroidered, or aimeled No Silk The same No Veils over 12d a veil	
People of handicraft, and Yeomen	No cloth over 40 shillings the whole cloth	2l.
Wives, Daughters, and Children	No Stone No Cloth of silk or silver No Girdle, knife [harnessed], button, ring, garter, owche, ribband, chains, seal, bendes of Gold or Silver No embroidery, aimeled, or silk the same No silk veils, only veils of [yarn] made within Great Britian No Fur, or Budge, only Lamb, Cony, Cat, and Fox	
Esquires and All Gentlemen under 100 pounds/year	No cloth over 4.5 marks the whole cloth	3l. 1s. 6d.
Wives, Daughters, and Children	No cloth of gold or silver No embroidered clothing No owche of gold (ounce?, Fr. <i>nouche dor</i> ) No ribband of gold or silver No stone No Fur the same no turning up or purfle (ME trim, border) No gold, silver, or stone	
Esquires and all Gentlemen over 200 [Marks]/year	Cloth up to 5 marks the whole cloth	3l. 8s. 4d.
Wives, Daughters, and Children	Cloth of silk and silver Ribband, Girdle, or other Apparel reasonably garnished with silver the same may wear fur turned up of Miniver	

	<p>No Ermins or Letuse (weasel)  No apparel of stone except for their heads</p>
<p>Merchants, Citizens and Burgesses, Artificers, and People of Handy-craft of the value of 500 pounds/year</p>	<p>see Esquires and Gentlemen to the value of 100 pounds/year</p>
<p>Merchants, Citizens and Burgesses, Artificers, and People of Handy-craft of the value of 1000 pounds/year</p>	<p>see Esquires and Gentlemen above the value of 200 marks/year</p>
<p>Knight worth 200 pounds</p> <p>Wives, Daughters, and Children</p>	<p>No cloth over 6 marks the whole cloth <span style="float: right;">4l. 2s.</span></p> <p>No cloth of gold  No fur of Miniver or Ermins  No apparel embroidered with stone</p> <p>the same</p> <p>No turning up of Ermins, or Letuses  No apparel of stone, except for their heads</p>
<p>Knights worth 500 marks to 1000 pounds/year</p>	<p>Can wear at their pleasure</p> <p>No Ermins or Letuses  No apparel of Pearls or Stone, except for their heads</p>
<p>Carters, Ploughmen, Drivers of the Plough, Oxherds, Cowhers, Shephards, [Deyars, (swineherds, dairymen,)] and all other Keepers of Beasts, Threshers of Corn, and all Manner of People of the Estate [of a Groom, attending to Husbandry,] and all other People, that have not 40s.</p>	<p>No cloth, except for Blanket and Russet of Twelve-pence  Shall wear girdles of linen according to their estate</p>

## Appendix B - Documents

*Register of Edward, The Black Prince Preserved in the Public Record Office*, Prepared under the superintendence of the deputy keeper of the records. Part IV (England) A.D. 1351-1365. Published by authority of his majesty's principal secretary of state for the home department, Published by his majesty's stationery office (London, 1933)

P. 56 - 1352 - folio 36 - July 1 - London

Order to the auditors of the account of Sir William de Northwell the prince's clerk, treasurer of this household and late keeper of this great wardrobe, - inasmuch as William de Stretton, the prince's yeoman and tailor, bought the following things relating to his office from divers of the prince's creditors at London when Sir William was keeper of the wardrobe but in his absence, to wit,

a piece of velvet, price 54s.,  
four pieces of samit, price 70s.,  
810 pearls, price 8*l.* 2s.,  
32 pieces of 'garde,' price 112s.,  
13 ells of 'bokeram,' price 13s.,  
3 1/2 pounds of 'say,' price 70s.,  
44 pieces of 'sendale,' price 22*l.*,  
12 pieces of 'kamaca,' price 18*l.*,  
4 pieces and 7 ells of 'Elsham,' price 19s. 3 3/4d.

P. 68 - 1352 - folio 43d

Three ells of rayed cloth bought on 14 March; to John de Bradeston for a coat.

P. 70 - 1352 - folio 44

Nine 'stik' of cloth, bought on 5 March; to Richard Sturmy for making a robe for himself.

Two ells of rayed cloth, bought on 9 April; to Clays de Ispannia, the prince's runner.

P. 71 - 1352 - folio 44d

Three quarters of a rayed cloth, bought on 11 May; to Hans and Soz, the prince's minstrels, for making robes for themselves.

P. 89 - 1353 - folio 52 - April 19 - London

To John de Todenham, mercer of London, for a cloth of gold bought and delivered as above; 9*l.* 6s. 8d.

P. 90 - 1353 - folio 52 - April 19 - London

To Francis Dyne for two cloths of gold 'baudekyn' bought from him and delivered to prince in his chamber; 22*l.*

P. 230 - 1357 - folio 132

For Henry Clerc of Seint Laurence for a coat, by command of Sir John de Wengefeld; 3 ells of mixed short cloth.

16 ells of 'taffata' and 1 coif of red 'sendal' by the hands of Henry de Alderyington, price 25*s.* 0*d.*

20 1/2 ells of blue cloth taken from John Peche, price per ell 13*s.* 4*d.*; 13*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*

16 ells of long burnet bought of Peche, price per ell 13*s.* 4*d.*; 10*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*

11 ells of 'sangwyn' mixed, price per ell 8*s.*; 4*l.* 8*s.* 0*d.*

23 ells of mixed brown cloth, price per ell 8*s.*; 9*l.* 4*s.* 0*d.*

Taken by Alryngton for Gistell:-

2 1/4 ells of long burnet, price per ell 13*s.* 4*d.*; 30*s.* 0*d.*

3 ells of cloth of ray, price per ell 13*s.* 4*d.*; 40*s.* 0*d.*

2 1/4 ells of long burnet, price per ell 7*s.*; 15*s.* 9*p.*

3 ells of cloth of ray, price per ell 7*s.*; 21*s.* 0*d.*

2 ells of blue longcloth, price per ell 8*s.*; 16*s.* 0*d.*

folio 132d

For the prince's esquires for the summer season; 10 ells of long russet

P. 285 - 1359 - folio 162d - March 10 - London

10*l.* for a cloth of ray with a brown field,

7*l.* for three-quarters of a cloth of ray with a perse-murrey field;

10*l.* for a sanguine-murrey cloth;

6*l.* for a quarter of a 'maskle' cloth;

6*l.* for a quarter of a 'chokettee' cloth;

13*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* for a cloth of ray with a russet field;

13*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* for a cloth of ray 'rome';

P. 320 - 1359 - folio 181 - October 18 - Northbourne

Order to the auditors of the account of Sir Peter de Lacy, the prince's clerk and keeper of the great wardrobe, to make due allowance to Sir Peter, on his account, of the following items which by the prince's order he has delivered in the prince's chamber, to wit,

11 cloth of 'baudekyn,'

42 ells of linen cloth of Brabant,

6 pieces of strengthened 'sendel,'

a piece of 'carde' of Lumbardie,

16 ells of 'taffata,'

1lb. of silk 'frenses.'

1/2lb. of silk laces,

a cloth and a half of ray and a cloth of colour, for a 'dossere' and 'banquerre' in the great chamber of the wardrobe.



P. 409 - 1361 - folio 224 - December 28 - Berkhamstead Castle

Order to Sir Peter de Lacy, the prince's clerk and keeper of the great wardrobe, - inasmuch as the prince has decided to give the knights, esquires and yeomen of his household cats and hats for this coming feast of New Year, - to arrange somehow or other to send to the prince at Berkhamsted by the eve of the said feast enough cloth for making the said livery, to wit, for the knights four pieces of 'camaca,' with such woollen cloth as shall seem most suitable for hats with gold ribbons, and for the esquires and yeomen as much woollen cloth as is necessary.

P. 476 - 1362 - folio 250d - November 8 - Plympton

Also paid for a cloth of scarlet which was bought and given to the same knights as a gift from the prince on the same day; 18*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*

---

*Accounts of The Chamberlains and other Officers of The County of Chester, 1301 – 1360,* (From the Original Rolls preserved in the Public Record Office, London) The Record Society for the Publication of Original Documents Relating to Lancashire and Cheshire, Volume 59, Edited with an Introduction by Ronald Stewart-Brown, M.A., Honorary Secretary of the Society, Printed for The Record Society, (1910)

P. 94 (1320-1321) Expenses and Deliveries

And for two yards of canvas bought during the time of this account for putting the said moneys in, and sent to the court, the price of the ell 4 ½*d.* – 9*d.*

P. 105 (September 29, 1327 – March 13, 1328) Expenses

Three ells of striped cloth bought for covering the exchequer of Chester (In tribus ulnis panni stragulati empti pro scaccario Cestrie cooperiando), the price of the ell 2*s.* 2*d.* - 6*s.* 6*d.*

P. 167 (1350-1351) Expenses and Deliveries

In monies payed for 19 dozens 11 ells of white cloth and 4 dozens of green cloth bought for arrows to go with the Prince in the King of England's War – 18*l.* 11*s.* 10*d.*

P. 270 (1359-1360) Payments

2 ells of canvass bought for making pouches (*pokettis*) and other necessary things for putting and carrying the lord's money in – 12*d.*

Sewing the same – 2*d.*

5 ells of green striped cloth bought for covering the exchequer of Chester, price the ell 20*d.* – 8*s.* 4*d.*

Item, in damping (*matidacione*) and clipping (*tonsio*) of the same cloth – 2 ½*d.*

2 ells of canvas bought for the same covering 12*d.*

---

*Accounts of the Obedientiars of Abingdon Abbey*, Edited by R. E. G. Kirk, Printed for the Camden Society (1892)

- p. 7 - The Lignar's Account, 1355-1356  
*Vendicio lane. - De xxix petris lane vii li. x s.*  
(For the sale of wool. - For 29 stones [406 lbs.] of wool 7l. 10s.)
- p. 25 - The Treasurers' Account, 1375-1376.  
*In lineo panno pro Abbate Nicholao. xii d.*  
(For the abbot Nicholas, linen cloth for 12d.)
- p. 29 - The Treasurers' Account, 1375 -1376.  
*Item in panno et aliis necessariis empris pro Willelmo Skinner' per annum xix s. viiid.*  
(Likewise, cloth and others necessary for William Skinner per year for 19s. 8p.)  
*In lineis et cordis empties ad opus cementarii vi d.*  
(Linen and rope/cord bought for all the stone cutters for 6d.)  
*In lineo panno pro mappis ii s. ix d.*  
(Linen cloth for a white cloth[table cloth] for 2s. 9d.)
- p. 33 - The Treasurers' Account, 1375-1376.  
*In lineo panno pro Abbate Nicholao vii li. iii d. ob.*  
(For the abbot Nicholas, linen cloth for 7l. 3d. ob.)
- p. 44 - The Treasurers' Account, 1383-1384.  
*In lineo panno pro Abbate Nicholao xii s.*  
(For the abbot Nicholas, linen cloth for 12s.)
- p. 62 - The Sacristan's Account, 1396-1397.  
*In lineo panno, cerico [serico], et filo pro vestimentis emendandis vi s. vi d.*  
(Linen cloth, silk, and thread to repair the vestments for 7s. 7d.)  
*In pannis pendendis et deponendis ix s. vi d.*  
(For cloth to hang down and lay down 9s. 6d.)
- p. 86 - The Chamberlain's Account, 1417-1418.  
*Et in stamina, linea tela, langel' emptis hoc anno viii li. iiii s.*  
(And for the thread, linen thread, was bought this year for 8l. 4s.)  
*Et in panno laneo empto pro pedibus xxviii s. vi d.*  
(And for the wool cloth bought for the feet 28s. 6d.)  
\*Most likely this is referencing wool cloth bought for hosen or foot wraps.
- p. 90 - The Refectorer's Account, 1422-1423.  
*Item in serico empto ad idem xx d.*  
(Likewise, silk fabric was bought for the same also 20d.)

## Summary of the Black Prince's Register

1352		price/ell	yards	pounds/yard	pounds/cloth	marks/cloth
p. 56	a piece of velvet, price 54 s.					
	four pieces of samite, price 70s.					
	32 pieces of 'garde', price 112s.					
	13 ells of 'bokeram', price 13s.	1s.				
	3 1/2 pounds of 'say' price 112s.					
	44 pieces and 7 ells of 'Elsham', price 19s. 3 3/4d.					
p. 68	Three ells of rayed cloth bought 14 March to John de Bradeston for a coat.					
p. 70	Nine 'stik' of cloth, bought 5 March, to Richard Sturmy for making a robe for himself.					
p. 71	Three quarters of a rayed cloth, bought on 11 May; to Hans and Soz, the prince's minstrels, for making robes for themselves.					
1353						

Apr. 19						
p. 89	To John de Todenham, mercer of London, for a cloth of gold bought and delivered as above; 9l. 6s. 8d.					
p. 90	To Francis Dyne for two cloths of gold 'baudekyn' bought from him and delivered to the prince in his chamber 22l.					
1357						
p. 230						
	16 ells of 'taffata' and 1 coif of red 'sendal' by the hands of Henry de Alderyngton, price 25s. 0d.					
	20 1/2 ells of blue cloth taken from John Peche, price per ell 13s. 4d.; 13l. 13s. 4d.	13s. 4d.	25.625	10s. 8d.	13l. 17s. 4d.	20.8
	16 ells of long burnet bought of Peche, price per ell 13s. 4d.; 10l. 13s. 4d.	13s. 4d.	20	10s. 8d.		
	11 ells of 'sangwyn' mixed, price per ell 8s.; 4l. 8s. 0d.		13.75	6s. 4.8d.	8l. 6s. 4.8d.	12.48

	23 ells of mixed brown cloth, price per ell 8s.; 9l. 4s. 0d.		28.75	6s. 4.8d.		
	2 1/4 ells of long burnet, per ell 13s. 4d.; 30s. 0d.	13s. 4d.				
	3 ells of cloth of ray, price per ell 13s. 4d.; 40s. 0d.	13s. 4d.		10s. 8d.	12l. 16s.	19.2
	2 ells of blue long cloth, price per ell 8s.; 16s. 0d.			6s. 4.8d	8l. 6s. 4.8d.	12.48
1359						
Mar. 10						
p. 285	10l. for a cloth of ray with a brown field.		28		10l.	15
	7l. for three-quarters of a cloth of ray with a perse-murrey field.		28		9l. 6s. 6p.	14
	10l. for a sanquine-murrey cloth.					
	6l. for a quarter of a 'maskle' cloth.					
	6l. for a quarter of 'chokette' cloth.					
	13l. 6s. 8d. for a cloth of ray with a russet field.		28		13l. 6s. 8p.	20
	13l. 6s. 8d. for a cloth of ray 'rome'.		28		13l. 6s. 8p.	20

	65s. 10d. for a cloth which the prince gave to Ode Merstorthere.					
	10l. which he paid for two girdles.					
Oct. 18						
p. 320-321						
	11 cloths of 'baudekyn'					
	42 ells of linen cloth of Brabant					
	6 pieces of strengthened 'sendel'					
	a piece of 'carde' of Lumbarde					
	16 ells of 'taffata'					
	1lb of silk 'frenes'					
	1/2 lb of silk laces					
	a cloth and a half of ray					
	a cloth of colour					
1361						
Dec. 28						
p. 409						
	four pieces of 'camaca', with such woollen cloth as shall seem most suitable for hats with gold ribbons					

1362						
Nov. 8						
p. 476	Also paid for a cloth of scarlet which was bought and given to the same knights as a gift from the prince on the same day; 18l. 13s. 4d.					

## Appendix C - Commonly Used Conversions

### Fabric Measurements

1 ell =  $1 \frac{1}{4}$  yards

Whole cloth = 28 yards of Ray cloth or 26 yards of Colored cloth

*Stik* =  $\frac{3}{4}$  yard

### Pre-Decimal English Money

1 shilling (s) = 12 pence (d)

1 pound (*l*) = 20 shillings

1 mark =  $\frac{2}{3}$  of a pound = 13 shillings 4 pence = 160 pence



## Glossary

Many of the terms used when referring to medieval fabrics and clothing are the same or similar to words still used today, but many of their meanings have shifted slightly in modern speech, so that they no longer mean what they did in the late fourteenth-century. To that end I am providing a list of words that may not be familiar to the reader, or may have another meaning to the reader, and their definitions from the fourteenth-century.

banquerre - Most likely; **banker** (n.) Also **banc(o)ur**, **bankquer**, **banqwer**, **bankert**. [OF **banquier**] A covering, of tapestry or other fabric, for a bench, couch, or chair; also, an ornamental hanging for a room, altar, or bed; ~ **cloth**. (MED)

baudekyn - **baudekin** (n.(1)) Also **baudakin**, **baudkin**, **ba(u)ldekin**. [OF **baudequin** & ML **baldakinus**.] (a) Oriental cloth woven of silk, shot through with gold (or silver) thread, or brocaded; brocade; ~ **cloth**; (b) a rug or drape of this cloth. (MED)

bokeram - (n.) Also (early) **bougeren**, **bokram**, **buk(e)ram**. [OF **bo(u)querant** & It. **bucherame** (named for Bukhara).] A fine costly cloth, apparently of linen or cotton (for curtains, bedspreads, banners, lining, etc.). (MED)

broadcloth - Any fabric more than twice the width of a regular loom, usually about 1.5 – 3 yards wide finished width.

burnet - (n.(1) & adj.) Also **bornet**, **brunet**, (pl.) **burneys**. [OF **brunet** adj. & **brunete**, **burnete** n.] (a) Of cloth, a garment: brown; (b) a brown woolen cloth of fine quality; **blak** ~, **bright** ~; (c) a garment or bag made of this cloth. (MED)

camaca - (n.) Also **kameka**, **cam(m)oka**, **kamaca**. [OF & ML] A rich fabric; ?a kind of brocaded silk. (MED)

carde - (n.(3)) [ML **carda**] (a) A kind of fabric, **carde**; (b) ~ **blod**, **carde** of a certain color (prob. blue); ~ **lombard**, **carde** of a kind imported from (or associated with) Lombardy. (MED)

Also possibly; Fabric made by carding the wool instead of combing it prior to spinning, a new practice in the fourteenth century.

chokette - Most likely; **cokke** (n.(2)) Also **cok**, (error) **cocto** & **coccin**. [L **coccum** & **coccinum**.] Scarlet; scarlet cloth, scarlet garment. (MED)

Also possibly; **coket** (*n.*(1)) [OF] (a) A seal of the King's Customs of England; (b) a document sealed with such a seal certifying a merchant's payment of export duties; (c) a customs duty levied on merchandise (as on wool, cloth, etc.); **coketed** (*ppl.*) [OF; cp. **coket** (1).] *Of merchandise: certified for customs duties paid.* (MED)

dossere - *dowry wreath* (William Whitaker's Words, Online Latin Dictionary)

draper - Someone that sells cloth, often in the middle ages this meant that they were in some way involved in the production of the cloth, see drapery.

drapery - A fabric production facility that usually produced woollens from weaving through the finishing process.

Elsham - A village in North Lincolnshire, England

faldyng - **falding** (*n.*) 1. A kind of woolen cloth, prob. coarse, sometimes napped, and often described as of Irish manufacture; ~ **cloth**, ~ **ware**. A mantle or cloak made of (coarse) woolen cloth; ?a woolen blanket or wrap worn over the shoulders; ~ **cloke**, ~ **cloth**, ~ **mantel** (MED)

frenes - **frenge** (*n.*) Also **frang**. [OF **frenge**, F **frange**.] (a) An ornamental border of cloth or thread (on a garment, saddle, etc.), a fringe; (b) an ornamental strip suitable for use as a border on clothing, etc; esp., fringe material sold in lengths. (MED)

fuller - A person that works the woolen fabric in water to felt it, see fulling.

fulling - A process by which woolen fabric is beaten in water to felt the fabric and create a densely woven fabric.

garde - ?

kermes - A small red beetle from which red dye was produced. It was important in the textile trade due to its very high cost.

linen - The fiber from the flax plant. When processed and spun looks similar to cotton.

livery - Clothing worn by members of a household, guild, or other group to identify allegiance.

maskle - Most likely; **mask(e** (*n.*) Also **masce**, (error) **maste**. [OE **max** (from \***masc**) & ON; cp. *OI möskvi*.] Mesh of a net; pl. the openings between the cords of a net, interstices.

Also; **maskel** (*n.*) Also **maskle**, **mascle**. [ML **mascula**, from Gmc.; cp. ME **mask(e**, OE **max**, MDu. **masche**, etc. Also cp. ML **macula** & OF **macle** & **macule**.] (b) pl. the strands or cords of a net; also, the openings between the strands or cords of a net; (c) **gise of** ~, ?lozenge shaped.

mercier - A dry goods merchant, selling products including fabrics, more often retail sellers.

merchant - One that buys and sells goods for profit, often refers to wholesalers instead of retail sellers.

murrey - Also *murrei* (n.(1)) *murrai*, *murri*, *murre*, *murret* & *morrei*, *morei*, *morri* & *murr*, *morr*. [OF *moré*, *morey*.] (a) A dark red or purplish-red color, mulberry color; (b) cloth of mulberry color.

nap - The raised fibers on the surface of a fabric.

ray, cloth of - *striped fabric, most often in the direction of the warp.*

russet - (n.) Also *russette*, *ruset*, *rosset*, *roset(te)*. [OF *rosset*, *rossete*, AF *russet* & ML *russetum*, AL *rossetum*.] (a) The color russet, grey or dull red, brown, etc., suitable for working clothes; (b) a serviceable woolen cloth, usu. of plain or subdued color & usu. worn by the poor or by workingmen (also by the Duke of Suffolk as a sea-cloak); a length of such cloth; (c) **brod** ~, russet cloth of double width; **colchestre** (*cottenhames*, *cotoun*, *frensh*) ~, a specific kind of russet; (d) a garment of russet. (MED)

samit - (n.) Also *samitte*, *samet(te)*, *samed*, *sanite*, *sayntes*, *samer*. [OF *samit* & ML *samitum*, *samittum*, *sametum*.] (a) A kind of silken cloth, often embroidered or interwoven with threads of gold or silver, samite; ~ **tir**, clothing made of samite; **double** ~, heavy samite; (b) a piece of samite; a garment made of this material. (MED)

sanqwyn - (n.) Also *sanguin(e)*, *sangwin(e)*, *sangwen*, *sangewin*, *sanguin(e)*, *sangwein(e)*, *sangine* [OF *sanguin(e)*, *sangwine*, *sangin* & L *sanguis*, *-inis*; ML *sanguinea* neut.pl.adj. as n.] (a) A blood-red color; also, rosy hue [last quot.]; (b) a rich cloth of a blood-red color; also, a piece of such cloth. (MED)

say - (n.) Either *sai* (n.(2)) Also *seu*. [OF *saie*, *seie*, *sö*, vars. of OF *soie*, & AL *seia*, var. of ML *seta*. Cp. ME *sai(e)* n., to which some of the following quotes. may belong.] Silk; ~ **worm**, the silkworm (*Bombyx mori*). (MED)

Also possibly - *sai(e)* (n.) [OF *saie* & ML *saia*, var. of L *sagum*; cp. ME *sai* n.(2).] (a) An esteemed variety of woolen cloth, perhaps rather heavy; ?also, a small piece of such cloth [quot.: ?c1475]; **double** ~, such cloth in two layers; **worsted** ~, a piece of worsted; (b) a curtain, hanging; ~ **coverture**, cover, curtain; (c) ?a net-like fabric. (MED)

scarlet - Can refer to both the color and the highest quality woolen fabrics, which were often dyed red with the most expensive dye, kermes.

sericulture - The process by which silk worms are raised for the production of silk fiber.

sendale - (n.) 1. Also *cendel, sendal, -el, -il, sindal, sandel & cendre, sendre*. [OF *cendal, -el, çandal & cender*.] A kind of costly fabric (apparently of linen or cotton); *silk and ~; ~ clout; ~ gown*. (MED)

2. A fine silk fabric used, esp in the Middle Ages, for ceremonial clothing, etc. (Collins English Dictionary)

stik - Also *stik(e (n.(2))) Pl. stikes, stikkas*. [MDu. *stic, sticke*, vars. of *stuc*.] A measure of cloth, approx. 3/4 yard. (MED)

sumptuary law - Any law designed to regulate consumption of goods, often found in relation to fabrics, clothing, and accessories.

teasing - A process by which fulled fabric is combed to create a nap on the surface of the fabric, the nap is then sheared to create a very smooth finish on the fabric.

whole cloth - According to the 1353 statute a whole cloth measured 24 yards for a ray cloth, and 26 yards for a colored cloth.

wool - The hair fiber from sheep, goats, and other animals. In this paper it is specifically refers to the hair fiber from sheep.

woolen - Any fabric that has been woven with short staple wool fibers and then fulled, teased, and sheared to create a very densely woven and smooth fabric.

worsted - Any fabric that has been woven with long staple wool fiber, often lighter in weight than woolens.

## Bibliography

- Abbott, Reginald, "What Becomes a Legend Most?: Fur in the Medieval Romance." in *Dress, Volume 21*, The Costume Society of America (1994)
- Anderson, Linda. "'As proud as a dog in a doublet': the importance of clothing in *The Shoemaker's Holiday*." In *Encountering Medieval Textiles and Dress: Objects, Texts, Images*, edited by Desiree G. Koslin and Janet E. Snyder, 223-232. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004.
- Ashley, Kathleen. "Material and Symbolic Gift-Giving in French and English Wills." In *Medieval Fabrications: Dress, Textiles, Clothwork, and Other Cultural Imaginings*, edited by Jane Burns, 137-146. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004.
- Bailey, Mark. *Medieval Suffolk, 1200-1500*. Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2007.
- Baldwin, Frances Elizabeth. *Sumptuary Legislation and Personal Regulation in England*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1926.
- Bartram, Claire. "Social fabric in Thynne's *Debate Between Pride and Lowliness*." In *Clothing Culture, 1350-1650*, edited by Catherine Richardson, 137-152. Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2004.
- Bolton, J. L. *The Medieval English Economy: 1150-1500*. London: Billing & Sons Ltd., 1980.
- Bridbury, A.R. *Medieval English Clothmaking*. London: Heinemann Educational Books, Ltd., 1982.
- Britnell, R. H. *The commercialization of English society 1000-1500*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.
- Burkholder, Kristen M. "Threads Bared: Dress and Textiles in Late Medieval English Wills." In *Medieval Clothing and Textiles, Volume 1*, edited by Robin Netherton and Gale R. Owen Crocker, 133-154. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2005.
- Cardon, Dominique. *Natural Dyes: Sources, Tradition, Technology, and Science*. Paris: Archetype Publications, 2003.
- Childs, Wendy. "The English export trade in cloth in the fourteenth century," In *Progress*

*and problems in medieval England*, edited by Richard Britnell and John Hatcher, 121-147. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Collins, Brenda, and Philip Ollerenshaw. "The European Linen Industry since the Middle Ages." In *The European Linen Industry in Historical Perspective*, edited by Brenda Collins and Philip Ollerenshaw, 1-42. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.

Dale, Marian K. "The London Silk Women of the Fifteenth Century." In *The Economic History Review* 4, no. 3, (Oct. 1933): 324-335.

Denny-Brown, Andrea. "Rips and slits: the torn garment and the medieval self." In *Clothing Culture, 1350-1650*, edited by Catherine Richardson, 223-238. Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2004.

Ertl, Thomas. "Silkworms, Capital and Merchant Ships: European Silk Industry in the Medieval World Economy" In *The Medieval History Journal*, 9, no.2, (2006).

Farmer, Sharon. "*Biffes, Tiretaines, and Aumonieres*: The role of Paris in the International Textile Markets of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries." In *Medieval Clothing and Textiles, Volume 2*, edited by Robin Netherton and Gale R. Owen-Crocker, 73-90. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2006.

Heller, Sarah-Grace. "Limiting yardages and changes of clothes: Sumptuary Legislation in Thirteenth-Century France, Languedoc and Italy." In *Medieval Fabrications: Dress, Textiles, Clothwork, and Other Cultural Imaginings*, edited by E. Jane Burns, 121-126. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004.

Heller, Sarah-Grace. *Fashion in Medieval France*. Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2007.

Hentschell, Roze. "A Question of Nation: Foreign clothes on the English subject." In *Clothing Culture, 1350-1650*, edited by Catherine Richardson, 49-62. Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2004.

Hodges, Laura F. *Chaucer and Costume: The Secular Pilgrims in the General Prologue*. Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2000.

Houston, Mary G. *Medieval costume in England and France: the 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries*. New York: Dover Publications, 1996.

Hunt, Alan. *Governance of the Consuming Passions: A History of Sumptuary Law*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996.

Kowaleski, Maryanne, and Judith M. Bennett. "Crafts, Gilds, and Women in the Middle Ages: Fifty Years After Marian K. Dale." In *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 14, no. 2 (1989).

- Killerby, Catherine K. *Sumptuary law in Italy, 1200-1500*. Oxford: Clarendon, 2002.
- Little, Lester K. *Religious Poverty and Profit Economy in Medieval Europe*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1978.
- Middleton, Neil. "Early medieval port customs, tolls, and controls on foreign trade." In *Early Medieval Europe*, 13, no. 4, (2005).
- Muendel, John. "The Orientation of Strikers in Medieval Fulling Mills: The Role of the "French" *Gualchiera*." In *Medieval Clothing and Textiles, Volume 1*, edited by Robin Netherton and Gale R. Owen-Crocker, 97-118. Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2005.
- Munro, John H. "The 1357 Wool-Price Schedule and the Decline of Yorkshire Wool Values", In *Textiles, Towns, and Trade*, edited by John H. Munro, 211-219. Hampshire: Variorum, 1994.
- "Bruges and the Abortive Staple in English Cloth" In *Textiles, Towns, and Trade*, edited by John H. Munro, 1137-1159. Hampshire: Variorum, 1994.
  - "Industrial Transformations in the North-west European Textile Trade, c. 1290 - c. 1340: Economic Progress or Economic Crisis?" In *Textiles, Towns, and Trade*, edited by John H. Munro, 110-148. Hampshire: Variorum, 1994.
  - "Textile Technology in the Middle Ages." In *Textiles, Towns, and Trade*, edited by John H. Munro, 1-27. Hampshire: Variorum, 1994.
  - *Wool, Cloth, and Gold: The Struggle for Bullion in Anglo-Burgundian Trade*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972.
  - "Wool-Price Schedules and the Qualities of English Wools in the Later Middle Ages c. 1270-1499." In *Textiles, Towns, and Trade*, edited by John H. Munro, 118-169. Hampshire: Variorum, 1994.
- Netherton, Robin. "The Tippet: Accessory after the Fact?" In *Medieval Clothing and Textiles, Volume 1*, edited by Robin Netherton and Gale R. Owen Crocker, 115-132. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2005.
- Newton, Stella Mary. *Fashion in the Age of the Black Prince*. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1980.
- Nightingale, Pamela. "The growth of London in the medieval English economy." In *Progress and problems in medieval England*, edited by Richard Britnell and John Hatcher, 89-106. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- Oldland, John. "The Finishing of English Woolens , 1300-1550." In *Medieval Clothing and Textiles, Volume 3*, edited by Robin Netherton and Gale R. Owen-Crocker, 97-118. Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2007.
- Ormrod, W. M. *Edward III*. England: Tempus, 2005.
- Quinton, Eleanor, and John Oldland. "London Merchants' Cloth Exports, 1350-1500." In

*Medieval Clothing and Textiles, Volume 7*, edited by Robin Netherton and Gale R. Owen-Crocker, 111-140. Woodbridge : Boydell Press, 2011.

Roche, Daniel. *The Culture of Clothing*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Scott, Margaret. *Medieval Dress and Fashion*. London: The British Library, 2007.

Soly, Hugo. "The political economy of European craft guilds: Power relations and economic strategies of merchants and master artisans in the Medieval and Early Modern textile industries." *Internationaal Instituut voor Sociale Geschiedenis Internationaal Instituut voor Sociale Geschiedenis*, 58 (2008).

Sponsler, Claire. *Drama and resistance: bodies, goods, and theatricality in late medieval England*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997.

-"Text and textile: Lydgate's tapestry poems." In *Medieval Fabrications: Dress, Textiles, Clothwork, and Other Cultural Imaginings*, edited by E. Jane Burns, 19-34. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004.

Staples, Kate Kelsey. "Fripperers in Late Medieval London." In *Medieval Clothing and Textiles, Volume 6*, edited by Robin Netherton and Gale R. Owen-Crocker, 151-171. Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, 2010.

Sweetinburgh, Sheila. "Clothing the naked in late medieval East Kent." In *Clothing Culture, 1350-1650*, edited by Catherine Richardson, 109-122. Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2004.

Tognetti, Sergio. "The development of the Florentine silk industry: a positive response to the crisis of the fourteenth century." In *Journal of Medieval History*, 31, (2005)

Wood, Diane. *Medieval Economic Thought*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

Woolgar, C.M. *The Great Household in Late Medieval England*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999.

## Primary Sources

*The Statutes of the Realm*, Printed by command of his majesty King George the Third. In pursuance of an address of the House of Commons of Great Britain. From Original Records and Authentic Manuscripts, Volume 1 (Buffalo, N.Y.: William S. Hein and Company, Inc., 1993).

*Register of Edward, The Black Prince Preserved in the Public Record Office*, Prepared under the superintendence of the deputy keeper of the records. Part IV (England) A.D. 1351-1365. Published by authority of his majesty's principal secretary of state for the home department, (London: His majesty's stationery office, 1933).



*Accounts of The Chamberlains and other Officers of The County of Chester, 1301 – 1360*, (From the Original Rolls preserved in the Public Record Office, London) The Record Society for the Publication of Original Documents Relating to Lancashire and Cheshire, Volume 59, Edited with an Introduction by Ronald Stewart-Brown, M.A., Honorary Secretary of the Society, Printed for The Record Society, (1910).

*Accounts of the Obedientiars of Abingdon Abbey*, Edited by R. E. G. Kirk, Printed for the Camden Society (1892).