

MEDIEVAL CLOTHES

Some garments bequeathed were colourful:

To my nephew the rector of Newbury my yellow [cloak] furred with sarcenet ... to dame Margery, my niece, a nun of Shaftesbury, my yellow cloak lined with squirrel fur ... to my nephew Willam Twynyho ... a yellow gown furred with martrons ... to my kinsman John Tame ... a gown of violett furred with martrons ... To sir William my son mayster of the seid hospital [*St Thomas's, Southwark*], iij the best of my gownys after my best gown of murrey furrid with grey which I will shalbe sold ... my blew gown furrid with calabour ... to Johane Beele my nece ... my skarlet kyrtyll ... to Elizabeth my servant a blak gown furrid with grey ... to Johane Crane a girdill of violet harnyshed with sylver and my crymsyn kyrtyll ...

Some people seem to have bequeathed their entire wardrobe, garment by garment:

He bequethed to his brother John Goldewyn ... his crymesyn gowne furred ... to his cousyn Nicholas Goldwyn ... his best violet gowne and a furr of marton pollys ... to Hugh Bradowe ... his russet gowne furred with shanks ... to John Walworth the yonger his crymesyn gowne lyned with blak lynyng ... To Master Robert Godde my brother ... my best gown and the hood belonging to it, my best studded belt ... to sir William Booyes ... my blue gown furred with black fur, with a hood attached ... to John Roger my gown of murrey lined with wool cloth ... to sir Richard Godde my second best surplice ... to David Peynter a long gown ... to Richard my poor servant at Welles my short gown there ... To William Wightryng a ray gowne furred and a skarlet hode, also to Robert Moore my skarlet gowne, also to John Blakbourn a russet gowne. ... also I bequeth to Rauf Stile a tawny gowne furred with white lambe ...

Strict hierarchy may be observed:

To dame Jane my wife my best habitt that is to saie gowne, cloke and hode. Also I biqueth to my doughter Elyn my ij^{de} best habitt in lyke fourme. Also I biqueth to Alice my doughter my iij^{de} best habite in lyke fourme ...

A man might leave his gowns to women as well as men:

Unto my moder Annes Bowes ... my violet gowne engrayned furred with calabr' ... unto my brother Leonard Bowes ... my russet gowne furred with blak bogye ... unto my nephu ... Andrew Trolop ... my violet gowne lyned with blak lynyng ... to Richard Butler my lover my crymsyn gowne engrayned lyned with bokerum ... to Agnes Bernard my long blak gown ... and my mustervilers gowne furred with blak lambe ... To sir John Saunders ... a gowne of violet ... to Walter Nonne ... a best gown of scarlet cloth not bequeathed ... to Agnes daughter of the said Walter ... a gown at the discretion of my executors ... to Mary [*left blank*] of Northampton a silk girdle decorated with silver gilt ...

Other bequests were very practical:

To Hankyn my Duche child a newe gowne, a newe doublet, a newe pair of hosen and a newe pair of shoon ... To my father, to be paid to him every year during his lifetime, six marks, and also two pairs of sheets and one pair of blankets, four shirts and two gowns ...

Some testators clearly envisaged the need for sewing:

To Mary Vernon nece unto the saide Dame Margarete my wife ... a furr of body meniver which lieth in my gowne of blue velvett and my gowne of chamllet lynyng and all to make her a kirtill ... To Gerard Charles ... to make a gown for himself, the cloth of my violet

gown which cloth was lately with the fuller or clothdresser for treatment and not yet completed ...

Some people bequeathed dress-lengths:

Also I will and ordeyn that myn executours undirwreten do to be made in vestmentes to the seid chauntry my iij yerdis of crymsyn silk, iij yerdes of tawny silk and two yerdis of blak silk beyng in my cofer at Cometon Paunssefote ... To dame Kateryn Preston a nonne of Halywell iiiij yerdes of blak wollen clothe gode and honest she to make her a mantell therof ...

People might keep their dead spouse's clothes until their own deaths:

To my brother Underhill my husbondes best doublett of worstede, a gowne of crymesyn in greyne lyned, a tipett of crymesyn in greyne ... *Item* that my ij^{de} wifes russet satyn gowne be maade in vestiments for the chirch of Trattoon ... And I will my cosyn his wiff have one of my wifes gownes the best she will chose with a dimysent such as it shall pleais my ladies grace [*the duchess of Norfolk*] to geve heir ... *Item* I will that maistres Jane have one of my wifes gownes ...