

University of Cambridge
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The Value of Dress in the Cecil Household, (c. 1550-1612)

Abigail Jean Gomulkiewicz
Clare Hall

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Declaration

This thesis is the result of my own work and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text. It is not substantially the same as any that I have submitted, or, is being concurrently submitted for a degree or diploma or other qualification at the University of Cambridge or any other University or similar institution except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text. I further state that no substantial part of my thesis has already been submitted, or, is being concurrently submitted for any such degree, diploma or other qualification at the University of Cambridge or any other University or similar institution except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text. It does not exceed the prescribed word limit for the relevant Degree Committee.

Abigail Jean Gomulkiewicz, April 2020

Abstract

The Value of Dress in the Cecil Household, (c. 1550-1612)

Abigail Jean Gomulkiewicz

This thesis considers how William Cecil (1520-1598), Lord Burghley, his family, and his household dressed. It investigates how the Cecil household from the middle of the sixteenth century to the early seventeenth century perceived dress and how they demonstrated their political power and social position through their clothing choices. The thesis concentrates on the clothing worn by individuals either every day or during ceremonial or special occasions and highlights the values given to different fabrics, colours, styles, and decorations found in the elite and non-elite wardrobes. Attention to these specific clothing choices and their continuities or changes allows the thesis to show how cloth and clothing was constructed and worn in early modern England and allows for a greater appreciation of England's interconnections with Europe and the wider world.

In addition, this thesis includes a new methodology for examining the early modern experience of dress. It combines a more traditional engagement with textual sources such as household accounts and letters alongside extant objects with historical reconstruction. This methodology moves beyond a linguistic or semiotic interpretive system for dress to investigate 'materiality' and lived practice in order to gain access into clothing as embodied practice. This methodology considers how the garments themselves shaped the household and its members as well as the crucial role artisans and craftsmen and craftswomen had in the creation and care of early modern garments. Thus, the thesis explores how cloth and clothing in Elizabethan and early Jacobean society became linked to abstract concepts such as power and authority through the more concrete individual, familial and household identities and associations of those who made, chose, gifted and performed them.

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Introduction

The Burghley¹ household accounts included the following entry on the 22nd of December 1555:

Doublet for Mr. T. Cecil—ix s. vj d.

Itm for makyng of the same doblet—xij d.

It. for iij yardes of lase—ix di

It. for ij yardes + a quarter of lynyng fuschen—xviiij d

It. for canves for the same—vij d

It. for buttons + sylcke —x d

Coat Mr Arthur Hall xj s. viij d.

Itm for a yard of clothe for Mr Artare Hall to macke hym a cote—xiiij s

It. for makyng of the same cote—xvi di

It. for lynyng for the same cote—xvi di

It. for sylck + buttons—xij d²

Despite his demanding responsibilities as a chief advisor of the English government, William Cecil (13 September 1520 – 4 August 1598), Lord Burghley, kept detailed clothing accounts like these for his household which specifically noted the price of each aspect of dress from the cloth to the making. Clothing was a constant theme in his household account books as well as in his prolific correspondence. William commissioned and paid for the construction of clothing for members of his household including family members, such as his son, Thomas Cecil (5 May 1542 – 8 February 1623), and those in his care like his ward, Arthur Hall (1539–1605). This

¹ This thesis refers to William Cecil's household as the Burghley household for clarity, even though the title of Burghley was not conferred until 1571. In a similar manner, Robert Cecil's household is referred to as the Salisbury household even before he received the title in 1605. The two households together are the Cecil household.

² Hatfield House, Household Accounts, Vol. 1 1552-1607, Cecil Papers, 11.2/96.

expenditure, like the 1555 account entry, recorded payments made for fabric, lining, buttons, ribbon, and accessories.

This intense consideration of what his household wore reveals the value William placed on how it appeared and dressed. His household and their clothing reflected his status, wealth, and position. However, despite the vast scholarship that addresses William Cecil and his family, historians remain relatively silent on what William and his household wore and what their dress might represent or mean. Most scholars simply state that Cecil donned sombre black clothing because he was a typical bureaucrat uninterested in appearances or fashion.³ Yet, even if William did only wear black, historians could learn more from this choice than just subsuming his secretarial role and dress choice. Since, by doing this, they do not properly appreciate the importance of clothing at the Tudor court or the level of material knowledge demonstrated by this choice.⁴ This thesis, therefore, examines these previously unexplored choices and their motivations. It considers how William Cecil, his family, and his household dressed. It also investigates how those within the household perceived dress and if they demonstrated their power, wealth, connections, and position through their clothing choices. It explores how the garments themselves might have shaped the household. More broadly, however, I analyse what the dress of the Burghley and later Salisbury households reveals about the value of materials, processes of making, and cultures of knowledge in early modern England.

This introduction sets out the main areas with which this thesis engages: why the Burghley and Salisbury households provide an ideal context for an examination into different regimes of value in early modern England through the links between dress, status, power, wealth,

³ See for example: Stephen Alford, *Burghley: William Cecil at the Court of Elizabeth I* (New Haven, 2008), p. 122; Roy Strong, *Tudor and Jacobean Portraits*, Vol. I (London, 1969), p. 28.

⁴ For the importance of fashion at the Tudor court see: Maria Hayward, *Rich Apparel: Clothing and the Law in Henry VIII's England* (Farnham, Surrey, 2009); Janet Arnold, *Queen Elizabeth's Wardrobe Unlock'd: The Inventories of the Wardrobe of Robes prepared in July 1600 edited from Stowe MSS 557 in the British Library, MS LR 2/121 in the Public Record Office, London, and MS V.b.72 in the Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington DC* (Leeds, 1988).

innovation, and expertise; why studies of cloth and clothing at the English court must move beyond an almost exclusive focus on the monarch or sumptuary legislation; and how dress itself, through its materiality and form, can shape and reinforce its valuation and association with power and authority. Additionally, this introduction presents a new methodology for examining the early modern experience of dress that combines a more traditional engagement with textual sources, such as household accounts and letters, alongside a historical garment reconstruction. This methodology moves beyond a linguistic or semiotic interpretive system for dress to investigate ‘materiality’ and cultures of making in order to gain perspective into clothing as a site of embodied practice and material knowledge. Finally, this section presents the structure of the thesis.

The Cecils: An Ideal Clothing Context

The Burghley and Salisbury families and their households provide a unique context to explore connections between dress and power because of the family’s place in Elizabethan and early Jacobean England, as well as the size of their household and the survival of a wide range of source material. The Burghley family rose and established itself in Tudor England during a time of great political and religious change. Henry VII secured Tudor rule at the Battle of Bosworth Field and Henry VIII broke with the Church of Rome.⁵ The Cecils chose the right side at the right moment. William Cecil’s grandfather, David Cecil (c. 1460 – 1540), who was the younger son of a poor Welsh squire supported Henry Tudor over Richard III during the War of the Roses.⁶ After Henry’s succession, he rewarded this early loyalty and named David a Yeoman of the Guard. This position helped David accumulate enough wealth and become a Member of Parliament which provided the family with a financial foundation and connections. This enabled the Cecil family’s later rise in Tudor politics and society.⁷ David’s son, Richard (ca.

⁵ David Cecil, *The Cecils of Hatfield House: A Portrait of an English Ruling Family* (London, 1973), p. 58.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 58.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 58.

1495 - 19 March 1553), further secured this legacy of loyalty when he acted as a groom of the Privy Chamber to Henry VIII and, more importantly, supported Henry when he broke with the Church of Rome.⁸ Thus, the rise of the Cecils corresponded quite closely with the rise of the Tudors. David and Richard were proper Tudor gentleman through their close connection with Henry VII and Henry VIII. However, William Cecil, their grandson and son respectively, greatly advanced the family's fortunes. His place in Elizabeth I's government as High Lord Treasurer and Secretary of State brought his family and household increased political prominence as well as greater social importance when he was elevated to the title of Lord Burghley in 1571 and his son later named Earl of Salisbury in 1605.⁹ The Cecil family moved from Welsh obscurity to gentlemen and then noble prominence in three generations. Thus, they provide a unique context for looking at how a household gained, held, and advanced their social position and political power in early modern England.

Historians remain fascinated both by this rapid advance and William Cecil as a figure in early modern England, more generally. This has made the historiography about William immense and far-reaching aided by the survival of a vast amount of records associated with him. Many historians like Conyers Read, B.W. Beckingsale, Norman Jones, and Stephan Alford focus on William's political prominence at the Tudor court serving Queen Elizabeth I.¹⁰ They describe him as 'the man who walked the corridors of power in Elizabeth's court' whose bureaucratic

⁸ Cecil, *The Cecils of Hatfield House*, p. 58.

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 61-65, 91, 105.

¹⁰ For a selection of historiography about William Cecil, Lord Burghley, see: Alford, *Burghley*; Conyers Read, *Mr Secretary Cecil and Queen Elizabeth* (London, 1955); Conyers Read, *Lord Burghley and Queen Elizabeth* (London, 1960); B. W. Beckingsale, *Burghley: Tudor statesman, 1520-1598* (London, 1967); Stephen Alford, *The early Elizabethan polity: William Cecil and the British Succession Crisis, 1558-1569* (Cambridge, 2002); Stephen Alford, 'Reassessing William Cecil in the 1560s' in *The Tudor Monarchy*, edited by John Guy (London, 1997), pp. 233-253; A. G. R. Smith, *William Cecil, Lord Burghley: minister of Elizabeth I* (Bangor, 1991); Norman Jones, 'William Cecil, Lord Burghley, and Managing with the Men-of-Business', *Parliamentary History*, Vol. 34 (1) (February 2015), pp. 45-61; Norman Jones, 'William Cecil Lord Burghley and the Management of Elizabeth's England' in *The Oxford Handbook of the Age of Shakespeare*, edited by Malcolm Smuts (Oxford, 2016), pp. 22-36; David Loades, *The Cecils: Privilege and Power Behind the Throne* (Surrey, 2007).

proress and pragmatism made him a central, if not *the* central, individual at the Elizabethan court and in the Elizabethan government.¹¹ Christopher Maginn, meanwhile, asserts that

[b]y virtue of his wide-ranging service to three monarchs spanning the better part of five decades, and his ability to pass intact to his son and successor much of the immense wealth and political power which he had gathered in these years, Cecil stands apart from the other chief ministers of state who served the Tudors.¹²

Historians show that William Cecil had a central role in the formation and dissemination of government decisions and policy about the economy, religion, and the succession. Patrick Collinson and Stephan Alford, for example, demonstrate William's aversion to Mary Queen of Scots and desire to create a government policy that prevented her from succeeding on Elizabeth's death.¹³ Additionally, Pauline Croft investigates the religious networks and culture of Protestantism in which William raised his family.¹⁴ These studies often present the Burghleys as the power which controlled the throne, although they also highlight the necessity of making strategic alliances on key issues like Ireland or the execution of the Earl of Essex.¹⁵ These alliances helped the Burghleys and later Salisburys solidify their importance, eliminate political rivals, and secure political power and social position.

However, recent scholarship by Stephen Alford and an edited volume by Pauline Croft perceives the Burghley family and their prominence differently. Alford's presentation of William Cecil at the Elizabethan court makes note of his cultural as well as political achievements. William 'also built three fabulous houses and planted beautiful gardens. He was a collector of fine things. He loved expensive clothes and lived as grandly as any other

¹¹ Alford, *Burghley*, p. 122.

¹² Christopher Maginn, *William Cecil, Ireland, and the Tudor State* (Oxford, 2012), p. 2.

¹³ Patrick Collinson, 'The Elizabethan Exclusion Crisis and the Elizabethan Polity', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 84 (1993), pp. 51–92; Alford, *The Early Elizabethan Polity*, pp. 52–65, 109–119; Glyn Parry, 'The Monarchical Republic and Magic: William Cecil and The Exclusion of Mary Queen of Scots', *Reformation*, 17:1 (2012), pp. 29-47.

¹⁴ Pauline Croft, 'The Religion of Robert Cecil', *Historical Journal*, 34, 4 (1991), pp. 773-796.

¹⁵ Maginn, *William Cecil, Ireland, and the Tudor State*; Cecil, *The Cecils of Hatfield House*, pp. 98-101.

courtier.’¹⁶ Pauline Croft’s volume, meanwhile, accentuates how the Burghleys used their cultural engagement with architecture, art collecting, and gardening to maintain and further their political and social position. They were not just a politically dominant family, ‘but also formed the vital centre of a network of cultural, artistic, economic and intellectual patronage unequalled in England in the second half of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.’¹⁷ This network was an intentional demonstration and consolidation of power and position by the family equal to William Cecil’s decisions about political or religious policy. Thus, Croft’s work opens new research avenues because it underscores what historians can learn about the Burghley family and their concepts of power and authority beyond their governmental roles.

Croft specifically notes how the Burghley family understood that onlookers were influenced ‘by what they observed, experienced and admired’.¹⁸ Several of the chapters in this volume offer important insights into how the early Cecils enacted this understanding. Croft’s chapter, for example, on ‘Lady Burghley: The Matriarch’ dismantles the historiographical stereotype of Mildred Cecil, the wife of William Cecil, as a dour and repressed woman who disliked court finery. Instead, it presents the matriarch as a cultivated woman who desired luxurious clothing and used dress for political aims in her painted image.¹⁹ Susan Bracken also alludes to the significance that the early Cecils placed on their image in her discussion of Robert Cecil as an art collector and his intentional design of his funerary monument which portrayed him in his official robes.²⁰ Finally, several chapters in Croft’s volume underscore the wide range of activities and items like welcome festivities, fine furnishings, building projects, and architecture that contributed to the visual and sensorial demonstration of the power and position of the

¹⁶ Alford, *Burghley*, p. xii.

¹⁷ Pauline Croft, ‘Introduction’ in *Patronage, Culture and Power The Early Cecils*, edited by Pauline Croft (New Haven, 2002), pp. ix-xxiii, ix.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. xx.

¹⁹ Pauline Croft, ‘Mildred, Lady Burghley: The Matriarch’ in *Patronage, Culture and Power The Early Cecils*, pp. 283-300, 284, 286, 290.

²⁰ Susan Bracken, ‘Robert Cecil as Art Collector’ in *Patronage, Culture and Power The Early Cecils*, pp. 132-133.

Burghley household.²¹ These chapters bring out the importance placed on these other kinds of political, economic, and social power plays which required great attention, expenditure, and networking in early modern England.

Despite this significant reconsideration of William Cecil's image and power, historians remain notably silent on what the majority of the Burghley family and their household wore and how their dress might contribute to a greater understanding of how they displayed, managed, and furthered their political power and social position in Elizabethan and early Jacobean England. This is especially puzzling since dress, more than even architecture or portraiture, was the most visually accessible medium through which people around the Burghleys saw and understood their power and place. Thus, my thesis seeks to fill this gap.

Although the political and social context makes the Burghley household a fruitful place of investigation, the household's size also enables this thesis to properly engage with men and women across the social spectrum. This strengthens this study of dress and its connection with power and authority. The Burghley household reached its height with approximately 120 individuals during the Elizabethan period.²² This made it one of the largest noble households outside the court. Aristocratic households, such as the Burghley household, formed important economic, political, social, and religious institutions in early modern England where policies and practices concerning consumption, dress, and display were shaped, moulded, and enacted.²³ However, despite this fact, most previous household studies on early modern dress investigate

²¹ Claire Gapper, John Newman, and Annabel Ricketts, 'Hatfield: A House for a Lord Treasurer' in *Patronage, Culture and Power The Early Cecils*, pp. 67-98; Jill Hussey, 'The Politics of Pleasure: William Cecil and Burghley House' in *Patronage, Culture and Power The Early Cecils*, pp. 21-46; James Knowles 'To raise a house of better frame': Jonson's Cecilian Entertainments' in *Patronage, Culture and Power The Early Cecils*, pp. 181-198; Felicity Heal and Clive Holmes, 'The Economic Patronage of William Cecil's Entertainments' in *Patronage, Culture and Power The Early Cecils*, pp. 199-130; Helen Payne, 'The Cecil Women at Court' in *Patronage, Culture and Power The Early Cecils*, pp. 265-282.

²² Alison Sim, *Masters and Servants in Tudor England* (Stroud, 2006), p. 2.

²³ Kate Mertens, *The English Noble Household 1250-1600: Good Governance and Politic Rule* (Oxford, 1988), pp. 1-4, 119, 136-137.

Renaissance Italy or the Tudor court.²⁴ In contrast, this thesis uses the size and importance of the Burghley and Salisbury households to move this historiography forward and investigate an English non-court context. Additionally, these previous studies almost exclusively highlight elite engagement with cloth and clothing rather than simultaneously exploring the servant and retainer experience.²⁵ This thesis, in contrast, recognises how the early modern household comprised elite family members as well as their servants and retainers. It acknowledges how a household might appear uniform and united, but comprised individuals of different ages, sex, and status. These individuals had varying amounts of authority, power, and control in the household and over its decision-making which influenced their relationship with dress. Thus, with these dynamics in mind, this thesis looks at the pivotal role servants and retainers played in shaping elite culture through dress and livery.

Although the Burghley and Salisbury servants have been previously studied, these works contain hardly any analysis of their dress and its importance as a demonstration of authority and power for both the individual and the household.²⁶ In contrast, this thesis specifically investigates if Burghley and Salisbury servants and retainers dressed in similar or different ways than their elite counterparts. These examples highlight the intra-family and intra-household discussions, decisions, and tensions concerning cloth and clothing and their different values in early modern England. This shows how choices about what to wear in early modern England were moulded by personal, familial, and household expectations as well as law, custom, and gendered practices.

²⁴ For an Italian focus see: Elizabeth Currie, *Fashion and Masculinity in Renaissance Florence* (London, 2016); Carole Collier Frick, *Dressing Renaissance Florence: Families, Fortunes, and Fine Clothing* (Baltimore, 2002); For an English court context see: Hayward, *Rich Apparel*; Kevin Sharpe, *Selling the Tudor Monarchy: Authority and Image in Sixteenth-Century England* (New Haven, 2009).

²⁵ See for example: Linda Levy Peck, *Consuming Splendor: Society and Culture in Seventeenth-Century England* (Cambridge, 2005); Joan Thirsk, 'The fashioning of the Tudor-Stuart gentry', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, 72:1 (1990), pp. 69-86; Susan Vincent, *Dressing the Elite: Clothes in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 2003).

²⁶ Richard C. Barnett, *Place, Profit, and Power: A Study of the Servants of William Cecil, Elizabethan Statesman* (Chapel Hill, 1969); Alan G.R. Smith, *Servant of the Cecils: The Life of Sir Michael Hicke, 1543-1612* (London, 1977).

This thesis primarily uses the Burghley and Salisbury household account books and correspondence as its source. It specifically focuses on the daily records and re-copied bills compiled within the larger family records for William Cecil, Lord Burghley, and his son, Robert Cecil, the Earl of Salisbury. These household account books are located at Hatfield House. They record weekly and monthly household expenditures including food, travel expenses, cloth purchases, servants' wages, and home improvements. These records provide insight into cloth and clothing purchases for both elite and non-elite members of the household. They also offer glimpses into those artisans and workers who the household regularly interacted with for clothing construction and washing. Thus, the account books provide vital insight into the routine and domestic experience of dress in the Burghley and Salisbury households demonstrating the varying values of cloth, clothing, and making.

This thesis includes approximately seventy bills alongside three different series of expenses taken from 1557, 1600, and 1605-1606. The authorship of these sources is varied. It ranges from direct accounting by William and Robert Cecil to records kept by their secretaries and stewards as well as bills copied from the craftspeople and makers themselves. Together, these accounts provide evidence of the costs associated with cloth and clothing within the household as well as offer a nuanced and layered record of the materials and processes of making available to those in the household.

In contrast, William Cecil's other records and correspondence provides a more court-focused, political, and economic perspective about dress. This collection of sources presents the value of cloth, clothing, and the processes of making in regimes or contexts which sometimes had quite varied cultures and aims to the household. This thesis, for example, uses information from the Lansdowne Manuscript at The British Library including around ten to twenty different reports commissioned by William Cecil and his information network about domestic production and matters of cloth. Additionally, its conclusions are drawn from an analysis of approximately

900 letters related to cloth, clothing, and dress from the Burghley and Salisbury records. These include, for instance, around fifty group petitions and several hundred individual correspondences that acknowledge gifts given or relay discussions with merchants, including roughly thirty which relate directly to the wool trade. Correspondence survives somewhat sporadically for the reigns of Edward VI and Mary I and more consistently throughout the reigns of Elizabeth I and James I. In total, over ninety percent of the letters pertaining to cloth and clothing are from the Elizabethan or early Jacobean period.

Although these letters were often received by William and Robert Cecil rather than sent by these men, they still provide important insight into their political, economic, and social engagement and perspective about dress. These letters convey different conversations and dialogues that William and Robert had with a variety of men and women across early modern English society from merchants to army suppliers to elite women to petitioners to craftspeople to foreign dignitaries seeking domestic goods. The breadth and depth of this correspondence acts as a form of social acknowledgment of the central role of William and Robert in these discussions as well as the interest these two men had in these kinds of issues. These letters highlight how William and Robert engaged with dress at court by helping to shape the monarch's image through their advisory role in the giving of gifts. They also show William's interest in innovation alongside his desire for economic regulation in certain sectors. This correspondence from the Burghley and Salisbury records, in conjunction with their household accounts, offers insight into the congruence or contention between the government, court, and household evaluations of dress and making in early modern England.

Questions of Value

This thesis is interested in questions of value and the social mechanisms surrounding them in early modern England particularly as they relate to cloth and clothing. It seeks to better understand the value placed by early modern society on concepts related to dress, such as

material literacy, embodied processes of making, technical and tacit knowledge, innovation, expertise, and experimentation.

Scholars like Arjun Appadurai and David Morgan remind historians that ‘things exist within spaces of value’ or ‘regimes of value in space and time.’²⁷ They can also contribute to or alter these spaces or regimes. However, these are not universal or inherently understood. In fact, these ‘spaces’ or ‘regimes’ of value do not imply that an individual’s engagement with a specific object necessarily carries the same understanding as someone else’s engagement. Instead, these concepts show that each object and the evaluation of its value are actually part of a process that reveal different economic, political, social, and cultural ideas in a society which can make ‘the degree of value coherence...highly variable from situation to situation, and from commodity to commodity.’²⁸

Early modern historians like Beverly Lemire and Alison Scott explore the financial value of cloth and clothing through its use and exchange value in the early modern period. Use value refers to the utilitarian or fashionable appraisal of dress whereas store value ascertains the worth of an item in terms of its potential for sale, credit or exchange.²⁹ These largely economic discussions interested in consumption and production focus on the value of dress in terms of ‘both the inherent material value (for example, the superiority of velvet over buckram or a diamond over a ‘counterfeit’ stone) but also in the labor involved in creating it...’³⁰

²⁷ David Morgan, ‘Materiality, social analysis, and the study of religion’ in *Religion and Material Culture: The Matter of Belief*, edited by David Morgan (London, 2010), pp. 55-74, 71; Arjun Appadurai, ‘Introduction: Commodities and the Politics of Value’ in *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, edited by Arjun Appadurai (Cambridge, 1986), pp. 3-63, 4.

²⁸ Appadurai, ‘Introduction: Commodities and the Politics of Value’, p. 4.

²⁹ Beverly Lemire, *Global Trade and the Transformation of Consumer Cultures: The Material World Remade, c.1500-1820* (Cambridge, 2017), p. 115; Beverly Lemire, ‘Plebian commercial circuits and everyday material exchange in England, c. 1600-1900’ in *Buyers and Sellers: Retail Circuits and Practices in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, edited by Bruno Blondé, Peter Stabel, Jon Stobart, and Ilja Van Damme (Turnhout, Belgium, 2006), pp. 245-266, 248.

³⁰ Erin Griffey, *On Display: Henrietta Maria and the Materials of Magnificence at the Stuart Court* (New Haven, 2015), p. 27.

Yet, these studies present the early modern period as a moment when the use and store value of dress were in flux with different values or assumptions converging and transforming previous appraisals of value. For many objects, for example, value shifted from something inherent in the materials or craftsmanship to something more abstract and often connected to perceived fashionability, variability, and desirability. Scott shows how a new and expanding world of global goods propelled early modern writers to consider ‘a paradox of value...namely that practically valuable objects could nevertheless stimulate intense possessive desire’ and become perceived as highly valuable within a society.³¹ Although an object might be completely valueless in one framework of meaning or context, this same object could be priceless in another regime of value. For these reasons, Peter Stallybrass asserts that the ‘need to distinguish financial value from other kinds of value appears to have taken on a pressing urgency’ during this period as luxury and trade expanded.³²

This paradox of value made early modern individuals consider and engage with value in novel ways as they questioned their assumptions and definitions about what made something valuable, worthless, or along that spectrum. This had ramifications for both how people evaluated dress and how cloth and clothing operated in systems of power, position, and wealth. These ramifications often challenged previous regimes and spaces of value. Sara Pennell, for example, argues that England in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries moved ‘from an appreciation of and value set on durability, to an appreciation of and value set on variability and novelty’ which set ‘apart the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries from those that follow’.³³ Paula Hohti shows how this new system of values manifested itself throughout Europe as new

³¹ Alison V. Scott, *Literature and the Idea of Luxury in Early Modern England* (Farnham, 2015), pp. 129-130.

³² Peter Stallybrass, ‘The Value of Culture and the Disavowal of Things’ in *The Culture of Capital: Property, Cities, and Knowledge in Early Modern England*, edited by Henry S. Turner (New York, 2002), pp. 275-292, 275.

³³ Sara Pennell, ‘Material culture in seventeenth-century Britain’ in *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Consumption*, edited by Frank Trentmann (Oxford, 2012), pp. 64-84, p. 78; Tara Hamling and Catherine Richardson, *A Day at Home in Early Modern England: Material Culture and Domestic Life, 1500-1700* (New Haven, 2017), p. 97.

crafts and industries emerged and goods circulated more quickly and more freely throughout the world. In Italy, for instance, ‘expensive fabrics used for the multiple layers of male and female clothing, were no longer the only powerful tools that made real or imaginary distinctions of visible rank in society.’ Instead, Italians like the English desired novelty and cheaper materials which fundamentally changed how ‘clothing was made, decorated, and worn...’³⁴

Yet, this historiographic narrative about the shift from inherent material value to an elevation of variability and craftsmanship in cloth and clothing is not without its critics. Scholars like Bert De Munck and Dries Lyna argue that this reevaluation of early modern objects cannot be simply interpreted as a movement ‘from value in the raw materials to cheaper, more fashion-sensitive objects’.³⁵ There is no linear ‘waning importance of intrinsic value’ but instead a simultaneous shift toward appreciating the innovation and variability of craftsmanship as well as raw materials and their novelty.³⁶ However, the conclusions of De Munck and Lyna still view the early modern period as a moment where value systems about goods were being reconsidered and transformed. This thesis builds on the work of these scholars while offering a different lens into early modern England’s evolving regimes of value in production and consumption. It does not prioritise materials, styles, and fashions over craftsmanship and process of making but instead considers them together in order to better understand the tensions and debates about value in three different contexts—the government, the court, and the household.

However, scholars like Susan Vincent and Peter Stallybrass also argue that ‘[a]s well as being commodities of utility and economic value, garments enjoyed a rich discursive life,

³⁴ Paula Hohti, ‘Dress, Dissemination, and Innovation: Artisan Fashions in Sixteenth- and Early Seventeenth-Century Italy’ in *Fashioning the Early Modern: Dress, Textile, and Innovation in Europe, 1500-1800*, edited by Evelyn Welch (Oxford, 2017), pp. 143-165, 148-149.

³⁵ Bert De Munck and Dries Lyna, ‘Locating and Dislocating Value: A Pragmatic Approach to Early Modern and Nineteenth-Century Economic Practices’ in *Concepts of Value in European Material Culture, 1500—1900*, edited by Bert De Munck and Dries Lyna (Surrey, 2015), pp. 1-29, 26-27.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

participating in moral, religious and political debates.³⁷ Cloth and clothing do not just have economic or utilitarian purpose and significance but shaped and reflected the circulation of other values in early modern society—symbolic, financial, and even sentimental.³⁸ In these contexts, dress offers historians insight and access to different cultural values.³⁹

The scholarship of Susan Vincent, for example, explores the social significance of early modern English dress where men and women were ‘sufficiently aware of the value of dress to be able to distinguish between the sometimes very small graduations.’⁴⁰ This relied on a high level of ‘dress competence’ about fabrics and fashion styles which allowed individuals to quickly value and assess another’s garment.⁴¹ In this context, a wide range of individuals including artisans, neighbours, servants, courtiers, and family members all had ‘intimate knowledge’ about the clothing of others. This intimate knowledge offered insight into an individual’s wealth, connections, position, and status making it a valued piece of information.⁴² This thesis is similarly interested in the cultural and social values of dress in early modern England. However, unlike Vincent’s scholarship or other previous studies, this work investigates the spaces or regimes of value together rather than separate. It considers how shifting economic and political values about cloth and clothing intersected with and informed cultural and social values about materials, innovation, expertise, variation, and processes of making.

³⁷ Vincent, *Dressing the Elite*, p. 5.

³⁸ Peter Stallybrass, ‘Worn worlds: clothes and identity on the Renaissance stage’ in *Subject and Object in Renaissance Culture*, edited by Margreta de Grazia, Maureen Quilligan, and Peter Stallybrass (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 289-321, 310; Lena Cowen Orlin, ‘Empty Vessels’ in *Everyday Objects: Medieval and Early Modern Material Culture and its Meanings*, edited by Tara Hamling and Catherine Richardson (Farnham, 2010), pp. 299-308, 303.

³⁹ Linda B. Arthur, ‘Dress and the Social Control of the Body’ in *Religion, Dress and the Body*, edited by Linda B. Arthur (Oxford, 1999), pp. 1-7; F. Davis, ‘Of maids’ uniforms and blue jeans: The drama of status ambivalences in clothing and fashion’, *Quantitative Sociology*, 12 (1), Winter (1989), pp. 337-355.

⁴⁰ Vincent, *Dressing the Elite*, pp. 29-30.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 104-107, 140, 191.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 96.

Dress at the Elizabethan Court

The Burghley family established itself at the court of Elizabeth I where the monarch's image gained increasing prominence. This context not only helps explain the wider social and political circumstances in which the Burghley family operated, but it also establishes the historiographic importance of this thesis as a means to better understand Elizabethan court society and the symbolic politics of dress. This section outlines what scholars know generally about the politics of etiquette at early modern courts as well as specifically about the connections between authority, display, and clothing at the Elizabethan court. It also reveals the importance of the insights provided by the Burghley and Salisbury household which offer a context for understanding how English courtiers saw dress and used it as a social and political tool in similar or different ways to a monarch who made what she wore one of the signal features of her image and rule.

Early modern courts abounded with etiquette and ceremonies. This general context helps frame this thesis and its understanding of how the politics of clothing operated alongside other aspects of protocol at the Elizabethan court. At one time, many historians viewed these interactions as boring, even stuffy. However, Norbert Elias in his groundbreaking work, *The Court Society*, transformed this perspective. He recognised how ceremony and etiquette were not just 'a dusty exhibit in an historical museum', but 'legitimate objects of scholarly inquiry.'⁴³ Elias insisted 'on the significance of status in early modern society' which demonstrated one's place within the larger political and social group.⁴⁴ However, he did not only see these laws and protocol as a systematic support of the monarch, but also as something which controlled and micromanaged both him or her and the court. He noted how at court 'hundreds and often thousands of people were bound together in one place by peculiar restraints which they and outsiders applied to each

⁴³ Norbert Elias, *The Court Society* in *The Collected Works of Norbert Elias*, edited by Stephen Mennell, translated by Edmund Japhcott, Vol. 2 (Dublin, 2006), p. 91.

⁴⁴ Giora Sternberg, *Status Interaction during the Reign of Louis XIV* (Oxford, 2014), p. 5.

other and to themselves, as servants, advisers and companions of kinds' which included 'even the most absolute monarch' who 'could exert an influence on his country only through the mediation of the people living at the court.'⁴⁵

Giora Sternberg's recent work on aristocratic society during Louis XIV's reign further explores how these mechanisms of distinction and precedent, described by Elias, abounded throughout aristocratic French society 'from precedence in three-dimensional space to the temporal order of events, from canopies and pews to nightshirts and drinking cups; from the length of a textile train to the number of adjectives in a verbal formula' with monarch and courtiers both participating in the creation, use, and regulation of this protocol.⁴⁶ Additionally, Jeroen Duindam's scholarship shows how these mechanisms occurred not only at the early modern French court, but also at the Hapsburg court where 'dynastic status was...demonstrated by the theater of ceremony and rank around the ruler'.⁴⁷ Duindam's work emphasises that the king alone did not create or manage this theatre because courtiers 'had their own agendas in ceremonial matters' often based on historical precedent which made monarchs and their families participants rather than dictators of etiquette and protocol.⁴⁸ This created spaces where courtiers, alongside rulers, shaped diplomacy and politics through their role in the management and regulation of rank, favours, and ceremony. Maria Hayward shows a similar phenomenon at the English court where monarchs like Henry VIII, Elizabeth I and James VI and I 'knew their public lives were a performance and that their words, deportment and behaviour were central in creating a monarchical identity...'⁴⁹ However, they relied upon their courtiers to

⁴⁵ Elias, *The Court Society*, pp. 39, 46.

⁴⁶ Sternberg, *Status Interaction during the Reign of Louis XIV*, p. 3.

⁴⁷ Jeroen Duindam, *Vienna and Versailles: The Courts of Europe's Dynastic Rivals, 1550-1780* (Cambridge, 2003), p. 242; For other works by Duindam which discuss the shared importance of ceremony in early modern courts more globally see: Jeroen Duindam, *Dynasties: A Global History of Power, 1300-1800* (Cambridge, 2016); Jeroen Duindam, Tülay Artan, and Metin Kunt, eds., *Royal Courts in Dynastic States and Empires: A Global Perspective* (Leiden, 2011).

⁴⁸ Duindam, *Vienna and Versailles*, p. 214.

⁴⁹ Maria Hayward, "'The Compass of a Lie'?: Royal Clothing at Court and in the Plays of Shakespeare, 1598-1613" in *Shakespeare and Costume*, edited by Patricia Lennox and Bella Mirabella (London, 2015), pp. 23-46, 23.

facilitate certain aspects of these performances such as dress which allowed nobles a greater role in shaping the image of the monarch.

Although, in theory, sumptuary laws and etiquette might represent a monarch's attempt to regulate and maintain status, Elias, Sternberg, Duindam, and Hayward reveal how within the early modern French, Hapsburg, and English courts, courtiers had a significant role in the understanding and expression of these displays of status and prestige. However, while scholarship on the early modern French and Hapsburg courts emphasises the role of courtiers, the scholarship on the Elizabethan court has typically been much more focused on the monarch, and specifically her use of clothing, to demonstrate her authority. This context provides an important framework which establishes the place and use of dress at the Elizabethan court.

Elizabeth I's appearance, even today, is familiar and recognisable. She and those around her masterfully constructed her image. She moved from the humanist Protestant Princess of her youth to the auburn-haired military leader at Tilbury who was the rightful successor of Henry VIII and a protector of Protestantism to the eternally youthful and majestic Gloriana, Astraea, and Cynthia of her later years. These representations circulated in various mediums including print, official portraiture, and coinage throughout Elizabeth's reign. However, they are often reinforced by what Elizabeth wore.⁵⁰ Her clothing sometimes became the mnemonic of her image. For instance, people remember Elizabeth's speech at Tilbury, but it is the, likely mythic, picture of her wearing a silver breastplate and white silk dress with red hair flying in the wind that resonates perhaps even more strongly. It is the fashion—the seemingly endless strands of pearls, large white ruffs, wide farthingale, pale face, and red hair—which many see as literal embodiments of the Gloriana Elizabeth and her triumphant reign. Both during Elizabeth's rule and afterwards, people inextricably linked monarch, image, and clothing.

⁵⁰ Hayward 'The Compass of a Lie', pp. 23-24.

These links interest scholars who explore Elizabeth's image. Previous scholarship helps understand how different representations emerged, what pressures or contradictions they contained, who constructed and controlled these ideas, and how these pictures were understood in the Elizabethan period and beyond.⁵¹ For example, the work of Kevin Sharpe reveals how the Tudor monarchy secured its monarchical position through mindful visual displays and the proliferation of the monarch's image through official portraiture, recognised heraldic colours, and generous public gift giving.⁵² Sharpe specifically notes the role that clothing played in these representations when he comments on how foreigners who visited the Elizabethan court were particularly awestruck 'by the splendor of the nobles' clothes and costly gems and jewels'.⁵³

Clothing acted as an external signifier of the power, authority, and magnificence of Elizabeth and her court for those who witnessed it. The colours, styles, and fabrics confirmed and secured her position by providing a visual, auditory, and aromatic reminder of her wealth and majesty. Susan Vincent's work further highlights this link between power and dress at the Elizabethan court. She argues that Elizabeth constructed an image of powerful queenship largely through her clothing. Contemporaries often commented upon both Elizabeth's passion for dress and the 'political mileage' she gained from 'her fashioned magnificence'.⁵⁴ However, Vincent's scholarship explores how these links were not always straightforward. Clothing also reveals certain tensions which precipitated changes in Elizabeth's representation.

This is perhaps most clearly seen in her later allegorical emergence as an imperialist ruler, vestal virgin, and classical goddess. Elizabeth used her courtships and potential marriages as a political strategy both nationally and internationally. This game rested largely on the pretext of

⁵¹ Roy Strong, *Gloriana: The Portraiture of Queen Elizabeth I* (London, 1987); Frances Yates, *Astraea: The Imperial Theme in the Sixteenth Century* (London, 1975); Susan Frye, *Elizabeth I: The Competition for Representation* (Oxford, 1993).

⁵² Sharpe, *Selling the Tudor Monarchy*, pp. 39, 129, 321, 361, 412; Kevin Sharpe, *Politics and Ideas in Early Stuart England: Essays and Studies* (London, 1989), pp. 279-316.

⁵³ Victor Von Klarwill, *Queen Elizabeth and some foreigners being a series of hetherto unpublished letters form the archives of the Hapsburg family* (London, 1928), pp. 375-378.

⁵⁴ Vincent, *Dressing the Elite*, p. 137.

her sustained youth and virginity and, therefore, became more perilous as she aged. However, her representation as the Virgin Queen with its emphasis on ongoing youth and virginity perpetuated this strategy. Vincent specifically highlights how the clothing which appeared on Elizabeth in portraits from the later years of the reign reinforced these new images. In these images, Elizabeth often wears dress associated with young women, such as low-cut gowns and pearls, and uses elements which hid her age, such as hair pieces and white make-up.⁵⁵ Clothing had a central role in the Queen's representation. Clothing helped portray Elizabeth's power, but it also helped her and those around her mask the tensions within her later rule. While the scholarship of Sharpe and Vincent firmly establishes links between monarch, image, and dress, their work relies predominantly on sources other than those which detail what clothing Elizabeth owned and wore.

In contrast, Janet Arnold's work explores the relationship between Elizabeth's representation and her actual clothing.⁵⁶ Arnold uses the royal household's detailed wardrobe accounts to ask broad questions about how what Elizabeth wore influenced her actions; how dress helped construct the Queen's image of majesty; and how those at court contributed to these representations through gifting her clothing and accessories. Clothing dictates movement and gesture. Elizabeth's wardrobe accounts detail her ownership and use of wide-shirted fashions with large amounts of fabric often supported by a whale-bone farthingale. This style visually demonstrated the Queen's vast wealth with its quantity of expensive fabric. However, it also influenced her movement. It slowed her gait and made her appear to float across the floor. Contemporaries such as George Puttenham in 1589 noted how Elizabeth's movement accentuated her regal position. He commented that 'in a prince it is decent to go slowly and to march with leisure, and with a certain grandity rather than gravity; as our sovereign lady and

⁵⁵ Vincent, *Dressing the Elite*, p. 138; See also Hayward 'The Compass of a Lie', p. 27.

⁵⁶ Arnold, *Queen Elizabeth's Wardrobe Unlock'd*.

mistress, the very image of majesty and magnificence, is accustomed to do generally...'⁵⁷ Thus, as Arnold demonstrates, what Elizabeth wore helps us better understand how clothing did not just reflect the Queen's image, but helped construct her representation as a regal monarch with proper movements and presentation which remained effective even as she aged and required 'elaborate clothing...[to] create an impression of wealth and majesty' and youthfulness.⁵⁸

Additionally, Arnold uses the wardrobe accounts to show how courtiers and other members of Elizabethan society gave the Queen clothing and therefore helped mould the images she projected through what she wore. For example, during Elizabeth's courtship with the Duke of Anjou whom she nicknames her frog, she received several jewels with a frog motif both from the Duke and her courtiers.⁵⁹ These accessories were beautiful and whimsical, but also quite political. They demonstrated support for the Anjou marriage. Their givers perhaps hoped these gifts might influence the Queen or give her a means to visually demonstrate her preference for the match. This example proves Arnold's point. Elizabeth's representation was not a monologue where the Queen singularly projected an image of herself through what she wore. Instead, both courtiers and members of Elizabethan society played a role in these representations because they also helped construct the royal wardrobe through their gifts of clothing, accessories, and fabric. These individuals often provided the raw materials through which Elizabeth later built her image. Thus, Arnold not only establishes that dress mattered at the Elizabethan court, but also how courtiers played an important role in this construction of Elizabeth's clothed image.

Despite this vast scholarship on Elizabeth's dress and its influence on her representation as well as how her courtiers participated in its creation, very little work exists which explores how these individual Elizabethan courtiers perceived dress, what they wore or how they also used dress

⁵⁷ George Puttenham, *The Art of Poesie* (1589), quoted in F.M. O' Donoghue, *A Descriptive and Classified Catalogue of Portraits of Queen Elizabeth* (London, 1894). p. xviii; See also: Hayward, 'The Compass of a Lie', pp. 32-33.

⁵⁸ Arnold, *Queen Elizabeth's Wardrobe Unlock'd*, p. 1.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 75-76, 328.

to demonstrate their own political power and social position. Scholars know Elizabeth used dress and it was significant for her. Maria Hayward has demonstrated how Tudor sumptuary legislation broadly regulated elite clothing and created links between status and particular fabrics, furs, and styles with ‘expensive, imported, silks, furs and metal thread’ acting ‘as material signifiers of status and the individuals permitted to wear them were clearly identified as the elite’.⁶⁰ Additionally, Anna Reynolds’ recent work explores the dress of Tudor and Stuart monarchs, their ‘extended family, the men and women making up the court, together with the upwardly mobile and increasingly wealthy gentry classes’ through the Royal Collection’s paintings.⁶¹ Although this study importantly also highlights the magnificence of Elizabethan court dress, it almost exclusively focuses on how courtiers were painted. Reynolds herself notes that what people actually wore could ‘sometimes be at odds with the evidence from portraiture.’⁶² Thus, in order to truly know if dress had as prominent a role at the Elizabethan court as scholars assume it did, we must investigate people beyond Elizabeth and look further than regulatory frameworks or paintings. Scholars must explore what Elizabethan courtiers thought about clothing and what they wore daily and at ceremonies rather than what the law said they could wear or how they had themselves depicted.

This is where this thesis importantly enters the discussion because it investigates what William Cecil and his household wore, how they perceived dress and probes if they used it to demonstrate their political position and social place. It uses the Burghleys as a microcosm for the politics of dress at the Elizabethan court by exploring how William oriented himself and his household in relation to the rules and expectations for clothing and display at the Elizabethan

⁶⁰ Hayward, *Rich Apparel*, p. 17; For additional literature on Tudor sumptuary legislation see: Winifred Hooper, ‘The Tudor Sumptuary Laws’, *English Historical Review*, 30 (1915), pp. 433-49; F.E. Baldwin, *Sumptuary Legislation and Personal Regulation in England* (Baltimore, MD, 1926); Negley B. Harte, ‘State Control over Dress and Social Change in Pre-industrial England’ in *Trade, Government and Economy in Pre-industrial England: Essays Presented to F.J. Fisher*, edited by D.C. Coleman and A.H. Johns (London, 1976), pp. 132-165; Alan Hunt, *Governance of the Consuming Passions: A History of Sumptuary Law* (New York, 1996).

⁶¹ Anna Reynolds, *In Fine Style: The Art of Tudor and Stuart Fashion* (London, 2013), p. 7.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 29.

court. However, it also looks at whether views outside the court influenced what William Cecil and his household bought and wore and if these acted in congruence or tension with what the court expected. It asks if Elizabethan courtiers such as William could create and mould protocol about rank and magnificence versus being simply bound by it. It uses the similarities and differences seen in the creation, receipt, and use of garments between the Queen's wardrobe accounts and the household accounts of the Burghley and Salisbury household to see if dress played as central a role in the image creation of an Elizabethan courtier—William Cecil—as it did for the Queen. It investigates if dress had an equal or greater importance in how early modern Englishmen and women such as William viewed and remembered their Queen than in their own self-representation. This, in turn, helps scholars better understand Elizabeth and how her image was influenced, formed, and emerged out of the expectations about dress, representation, and display held by her courtiers as well as by her.

This thesis also offers an example of how early modern English aristocrats participated in etiquette and protocol within the early modern English court as they did in early modern French and Hapsburg courts, though perhaps reveals an increased focus on dress because of clothing's close relationship to the image of Elizabeth. In sum, this thesis investigates aristocratic society in early modern England and uses the Burghley and Salisbury households to reveal how ideas about clothing, representation, and display—the politics of clothing—formed and were enacted by both monarch and courtier in dialogue.

Clothing and Agency

Although the previous definition and categorisation of dress provides helpful insights, this thesis sees clothing not just as forms of economic consumption or fashion styles, but also as objects with their own agency that ultimately helped shape personal dress and display in the Burghley and Salisbury households. This idea builds on previous material culture historiography, specifically debates over the 'agency' of objects. While some scholars, such as

the anthropologist Arjun Appadurai and the art historian Ludmilla Jordanova, challenge this idea and argue that humans exclusively give objects and images meaning and they cannot ‘speak’ independently because humans must activate them, other anthropologists and historians of science, including Alfred Gell and Lorraine Daston, argue that art and object do not simply reflect human meaning, but create, cause, and transform understanding apart from human attribution or motivations.⁶³ Some scholars such as David Freedberg have even argued that artefacts and images provoke specific psychological responses in individuals which trigger vision and brain processes apart from human choice.⁶⁴ This gives the object agency.

My work views the arguments of Gell, Daston, and Freedberg as important, especially for clothing where connections between individual and object are magnified by specific materials, colours, and forms. For instance, the early modern world did not view certain colours such as gold and black as pigments alone, but viewed them as having desirable, embedded mystical and healing properties.⁶⁵ Thus, the materiality of black and gold clothes, heraldry or accessories often heightened their perceived religiosity. Additionally, livery cloth did not just demonstrate loyalty or subjugation, but embodied these links when worn.⁶⁶ The dress moulded and shaped its subject. Thus, form as well as colours and materials grew increasingly important with their own perceived agency to protect, subjugate or heal.

Within an English context, the work by Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass proves especially important when it illustrates how much materiality shaped early modern English

⁶³ Arjun Appadurai, ed., *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective* (Cambridge, 1986); Ludmilla Jordanova, *The Look at the Past: Visual and Material Evidence of Historical Practice* (Cambridge, 2012), pp. 15-34; Alfred Gell, *Art and Agency: an Anthropological Theory* (Oxford, 1998); Lorraine Daston, ed., *Things that Talk: Object Lessons from Art and Science* (New York, 2004).

⁶⁴ David Freedberg, *The Power of Images: Studies in the History and Theory of Response* (Chicago, 1989).

⁶⁵ These ideas were presented by Spike Butler to the members of the Early Modern History Cambridge course ‘Material and Visual Culture’ at Cambridge on 24 November 2015. See also: Spike Butler, *The Alchemy of Paint: Art, Science and Secrets of the Middle Ages* (London, 2009), Ch. VI.; Désirée Koslin, ‘Value-Added Stuff and Shifts in Meaning: An Overview and Case Study of Medieval Textile Paradigms’ in *Encountering Medieval Textiles and Dress: Objects, Texts, Images*, edited by Désirée G. Koslin and Janet E. Snyder (New York, 2002), pp. 233-251, 235; R. Wagner, *Heralds and Heraldry in the Middle Ages* (London, 1967).

⁶⁶ Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing and the Materials of Memory* (Cambridge, 2000), p. 2.

perceptions of dress. These scholars examine the culturally heightened colour of saffron-yellow and the use of starch which originated from France and Spain. Many Elizabethans remained suspicious of this colour and starched clothing because they worried these materials carried Catholicism and other negative qualities such as vanity and avarice which they associated with these foreign countries.⁶⁷ Thus, they believed that if an individual wore this colour or used this material, they might become foreign, demonic and Catholic.⁶⁸ Many Elizabethan religious and political publications further elevated materiality and argued that Elizabethans must wear English materials in order to be English. Roze Hentschell notes how religious and political treatises often denounced fashionistas through materiality whereby foreign fabrics and styles were linked to ‘the various immoral attributes of those continental countries’.⁶⁹ Fashionista, according to these sources, did not just robe themselves with foreign imports, but also in foreign vices. For example, ‘papisty and lasciviousness were linked with silks and satins from Spain and Italy, syphilis and ostentation with French fabrics’.⁷⁰

However, Hentschell notes how these denunciations of foreign fabrics are more than just examples of early modern xenophobia. Instead, they provide glimpses into what Elizabethans felt was politically, socially, and economically at stake when individuals used certain fabrics. This is perhaps most poignantly seen in discussions around the English woollen industry and its decline. Elizabethans viewed woolen broadcloth as a visible manifestation of English moral virtue and technical superiority.⁷¹ Thus, its decline and the increased preference for foreign fabrics meant not only economic trouble, but also disrupted ideas about national selfhood because it decreased ‘the *cultural* value of domestic cloth’ and meant many Elizabethans now

⁶⁷ Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass, “‘Rugges of London and the Diuell’s Band’: Irish Mantles and Yellow Starch as Hybrid London Fashion’ in *Material London, ca. 1600*, edited by Len Cowen Orin (Philadelphia, 2000), pp. 128-150, 142.

⁶⁸ Jones and Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing and the Materials of Memory*, p. 69.

⁶⁹ Roze Hentschell, ‘A Question of Nation: Foreign Clothes on the English Subject’ in *Clothing Culture, 1350-1650*, edited by Catherine Richardson (Aldershot, 2004), pp. 49-62, 49.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 49-62, 53; Roze Hentschell, *The Culture of Cloth in Early Modern England: Textual Constructions of a National Identity* (Aldershot, 2008), p. 106.

⁷¹ Hentschell ‘A Question of Nation’, pp. 49-62, 53.

wore fabric from many diverse places.⁷² This was perceived, at best, as disloyal and morally questionable as well as occasionally seen as treasonous because an Englishman was compromising the purity of the English body politic through the foreign fabric he wore. Thus, Hentschell demonstrates how the domestic woolen industry and the cloth it created became powerful rhetorical symbols for England which, in turn, endowed textiles with a great power to materially articulate national identity and visually demonstrate where one's loyalty lay.⁷³ These examples reveal materiality's potent role in early modern English dress. However, they are especially interesting within the context of this thesis which explores William Cecil's central role in the regulation and maintenance of the English wool trade during the Elizabethan period. Thus, this thesis adds another dimension to this previous scholarship by Hentschell because it moves beyond polemical texts and investigates how an actual Elizabethan politician viewed his actions concerned with cloth. It asks if he saw these decisions as protection and furthering the prestige of the Elizabethan court and whether he viewed these more political decisions as an equal demonstration of the power and authority demonstrated by the clothes he and his household wore.

These studies reveal that materiality and form held specific and heightened meaning in the early modern world. The emphasis on the power of matter affected how early modern people made and perceived objects. Many craftspeople strove to create something aesthetically beautiful, but in spiritual contexts also wanted to manifest the 'power in the matter of the object.'⁷⁴ The living nature of matter linked directly with an object's ability for agency—something which early modern craftspeople respected.⁷⁵ Thus, in England, some people rejected certain fabrics and clothing styles because they believed these materials imparted negative, foreign qualities. These

⁷² Hentschell, *The Culture of Cloth in Early Modern England*, p. 119.

⁷³ Hentschell 'A Question of Nation', pp. 49-62, 53.

⁷⁴ C. W. Bynum, *Christian Materiality: an Essay on Religion in Late Medieval Europe* (London, 2011), p. 29.

⁷⁵ Pamela Smith and Tonny Beentjes, 'Nature and Art, Making and Knowing: Reconstructing Sixteenth-Century Life Casting Techniques,' *Renaissance Quarterly*, Vol. 63, No. 1 (Spring 2010), pp. 128-179.

objects could ‘speak’ through their matter and form in a way that adopted a level of agency. The material used had a meaning of its own that craftspeople maximised. The matter mattered. Thus, this thesis will explore the agency of dress in the Burghley and Salisbury households by examining what the clothing was made of as well as how it was constructed to determine if and how the materials, colours, and styles of dress perhaps heightened their meaning and significance.

Methodology

This study looks at the embodied experience of early modern dress and the politics of the early modern English court from the middle of the sixteenth century to the beginning of the seventeenth century through account books, letters, and historical reconstruction. This methodology understands dress as a lived experience rather than simply offering linguistic or representative messages. It sees clothing as something which demonstrated power, authority, and prestige through its very presence—the space it took up, the sound it made, the way it looked. It centres its analysis on material culture by exploring what early modern English courtiers such as William Cecil and his household wore and how this clothing helped them participate in the wider rituals, ceremony, and etiquette of the court. It also probes sumptuary law and portraiture, but not for their legal or artistic success. Instead, it uses these for further context which helps see if and how courtiers’ expectations about dress influenced the monarch’s representation, wardrobe, and legislation. This embodied context helps scholars to show how individuals, societies, and clothes themselves shaped early modern dress. This section sets out this methodology with specific attention paid to the interpretation of material culture and dress reconstruction. It also introduces important questions that guide this thesis and its investigation.

A. Embodiment

Historians interpret dress differently. It is often seen as a language. Ferdinand de Saussure pioneered this methodology, though Roland Barthes and Alison Lurie perhaps established it.

Barthes saw twentieth-century contemporary fashion as a language with its own vocabulary. Each garment sent linguistic messages through its fabric, colour, construction and decoration. The elements together could say different things like a diverse arrangement of words in a sentence.⁷⁶ Lurie's work appropriately titled, *The Language of Clothes*, further emphasised characteristics of this language. She stressed its universality and clarity. She claimed everyone understood, appreciated, and similarly interpreted it.⁷⁷

Recent scholarship still maximises this methodology. Daniel Roche's study of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century French fashion argues that clothes are 'like the words of a language which needs to be translated and explained.'⁷⁸ Additionally, Roze Hentschell's recent work on cloth culture in early modern England shows that certain fabrics and styles carried messages of national origin.⁷⁹ She highlights how the early modern work, *Pleasant Quippes for Upstart Newfangled Gentlemen* (1595), communicated dangers, such as the pox and arrogance associated with the French, through culturally understood semiotic symbols, such as the ostentatious farthingale that translated into a language about the pox.⁸⁰ Marcia Pointon also demonstrates how the clothing of seventeenth and eighteenth-century English women should be 'accessed through languages both visual and verbal.'⁸¹ Although this scholarship recognises dress' importance, these methodologies and their interpretations typically elevate verbal and

⁷⁶ Roland Barthes, *The Fashion System* (London, 1985); Alison Lurie, *The Language of Clothes* (London, 1981), p. 196; For more discussion on Barthes and his arguments see: Joanne Entwistle and Elizabeth Wilson, 'Introduction: Body Dressing' in *Body Dressing*, edited by Joanne Entwistle and Elizabeth Wilson (Oxford, 2001), pp. 1-13, 3; Christopher Breward, 'Cultures, Identities: Fashioning a Cultural Approach to Dress', *Fashion Theory*, 2, 4 (December 1998), pp. 301-313, 303, 305; E. Jane Burns, 'Why Textiles Make a Difference' in *Medieval Fabrications: Dress, Textiles, Clothwork, and Other Cultural Imaginings*, edited by E. Jane Burns (New York, 2004), pp. 1-18, 3-4.

⁷⁷ Lurie, *The Language of Clothes*; For more discussion on Lurie and her arguments see: Fred Davis, *Fashion and the Construction of Identity* (Chicago, 1993); Elizabeth Wilson and Amy de la Haye, 'Introduction' in *Defining Dress: Dress as Object, Meaning and Identity*, edited by Amy de la Haye and Elizabeth Wilson (Manchester, 1999), p. 5.

⁷⁸ Daniel Roche, *The Culture of Clothing: Dress and Fashion in the 'Ancien regime'*, translated by Jean Birrell (Cambridge, 1994), p. 43.

⁷⁹ Hentschell, *The Culture of Cloth in Early Modern England*, p. 9.

⁸⁰ Stephen Gosson, *Pleasant Quippes for Upstart Newfangled Gentlemen*, 1595 (London, 1841).

⁸¹ Marcia Pointon, *Strategies for Showing: Women, Possession, and Representation in English Visual Culture, 1665-1800* (Oxford, 1997), p. 7.

written descriptions of clothing. However, as Pointon's work highlights, dress is very visual. The visual complicates dress and its interpretation. It is not the straightforward linguistic concept proposed by Barthes and Lurie. Thus, in order to properly understand these visual elements, scholars have sought new methodologies.

These new semiotic methodologies emphasise non-linguistic visual sign systems. Dress communicates, but not through universal grammatical rules. Instead, its visual messages are mobile and diverse and linked to the unconscious and sensuous. Fred Davis and Anne Hollander, early champions of this methodological approach, saw semiotic exchanges as undercoded communication akin to music or figurative art.⁸² Davis and Hollander believed context was critical. Historians could only properly interpret these non-linguistic sign systems when they were placed into their appropriate social, political, religious, and economic context.

However, although this non-linguistic semiotic methodology acknowledges dress' visual messages, this investigative framework fundamentally asks what dress communicates rather than how is it lived. Semiology is concerned with the linguistic or visual figuring of identity rather than identity itself. Embodiment, in contrast, moves further toward dress and its individual experience. Anthropologists and philosophers such as John Michael Krois, Mats Rosengren, Angela Steidele and Dirk Westerkamp define 'embodiment' as the combination of 'form and content, as well as thought and feeling' which avoids the creation of dualisms between mind and matter or body and soul.⁸³ This sees clothing as discursive and visual, but also material and bodily. Dress molds the body and the body alters dress. This reciprocal relationship is important. It helps scholars engage with the individual and collective lived experience of early modern dress. It also shows how the senses together form our understanding

⁸² Davis, *Fashion and the Construction of Identity*; Anne Hollander, *Seeing Through Clothes* (Berkeley, 1978).

⁸³ John Michael Krois, Mats Rosengren, Angela Steidele, and Dirk Westerkamp, 'Introduction' in *Embodiment in Cognition and Culture*, edited by John Michael Krois, Mats Rosengren, Angela Steidele, and Dirk Westerkamp (Amsterdam and Philadelphia, 2007), pp. xiii-xxii.

and experience of dress which properly explores the role of the eye, ear, and body in creating a multifaceted sensory dimension to cloth, clothing and its construction.⁸⁴ This thesis uses embodiment in order to better understand the sensorial experience of dress and the importance of the sensory and tacit knowledge gained from these experiences with cloth and clothing alongside other linguistic or visual messages.

Embodiment helps scholars see the complexities and individualism of early modern dress. Joanne Entwistle probes the fashioned body through embodiment. Her research articulates the process whereby the body is made sociable and identifiable through discourse *and* practices. Practice helps reposition individuals and their actions. Entwistle notes ‘that dress is thus actively produced through routine practice directed toward the body’ done by individuals who are ‘active in their engagement’. Thus, embodiment explores discourse and practice as well as communication. It also sees both individuals and clothing as actors in the creation of cultural ideas about dress and identity. People do not just accept dress’ meaning. Dress and people help build meaning.⁸⁵ Thus, the body is a critical place where these discourses converge. This elevates daily everyday practice and dress. It shows how the mundane actually forms larger customs and beliefs about cloth and clothing.⁸⁶

Historians Margreta de Grazia, Maureen Quilligan, and Peter Stallybrass explore these ideas in *Subject and Object in Renaissance Culture*. Their work interlinks object and subject. It shows ‘how objects have a hold on subjects as well as subjects on objects.’ These ‘reciprocal makings and unmakings’ are critical moments in the experience of early modern dress. They reveal the role of the individual in the experience of wearing, seeing, feeling, and constructing clothing, but also highlight the object’s function in shaping individual’s memory and self-formation

⁸⁴ Reinhart Meyer-Kalkus, ‘Work, Rhythm, Dance: Prerequisites for a Kinaesthetics of Media and Art’ in *Embodiment in Cognition and Culture*, pp. 165-181, 175.

⁸⁵ Joanne Entwistle, *The Fashioned Body: Theorizing Fashion and Dress in Modern Society* (Cambridge, 2000); Joanne Entwistle, ‘The Dressed Body’ in *Body Dressing*, edited by Joanne Entwistle and Elizabeth Wilson (Oxford, 2001), pp. 33-59, 34.

⁸⁶ Entwistle, ‘The Dressed Body’, pp. 33-59.

through fabric, style, and provenance.⁸⁷ Ulinka Rublack's work on cultural identity in Renaissance Europe also emphasises how historians must place clothes alongside images of clothes.⁸⁸ People emotionally relate to objects. They prompt memories and represent desires, concerns, tastes, and wishes. Scholars should appreciate the visual symbolism of Matthäus Schwarz's clothes, but they should also probe how he experienced types of leather shoes and striped hose. Embodiment helps ensure historians engage with how Schwarz's shoes, fabrics, and styles shaped his gestures, movement or gait which impacted his presentation and identity.⁸⁹ As Rublack articulates, it is this dialogue between things and the individuals who engage with them that make meaning and help us understand people's lives. These dialogues occur every day through mundane and extraordinary moments. They are embodied practice and form part of the lived experience of dress.

This methodology puts the Burghley and Salisbury households and the individual engagement with dress at the forefront of its discussion. There is no dominant narrative. Instead, each individual found within the account books, correspondence, paintings or extant artefacts can provide insight into the lived experience of dress within the Burghley and Salisbury households. This enables the unique sex and rank of various household members, as well as the form and substance of various objects, to inform the larger discussion.

Embodiment also helps investigate questions of motivation. This is particularly important when considering if and how the Burghley and Salisbury households used dress to demonstrate their social position and political power as well as how it reflected larger questions of value in early modern English society. Embodiment offers a two-stage investigative approach. First, conduct is seen as motivated by individual peculiarities. This directly addresses the everyday

⁸⁷ Margreta de Grazia, Maureen Quilligan, and Peter Stallybrass, 'Introduction' in *Subject and Object in Renaissance Culture*, pp. 1-17, 11-12.

⁸⁸ Ulinka Rublack, *Dressing Up: Cultural Identity in Renaissance Europe* (Oxford, 2010), p. 3.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

individual lived experience of dress in all its bodily form. However, conduct is also seen as shaped by motives which relate to specific social, cultural, and historical circumstances. Individual and broader concerns come together forming ‘unique constellations of meaning.’⁹⁰ This is the embodied context or situated practice of dress. As an approach, it requires moving between discursive and representational elements of dress alongside the use of dress.⁹¹ This methodology allows this thesis to properly ask if and how dress interacted with and shaped power and authority within the Burghley and Salisbury households on both an individual and household level. However, it also moves beyond this focus by exploring how the clothing and its use in the Burghley and Salisbury households reflected or shaped expectations about dress at the court. It explores how this clothing interacted with other political, social, economic, and religious ideas about dress in early modern England through the specific choices made by courtiers such as William Cecil about fabric, style, and colour.

B. Reconstruction

While this thesis builds an embodied context for dress in the Cecil household through account books, correspondence, portraiture and extant artefacts, it also moves embodiment methodologies forward by showing how historical reconstruction offers a more nuanced context for understanding early modern dress. Reconstruction is its own source. Thus, its inclusion in this thesis offers insights often inaccessible within archival sources.

A reconstruction alongside other archival sources is not entirely unprecedented. *The Making and Knowing Project* run by Pamela Smith at Columbia University moves between text and reconstruction. Its participants recreate recipes recorded in a late sixteenth-century French manuscript.⁹² Additionally, Ulinka Rublack and Jenny Tiramani reconstructed one of Matthäus

⁹⁰ Colin Campbell, ‘Understanding Traditional and Modern Patterns of Consumption in Eighteenth-century England: a Character—Action Approach’ in *Consumption and the World of Goods*, edited by John Brewer and Roy Porter (London and New York, 1993), pp. 40-57, 44.

⁹¹ Entwistle, ‘The Dressed Body’, p. 55.

⁹² Pamela Smith, ‘Making and Knowing Project’, Columbia University.

Schwarz's most politically important outfits, a pair of yellow and red hose, in their wider engagement with his wardrobe.⁹³ Through reconstruction and its corresponding processes of experimentation, they explored how this specific article of dress was not only fashionable, but also used by Schwarz 'as a politicized visual act' during the Augsburg Imperial Diet of 1530.⁹⁴ The specific bright and bold colours incorporated into this outfit were 'a political sign' demonstrating Schwarz's 'unity, belonging, and power' to Ferdinand I of Hapsburg and the Catholic cause.⁹⁵ However, an early modern clothing reconstruction has not prominently appeared alongside other materials in a study of English dress especially one which explores how a political figure such as William Cecil might assert their political positions through the specific choice of colour, material, or style for specific clothes. This thesis' reconstruction seeks to fill this gap.

Reconstruction is particularly important in this thesis because no extant household clothing survives for the Burghley or Salisbury households. Although some museum collections do have similar early modern clothing, this does not reveal the peculiarities of clothing from within this household. Historians must be careful that these museum objects do not become prototypes for understanding certain clothing. The museum glove must not suddenly become representative of every early modern glove because this obscures the individual experience of dress. Thus, a historical reconstruction prioritises the personal and familial circumstances of clothing and its production which is so central to the embodied methodology while helping historians further engage with tactile and embodied forms of knowledge and their value in early modern English society.

⁹³ Ulinka Rublack, Jenny Tiramani, and Maria Hayward, eds., *The First Book of Fashion: The Book of Clothes of Matthäus and Veit Konrad Schwarz of Augsburg* (London, 2015).

⁹⁴ Ulinka Rublack, 'Renaissance Dress, Cultures of Making, and the Period Eye', *West 86th: A Journal of Decorative Arts, Design History, and Material Culture*, Vol. 23, Number 1 (Spring-Summer 2016), pp. 6-34, 12.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

Additionally, anthropologists such as Reinhart Meyer-Kalkus, note how embodiment emphasises the body and elevates its sensorial interaction with dress. His scholarship on work, dance, and song shows how

a multisensorial interconnection...goes deeper than a single sensory dimension could achieve. The impressions of the ear, the eye, and the whole body are not simply added or fused; rather, their connection creates a new quality of impression in which the ear cannot be abstracted from what the eye sees, and in which the eye sees what is not independent of what the ear discerns...⁹⁶

Historical reconstruction does something similar. It gives historians a more multisensorial awareness of the lived experience of dress where the eye, ear, and whole-body work together in an understanding and evaluation of cloth, colour, design, and ornamentation. Contemporaries quickly evaluated and appreciated these aspects of dress though historians often miss these elements in traditional archival studies.⁹⁷ Reconstruction gives historians a more tangible awareness of both the sensorial experience of dressing and the technical processes for the construction of dress. These are key elements of the lived experience of dress though often unarticulated in the written or visual record. Thus, through reconstruction, this thesis ensures it does not contort clothing as the famous dress historians, Janet Arnold and Naomi Tarrant, worried ‘to fit some theory without a basic understanding of cloth and the structures of cloth’.⁹⁸ Instead, any arguments are related to the lived experience of dress from the inside out.

Structure

Following this introduction, Chapter One provides a political and economic profile of William Cecil and his engagement with cloth and clothing in Elizabethan and early Jacobean society. It will discuss how previous historians characterise the economic and political policies of this period as either those which value conservatism or innovation and how my thesis supports or

⁹⁶ Meyer-Kalkus ‘Work, rhythm, dance’, p. 175.

⁹⁷ Koslin, ‘Value-Added Stuffs and Shifts in Meaning’, p. 236.

⁹⁸ Janet Arnold, *A Handbook of Costume* (New York, 1973); N. Tarrant, *The Development of Costume* (London, 1994), p. 12; Lou Taylor, *The Study of Dress History* (Manchester, 2002), pp. 12-13.

departs from these discussions. Chapter Two examines the court context where the values of cloth and clothing were distinct and highly personal. This chapter demonstrates the centrality of sartorial dress gifts for men as well as women and the central role of gift facilitators like William and Robert Cecil. Together, Chapter One and Chapter Two establish a more macro level picture of how the Burghley and later Salisbury households directly engaged with dress and its management of power through proposing legislation, supporting consumer endeavours, and participating in court gift-giving and ceremonies.

Chapter Three, meanwhile, moves the thesis toward a more micro investigation into how the immediate Burghley and Salisbury families, including women and children, directly engaged with dress through wearing, purchasing, or gifting of clothing and accessories. This chapter investigates these decisions as part of a larger cultural context which valued material literacy and experimentation. Chapter Four furthers this investigation by shifting the focus from the dress to the makers, and the processes of making, as well as servant dress. In this way, the thesis questions the value of craftsmanship and the status of the artisan or maker in early modern English society.

Chapter Five provides a methodological shift whereby this thesis uses historical reconstruction to further understand and appreciate the expertise and embodied knowledge necessary for makers, wearers, and viewers evaluating certain material, colours, and cuts of cloth and clothing. These reconstructions also enable a greater awareness of how the Burghley and Salisbury garments visually, tactically, and audibly expressed power, wealth, and position. It, therefore, helps this thesis engage with the question of value in a novel and tangible manner which works in conjunction with, and often augments, other types of source material. Finally, the Conclusion offers some final thoughts on how the Burghley and Salisbury households and their interactions with dress offer greater insight into understanding regimes of value in early

modern England and demonstrate how household choices about dress reveal some of the central paradoxes of sixteenth and seventeenth-century English society.

Chapter One: Political and Economic Value

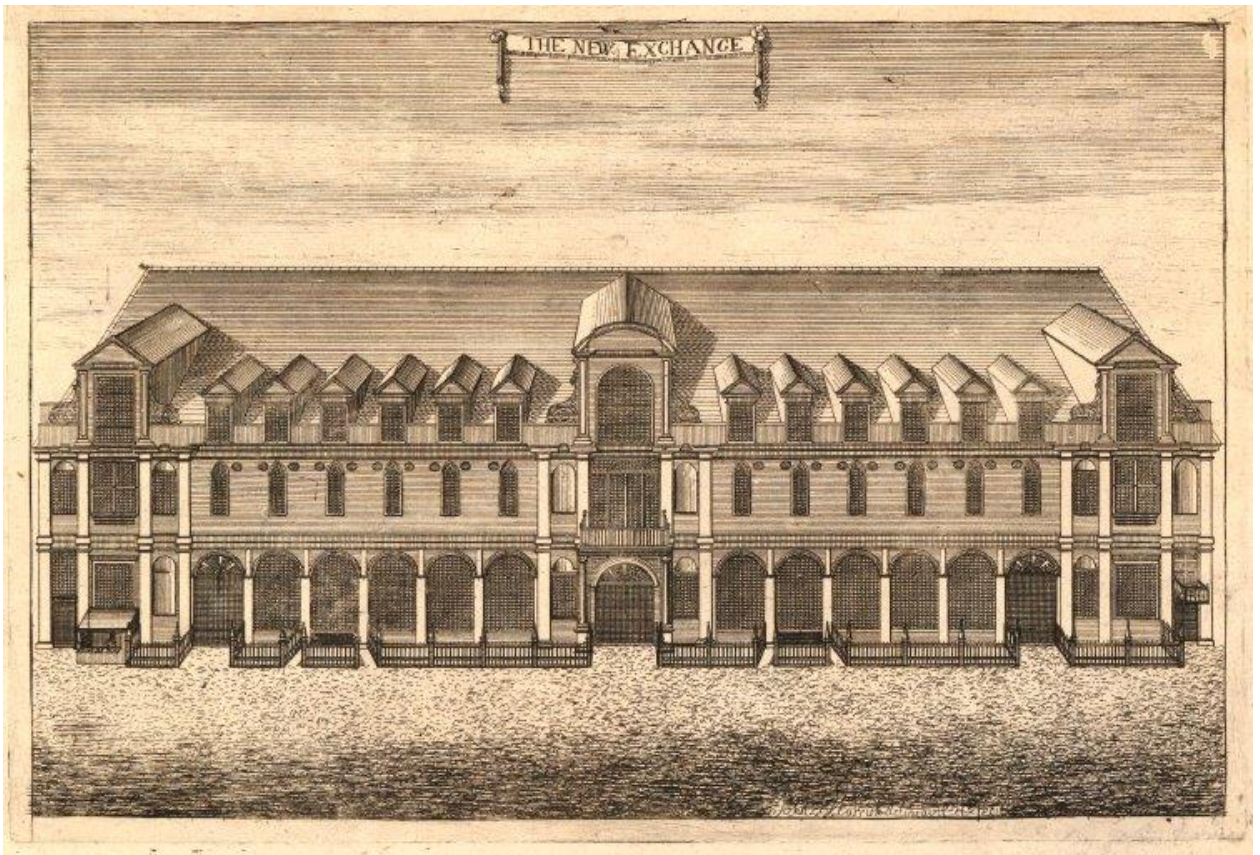


Figure 1. View of the front of the new Exchange, or Britain's Bourse, in the Strand. c.1715, Etching and engraving, © The Trustees of the British Museum

On the morning of the 11th of April 1609, the New Exchange located on the Strand in London opened to great fanfare. It was firmly situated in the suburban and aristocratic West End near homes owned by the Salisbury family and the Earl of Bedford.⁹⁹ Contemporaries also referred to it as Britain's Bourse. This new shopping space, according to its regulations, was meant to bring together luxury craftspeople into a single space, such as haberdashers, stocking sellers, linen drapers, goldsmiths, milliners, perfumers, silk mercers, stationers, booksellers, confectioners, girdlers, and sellers of china, pictures, maps, and prints. The milliner Humphrey Bradbourne, for example, sold ribbons amongst many other things and rented a large corner shop in the Exchange while the haberdasher, George Blennerhasset provided his customers with

⁹⁹ Hatfield House, Cecil MSS, Estate Papers, Box R5, Leases of 1633; Westminster Archives 10/356, Parish Rate books 1632; Hatfield House, Cecil MSS, Accounts 35/2 1638.

a breadth of luxury goods including stockings at his two shops known as the George and the Black Beak.¹⁰⁰ By the 1630s, however, most of the shops housed trades associated with cloth and clothing.¹⁰¹

Designed by Inigo Jones (15 July 1573 – 21 June 1652), the New Exchange was a magnificent building. It had two stories with rows of approximately 100 shops which were divided into two long galleries on each floor known as the ‘Outer Walk’ and ‘Inner Walk’ both below and above the stairs. The façade of the building was stone and Gothic in style.¹⁰² This New Exchange provided a showcase for the best of domestic craftsmanship and foreign trade in early modern England. Its design, location, and offering of goods, however, was also meant to compete with the Royal Exchange located in the heart of London and built by Sir Thomas Gresham (1519 – 21 November 1579) at the end of the sixteenth century.¹⁰³ In contrast to this previous shopping space, Robert Cecil intended this New Exchange to be a symbol of aristocratic luxury rather than merchant prowess.

On that morning in April 1609, a grand crowd heralded the New Exchange’s opening. The presence of these individuals was meant to assert the noble connections to and elite associations with this new space. King James I (19 June 1566 – 27 March 1625) alongside his wife, Queen Anne of Denmark (12 December 1574 – 2 March 1619), the heir to the throne, Prince Henry (19 February 1594 – 6 November 1612) and other members of the royal family, including Prince Charles (19 November 1600 – 30 January 1649), who would become Charles I, and Princess Elizabeth (19 August 1596 – 13 February 1662) all appeared. Additionally, members of the

¹⁰⁰ Hatfield House, Cecil MSS, Estate Papers, Box R5; Hatfield House, Cecil MSS, Box H4, 163; see also Hatfield House, Estate Papers, Box F3, ‘Things bought for Lady Diana in the Bourse’.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*; *Calendar of State Papers Domestic: James I, 1603-1610*, 14/44/5, Orders for the Burse (1609), edited by Mary Anne Everett Green (London, 1857).

¹⁰² Lawrence Stone, ‘Inigo Jones and the New Exchange’, *Archeological Journal*, 114 (1957), pp. 106-121.

¹⁰³ Peck, *Consuming Splendor*, pp. 46-47.

court from upper nobility to foreign ambassadors, such as the Venetian ambassador, attended and witnessed the occasion.¹⁰⁴

It was more than a simple ribbon-cutting moment. Instead, those in attendance were treated to an elaborate entertainment arranged by the playwright, Ben Jonson (c. 11 June 1572 – c. 16 August 1637). Its text was rediscovered in the papers of Sir Edward Conway (1564-1631), a prolific collector of letters, speeches, poems, and libels as well as a regular correspondent with Robert Cecil, the Earl of Salisbury, who had commissioned both the entertainment and the construction of the New Exchange. This spectacle entitled *The Entertainment at Britain's Burse* or *The Key Keeper* included three characters—the Key Keeper, the Shop Boy, and the Master—who welcomed the visitors, described the space, and presented commodities from the New Exchange.¹⁰⁵ Receipts found in the Hatfield House archive, the Salisbury family home, recorded the costumes worn by the three actors for the occasion which included a doublet and breeches as well as ‘an old man’s beard, hair and nightcap’ topped by a ‘hat with a brooch’.¹⁰⁶ Further bills revealed the range of goods that the actors presented to the spectators, such as bracelets, scarves, fans, silk flowers, umbrellas, porcelain, knives, and sundials. These gifts embodied the luxurious, novel, and global goods available at the New Exchange.¹⁰⁷

Jonson’s spectacle made these varied items central to the narrative by presenting them to viewers at the beginning and referencing them throughout the welcome event. The text argued that these kinds of objects distinguished the New Exchange as a shopping space from other places like its predecessor the Royal Exchange and made England distinct from other nations

¹⁰⁴ Knowles ‘To raise a house of better frame’, pp. 181-198.

¹⁰⁵ Ben Jonson, *The Key Keeper. A Masque for the Opening of Britain's Burse April 19, 1609*, edited by James Knowles (Tunbridge Wells, England, 2002).

¹⁰⁶ Hatfield House, Cecil MSS, Bill 35/81; James Knowles, ‘Jonson's Entertainment at Britain's Burse’ in *Re-presenting Ben Jonson: Text, History, Performance*, edited by Martin Butler (New York, 1999), pp. 114-151, 133-34. This includes both an edited text and Knowles's commentary on it. See also James Knowles, ‘Cecil's Shopping Centre’, *Times Literary Supplement*, 7 February 1997, pp. 14-15. This announced Knowles’ discovery of the Entertainment among the State Papers Domestic in the Public Record Office.

¹⁰⁷ *The Entertainment at Britain's Burse* is cited from Knowles, *Re-Representing Ben Jonson*, lines 73-85; Hatfield House, Cecil MSS, Bill 35/7, and Accounts 160/I, fol. 51r.

because of its expansive trade and dominion. Jonson, therefore, used the welcome entertainment to celebrate England's expanding global networks and herald the acceptability of luxury consumption by displaying these items and their availability both real and imaginary.

The New Exchange showcased England in the early seventeenth century as a place where novelty and luxury were welcomed and valued. It was a place where fine and varied global and domestic goods were available and desired. It was also a place where aristocrats like the Salisbury household demonstrated their wealth and status through the purchasing, displaying, and wearing of these objects. This indicated that the value of these items—their materials, novelty or craftsmanship—was perceived and understood by many throughout early modern society. Thus, making these objects worth owning and showing off.

However, the New Exchange was equally characterised by what it was not. It was purposely intended to be separate and distinct from the Royal Exchange and represented a movement away from the London merchant interests embodied in that building. If the Royal Exchange was the economic building for the sixteenth century than the New Exchange was the same for the early seventeenth century.

Sixteenth Century England: Conservative or Innovative

Sixteenth and seventeenth England have often been characterised as distinct from one another, especially in terms of economic policy and discussions surrounding foreign goods, luxury, and novelty. The juxtaposition, for instance, between the Royal Exchange and the New Exchange, by both contemporaries and historians, provides a clear example of this phenomenon. Additionally, Paul Slack's scholarship about the emergence of a culture of 'improvement' and 'material betterment' made no apologies for its 'Whiggish story of progress' in which seventeenth-century England was presented as cultivating and valuing an economic, social, and

intellectual culture that embraced material luxury and importing as well as exporting.¹⁰⁸ This culture distinguished Englishmen and Englishwomen from their European compatriots well into the eighteenth century.¹⁰⁹ Scholars like Malcolm Smuts, Linda Levy Peck, and Alison Scott have also investigated the de-moralisation of luxury and its ramifications for seventeenth-century English society.¹¹⁰ Although their works did not necessarily juxtapose the sixteenth-century with the seventeenth, this historiographical strand still implied that seventeenth century views and values differed from their predecessors and were part of a change and evolution towards a more positive view of these topics.

However, not all historiography has viewed or presented the sixteenth century as devoid of excitement and interest in innovation and luxury. The work of Deborah Harkness and Joan Thirsk, for instance, has shown a culture ripe with experimentation and the development of economic ‘projects’ intended to promote and develop domestic industries in both luxurious and utilitarian commodities.¹¹¹ These could be agricultural, such as the cultivation of silk worms, the growing of hemp, and the expansion of the woad crop, or more industrial, such as the expansion of stocking knitting, button making, linen weaving, and the distillation of *aqua vita*.¹¹² Although Harkness investigated these changes almost exclusively in a London focused context, Thirsk’s work importantly situated these changes within both urban and rural sectors of early modern society. Additionally, scholarship by Stephen Alford demonstrated how sixteenth-century England, specifically London, was an upcoming centre for global goods and

¹⁰⁸ Paul Slack, *The Invention of Improvement: Information and Material Progress in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford, 2015), p. 263.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 264.

¹¹⁰ Malcolm Smuts, ‘Cultural diversity and cultural change at the court of James I’ in *The Mental World of the Jacobean Court*, edited by Linda Levy Peck (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 99-112; Scott, *Literature and the idea of Luxury*; Peck, *Consuming Splendor*; Margreta de Grazia, ‘The Ideology of Superfluous Things: King Lear as a Period Piece’ in *Subject and Object in Renaissance Culture*, edited by Margreta de Grazia, Maureen Quilligan, and Peter Stallybrass (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 17-42, 33.

¹¹¹ Joan Thirsk, *Economic Policy and Projects: The Development of a Consumer Society in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 1988); Deborah E. Harkness, *The Jewel House: Elizabethan London and the Scientific Revolution* (New Haven, 2007); Malcolm Thick, *Sir Hugh Plat: The Search for Useful Knowledge in Early Modern London* (Blackawton, Devon, 2010).

¹¹² Thirsk, *Economic Policy and Projects*, pp. 6-7.

expansion as well as a site of expanding mercantile interests. However, this had significant implications even beyond the isle as England acquired new territories and more stable worldwide trade networks.¹¹³

These narratives triumphantly portrayed England's economic choices and culture in the sixteenth century. They not only explored innovation, variation, and novelty, but also presented them as deeply valued within early modern English society. Collectively, these works did not present a conservative or backward century then saved by the next. Instead, they portrayed sixteenth-century England as a place where the ideas and policies of the seventeenth century were birthed and began to form. The seventeenth century could not happen without the sixteenth.

Yet, although these two historiographical trends provided important insight into the economic concerns and values of English society in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, they both typically presented their narratives as either one of linearity or complete rejection which culminated in the Scientific Revolution, the Industrial Revolution, the British Empire or a new world of goods.¹¹⁴ Historians have largely ignored the potential for any tensions or dissonance within these two characterisations. This chapter, therefore, questions both these strands of historiography. It considers if either characterisation is wholly accurate or if scholars would benefit more from further investigation into the complexities or juxtapositions which existed in English society and economic decision making from the middle of the sixteenth to the beginning of the seventeenth centuries in order to ascertain what was really valued and why.

In order to ask these questions, this chapter considers together the political realm of economic policy-making and government regulation, specifically those related to cloth and clothing—its

¹¹³ Stephen Alford, *London's Triumph: Merchant Adventurers and the Tudor City* (London, 2017).

¹¹⁴ John Brewer and Roy Porter, eds., *Consumption and the World of Goods* (London and New York, 1993); for this terminology see in particular John Brewer and Roy Porter, 'Introduction' in *Consumption and the World of Goods*, pp. 1-15, 6.

materials, production, and transport. This joint focus in both theory and practice also distinguishes this chapter from many previous historiographical investigations which frame their discussions around intellectual, artisanal or economic culture almost exclusively. Not only do cloth and clothing, therefore, provide this chapter with a focus, but it is also a focus centred on what was, arguably, the single most significant commodity in discussions about luxury, expenditure, importing, exporting, and novelty in early modern England. In fact, scholars often identify clothing as the single most important category for understanding the growth of early modern consumer culture and what it valued in the early modern world.¹¹⁵ Its social and economic importance, for example, was reflected in its prominence within the shops at the New Exchange as well as within Jonson's narrative which drew specific attention to items of dress, including accessories like scarves and fans, jewellery like bracelets, and forms of ornamentation like silk flowers.

Additionally, this chapter is focused on one individual's political engagement with cloth and clothing during the sixteenth century in England. William Cecil, Lord Burghley, may initially appear to be a peculiar choice for a chapter on these themes. Historians are almost unanimous in dismissing William Cecil's interest in dress as conservative describing him as simply as 'a bureaucrat dressed in somber black'.¹¹⁶ His black clothes demonstrated his wealth and power but this 'was a discreet kind of power.'¹¹⁷

¹¹⁵ Giorgio Riello, *A Foot in the Past: Consumers, Producers and Footwear in the Long Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, 2006), p. 9; Neil McKendrick, John Brewer, and John Harold Plumb, *The Birth of a Consumer Society: The Commercialization of Eighteenth Century England* (London, 1982).

¹¹⁶ Alford, *Burghley*, p. xi.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 122.



Figure 2. William Cecil, 1st Baron Burghley, Unknown Anglo-Netherlandish artist, oil on panel, 1560s, 37 1/2 in. x 28 1/4 in. (953 mm x 718 mm), NPG 2184, © National Portrait Gallery, London

In this portrait attributed to Arnold van Bronckhorst (Bronckhorst) or his Anglo-Netherlandish school, this characterisation was memorialised. William Cecil wore a flat black cap over a black skullcap, small white neck and wrist ruffs edged with black stitching, a black doublet slashed with black and gold buttons, a high collared black coat, black silks sleeves, and a black and

gold sword.¹¹⁸ He was properly clothed as a Royal Secretary with his wand of office but, on the surface, his dress did not appear particularly noteworthy or innovative. In fact, some historians like Norman Jones have argued that William Cecil's personal dress and appearance are further proof of his overall conservative attitude toward cloth and clothing.¹¹⁹



Figure 3. Robert Cecil, 1st Earl of Salisbury, by Unknown artist, after John De Critz the Elder, oil on panel, 1602, 35 1/2 in. x 28 7/8 in. (902 mm x 734 mm), NPG 107, © National Portrait Gallery, London

Yet, it was William's son, Robert Cecil, who commissioned the New Exchange and its welcome spectacle. Robert was the visionary, patron, and financial backer for that early seventeenth-

¹¹⁸ Strong, *Tudor and Jacobean Portraits*, p. 28; Alford, *Burghley*, p. 122.

¹¹⁹ Norman Jones, *Governing by Virtue: Lord Burghley and the Management of Elizabethan England* (Oxford, 2015), pp. 179-180.

century undertaking. It was a natural extension to his widespread interest in novelty and his support of innovation regarding both cloth and clothing. He held the customs for silk and New Draperies, for example, and decorated his home, Hatfield House, extravagantly with luxurious furnishings.¹²⁰ He also dressed in fine clothing, although the above portrait might suggest otherwise, in a multitude of colours often donning quite fashionable attire as did his children who frequented the best shops in London.¹²¹

Historians regularly treat William and Robert Cecil as embodiments of the political and economic policies and attitudes of the Elizabethan and early Jacobean periods.¹²² This is largely because of their central roles in the government. For example, William Cecil was the Secretary of State during Elizabeth's reign from 1558 to 1572. He was also the Secretary of State from 1550 to 1553 in the middle of the sixteenth century during the Edwardian period. However, William was not just the Secretary of State for Elizabeth's government but also the Lord High Treasurer in charge of managing royal expenditure from 1572 until his death in 1598. Additionally, Robert had central roles in both the late Elizabethan and the early Jacobean governments. He was Secretary of State from 1596 to 1612 and held the position of Lord High Treasurer for James I from 1608 to 1612.

Thus, some scholars would not only juxtapose Robert with William, the progressive son versus the conservative father, but also use them as a lens through which to understand and portray the attitudes and values of the Elizabethan and early Jacobean period toward innovation and novelty.¹²³ James I's participation in the opening of Robert's New Exchange and the inclusion of the royal arms on the building seemed to highlight how the seventeenth century sanctioned, valued, and celebrated luxury, variation, and imports.¹²⁴ It was a place that welcomed and

¹²⁰ Peck, *Consuming Splendor*, pp. 42-43.

¹²¹ Lawrence Stone, *Family and Fortune: Studies in Aristocratic Finance in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Oxford, 1973), pp. 3-15; Hatfield House, Cecil MSS, Legal 38/11.

¹²² Croft, 'Introduction', p. ix.

¹²³ Stone, *Family and Fortune*, pp. 3-15; Hatfield Cecil MSS, Legal 38/11.

¹²⁴ Hatfield House, Cecil MSS, Bills 40-44, 1609.

embraced the new and novel. It heralded England's triumphant departure from an older political and economic philosophy which viewed imports and extravagance as dangerous for individuals and the commonwealth.¹²⁵ Thus, the New Exchange and Robert's backing of it, represented a starting point through which contemporaries and historians could understand Jacobean economic policies and attitudes versus their Elizabethan predecessors.

In contrast, William's role in Elizabethan sumptuary legislation demonstrated the government's conservatism and antagonism toward the new and novel. Scholars like Clive Holmes and Felicity Heal, through their discussion of sumptuary legislation, assert that '[t]here is little doubt that Cecil was the driving force behind the sustained attempts to enforce Henrician and Marian legislation on apparel'.¹²⁶ His work, for example, on the 1574 apparel proclamation and his oversight of display at the University of Cambridge present him as an 'obsessively conservative convener for order' with 'a view of social structure that matches the most traditional sentiments of his Edwardian processors' about decay of the commonweal and the deceitful qualities of luxury.¹²⁷ This was a world in which the good of the country and the individual was firmly based in the production of domestic goods of fine, but not luxurious, quality. These were a different set of values quite distinct from what came afterwards and quite concerned with the novelty and luxury of dress.

However, this chapter challenges these conclusions and the stark juxtaposition between William and Robert Cecil created by these assumptions and precipitated by many scholars drawing their characterisations from a single type of source like sumptuary legislation. Instead of using the New Exchange and Robert's involvement with it as a starting point for Jacobean luxury, its investigation goes backwards and probes whether the New Exchange could represent

¹²⁵ For more on the intellectual foundation of economic policies interested in the conception of the good of the commonwealth see Thirsk, *Economic Policy and Projects*, pp. 33-43; Heal and Holmes, 'The Economic Patronage of William Cecil', pp. 208, 220.

¹²⁶ Heal and Holmes, 'The Economic Patronage of William Cecil', p. 219.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 219; British Library, Lansdowne 18/42; Hooper, 'The Tudor Sumptuary Laws', pp. 437, 446.

the rising value of innovation, novelty, and variation in luxury and consumption during the Elizabethan period and epitomised by the economic policies of William Cecil himself. Was William Cecil the cornerstone of conservatism or the driver of innovation within the Elizabethan government as suggested by historians like Joan Thirsk and Deborah Harkness?¹²⁸ As noted by Holmes and Heal, William's actions, 'even his most conservative actions', were 'designed to provide greater health and vigor to the body politic'.¹²⁹ This desire had the potential to shift William's view and engagement with the new and novel. This chapter, therefore, seeks to better understand whether the New Exchange was really a sharp juncture or a natural development from the past.

William Cecil: The Conservative

William Cecil, in certain contexts, reinforces the historiographical presentation of him as a conservative force in the Elizabethan government. He was active, for example, in the construction and promotion of sumptuary legislation and proclamations as well as other forms of dress regulation. These contexts highlight the existence of more traditional views toward cloth and clothing and the perception that the government must regulate it in early modern England. This was done to preserve social distinctions and the good of the commonwealth.

William Cecil's engagement with the regulation of dress is found in his own records as well as in more official government sources. His diary, for instance, included specific notation when conciliar initiatives about cloth and clothing were discussed. These appeared alongside other topics more readily associated by historians with high politics, such as military policies, questions about the succession, and religious policies.¹³⁰ This indicated, therefore, that William

¹²⁸ Thirsk, *Economic Policy and Projects*, p. 33; Harkness, *The Jewel House*, pp. 142-164; Heal and Holmes, 'The Economic Patronage of William Cecil', pp. 199-229. These sources discuss the significance of William Cecil and his actions regarding economic policy or scientific achievement, this chapter instead focuses on the political values of innovation, novelty, and luxury.

¹²⁹ Heal and Holmes, 'The Economic Patronage of William Cecil', p. 223.

¹³⁰ William Mundin, ed., *A Collection of State Papers Relating to Affairs in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth* (London, 1759), p. 749.

Cecil placed great importance on matters of cloth and clothing. He was alert to political decisions made about them and the implications of these matters. This is underscored by the inclusion as well as placement of these topics alongside more 'serious' governmental discussions in William's personal records. He did not include other sorts of matters, which might be equally perceived as having less political importance like household expenditure or food provisions, in these sources.

William further highlighted how significant he viewed cloth and clothing through advancing specific regulations about it. He gave these statutes great prominence, for example, at the beginning of Elizabeth's reign in 1559, despite all the other decisions he had to consult on, such as foreign and domestic policy and religion, during this period. He ensured that the new Elizabethan government reissued previous English sumptuary legislation through proclamation in the kingdom.¹³¹ A proclamation from 21 October 1559 charged both official authorities and general men with ensuring that the sumptuary laws were upheld, particularly those defined in the acts of 1553 and 1554, restricting the wearing of silk trimmings as well as velvet and silk cloth. These apparel acts from the reign of Mary I and Philip, for example, prohibited the wearing of any silk

worn in or upon hats, bonnets, nightcaps, girdles, hose, shoes, scabbards, or spur leathers by persons beneath the rank of son and heir-apparent of a knight, or possessing less than the income above stated, under a penalty of three months' imprisonment and a fine of £10 a day for each day's infringement of the act.¹³²

Additionally, this legislation punished masters whose servants failed to dress legally with a £100 fine to the master rather than the servant. This incentivised masters to follow and enforce these rules within their larger communities.

¹³¹ Paul L. Hughes and James Francis Larkin, eds., *Tudor Royal Proclamations*, 3 Vols. (New Haven, 1964-69), Vol. 2, pp. 136-37; *State Papers Domestic Elizabeth 12/7/13&14*; Hooper, 'The Tudor Sumptuary Laws', pp. 437-38.

¹³² John Raithby, ed., *The Statutes of the Realm*, Vol. IV, Part I (London, 1963), p. 239.

William was also instrumental in drafting and passing several other proclamations in 1562 and 1574 that concerned the regulation of dress. These pieces of legislation included detailed annotations made by William and previous iterations of these statutes in his political papers. Clive Holmes and Felicity Heal, for example, discuss how William redrafted the 1574 proclamation inserting more conservative language with traditional arguments into his word choice.¹³³ William argued, for instance, that the youth were ‘seeking by show of apparel to be esteemed for gentlemen’ harming the commonwealth.¹³⁴ His notations justified these proclamations through traditional arguments about the inherent vice of luxury and how its consumption undermined a proper social order.

William’s arguments reiterated how early modern societies must value traditional domestic industries and non-luxurious materials like wool over foreign manufacture and novel fashions. Excess and frivolity, especially amongst young men in London, would propel the commonwealth into decline as they skirted their political and societal duties and obligations in favour of fashionable dress constructed from imported silks, satins, and velvets with abundant ornamentation and multiple accessories.¹³⁵

Yet, William Cecil did not just promote the regulation of clothing through sumptuary legislation and direct dress proclamations. He also found other creative ways to incorporate these conservative values into social policies and interlink them with other political issues. He believed dress was a powerful tool which could be used in a variety of ways. A 7 May 1562 proclamation, focused on providing the military with horses for its Irish campaign, for example,

¹³³ Heal and Holmes, ‘The Economic Patronage of William Cecil’, p. 219.

¹³⁴ British Library, Lansdowne 18/42.

¹³⁵ Heal and Holmes, ‘The Economic Patronage of William Cecil’; British Library, Lansdowne 18/42; Hooper, ‘The Tudor Sumptuary Laws’, pp. 437, 446; John Hawarde, *Les Reportes del Cases in Camera Stellata 1593 to 1609*, edited by William P. Baildon (London, 1894), pp. 19, 21, 56-57.

used apparel and its regulation to the benefit of the Crown and its resources. It declared the ‘monstrous abuse of apparel’ as well as the ‘disfurniture’ of horses for military service.¹³⁶

William cleverly mandated that any wife who wore certain fashionable and foreign fabrics or styles had to have her husband provide the military with a horse. He redrafted an abstract for this statute adding emphatic language, such as when he desired to ‘induce’ the following of the statutes on apparel. His draft also provided some guidance for how the government could enact this legislation by following the latest subsidy lists about who was entitled to wear particular types of clothing or kinds of fabric.¹³⁷ In this proclamation, William argued that a wife or woman wearing certain articles of clothing must have a husband, father, brother, or guardian of great wealth and social position. This great wealth and social position meant that this man would already own a horse or have the money to purchase one. Thus, this man could easily provide a horse to the Crown if his wife or any female under his care wore fine garments.

According to Elizabethan sumptuary legislation, however, not every woman who wore these fine fashions was supposed to because they did not have the correct social status or wealth. Yet, the owning of a horse typically signalled the elevated position or finances of an individual making it a good indicator for sumptuary legislation regulating dress. Thus, William thought that this proclamation, then, could nicely solve two issues. It would incentivise men and women to wear correct attire lest they be caught wearing something above their station and be required to supply the Crown with a horse. However, if a woman was caught wearing something unlawful, her male guardian would be mandated to provide a horse which helped the Crown grow its supplies. Seven women in Cornwall, therefore, could continue wearing silk garments because their guardians each owned a horse while a poor Portsmouth woman got her husband

¹³⁶ The National Archives, State Papers 52/4, fol. 29. The abstract of these statutes is in The National Archives, State Papers 12/23 fol. 20; See also Jones, *Governing by Virtue*, pp. 179-180.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*

into trouble because she wore velvet on her kirtle, despite the fact that he did not own or could not provide the necessary horse.¹³⁸

This legislation promoted the personal regulating of cloth and clothing for the benefit of the government and its military campaigns. It strongly incentivised individuals to correctly follow sumptuary regulations and encouraged most Englishmen and women to not appear in foreign, novel, or innovative designs. It indirectly enforced statutes of apparel in the Elizabethan government while also providing the military with the horses they so desperately needed at no cost to the Crown. Although the proclamation originally stated that it would be enacted through local reports every six months, it was only carried out once. Thus, it represented a failed attempt by William to creatively help facilitate the good of the commonwealth.¹³⁹

However, William Cecil was not the only individual interested in the regulation of dress or the promotion of domestic industries over foreign consumption during the Elizabethan period. His interest and promotion of sumptuary legislation was just one example of this phenomenon. These arguments formed part of a larger early modern English dialogue and rhetoric about cloth, clothing, extravagance, fashion, and change.

Many of the men and women who petitioned William Cecil, for instance, provide additional insight into the existence and value of these arguments. Their petitions almost always included discussions about these topics, although it is impossible to entirely know whether this rhetoric was used because it represented their true concerns or whether they maximised the words that they believed would make William Cecil more sympathetic to their plight and willing to act. Yet, a 1591 petition from the Handicraftsmen of the Mystery of the Skinners of London to William Cecil included this rhetorical technique. It represented just one of approximately fifty similar examples found in the Hatfield House archives in which craftsmen and women pleaded

¹³⁸ The National Archives, State Papers 52/4, fol. 29. The abstract of these statutes is in The National Archives, State Papers 12/23 fol. 20; See also Jones, *Governing by Virtue*, pp. 179-180.

¹³⁹ Jones, *Governing by Virtue*, p. 180.

for the preservation and continued value of their domestic trade. This petition specifically noted how the decline in the consumption of English furs and skins for dress came about because the ‘usual wearing of furs...is utterly neglected by the too ordinary lavish and unnecessary use of velvets and silks, drinking up the wealth of this realm.’¹⁴⁰ It linked the increased desire for and use of expensive and foreign fabrics, such as velvet and silk, to the decline of domestic industries like furs and wool. This decline, then, was ideologically linked through rhetoric to the undermining of traditional Englishness and its values. This was detrimental to the commonwealth—its social foundations as well as its finances. It was more than a simply economic matter but one of political, social, and moral significance.

In a later letter entitled, ‘Answer to the Clothiers of Taunton’, William Cecil presented himself as a champion for this kind of English-made consumption. He valued traditional industries and promoted them. In this way, his rhetoric was quite like that presented in the 1591 petition from the Handicraftsmen of the Mystery of the Skinners of London. This ‘Answer’ affirmed the historical processes of cloth making and chastised those Taunton clothiers who created cloth ‘so slenderly and deceitfully’ that it undermined the traditional English cloth manufacture.¹⁴¹ William asserted that this form of deception would not be tolerated by the Elizabethan government and the offending clothiers would be prosecuted. Regulation, therefore, was necessary for the production of cloth as well as the wearing of clothing even if this sacrificed innovation and variation.

A 1601 petition from the inhabitants of the towns of Salop and Oswestry highlighted how strict regulation made English cloth manufacture inherently conservative by discouraging novelty and variation. The inhabitants who wrote this petition traded Welsh cottons and friezes. They

¹⁴⁰ ‘The Handicraftsmen of the Mystery of Skinner of London to the Queen’ (167.30) in *Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Most Hon. The Marquis of Salisbury Preserved at Hatfield House, Hertfordshire*, Part IV (London, 1892), pp. 91-92.

¹⁴¹ ‘Answer to the Clothiers of Taunton’ (99. 23) in *Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Most Hon. The Marquis of Salisbury Preserved at Hatfield House, Hertfordshire*, Vol. XIV (London, 1933), p. 74.

were involved in its production and its circulation. However, their petition outlined how the government's requirement that their cloth have the same length and breadth made their work almost impossible because the yarn and wool used in the construction of Welsh cottons and friezes was combined from several markets both domestic and foreign. They needed to follow this manufacturing process of combining materials because they were poor craftspeople sourcing textiles from wherever they could manage. Additionally, this process allowed them to produce and sell different qualities and types of cloth. This variation benefited individuals across English society by making cloth more readily available to the poor as well as the rich. Yet, in order to ensure a similar breadth and width of cloth, the inhabitants of the towns of Salop and Oswestry asserted that they now had to spend countless hours labouring unnecessarily. This meant that their weekly production had been greatly reduced from 80 to 100 cloths before the regulation to just 10 after it.¹⁴² Not only did this hurt these inhabitants personally, but it also hindered the growth and development of the domestic cloth industry. This must be to the detriment of the commonwealth as well as its finances.

Interestingly, then, this petition showed how the promotion of domestic industries did not necessarily help all English production and might even have benefitted foreign importers rather than the English economy. Elizabethan cloth regulation, initially encouraged by William Cecil, greatly pleased the merchant communities at home and abroad. It brought about the desired uniformity rather than diversity of materials in terms of quality and price, which was sought by consumers and some craftsmen and women like the inhabitants of Salop and Oswestry.

William Cecil: The Progressive

While William Cecil's involvement in sumptuary legislation and the promotion of domestic industries presents him as a conservative individual, the following section introduces another

¹⁴² 'Inhabitants of the towns of Salop and Oswestry, traders in Welsh cottons and friezes, to Sir Robert Cecil' in *Calendar of the Cecil Manuscripts Preserved at Hatfield House, Hertfordshire*, Part XI (London, 1883), p. 584.

side of the man and his relationship to cloth and clothing. In doing so, it shows how William may not have been entirely traditional nor progressive. He was simply a person in an early modern world with sometimes dissonant values and perspectives about luxury, novelty, and innovation. Thus, he reminds us about the complexities and nuances in both the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. The New Exchange was neither a linear progression nor a sharp departure from the past. Instead, the truth is more complicated both in terms of what William valued and supported as well as what this indicates about the Elizabethan government, its policies, and its connection to the early Jacobean period.

Dyes: Woad and Cochineal

Despite William Cecil's active enforcement and advancement of dress regulation, he also simultaneously promoted and facilitated innovation and variation in the English cloth industry and other clothing contexts. This was perhaps most prominently shown through his engagement with woad and cochineal which were needed to produce early modern dyes. Woad made blue dye while cochineal made red dye. However, both dyes came in a variety of different qualities with distinct depths of colour. Cochineal, for instance, was produced through red insects from Europe or the New World. These were either cochineal beetles ground up or pieces of wood where the beetle had laid their eggs.¹⁴³ The higher quality cochineal from Europe was known as small crimson or Polish cochineal and the lower quality was known as large crimson made from 'bigger Armenian cochineal insects.'¹⁴⁴ The New World also later introduced a very vibrant cochineal dye produced from 'the bodies of insects that feed on nopal cactus...' to the

¹⁴³ Lisa Jardine, *Worldly Goods* (London, 1996), p. 31.

¹⁴⁴ Dominique Cardon, *Natural Dyes: Sources, Tradition, Technology and Science* (London, 2007), pp. 637-652; Lisa Monnas, *Renaissance Velvets* (London, 2012), p. 23.

European market during the sixteenth century.¹⁴⁵ Woad, meanwhile, came in several distinct variations including royal blue, light blue, and something in-between.¹⁴⁶



Figure 4. Pile-on-pile silk velvet, Milan (made), 1490-1525 (made), Museum number: 593-1884, © The Victoria and Albert Museum

This velvet has a pattern that can be identified as the *sempervivum tectorum*, a perennial plant that thrives in barren and mountainous places, Dyes (analysis by Maarten van Bommel, 2009): Main warp: red woods and weld, Pile warp: Polish cochineal, after treatment with tannins, Ground weft: red woods and weld

¹⁴⁵ Andrea Feeser, Maureen Daly Goggin, and Beth Fowkes Tobin, 'Introduction: The Value of Color' in *The Materiality of Color: The Production, Circulation, and Application of Dyes and Pigments, 1400-1800*, edited by Andrea Feeser, Maureen Daly Goggin, and Beth Fowkes Tobin (Farnham, Surrey, 2012), pp. 1-10, 2.

¹⁴⁶ Margaret Spufford and Susan Mee, *The Clothing of the Common Sort, 1570-1700* (Oxford, 2017), p. 45; British Library Lansdowne 114, f. 9; Stuart Peachey, ed., *Textiles and Materials of the Common Man and Woman, 1580-1660* (Bristol, 2001), pp. 21-2, 33.



Figure 5. Towel, Italy (probably, made), 15th century to 16th century (made), Woven linen and cotton dyed blue using either woad or indigo, Credit Line: Given by W.B. Chamberlin Esq. through Art Fund, Museum number: T.13-1916, © The Victoria and Albert Museum

The blue and red colours from these dyes had complicated associations in early modern English society. Sumptuary legislation, for example, had specifically restricted the use of blue, crimson, and scarlet dyes on certain kinds of fabric like silk since the Henrician period (1509 — 1547).¹⁴⁷ However, the different qualities and depths of colour as well as levels of durability and colour fastness meant that they were used to dye clothing for both the rich and the poor. While blue wool carried strong associations with lower social status, crimson and royal blue were linked with some of the most luxurious apparel and cost substantial sums.¹⁴⁸ These finer dyes could only be produced by the most skilled dyers. Woad and cochineal, therefore, were viewed as excellent dyes in early modern England and were greatly valued. They had outstanding reputations for beauty, versatility, and strength against the elements making them prized commodities.¹⁴⁹ Queen Elizabeth, for example, gifted the Earl of Essex over 7,000 pounds of cochineal as a gift in 1597 because of its material value and associations with novelty and

¹⁴⁷ Hayward, *Rich Apparel*, p. 96.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 97.

¹⁴⁹ Jane Schneider, 'Peacocks and Penguins: The Political Economy of European Cloth and Colors', *American Ethnologist*, Vol. 5, No. 3, Political Economy (Aug., 1978), pp. 413-447, 420; Frick, *Dressing Renaissance Florence*, p. 170.

prestige.¹⁵⁰ She perhaps gained this large amount during the capture of Cadiz the previous year where the Earl had distinguished himself in combat and the English had plundered Spanish imports from the New World.

However, cochineal was also primarily a foreign import coming either from Venice or Amsterdam and then the New World and Asia as the sixteenth century progressed.¹⁵¹ In fact, the English government was so desperate for this foreign product that it endorsed pirate raids against Spanish ships returning from Latin America in order to gain access to the coveted New World cochineal.¹⁵² Thus, it might be assumed that William Cecil would oppose the advancement of these luxury goods and view them as a detriment to society and the commonwealth.

Yet, even before the Elizabethan period, William Cecil took an active interest in these dyes and the materials necessary for their production. Extant papers at Hatfield House, for instance, detailed William's fascination with the woad growing industry in England as well as its manufacture abroad. He even had woad experts attached to his household. A Frenchman, Henry Fretayne, provided William with information about domestic woad production. Yet, the relationship between these two men was deeper than just a correspondence. William's papers included the indenture and lease for Henry Fretayne as a foreign worker in England and show his associations with the Cecil household.¹⁵³

Over twenty years later, William continued to actively promote advancements in woad growing and dying in his own community. In 1568, he facilitated the settlement of a Dutch congregation

¹⁵⁰ Schneider, 'Peacocks and Penguins', p. 434; Roland Whyte to Sir Robert Sidney, 12 February 1598 in *Letters and Memorials of State... Written and Collected by Sir Henry Sydney... Sir Philip Sydney, and his Brother Sir Robert Sydney... Robert, the Second Earl of Leicester... Philip Lord Viscount Lisle*, edited by Arthur Collins, 2 vols (London, 1746), Vol. II, pp. 87, 88, 89, 90, quoted in Susan Doran, *Elizabeth I and Her Circle* (Oxford 2015), p. 285.

¹⁵¹ Jardine, *Worldly Goods*, p. 31.

¹⁵² Schneider, 'Peacocks and Penguins', p. 434.

¹⁵³ *Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Most Hon. The Marquis of Salisbury Preserved at Hatfield House, Hertfordshire*, Vol. XIII, Addenda (London, 1915), p. 10.

in his hometown of Stamford. Although William may have partially been inclined to help these foreigners escape religious persecution, he was also interested in the new knowledges they brought about materials and processes when they arrived in England. The leader of the Dutch congregation, Casper Vosbergh, was a skilled dyer. His possessions included woad itself as well as other materials essential for dyeing cloth.¹⁵⁴ It appeared, therefore, that William hoped that Vosbergh and other craftspeople in the congregation would help England further develop a domestic woad industry for cloth and clothing by teaching English craftspeople how to grow the materials and produce quality dyes for themselves.

William Cecil's hometown of Stamford developed a reputation for cloth innovation in Elizabethan England perhaps because of William's early efforts to promote woad production in 1568. Robert Payne acknowledged this reputation in his correspondence with William on the 30th of April 1580. In this letter, Payne urged William to continue his legacy of valuing innovation and ingenuity in cloth manufacture by providing the financial backing and authority for Payne's project. Payne assured William that with just 'two skilful persons to instruct the rest', the tenants of Stamford could be taught 'to convert the most part of their wool into yarn' and be further instructed in spinning. This would make Stamford a 'space that clothiers would sue to your Honour to set up there' because of the skills and workmanship there.¹⁵⁵ Payne seemed to have been persuasive. William later in the 1570s prompted the production of the New Draperies—fine, lighter cloth made from wool—which required expertise in the spinning of wool. This was part of his larger desire to minimise England's dependence on the Old Draperies which were typically 'fine white cloths' imported from Antwerp.

¹⁵⁴ *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic series, of the reigns of Elizabeth and James I*, Vol. XII, edited by Mary Anne Everett Green (London, 1872), 77, no. 65.

¹⁵⁵ 'Robert Payne to Lord Burghley' (161.143) in *Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Most Hon. The Marquis of Salisbury Preserved at Hatfield House, Hertfordshire*, Part II (London, 1888), p. 320.

Robert Cecil later continued his father's legacy regarding this issue. He enlisted a teacher at his local town, Hatfield, to teach the tenants there to make fustian—a thick, heavy cotton cloth combined with wool—in England.¹⁵⁶ Fine fustians were traditionally produced in Milan while coarse fustians were from Germany and Holland.¹⁵⁷ However, William's initial support for the new draperies followed by Robert's support for English fustian production helped promote a more varied domestic industry which manufactured quality textiles besides wool. This, therefore, enabled the country to be less dependent on foreign cloth imports while also allowing more people access to quality fabrics.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁶ *Calendar of State Papers Domestic: James I, 1603-1610*, edited by Mary Anne Everett Green (London, 1857), p. 478; Joan Thirsk, 'England's Provinces: Did They Serve or Drive Material London?' in *Material London, ca. 1600*, pp. 97-109.

¹⁵⁷ Alford, *London's Triumph*, p. 100; Thirsk, *Economic Policy and Projects*, pp. 30-31.

¹⁵⁸ *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic series, of the reigns of Elizabeth and James I*, Vol. XII, edited by Mary Anne Everett Green (London, 1872), 195, no. 132.



Figure 6. England (made), 1630-1640 (made), Fustian handsewn with linen thread, embroidered with silver thread and spangles, and edged with silver bobbin lace and spangles, Credit Line: Purchased with Art Fund support, Museum number: T.70-2004, Gallery location: British Galleries, Room 56, The Djanogly Gallery, case 9, © The Victoria and Albert Museum

On the surface, then, William Cecil's engagement with woad and the New Draperies might appear quite conservative with traditional motivations including the promotion of domestic industry, the elimination of imports, and the desire to provide jobs for the poor. It might also seem like a 'mixture of instinctive conservatism with an often grudging willingness to adjust to

the times', which the historian Paul Slack described as 'characteristic of policy-makers engaging in social and economic engineering for the benefit of the commonwealth in Elizabeth's reign.'¹⁵⁹

However, this portrayal ignores the realities of what William was doing in sixteenth-century England and the connotations of his involvement. When William began supporting these areas of cloth manufacture, they related to dyes and textiles often associated with novel and luxurious dress. They were valued because of their material quality which was demonstrated through the expertise, ingenuity, and innovation necessary for their production. Thus, when William provided financial backing or personnel for these endeavours, he was encouraging, advancing, and valuing novelty in England and its apparel. He was also enabling the proliferation of both new and foreign fashions with many different variations.

William was aware of these ramifications. This was not an example of blind support or a programme gone horribly wrong. Instead, William himself reaffirmed his desire for innovation in the manufacture of cloth and clothing in England. His language about the New Draperies, for example, showed his awareness of the novelty of his present actions and his specific rejection of the past which decried and limited progress. In a 1564 memorandum about the economy, recoinage, and the wool industry, William declared that the time was ripe to look forward rather than backward, to 'attempt...an alteration', rather 'than to make a reverse, without any fruit to be had or gathered of these troubles now passes'. In this quote, he showed an evolution in his political and economic perspective about the good of the commonwealth. He would no longer support the traditional single cloth export economy and the exclusive rights for its manufacture or circulation by companies like the Merchant Adventurers Company but

¹⁵⁹ Slack, *The Invention of Improvement*, p. 56.

instead embraced a larger and more varied economic system with many players and different imports and exports apart from wool.¹⁶⁰

Yet, William Cecil was not just a proponent of innovation and industry in terms of domestic production. A warrant from the 4th of February 1598 and the additional correspondence surrounding it showed William's desire to restrain the importation of cochineal and indigo into the port of London for two years.¹⁶¹ Extant letters from the English merchant, Surveyor of Customs, and member of the Merchants Adventures Company, Richard Carmarden (c.1536 – 1603), demonstrated that the warrant was granted and carried out as Carmarden delivered all the cochineal and indigo he found to London for safekeeping.¹⁶²

On the surface, these records seem to present William Cecil, the conservative, again. However, the correspondence about this warrant reveals a financial rather than moral matter. The import was halted temporarily because of the massive influx of indigo and cochineal after the Earl of Essex captured Spanish ships carrying these dyes. The warrant preserved these existing imports by housing any indigo and cochineal delivered to England during this period in the London Customs house and restored it to its owners after two years. It was not destroyed.¹⁶³ William Cecil as the Lord High Treasurer desired to preserve the Crown's profits. His actions in this matter were not making a statement which was anti-luxury or anti-novelty. Instead, he was protecting the price and trade of these expensive and foreign goods. This was something William's son, Robert Cecil, would also later do for cochineal and indigo in a similar correspondence with Richard Carmarthen.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶⁰ Quoted in Thirsk, *Economic Policy and Projects*, pp. 43-44.

¹⁶¹ 'Cochineal and Indigo' (49.22) in *Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Most Hon. The Marquis of Salisbury Preserved at Hatfield House, Hertfordshire*, Part VIII (London, 1899), p. 37.

¹⁶² 'Richard Carmarden to Lord Burghley' (49. 41) in *Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Most Hon. The Marquis of Salisbury Preserved at Hatfield House, Hertfordshire*, Part VIII (London, 1899), p. 54.

¹⁶³ 'Cochineal and Indigo', p. 37.

¹⁶⁴ 'Richard Carmarden to Sir Robert Cecil' (51.1) in *Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Most Hon. The Marquis of Salisbury Preserved at Hatfield House, Hertfordshire*, Part VII (London, 1899), p. 474.

The financial importance of dyes in the early modern world, therefore, is essential to understanding why William Cecil issued the warrant to Richard Carmarthen. William's correspondence indicated that he had no qualms about cochineal or indigo as a luxury or foreign commodity. He desired to promote its portrayal as a desirable and quality material by keeping the price elevated to benefit both Crown and merchant.

William was also known to champion the circulation and production of other dyes. In a letter from Guido Malepart on the 16th of November 1593, for instance, Malepart asked William to intervene on Malepart's behalf concerning his license for exporting green woad. It was unclear from this correspondence if the green woad referred to the plant in its original form (green) or a unique dye typically a blue colour. However, both were necessary for the dyeing of woollen cloth.¹⁶⁵ Malepart had his license for twelve months but plague fell upon his household making him unable to use the export license. Thus, he needed William's authority, within the government and the London Customs House, to have the license reissued. William prioritised this issue and sent it to the proper authorities with his personal endorsement. Malepart received a new license and William reaffirmed his commitment to helping advance luxury dyes and their circulation in early modern England through his actions.¹⁶⁶

William also acted as a protector of these dyes in the Elizabethan government, such as during the woad growing crisis of 1585. As this chapter discussed earlier, William encouraged and facilitated the growth of a domestic woad growing industry for the dying of cloth and clothing. However, by the early 1580s, economic changes made woad production increasingly less appealing and even controversial within certain subsections of Elizabethan society.

¹⁶⁵ Richard Hoyle, 'Woad in the 1580s: alternative agriculture in England and Ireland' in *People, Landscape and Alternative Agriculture: Essays for Joan Thirsk*, edited by R.W. Hoyle (Exeter: Agricultural History Review, supplement series 3, 2004), pp. 56-73; Thick, *Sir Hugh Plat*, pp. 268-270; Maria Hayward, 'Dressed in Blue: The Impact of Woad on English Clothing, c. 1350–c. 1670', *Costume*, Volume 49 Issue 2 (June 2015), pp. 168-185.

¹⁶⁶ 'Guido Malepart to Lord Burghley' in *Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Most Hon. The Marquis of Salisbury Preserved at Hatfield House, Hertfordshire*, Part IV (London, 1892), p. 416.

Woad was labour-intensive and required significant amounts of land for farming. It was also very lucrative. Thus, many farmers turned away from planting crops like corn and grain to instead plant woad. Domestic production flourished. However, this meant that the Crown lost important import revenues from foreign woad which it had once routinely collected. This hurt the Elizabethan government's finances. So, it turned against this internal growth and reconsidered advocating the use of imported woad, despite previous concerns about foreignness.¹⁶⁷

During the 1580s, William Cecil was the Lord Treasurer. This made him a central figure in the management of the Crown's revenue and expenditure. Thus, the loss of the revenue from importing woad mattered to him. William Cecil requested his personal agent, Alexander King, to learn more about the domestic production of woad as well as procure complaints and hear local concerns about the growth of its cultivation. Reports found in the British Library's Lansdowne manuscripts recorded King's discussions which he had with individuals both for and against the emergence of the domestic woad industry. These were then sent to William Cecil where he made detailed notes about the key issues. In time, the Elizabethan government sanctioned and licensed only certain farmers and landowners to grow woad. This legislation was partially led by William Cecil and resulted from the consideration of the local circumstances and opinions found within the reports that he had commissioned. Although newly regulated, this change preserved English woad industry while also providing the Crown with a form of excise which replaced the revenues lost in the customs on imported woad and protected more local interests.¹⁶⁸ These sources, therefore, highlight how William Cecil initially supported the advancement of woad in England, despite its associations with novelty and

¹⁶⁷ British Library, Lansdowne 22, nos. 30 and 31; Thirsk, *Economic Policy and Projects*, pp. 69-70, 76-77, 86-87; Thick, *Sir Hugh Plat*, pp. 268-269.

¹⁶⁸ Thirsk, *Economic Policy and Projects*, pp. 4, 19, 27-28, 30, 76-77, 86-87, 98; Cecil's thinking on woad growing can be studied in his notes, drafts and working papers in British Library, Lansdowne 45, f. 44, 46, 47, 49, 54, 58.

foreignness, because he considered it beneficial to the commonwealth. However, he continued to oversee and protect it, even when its initial economic benefit to the government was questioned, because he believed woad and its cultivation was of pivotal importance to the broader dyeing industry in the Elizabethan period.

Imported Cloth

William Cecil's active support for merchants importing cloth and clothing provides further evidence for his nuanced positions about luxury, novelty, and non-English goods. An undated letter from the Genoese merchant who lived in London, Benedict Spinola (1519/1520 – 1580), to William, for example, revealed a cooperative partnership between them. This partnership was focused on the procurement of foreign fabrics to England sometime between 1572 and 1580. In this letter, Spinola updated his partner about the commodities, specifically the 'buying of the Spanish wools' that they intended to procure. He detailed their price and the necessary transportation that the goods would require.

Spinola was one of the leading Elizabethan merchants importing vast quantities of woollen cloth and wines.¹⁶⁹ He also acted as an agent and financier of the English government achieving full denization in 1552.¹⁷⁰ A 1580 epitaph described him as 'A noble Merchaunt euey way,/ no straunger was his peere'.¹⁷¹ Spinola's work and position meant that he and William moved in similar urban and court circles making their business partnership quite understandable. It was also, no doubt, mutually beneficial. While William may have wanted to work with Spinola because of his social credibility as an English agent and financier as well as his access to trade

¹⁶⁹ I would like to thank Ana Howie for drawing my attention to this article; Domenico Lovascio, 'Merchants, usurers and harlots: Genoa in early modern English drama', *Renaissance Studies*, Vol. 32 No. 3 (2017), pp. 346-364.

¹⁷⁰ 'Benedict Spinola (1519/20–1580)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004; online edn, Jan. 2008): www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/52156 (accessed December 2019).

¹⁷¹ R. B., *An epitaph vpon the death of the worshipfull Maister Benedict Spinola merchaunt of Genoa, and free denizon of England, who dyed on Tuesday the. 12. of Iulie. 1580* (London, [1580]) ll. 30–2, 36.

networks, Spinola may have desired greater engagement with William's government connections and information.

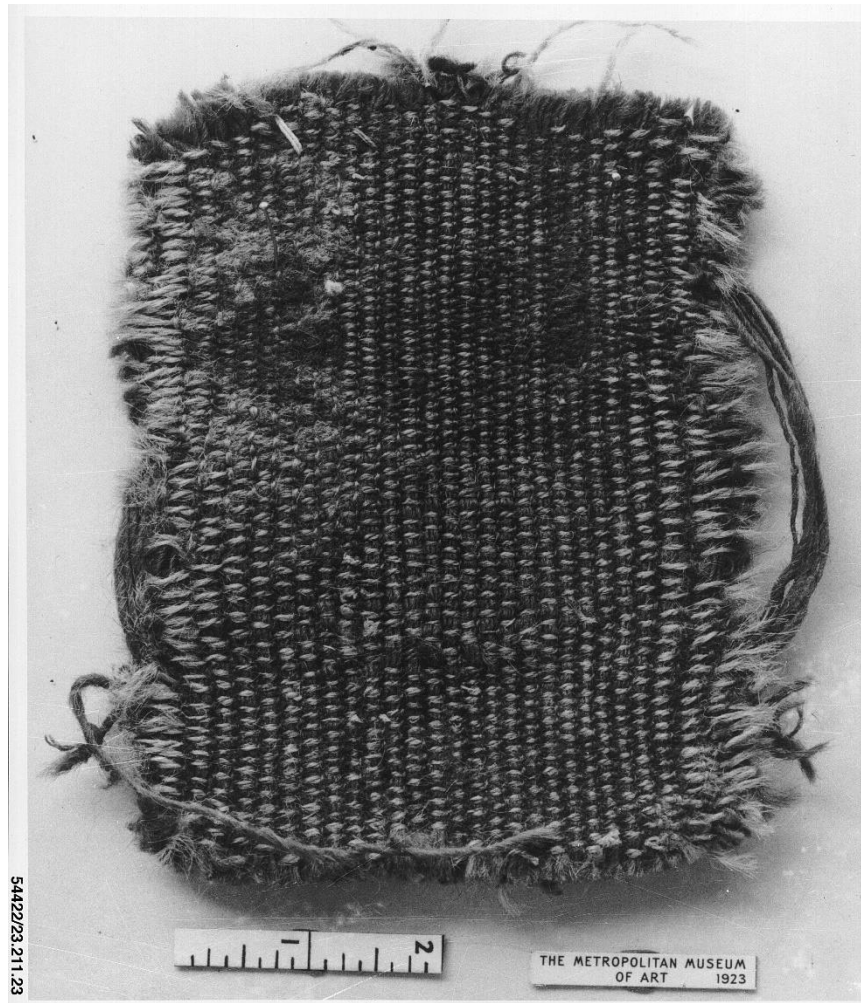


Figure 7. 16th century, Spanish, Wool (Spanish knot; each knot tied on alternate warp threads with six weft threads inserted after each row of knots.), 6 1/4 x 4 1/2 in. (15.9 x 11.4 cm), Credit Line: Gift of Bashford Dean, 1923, Accession Number: 23.211.23, © The Metropolitan Museum of Art

William Cecil's involvement in this partnership hardly presents him as a conservative figure. Although Englishness was often linked to woollen fabric, Spinola did not export English wool but imported Spanish wool.¹⁷² Spanish wool, therefore, was also a foreign textile. Fabrics from places like Spain, France, and Italy were viewed with great suspicion by certain traditionalists,

¹⁷² Currie, *Fashion and Masculinity in Renaissance Florence*, p. 63.

such as Philip Stubbes. In his *The Anatomie of Abuses* (1583), Stubbes asserted the need for foreign fabrics to stay out of England. He used both moral and economic reasons stating that since

we [the English] impoverish ourselves in buying their trifling merchandizes [from Spain, France, and Italy], more plesant than necessarie, and inrich them, who rather laugh at us in their sleeves, than otherwise, to see our great follie in affecting of trifles, & departing with good merchandizes for it.¹⁷³

Foreign fabrics made a mockery of the English. They impoverished them economically, while lining the pockets of those abroad. Although much of Stubbes' work presented a sort of caricature of society, his rationale in *The Anatomie of Abuses* still offered insight into wider concerns about luxury, foreign consumption, and importation within certain parts of Elizabethan England. Fabrics like the Spanish wool for some did carry connotations of decadence and were viewed as a threat to English virtues as well as domestic industry.¹⁷⁴ Additionally, some moralists believed that if an individual wore or used foreign material from non-Protestant countries, they might become demonic and Catholic.¹⁷⁵ Fashionistas were particularly denounced since fashionable foreign dress acted as a poignant external indication to these traditionalists that Englishmen and women had also become susceptible to 'the various immoral attributes of those continental countries'.¹⁷⁶

Yet, in the above correspondence, Spinola highlighted William Cecil's participation and encouragement of this very kind of import. This was also not an isolated incident. A 1591 letter from the English merchant, Richard Carmarthen, detailed William's support for the foreign importation of cloth having 'very lately passed your [William's] letters to the officers of Hull

¹⁷³ Philip Stubbes, *The Anatomie of Abuses contayning a discoverie, of briefe summarie, of such notable vices and imperfections, as now raigne in many Christian countreyes of the worlde, but (especiallie) in a verie famous Ilande called Ailgna: Together with most fearful Examples of Gods Judgements, executed upon the wicked for the same, aswell in Ailgna of late, as in other places elsewhere. Verie godly to be read of all true Christians everie where, but most needefull to be regarded in Englande* (London, 1583), C1r-v.

¹⁷⁴ Hentschell, *The Culture of Cloth in Early Modern England*, p. 106; Stubbes, *The Anatomie of Abuses*, C1r-v.

¹⁷⁵ Jones and Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing and the Materials of Memory*, p. 69.

¹⁷⁶ Hentschell 'A Question of Nation', p. 49.

to permit merchants in those parts to make their entries of all such sort of their northern cloths'.¹⁷⁷ These letters showed not only William's promotion of foreign merchants and their imported goods, but also his centrality to this endeavour as a facilitator who helped bring foreign cloth to England. William Cecil's role in the facilitation of foreign cloth and clothing was further detailed in Spinola's correspondence. Spinola reminded William that he needed his 'help in the matter' of importing Spanish wools. Spinola justified this help by reminding William that this trade was of 'the great advantage of the Queen and the merchants.'¹⁷⁸

However, this rhetoric was different from the rationale provided in the petition of the Handicraftsmen of the Mystery of the Skinners in 1591.¹⁷⁹ While the petition included more traditional justifications like the benefit to the poor and the protection of domestic industries, Spinola noted in this letter how foreign fabrics helped the merchant community as well as the Crown. Merchants, in this context, were presented as essential to the development and prosperity of the nation. Yet, the petition occurred after the Spinola correspondence. These two pieces of evidence, therefore, cannot be interpreted as an evolution from William Cecil's traditionalism to his progressivism. They are also not indicative of a shift from antagonism towards merchants and foreign goods in England to a sudden valuing of their role and place in society between the middle of the sixteenth and the early seventeenth centuries. Instead, they show the existence of both perspectives in the Elizabethan period as well as the nuances in the values placed on innovation, novelty, and luxury in cloth and clothing by William Cecil.

¹⁷⁷ 'Richard Carmarthen to the Lord High Treasurer' (19.80) in *Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Most Hon. The Marquis of Salisbury Preserved at Hatfield House, Hertfordshire*, Part IV (London, 1892), p. 102.

¹⁷⁸ 'Benedict Spinola to [? Lord Burghley]' (186.146) and (186.147) in *Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Most Hon. The Marquis of Salisbury Preserved at Hatfield House, Hertfordshire*. Vol. XIII. Addenda (London, 1915), pp. 188-189.

¹⁷⁹ 'The Handicraftsmen of the Mystery of Skinner of London to the Queen' (167.30); 'Benedict Spinola to [? Lord Burghley]' (186.146) and (186.147).

Conclusion

William Harrison in his 1577 *Description of England* expressed nostalgia for the Englishman who had

contented himself at home with his fine kersey hosen and a mean slop, his coat, gown and cloak of brown-blue or puke, with some pretty furniture of velvet or fur, and a doublet of sad tawney or black velvet or other comely silk, without such cuts and garish colours as are worn in these days and never brought in but by constant of the French, who think themselves the gayest men....¹⁸⁰

Harrison drew attention to two things—cloth and colour. His Englishman only wore kersey, basic velvets, and silks in black, puke, and brown blue. These fabrics and dyes were primarily produced in England and hardly excessive or ostentatious. These dress choices, therefore, were what a proper Englishman or woman should wear and value.

Harrison's 1577 *Description* epitomises many of the arguments found in more traditional and conservative arguments about the value of cloth and clothing in Elizabethan England. However, this chapter has shown that William Cecil did not subscribe entirely to this rhetoric or ideology. Although he supported sumptuary legislation and other forms of cloth regulation, he also simultaneously advanced the English dye industry and participated in the importation of foreign fabrics. In these endeavours, William showed a mixture of values including innovation, novelty, and variation in addition to regulation and the maintenance of the social order. These were typically aligned with what he perceived to be best for the commonwealth.¹⁸¹ However, this was not always the case as when he continued to advance woad production.

William Cecil was only one individual. Yet, his central role in the Elizabethan government made his ideas and policies important and influential in the government and society. His engagement with cloth and clothing, therefore, helps to reveal the complexities implicit in

¹⁸⁰ William Harrison, *The Description of England*, edited by Georges Edelen (London, 1587), p. 148.

¹⁸¹ Slack, *The Invention of Improvement*, p. 57.

understanding the value of luxury, novelty, innovation, and foreignness in Elizabethan England. They offer some insight into the ideological tensions and nuances which existed and influenced economic and social policies from the middle of the sixteenth to the beginning of the seventeenth centuries.

In addition, these examples point toward a more nuanced historiographical understanding of the values which gave rise to the New Exchange in the Jacobean period. In fact, they discourage presenting a sharp disjuncture between the middle of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Instead, they present a vision of early modern England as a place of varied and, at times, dissonant values. It was a context where regulation, freedom, ingenuity, and tradition might all simultaneously coexist, and all be important factors in an evaluation of the policies and choices that individuals and governments made about cloth and clothing. It was a time of both excitement and caution.

At the beginning of this chapter, the New Exchange was presented as a place where early modern England triumphed over previous traditional and conservative values about consumption and economic policy. This Jacobean England was now a place that welcomed and embraced the new and novel and saw these things as necessary rather than detrimental to the health of the commonwealth. This rhetoric was seemingly reinforced in Ben Jonson's welcome spectacle at the opening of the New Exchange.

However, even the New Exchange and its entertainment, was not necessarily quite so straightforward. While it might appear that the welcome glorified these changing values, the text also introduced questions of ambiguity, uncertainty, and deception into this new world of goods.¹⁸² Jonson used humour, for example, to remind his audience, comprising primarily

¹⁸² David J. Baker, 'The Allegory of a China Shop': Jonson's "Entertainment at Britain's Bourse", *ELH*, Vol. 72, No. 1 (Spring, 2005), pp. 159-180.

courtiers and merchants, of the potential problems embedded in these luxurious, novel, and foreign goods.

The New Exchange, according to Jonson, was actually a place where truth and reality were blurred. This culture of deception was introduced in his opening address by the Key Keeper. The Key Keeper presented himself as a compass in the foreign land that was the New Exchange stating: 'I thinke you scarce knowe, where you are now nor by my troth can I tell you, more then that you may seeme to be vppon some lande discouery of a newe region heere, to which I am your compasse'.¹⁸³

However, Jonson characterised the Key Keeper as a wavering compass. The Key Keeper did not properly orient the audience but undermined his own credibility and authority as a narrator through his rambling and false descriptions of the New Exchange. He also blurred his own identity claiming not to be what he seemed having morphed from an innkeeper and bartender to his more elevated position simply through 'entertayne my guesstes in my veluet cap, and my red Taffata doublett; and I coulde aunsuer theyr questions, and expounde theyr riddles'.¹⁸⁴ Thus, through the use of clothing and riddles, the Key Keeper presented himself as a man of learning and wealth. Yet, he was neither of those things. This compromised his authority and made him an unreliable guide, despite this being his role within the spectacle. Thus, through role of the Key Keeper, Jonson introduced his audience to the idea that the New Exchange was a far more complicated space than they might expect. They needed a guide and, yet, their guide was a fake.

These themes were further explored in another vignette within the welcome spectacle. In this scene, a China man presented the audience his shop full of fanciful and luxurious goods. Jonson emphasised that this shop keeper sold a wide variety of goods specialising in the novel and the

¹⁸³ Knowles, 'Jonson's Entertainment at Britain's Burse', p. 132.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

foreign. While some goods like china cups would have been familiar to the audience, others like the ‘Carpets wrought of Paraquitos feather’ or the ‘umbrellas made of the winge of the Indian Butterfly’ (Line 134) were much more exotic-sounding and seemingly quite rare.

However, while this parquet feather carpet and Indian butterfly winged umbrella might simply be unique objects, Jonson highlighted that this novelty made the authenticity and true value of these items subjective. Only the shopkeeper knew the real value and, yet, they were also the seller of the object trying to get it sold. This compromised their neutrality. Thus, Jonson showed how the emergence of these foreign and novel goods in spaces like the New Exchange created a ‘knowledge’ gap for customers about the authenticity and value of objects. This made customers reliant on the knowledge of others like merchants and shopkeepers who were hardly impartial advisors. Thus, Englishmen and women might easily be made foolish through the purchase of ‘extraordinary’ or ‘rare’ items with little actual value.

The New Exchange was celebrated and greeted with excitement. It was encouraged by the government and was an important intersection between elite and merchant interests. However, it should not be simply viewed as a space where old and new values triumphed or even coexisted harmoniously. This chapter has shown how this space is better understood as reflective of wider dialogues within Elizabethan and early Jacobean society where men and women like William and Robert Cecil were valuing, revaluing, and grappling with the successes and excitement over having access to global imports and varied domestic goods. However, they were also simultaneously dealing with concerns, uncertainties, and remaining tensions about luxurious and foreign consumption.

The Elizabethan period was a critical moment for the development of the consumer society in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. However, this was not a linear progression. This chapter has importantly reestablished the complexities and nuances that continued to exist in

England's engagement with the New World, Europe, and the rest of the world through trade, industry, and ideology.

Chapter Two: Value at Court

When the New Exchange opened, members of the court, including the royal family, found themselves in an urban, merchant context with an aristocratic ethos that both celebrated and expressed anxieties about new goods and their value at the beginning of the seventeenth century. These excitements and concerns about the novel, however, existed well before then as William Cecil's own tensions between conservatism and innovation reveal in his political and economic decisions about cloth and clothing throughout the sixteenth century as discussed in Chapter One.

At the New Exchange, though, these celebratory and anxious feelings were partially expressed through the gifts of fine accessories, 'Indyan toyes', and 'Chyna commodities' given to the spectators in the welcome festivity commissioned by Robert Cecil.¹⁸⁵ On one level, these gifted objects had great value as fashionable and unique commodities. Yet, on another level, their worth was not inherent to the materials relying instead on special knowledge and the item's variability to determine its value. These commodities, however, were not the only gifted items that highlight the tensions and nuances in early modern English conceptions of value which placed differing levels of importance on material literacy, accessibility, and modes of exchange.

As noted in the introduction, the court was another space where regimes of value were created and contested. This context had its own peculiarities as the monarch, courtiers, and subjects both supported and challenged the authority, position, and wealth of each other through ritual and etiquette often by regulating access and through different modes of exchange like gift-giving. Gift-giving formed a central part of ceremonial interactions between monarchs, courtiers, and subjects where men and women demonstrated their fidelity by offering money, food, and dress.

¹⁸⁵ Hatfield House, Cecil MSS, Bills 35/8.

William Cecil and his family took part in these ritual engagements in their function as courtiers as well as government officials. William, for example, presented the Queen at New Year in 1563 with

a faire Booke of Prayers and many other things in it couerid with siluer enamuled with the Quenis and her Maties Mothers Armes on both sides of golde garnesshid and clasped with golde sett with Garnettis and Turquisses...¹⁸⁶

His second wife, Mildred Cecil (1526 – 4 April 1589), also gifted elaborate jewellery to the Queen during the New Year festivities, such as a gold jewel shaped like a chameleon garnished with opals and six little rubies, a pearl pendant, and a necklace of three diamonds.¹⁸⁷ However, courtiers like William and Mildred were not the only givers of fine gifts. The New Year's gift lists reveal the participation of non-noble subjects like merchants and makers in these rituals, such as Benedict Spinola who, as we have seen, in Chapter One worked in partnership with William Cecil importing wool. Merchant and maker men often presented different kinds of cloth and clothing offerings than their noble counterparts largely because of distinctions in how they defined an object's value. This chapter, therefore, investigates how dress gifts reveal divergences in the regimes of value that coexisted at the Elizabeth court amongst subjects and the monarch.

Despite the shared value of dress gifts as a mode of exchange, this chapter highlights that the value of a dress gift at court was influenced and determined by many factors including context, networks, access, fashion, and material literacy. Its worth and effectiveness also relied on sets of complex interpersonal relationships between couples, friends, patrons, and gift facilitators

¹⁸⁶ The following citations of gift rolls will follow the reference given by year and gift number chronicled in Jane A. Lawson, ed., *The Elizabethan New Year's gift exchanges, 1559-1603* (Oxford, 2013). For example, the fifth gift taken from the 1567 rolls would be noted as 1567, 5. The page number from this reference is also provided for easy association. When the author of this paper also consulted the original manuscripts, this is noted following the Lawson citation. Gift Rolls 1563, 100. See Lawson, ed., *The Elizabethan New Year's gift exchanges*, p. 78.

¹⁸⁷ Croft, 'Mildred, Lady Burghley', p. 292; British Library, Additional MSS 8159; *Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Most Hon. The Marquis of Salisbury Preserved at Hatfield House, Hertfordshire*, Part III (London, 1889), p. 250.

like William and Robert Cecil whose individual knowledge and connections about dress were desired and valued in this collective enterprise by those inside and outside the palace. Thus, more generally, this chapter seeks to better understand the significant but largely overlooked role of men as both givers of dress and holders of information about the Queen's preferences. The importance of this investigation derives from the significance of dress in Elizabethan society as a driver of creativity, commerce, and identity. This chapter presents the value of cloth and clothing through gift-giving at the Elizabethan court rather than in economic policies or government regulation. In this way, it draws attention to the value of dress gifts for *both* men and women at the Elizabethan court and highlights the central importance of clothing, accessories, and jewellery in this context as a tool with significant social and political importance.

The chapter draws on an abundance of detailed information and a variety of primary sources about the clothing that merchants and courtiers gave, including the New Year's gift rolls, correspondence found within the Salisbury archives, records of Elizabeth's progresses, and the welcome events when she visited towns, universities, and families. These sources illustrate the wide range of men who gave the Queen gifts of dress as well as the different places and events where these exchanges were deemed acceptable. The sources also illustrate how men and women gave dress gifts together as a gift-giving tandem relying on each other for access, personal preferences, and material knowledge.

Current historiography about gifts of dress bestowed by Elizabethan subjects to the Queen focuses almost exclusively on the role played by elite women.¹⁸⁸ When elite men figure into

¹⁸⁸ Lawson, *The Elizabethan New Year's gift exchanges*, p. 23; Felicity Heal, *The Power of Gifts: Gift-Exchange in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 2014), p. 43; Catherine L. Stearn, 'Dressing a Virgin Queen: Court Women, Dress, and Fashioning the Image of England's Queen Elizabeth I', *Early Modern Women: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, Vol. 4 (2009), 201-208; Charlotte Merton, 'The women who served Queen Mary and Queen Elizabeth: Ladies, Gentlewomen and Maids of the Privy Chamber, 1553 to 1603', PhD Dissertation, University of Cambridge (1992), p. 101; P. Wright, 'A change of direction: the ramifications of a female household, 1558-1603' in *The English Court: From the War of the Roses to the Civil War*, edited by David Starkey (London, 1987), pp. 147-172.

the discussion, their role typically centres on the ‘favourite’.¹⁸⁹ In contrast, this chapter frames its exploration more broadly on Elizabethan men through a series of questions in order to better understand how dress gifts were valued in the court context by both men and women. This chapter asks the following questions. What types of men gave Elizabeth dress gifts and when? How did they give gifts? What did they give and why? There are also several smaller but important questions guiding this investigation. Did similar types of men and women give Elizabeth gifts of dress? Were the gifts gender-specific? Did the Queen’s gender seemingly limit male clothing gifts? Did men ever choose offerings that specifically focused on her gender? This analytic framework probes current narratives about the prominence of women as givers of clothing and accessories at the Elizabethan court and opens potential avenues for the complication and altering of accepted accounts about who, what, and when things were given at early modern courts.

An analysis of both male and female giving illuminates how dress operated at court and shows that shared and relational giving cultures centred on dress were typically not separated by factors like gender. Men at court were closely attuned to and valued the different meanings that gifts of dress could demonstrate and used clothing—its specific materials and designs—to simultaneously honour and instruct the Queen. They also drew on both female and male networks to glean insight into the monarch’s dress desires. Gender, its divisions, and its motifs, though, were not absent or necessarily conciliatory. Many male courtiers did use themes of virginity or motherhood to increase the value of their clothing gifts. However, in most exchanges, other factors proved equally influential in determining the ‘who’ and ‘what’ of gift-giving.

¹⁸⁹ Elizabeth Goldring, ‘Portraiture, Patronage, and the Progresses of Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, and the Kenilworth Festivities of 1575’ in *The Progresses, Pageants, and Entertainments of Queen Elizabeth I*, edited by Jayne Archer, Elisabeth Goldring, and Sarah Knight (Oxford, 2007), pp. 163-188; Louis Montrose, *The Subject of Elizabeth: Authority, Gender, and Representation* (Chicago, 2006), pp. 119-121.

This study first discusses pertinent approaches on gift-giving, dress, and material culture at Elizabeth's court, and afterwards considers the types of men who gave Elizabeth dress gifts and when they bestowed these on her. It then probes how men understood what the Queen desired and how they presented her with dress gifts. The chapter considers the range of dress—clothing, jewellery, accessories, and fabric—that men like the individuals in the Burghley and Salisbury households bestowed and the meanings these gifts could convey through their materials and design.

Elizabethan Gift Giving

Building upon anthropological and sociological studies, recent historical scholarship has recognised the vital role gift-giving cultures played in early modern society.¹⁹⁰ These studies show that early modern giving cultures extended throughout society and often aligned with the calendar year or life-cycle events.¹⁹¹ They also illuminate that giving was never straightforward or purely altruistic. When individuals gave, they expected something in return. This concept of 'return' in gift exchanges, initially outlined by Marcel Mauss, typically underscored all giving relationships.¹⁹² It constructed 'burdens' or 'obligations' onto both giver and receiver. The receiver might have an immediate gain, but the giver saw the gift as an investment for patronage, favour, and prestige. Early modern Elizabethan giving cultures were no different. Court gifts were loaded with expected returns of preference or position, exchanges at the university cemented social and political bonds, and gifts to guilds demonstrated civic pride, furthering allegiance amongst members and their families.¹⁹³

¹⁹⁰ Felicity Heal, *Hospitality in early modern England* (Oxford, 1990); Heal, *The power of gifts*; Felicity Heal, 'Food Gifts, the Household and the Politics of Exchange in Early Modern England', *Past and Present*, Vol. 199 (1) (2008), pp. 41-70; Ilana Krausman Ben-Amos, *The culture of giving: Informal support and gift-exchange in early modern England* (Cambridge, 2008).

¹⁹¹ Heal, *The power of gifts*, pp. 63-82.

¹⁹² Marcel Mauss, *The gift: the form and reason for exchange in archaic societies*, trans. W. D. Halls (London, 1990), p. 3.

¹⁹³ Linda Levy Peck, *Court patronage and corruption in early Stuart England* (London, 1990), pp. 18-20; Heal, *The power of gifts*, pp. 31-59; Lawson, *The Elizabethan New Year's gift exchanges*; Louise Durning, 'The Oxford college as household, 1580-1640' in *Domestic institutional interiors in early modern Europe*, edited by Sandra

Natalie Zemon Davis's work on sixteenth-century French gift exchange provides a crucial framework for this investigation. Her concept of 'gift mode' or 'gift register', which sees giving 'as an essential relational mode, a repertoire of behaviour, a register with its own rules, language, etiquette, and gestures', presents a method for properly including and exploring gender within gift exchange.¹⁹⁴ Davis's articulation of gift-giving as a mode helps address the influence of gender on the behaviours, offerings, and meanings of things and their giving in the Elizabethan court. Scholarship by Catherine Richardson, Maria Hayward, and Suzanne Butters has investigated the gendered giving practices involved in courtship and used by specific individuals, such as Ferdinando de' Medici.¹⁹⁵ However, this chapter moves beyond gender in romantic or familial contexts and builds on what we already know about Elizabethan men, including William and Robert Cecil, as prolific givers of food, horses, portraits, and book dedications.¹⁹⁶

This chapter also contributes to the scholarship about Elizabeth and the influence of dress on her representation. People during Elizabeth's reign inextricably linked monarch, image, and dress.¹⁹⁷ Scholars such as Kevin Sharpe and Maria Hayward reveal how the Tudor monarchy secured its monarchical position through strategic visual displays which were accentuated 'by the splendor of the nobles' clothes and costly gems and jewels' and left foreigners and visitors

Cavallo and Silvia Evangelisti (Farnham, 2009), pp. 83-102, 90; Jasmine Kilburn-Toppin, 'Gifting Cultures and Artisanal Guilds in Sixteenth- and Early Seventeenth-Century London', *The Historical Journal* (2013), pp. 1-27.

¹⁹⁴ Natalie Zemon Davis, *The Gift in Sixteenth-Century France* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 13, 14-15.

¹⁹⁵ Catherine Richardson, 'A very fit hat': Personal Objects and Early Modern Affection' in *Everyday Objects: Medieval and Early Modern Material Culture and its Meanings*, edited by Tara Hamling and Catherine Richardson (Farnham, 2010), pp. 289-298, 293, 297; Hayward, *Rich Apparel*, p. 8; Suzanne B. Butters, 'The Uses and Abuses of Gifts in the World of Ferdinando de' Medici (1549-1609)', *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance*, Vol. 11 (2007), pp. 243-354, 269-275.

¹⁹⁶ Heal, *The Power of Gifts*, pp. 53, 97, 99-100, 108-109, 119; Heal, 'Food Gifts, the Household and the Politics of Exchange in Early Modern England', pp. 43, 59, 65, 67; Jane A. Lawson, 'This Remembrance of the New Year: Books Given to Queen Elizabeth as New Year's Gifts' in *Elizabeth I and the Culture of Writing*, edited by P. Beal and G. Ioppolo (London, 2007), pp. 133-71; Goldring, 'Portraiture, Patronage, and the Progresses', pp. 163-188.

¹⁹⁷ Strong, *Gloriana*; Yates, *Astraea*; Frye, *Elizabeth I*; Andrew Belsey and Catherine Belsey, 'Icons of Divinity: Portraits of Elizabeth I' in *Renaissance Bodies: The Human Figure in English Culture c. 1540-1660*, edited by Lucy Gent and Nigel Llewellyn (London, 1990), pp. 11-35.

awestruck.¹⁹⁸ Monarchs from Henry VIII to Elizabeth deeply understood and maximised the sensorial power of dress.

However, for Elizabeth's reign, dress acted as a particularly striking feature. Sharpe's work noted how, through 'their symbols, colours, and designs', the Queen's 'dresses asserted her wealth and power'.¹⁹⁹ Clothing helped maintain regal authority and 'connected the intimate private female body to the public body of the realm and resolved the tensions inherent in the queen's two bodies and in the very fact of female rule'.²⁰⁰ Elizabeth's clothing acted as the mnemonic of her image. People remembered her speech at Tilbury, but it was the picture, likely mythic, of her wearing a silver breastplate and white silk dress with red hair flying in the wind that resonated even more strongly. Many people saw fashion—the seemingly endless strands of pearls, large white ruffs, wide farthingale, pale face, and red hair—as literal embodiments of the Queen and her triumphant reign. Previous scholarship has shown how these different representations emerged, what pressures or contradictions they contained, who constructed and controlled these ideas, and how these images were understood during the Elizabethan period and beyond.²⁰¹

However, a small group of scholars including Janet Arnold, Maria Hayward, Catherine Howey Stearn, Susan Vincent, and Felicity Heal have specifically focused on how dress gifts, rather than just the clothing found in the royal wardrobe or in portraits, shaped these representations of the Queen. Arnold's work, for example, argued that Elizabeth's charisma 'was reinforced by clothes and jewels' which she received from 'her loyal subjects who had presented them to her throughout her reign.'²⁰² Arnold saw both men and women as vital contributors to the Queen's wardrobe, but pointed out that 'much depended on the advice given by the Queen's women' in

¹⁹⁸ Sharpe, *Selling the Tudor Monarchy*, pp. 39, 129, 321, 361, 412.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 415, 412.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 415-416.

²⁰¹ Strong, *Gloriana*; Yates, *Astraea*; Frye, *Elizabeth I*.

²⁰² Arnold, *Queen Elizabeth's Wardrobe Unlocked*, p. xv.

the process.²⁰³ Catherine Howey Stearn also presented both men and women as important facilitators of the royal wardrobe through dress gifts. Stearn argued that ‘gifts of cloth, clothes, and clothing accessories were important tools of domestic and international statecraft’ through which subject and monarch fashioned their political identities.²⁰⁴ While much of her work focuses on the role of female courtiers, she routinely asserts the significance of both men and women in the process of gift exchange.²⁰⁵

Hayward further outlined this connection between gift-giving and the evolution of the royal wardrobe. Her work contended, based on an analysis of four gift rolls from the end of the reign, that ‘Elizabeth ordered less from her tailor because gift-giving shaped the queen’s wardrobe by the end of her reign.’²⁰⁶ The gifts of dress the Queen received enabled her to maintain ‘a relatively modest budget’ for clothing despite her expansive wardrobe in contrast to her successor, James I, whose extensive wardrobe put increasing strain on the crown’s finances.²⁰⁷ This scholarship, therefore, helpfully outlines the influence gifts of dress had on both the Queen’s image as a spectacularly wealthy and stylish monarch and the importance these offerings had for Elizabeth’s ability to equally preserve her reputation as a prudent and economical monarch. They focus on the gifts themselves and their meaning as well as the role of elite women. In contrast, this chapter centres on the court and mercantile men who gave gifts and the particular dynamics that arose during these kinds of exchanges.

Analysing the participants and potential gender pressures in the gift-giving exchange can broaden our understanding of Elizabethan society. Susan Vincent’s work provides an example

²⁰³ Arnold, *Queen Elizabeth’s Wardrobe Unlocked*, pp. 97-98.

²⁰⁴ Stearn, ‘Dressing a Virgin Queen’; Catherine Howey Stearn, ‘Fashioning Monarchy: Dress, Gender and Power at the Court of Elizabeth I’ in *The Rule of Women in Early Modern Europe, 1400-1700*, edited by Anne J. Cruz and Mihoko Suzuki (Champaign, Illinois, 2009), pp. 142-156, 143.

²⁰⁵ Stearn, ‘Fashioning Monarchy’, pp. 148-149, 151; Catherine Howey Stearn, ‘Critique or Compliment?: Lady Mary Sidney’s 1573 New Year’s Gift to Queen Elizabeth I’, *The Sidney Journal*, 30.2 (2012), pp. 109-127, 126-127.

²⁰⁶ Hayward, ‘The Compass of a Lie’, p. 26.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 26-27.

of how one might discuss the complicated interactions that defined dress gifts. Although not particularly focusing on gender, she highlighted how the message of clothing was not always positive. As the Queen aged, dress revealed the tensions felt by both Elizabeth and her subjects as they used it to maintain the illusion of her youthfulness and perpetual virginity.²⁰⁸ Stearn's discussion of the pelican jewel gifted by Lady Mary Sidney also highlighted the complexity of giving to Elizabeth. Stearn provided a tangible example of how dress could be used to critique the Queen and mould her actions.²⁰⁹ Felicity Heal presented a similar case study which outlined the positive and negative dynamics of giving. She shows how clothing and jewellery operated as signs of hospitality and prestige in Elizabethan England when the Queen progressed throughout the country.²¹⁰ These studies address the process of giving as well as the objects and individuals defining it. Yet, despite these vital discussions which situate the importance of dress and its offering, the gendered dimension of these exchanges largely remains to be considered.

This chapter presents a vision of an Elizabethan court where male nobles, merchants, and subjects participated in dressing their monarch rather than a court operating in isolation. It shows a gift culture where men as well as women valued innovation and novelty in fabrics, dyes, and other fashion materials. We see a culture where the dress ideas of many individuals contributed significantly to the image of an imperial and magnificent monarch.

How Men Dressed a Queen: From Court to City

Who gave? When did they give? How did men's giving practices differ from their female counterparts? What do these differences reveal about what men versus women valued in terms of materials, colours, and designs? The New Year's gift rolls and welcome events provide a

²⁰⁸ Vincent, *Dressing the Elite*, p. 138.

²⁰⁹ Stearn, 'Critique or Compliment?: Lady Mary Sidney's 1573 New Year's Gift to Queen Elizabeth I', pp. 109-127.

²¹⁰ Felicity Heal, 'Giving and Receiving on Royal Progress' in *John Nichols's The Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth I: A New Edition of the Early Modern Sources*, edited by Elizabeth Goldring, Faith Eales, Elizabeth Clarke, and Jayne Elizabeth Archer (Oxford, 2014), Vol. I, pp. 56-60.

snapshot into the status of givers and the moments when they gave. Broadly, both elite and non-elite men provided gifts of dress. They often gave at very specific and regulated times throughout the year, such as during the New Year's celebrations or as the Queen progressed throughout the country. The New Year's gift rolls illuminate that a diverse group of men presented Elizabeth with gifts of dress and, in return, she gave them subscribed gifts of plate, which corresponded in weight to their position. The gift rolls act as memorials of how Elizabeth's subjects physically demonstrated their honour for the Queen through the gifts they gave her and how these offerings significantly constructed and shaped Elizabeth, her wardrobe, and her image. The scribes who recorded this data provided quite detailed notes about the colours, designs, and styles of each item to record its worth and remember who gave each item, when it was given, and where it was stored. These lists were structured in descending rank order which reveals the interplay between gender and status in the giving of dress at the Elizabethan court.

Although we might assume that earls and dukes offered the most elaborate, expensive, and fashionable dress offerings, the gift rolls complicate this assumption.²¹¹ Those from the upper echelons of court society did give impressive presents. The courtier Ambrose Dudley, the Earl of Warwick (c.1530-1590), gave liberally and extravagantly to his Queen. Throughout her reign, he provided her with a flower in gold with the history of Charity in diamonds and rubies, a golden honeysuckle with multiple precious stones, buttons set with amethysts, a black velvet girdle, and three velvet gowns with gold buttons, feathers, and spangles.²¹² The offerings showed the wealth and taste of the Earl as they incorporated expensive materials—diamonds

²¹¹ This point differs from the conclusions drawn by Catherine Howey Stearn in 'Fashioning Monarchy: Dress, Gender and Power at the Court of Elizabeth I', p. 150. Her analysis of twenty-four gift rolls showed how gifts were dictated by status and gender. Although this could be the case in some contexts, my chapter highlights this was not always straightforward or consistent. Spinola shows us how other factors besides social position could dictate what and how a gift of dress was given to Elizabeth.

²¹² Gift Rolls 1567, 14; 1575, 14; 1576, 14; 1578, 15; 1581, 11; 1583; See Lawson, ed., *The Elizabethan New Year's gift exchanges*, pp. 117, 171, 184, 226, 268; British Library, MS Additional 9772 (1567); British Library, MS Additional 4827 (1576); British Library, Sloane 814, fos. 25r-26v (1583).

and velvet—alongside fashionable details—feathers and spangles—and the occasional whimsical play on ideas of charity or plenty as with the honeysuckle.



Figure 8. Velvet similar to the type and fine quality fabric given by the Earl of Warwick to Queen Elizabeth for her gowns, 16th century, Spanish or Italian, pile on pile cut, voided, and brocaded velvet of silk and gold metallic thread with bouclé details, Dimensions: L. 87 x W. 22 1/2 inches (221.0 x 57.2 cm), Credit Line: Fletcher Fund, 1946, Accession Number: 46.156.120, Public Domain, The Metropolitan Museum of Art

The gifts of William Cecil's two sons, Thomas and Robert also included offerings which were both costly and in vogue. They gave jewellery as well as articles of clothing to Elizabeth at New Year. Robert Cecil, for instance, gifted the Queen seven sprigs of gold garnished with rubies and diamonds in addition to a pearl pendant and a jewel of gold like a hunter's horn garnished with topaz, rubies, and a small pearl.²¹³ Additionally, Thomas Cecil gifted the Queen a fashionable French gown of black silk network with Venice gold and lined with white camlet, a valuable and soft woven fabric of wool and silk often produced from goat's hair.²¹⁴

Elizabeth was known to favour French fashions as a matter of personal taste and diplomatic ends. In 1566, William Cecil wrote Sir Henry Norris, the Ambassador in Paris, asking if he

²¹³ Gift Rolls 1600, 116; See Lawson, ed., *The Elizabethan New Year's gift exchanges*, p. 488.

²¹⁴ Gift Rolls 1589, 118; See Lawson, ed., *The Elizabethan New Year's gift exchanges*, p. 392; Vincent, *Dressing the Elite*, p. 110; *The 16th Century Household Secrets of Catherine Tollemache at Helmingham Hall*, edited by Moira Coleman (Andover, Hampshire, 2012), p. 131.

could procure a tailor knowledgeable in the art of Italian and French dress designs: ‘The Queen’s Majesty would fain have a tailor that had skill to make her apparel both after the Italian and French manner, and she thinketh that you might use some means to obtain some one that serveth the French queen...’²¹⁵ The Queen also admired French jewellery designs. In May 1561, William Cecil wrote Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, the Ambassador in France, stating that

...the Queen’s Majesty...willed me to require you that some goldsmith there might be induced indirectly to come hither with furniture of aglets, chains, bracelets etc: to be bought both by herself, and by the Ladies here, to be gay in this Court towards the progress. What is meant in it I know not; whether for that which many look for, or for the coming in of the Swede; but, as for me, I can see no certain disposition in her Majesty to any marriage...²¹⁶

While some found these foreign styles controversial, Elizabeth used them both for personal style and diplomatic aims.²¹⁷ The Valois court, for example, commented favourably on the fact that the Queen wore French fashions during the Anjou marriage negotiations and her choice of French jewellery when her Swedish suitor came to visit in 1566 might have subtly signalled her disinterest in his proposition of marriage.²¹⁸

However, it was not just courtiers who gave these expansive and fashionable dress gifts to Queen Elizabeth. The aforementioned Genoese merchant, Benedick Spinola (1519/20-1580), who lived in London and imported luxury textiles, shows how titles did not directly dictate the giving of dress at the Elizabethan court. He gave Elizabeth a riding robe in gold silk and pearl with its own green velvet case, a petticoat of carnation satin, a veil in purple lawn striped with gold, and one in calico.²¹⁹ These offerings demonstrate a similar luxury and taste as those

²¹⁵ Quoted in Arnold, *Queen Elizabeth’s Wardrobe Unlock’d*, p. 115.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 122; *Miscellaneous State Papers from 1501-1726 in Two Volumes*, Vol. I (London, 1778), p. 172.

²¹⁷ See the previous chapter for more contemporary opinions about the inherent problems in foreign fashions and imported materials like silk and satin.

²¹⁸ Arnold, *Queen Elizabeth’s Wardrobe Unlock’d*, p. 122; *Misc. State Papers from 1501-1726*, Vol. I (1778), p. 172.

²¹⁹ Gift Rolls 1559, 159; 1571, 154; 1577, 182; 1578, 181; 1579, 184; See Lawson, ed., *The Elizabethan New Year’s gift exchanges.*, pp. 41, 160, 215, 235, 256; The National Archives, Public Record Office at Kew C 47/3/39 (1577).

offered by the Earl of Warwick or the members of the Burghley family. Both the Earl of Warwick and Spinola gave garments in velvet and accessories with costly and fashionable details. Thus, despite Spinola's mercantile status, his connections to William Cecil showed that he was quite entrenched in established court networks as a government financier and leading merchant. However, these gifts still reflected the specific networks and personal choices of the givers revealing that they presented items which were valued in quite different ways.

While the Earl of Warwick along with Robert and Mildred Cecil provided the Queen with expensive jewellery sparkling with diamonds and amethysts, Spinola most likely drew on his urban merchant connections in London and overseas to incorporate diverse and innovative cloth into his offerings. He gave gold silk, green velvet, carnation satin, purple lawn, and calico, cotton cloth imported from India like the textile pictured below. The Earl, in contrast, simply used black velvet while Thomas Cecil's offering was primarily constructed from black silk. Spinola's offerings, therefore, show a more nuanced and varied understanding of colour and fabric perhaps more readily accessible to an urban merchant. Carnation—a vibrant pinkish-orange—reputedly caught candle-light better than most other colours and green proved extremely popular across society because of its associations with joy, hope, and the resurrection.²²⁰ Through his knowledge of colour, Spinola maximised his gifts' potential and value. He provided particularly thoughtful and tasteful offerings for a Queen who was intent on demonstrating her youth often in candlelight.

²²⁰ Koslin, 'Value-Added Stuffs and Shifts in Meaning', pp. 233-251, 235.





Figure 9. Bed Cover or Wall Hanging, early 17th century, Attributed to India, Gujarat, Cotton, silk; plain weave, embroidered, originally quilted, Textile: L. 76 1/2 in. (194.3 cm), W. 45 in. (114.3 cm), Mount: L. 84 5/8 in. (214.9 cm), W. 53 7/8 in. (136.8 cm), D. 2 3/4 in. (7 cm), Wt. 76 lbs. (34.5 kg), Credit Line: Gift of Victoria and Albert Museum, 1954, Accession Number: 54.21, Public Domain, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Collection

He also did this through fabric. Although velvets, satins, and silks were typically more costly fabrics than lawn or calico, Spinola did not choose lawn and calico out of frugality. In 1559, he ranked as the eighth-highest taxpayer in England and demonstrated through his other offerings

the potential to buy more expensive fabrics.²²¹ His choice of lawn and calico initially appears somewhat bewildering until we appreciate these textiles and their qualities.²²² Lawn was one of the finest qualities of linen and was used primarily for making ruffs, cuffs, handkerchiefs, and nightwear during the early modern period.²²³ It was essential for the highest quality creation of these fashionable accessories.



Detail of linen handkerchief, possibly lawn, with red or pink stitching with a tassel.

²²¹ 'Petition of Benedict Spinola', c. March 1559, Public Record Office, State Papers 15/9/15.

²²² The significance of cloth's material qualities in dictating fashions is explored in John Styles, 'Fashion and Innovation in Early Modern Europe' in *Fashioning the Early Modern: Dress, Textiles, and Innovation in Europe, 1500-1800*, edited by Evelyn Welch (New York, 2017), pp. 33-55, 37.

²²³ Hayward, *Rich Apparel*, p. 92.



Figure 10. Portrait of a Woman, Italian (Florentine) Painter (possibly Jacopo Zucchi, Florence 1541–1590 Rome), mid-16th century, Oil on wood, Dimensions: 38 1/2 x 30 in. (97.8 x 76.2 cm), Credit Line: The Friedsam Collection, Bequest of Michael Friedsam, 1931, Accession Number: 32.100.66, Public Domain, The Metropolitan Museum of Art

In the 1560s, it was also one of the newest linen fabrics and something of a novelty in England because it was sold only by Dutch merchants in yards and half-yards. Its expense meant few dared to buy it in large quantities.²²⁴ The use of this fabric, then, in conjunction with purple dye made a statement accessory since the colour purple remained primarily the monarch's prerogative.²²⁵ This gift combined old and new—sumptuary colour regulations with novel fabric. It sent a strong message of wealth, connections, and knowledge. Spinola's choice of calico was equally thoughtful and thought-provoking for the early modern viewer. Europeans typically used calico as the textile for wall hangings and tablecloths. It did not gain prominence

²²⁴ Thirsk, *Economic Policy and Projects*, p. 85.

²²⁵ Hayward, 'The Compass of a Lie', p. 28.

as a garment fabric until the seventeenth century.²²⁶ Thus, Spinola's choice of it for the veil would have been unusual though it created an accessory few, if any, but the Queen would have owned. The gifting of these veils seems to have made use of Spinola's mercantile contacts and urban mercantile knowledge about emerging or unique fashionable tastes in colours and textiles. He demonstrated an awareness of new fabric technologies as well as a willingness to present gifts where their 'newness' created value.²²⁷



Figure 11. Nicholas Hilliard (British, Exeter ca. 1547–1619 London), 1597, Medium: Vellum, Dimensions: Oval, 1 7/8 x 1 1/2 in. (47 x 39 mm), Credit Line: Fletcher Fund, 1935, Accession Number: 35.89.2, Public Domain, The Metropolitan Museum of Art

²²⁶ Woodruff D. Smith, *Consumption and the Making of Respectability, 1600-1800* (New York, 2002), p. 49.

²²⁷ The significance of novelty, change, and innovation is something discussed further in Styles, 'Fashion and Innovation in Early Modern Europe'. Styles argues that we must view historical fashion through lenses besides identity in order to fully appreciate and understand the past properly: '...focus on identity has become so intense that other ways of conceptualizing fashion in the period are in danger of being overlooked, especially fashion as a process of change. Fashion is inseparable from innovation and novelty. It is at least as much about the material sequencing of change as it is about the material ordering of identities (p. 35). Additionally, fashion and clothing are not just about the actual article of clothing that is worn but also about its cut and material construction (p. 37).

Yet, Spinola was not the only giver who prioritised novelty in cloth as part of giving. The gift rolls reveal a group of cloth merchants and drapers who acted quite similarly. These men had an even closer proximity to cloth and its creation. They deeply understood the connection between material, quality, emerging technologies, and new fashionable tastes. Their offerings advertised their own expertise and its value. Several of them provided Elizabeth with lawn. Three linen drapers, Mr. Hughes, Mr. John Braddyshe, and Mr. Ferrys, bestowed pieces of lawn in 1584, 1594, and 1603.²²⁸ Additionally, the great merchant and financier, Smith Customer (1522-1591), routinely gifted cambric fabric to his Queen which she preferred for her ruffs and even employed a foreign starch woman to perfect.²²⁹ Cambric, like lawn, was a relatively new linen fabric and necessary for fashionable ruffs like the one worn by the woman in the miniature pictured above by the popular Elizabethan miniaturist, Nicholas Hillard (c.1547 — 7 January 1619). Cambric quickly replaced Holland fabric as the preferred material for those in the upper echelons of society to use for accessories, fine shirts, and smocks.²³⁰ Smith, in a similar manner to Spinola, demonstrated his awareness of cloth innovation and the ability to procure this novel textile. He further accentuated his affluence through offering the cambric in cases of damask, a highly prestigious fabric with an import duty per yard over twice that of cambric.²³¹ His gifts combined wealth, taste, and novelty to achieve their value. They were thoughtful offerings which could be easily incorporated into Elizabeth's wardrobe by her own tailor or seamstresses.

²²⁸ Gift Rolls 1584, 176; 1594, 165; 1603, 209 See Lawson, ed., *The Elizabethan New Year's gift exchanges*, pp. 338; 416; 551; British Library, Egerton 3052 (1584); The National Archives, Public Record Office at Kew C 47/3/41 (1603).

²²⁹ Thirsk, *Economic Policy and Projects*, p. 85.

²³⁰ Hayward, *Rich Apparel*, p. 92.

²³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 86; New Year's Gift Rolls 1603, 209; 1562, 165; 1563, 155; 1564, 138; 1565, 85; 1567, 159; 1568, 152; 1571, 155; 1575, 120; 1576, 181, 1577, 181; 1578, 197; 1579, 183; 1581, 206; 1582, 177; 1584, 175; 1589, 156; See Lawson, ed., *The Elizabethan New Year's gift exchanges*, pp. 63, 81, 98, 110, 124, 142, 160, 176, 193, 215, 236, 256, 279, 305, 338, 357, 395; British Library, Harley Roll V. 18 (1562); The National Archives, Public Record Office at Kew C 47/3/38 (1563); British Library, MS Additional 9772 (1567); British Library, Additional 4827 (1576); The National Archives, Public Record Office at Kew C 47/3/39 (1577); British Library, Harley 1644 (1582); British Library, Egerton 3052 (1584); British Library, Lansdowne Roll 17 (1589); Thomas Smith was called Smith Customer because of his association with the customs house as the collector of the subsidy on imports at the port of London; see *John Nichols's The Progresses and Public Processions*, p. 250.

However, these gifts also demonstrated the Queen's reliance on urban merchant networks based in London that provided her with fashionable dress components. London was a thriving centre of industry and trade with textiles at its very heart.²³² This group of male merchant gift-givers and their gifts show how cloth tangibly linked court and city as well as England and its overseas trade. These gifts indicate that certain changes in taste and fashion within Elizabethan society emerged from a complex network between London merchants, drapers, courtiers, monarch, and subject.²³³ These interconnections became increasingly prominent as the Queen's access to merchants and makers with their new techniques and global goods allowed for her to own garments that demonstrated, incorporated, and valued the skill, wealth, and trade of an empire.



Figure 12. The Pelican in her Piety, Spain (made), ca. 1550-1575 (made), enamelled gold, set with a ruby simulant (triplet with a top layer of rock crystal, and with red adhesive layer, and foil), and hung with pearls, Museum number: 335-1870, Gallery location: Jewellery, Rooms 91, The William and Judith Bollinger Gallery, case 7, shelf D, box 5, © The Victoria and Albert Museum

As her reign progressed, Elizabeth could have clothed herself luxuriously and fashionably through the dress provided by both elite and non-elite men alone at New Year. They provided

²³² Alford, *London's Triumph*, pp. 40, 97, 221. To see the importance of the textile industry outside of London see Thirsk, *Economic Policy and Projects*.

²³³ Alford, *London's Triumph*, pp. 64, 235-237; Evelyn Welch has also explored similar ideas in Renaissance Italy. Please see Evelyn Welch, 'Art on the edge: hair and hands in Renaissance Italy', *Renaissance Studies*, Vol. 23, No. 3 (June 2009), pp. 241-268.

her with sleeves and stockings, gowns and garters, purses and petticoats, diamonds and doublets, and more. They understood fashions and incorporated the Queen's preferences into their offering. These personal links could make dress gifts more valuable. Salamander jewellery illustrates this point. The salamander, in fact, appears in more offerings at New Year than the oft-studied phoenix or pelican.²³⁴ Elizabeth received six gifts with distinct salamander imagery versus only one phoenix and one pelican, such as the jewel above, in the surviving gift rolls.²³⁵ The only motifs that appeared on more dress offerings were the 'moon' and 'ship'. These were gifted nine and seven times respectively at New Year, although four of the 'moon' offerings occurred in 1599 and the 'ships' often came from specific individuals with maritime-focused positions like merchants or members of the navy. In 1599, Robert Cecil, for example, presented the Queen with 'one half Moone pendante garnished with sparkes of Dyamondes' along with several other jewels like a carcanet containing thirteen pieces of gold set with rubies and fourteen pearls, a great amethyst, three pendants with rubies and diamonds in 1599.²³⁶ The salamander imagery, meanwhile, appeared throughout the reign and was only one of four images to be repeated more than twice at New Year.²³⁷ It was also given by a variety of individuals.

The salamander was given by Gentlemen of the Bedchamber, such as Sir Thomas Heneage (c. 1532-1595), who gifted a gold jewel tablet with a salamander in opal but also by merchants,

²³⁴ Gift Rolls 1574, British Library, Sloane 814, fos. 4r-5r; This symbol is not analysed in work by Roy Strong, Kevin Sharpe, Janet Arnold or Frances Yates.

²³⁵ The salamander image appears in the following: Gift Rolls 1577, 171; 1579, 201; 1588, 169; 1594, 145; See Lawson, ed., *The Elizabethan New Year's gift exchanges*, pp. 214, 257, 377, 414; The National Archives, Public Record Office at Kew C 47/3/39 (1577); British Library, MS Additional 8159 (1588). The phoenix appears in the jewellery offering by the Earl of Ormond in 1578 while the potential pelican jewel was given by Hatton in 1575. See Gift Rolls 1578, 21; 1575, 117; See Lawson, ed., *The Elizabethan New Year's gift exchanges*, pp. 226, 176. However, Elizabeth's inventories do include more phoenix and pelican jewels, including those offered by Sir John Young to the Queen on progress in Bristol. However, he also offered a salamander jewel. See Heal, *The Power of Gifts*, p. 108, Arnold, *Queen Elizabeth's Wardrobe*, p. 74, and Sharpe, *Selling the Tudor Monarchy*, p. 411.

²³⁶ Gift Rolls 1599, 113; See Lawson, ed., *The Elizabethan New Year's gift exchanges*, p. 469.

²³⁷ The moon imagery occurred on jewellery and clothing. See Gift Rolls 1589, 158; 1594, 1; 1594, 111; 1599, 1; 1599, 2; 1599, 53; 1599, 113; 1599, 117; 1600, 12; See Lawson, ed., *The Elizabethan New Year's gift exchanges*, pp. 395, 406, 412, 463, 465, 469, 470, 482. See also Roy Strong, *Gloriana*, p. 125. The only other images which appeared more than twice were the Tudor rose and ship or maritime motifs.

such as Richard Carmardenn (d. 1603). Carmardenn was a member of the Merchant Tailors Company and the customs administrator who gave a silver and gilt bodkin with a salamander pendant in mother of pearl. Other lesser-known Elizabethan men, such as Charles Smythe and Henry Bruncker, also offered similar imagery. Smythe presented a small salamander jewel with rubies, diamonds, and pearls and Bruncker offered a cap of black velvet garnished with diamonds, rubies, and a salamander.²³⁸ Bruncker's cap highlights the versatility of this imagery and its appearance as part of both jewellery and clothing. The salamander was one of only three images found on both.²³⁹ These examples highlight how male givers inside and outside the court presented tastefully patriotic imagery in their dress offerings to increase its value.

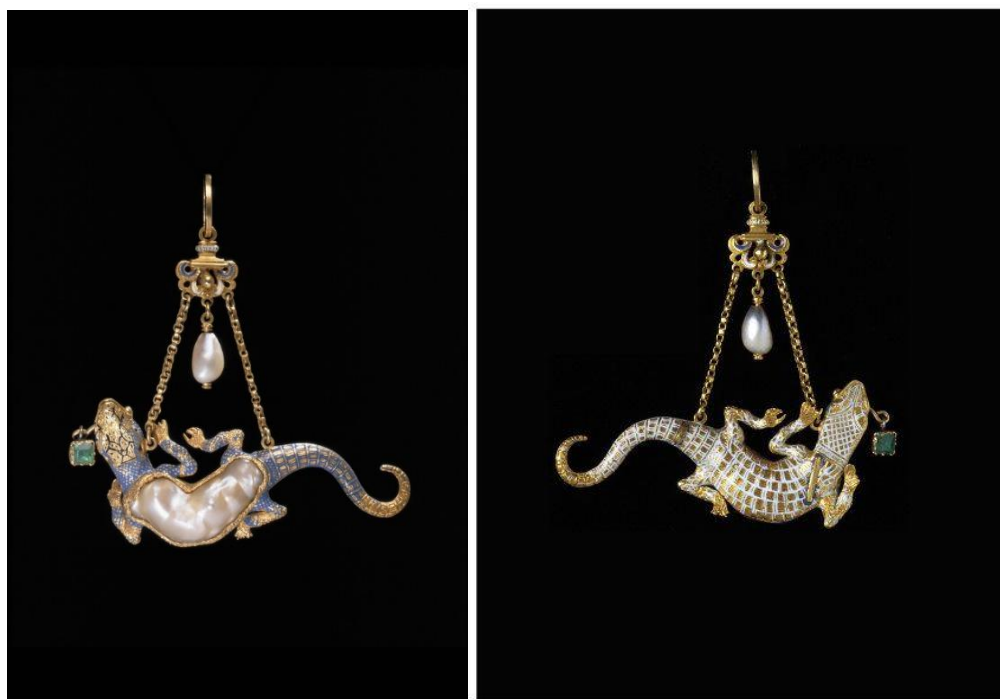


Figure 13. Salamander pendant, Europe (west, made), late 16th century (made), enamelled gold, set with pearls and an emerald, Credit Line: Salting Bequest, Museum number: M.537-1910, Gallery location: Medieval & Renaissance, Room 62, The Foyle Foundation Gallery, case 8, © The Victoria and Albert Museum

²³⁸ Gift Rolls 1577, 171; 1579, 201; 1588, 169; 1594, 145; See Lawson, ed., *The Elizabethan New Year's gift exchanges*, pp. 214, 257, 377, 414; The National Archives, Public Record Office at Kew C 47/3/39 (1577); British Library, MS Additional 8159 (1588).

²³⁹ The only other images to appear on both jewellery and clothing were the moon motif as discussed previously as well as ship or maritime imagery. See Gift Rolls 1576, 65; 1578, 20; 1582, 1; 1588, 57; 1589, 121; 1603, 4; See Lawson, ed., *The Elizabethan New Year's gift exchanges*, pp.186, 226, 291, 370, 393, 500; 1580, British Library, Sloane 814, fos. 18r-19r; 1583, British Library, Sloane 814, fos. 25r-26v.

These men may have known or believed that Elizabeth would have a particular affinity to salamanders because of their purported ability to survive fire.²⁴⁰ This made the imagery particularly suitable as a New Year's offering while other motifs like the pelican or phoenix were reserved for more individualised gift-giving contexts like royal progresses. The Queen routinely used the 'survival' motif in her self-presentation. She reminded her subjects how she survived, divinely protected, before her reign.²⁴¹ This preservation provided the foundation for her legitimacy. As God's chosen and safeguarded instrument, it was her connection with God alone that protected England. This elevated her individual power and demonstrated why she should control religious and political policies.

While the New Year's gift rolls provide one insightful source for seeing the types of men who gave Elizabeth dress gifts, the records of welcome events provide additional context. These moments of welcome typically occurred while Elizabeth progressed throughout the country, stopping at noble houses and universities. Although Elizabeth was moving amongst her people, the types of men who could provide her with dress gifts seem more proscribed. Noble men were the largest category, most likely because Elizabeth stayed in their homes. When the Attorney General Coke (1552-1634), a senior law officer who defended the Crown, prepared himself to welcome Elizabeth to his home in Stoke, for example, he ensured that the welcome gifts of an appropriately expensive and desirable jewel and gown were readied.²⁴²

²⁴⁰ For more information about the scientific, social, and political significance of the salamander in early modern Europe see Nicholas Popper, 'The Sudden Death of the Burning Salamander: Reading Experiment and the Transformation of Natural Historical Practice in Early Modern Europe', *Erudition and the Republic of Letters* 1 (2016), pp. 464-490.

²⁴¹ 'Queen Elizabeth's First Speech before Parliament, February 10. 1559' in *Elizabeth*, p. 57; 'Queen Elizabeth's Speech at the Close of the Parliamentary Session, March 15, 1576' in *Elizabeth*, p. 167; Richard Grafton, *Graftons Abridgment of the Chronicles of Englande* (London, 1570), f. 179r.

²⁴² 'The Attorney General (Coke) to Sir Robert Cecil, 17 July 1601', Hatfield House, Cecil Papers, 182/107.



The forehead cloth is an example of black threadwork combined with metal threadwork perhaps done in gold. This made it materially like the black threadwork mantle of pure gold gifted by Sir Julius Caesar to Queen Elizabeth I. This accessory was also just the kind of appropriate gift that some men like Sir Michael Hicks were advised to give the Queen. They were cautioned to give fine accessories rather than less luxurious articles of clothing.

Figure 14. Forehead cloth, last quarter 16th century, British, Medium: Silk and metal thread on linen, Dimensions: 14 1/2 x 16 1/2 inches (36.8 x 41.9 cm), Credit Line: Gift of Irwin Untermyer, 1964, Accession Number: 64.101.1239, Public Domain, Metropolitan Museum of Art

Other men, such as the nobleman Sir John Sherington, and the merchant-turned-courtier Sir John Young (1519-1589), followed suit providing Elizabeth with a mother-of-pearl dolphin jewel in gold as well as a phoenix and salamander jewel.²⁴³ Elizabeth was so pleased by Young's gifts that she knighted him.²⁴⁴ Additionally, when the Queen stopped in Mitcham, she lodged at the home of Sir Julius Caesar (c. 1558-1636), her Master of Requests, Ordinary Master, a civil lawyer, and previous ward of William Cecil. He recounted the event, and noted how he gave Elizabeth a gown of silver embroidered cloth, a black threadwork mantle of pure gold (see the forehead cloth above for a material comparison), a taffeta white hat with flowers,

²⁴³ British Library, Harleian 4698, fos. 22-4.

²⁴⁴ Sir John Maclean, 'Notes on the Family of Yonge, or Young, of Bristol, and on the Red Lodge', *Transactions of Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society*, Vol. 15 (1890/1), pp. 227-245.

and a gold jewel set with rubies and diamonds.²⁴⁵ These were spectacularly luxurious and fashionable gifts. The embroidery, an extra layer of ornate decoration, served no utilitarian purpose and was seen as conferring extra prestige on the wearer.²⁴⁶ Sumptuary legislation tightly controlled the proliferation of embroidery, especially with gold and silver threads as in Caesar's cloth, making it inherently expensive and exclusive.²⁴⁷ Embroidery also required specialised skills and focused labour time, something which contemporaries understood and valued.²⁴⁸ Yet, this was just one part of Caesar's dress offerings. He also presented expensive gemstones and fabrics and tasteful accessories like the taffeta hat.

While it seems that it was an accepted and acceptable practice for nobles to present Elizabeth with gifts of dress when she visited them, some evidence suggests that the practice could vary as not everyone could or did offer gifts like Caesar. For example, Sir Michael Hicks (1543-1612), one of William Cecil's principal secretaries, sought advice about what to present the Queen when she visited him in 1597. William advised Hicks to get dress gifts of a 'fine wastcoate, or fine ruffe, or like thinge...' since these items had an acknowledged great price.²⁴⁹ However, when contrasted with Caesar's gifts of clothing, Hicks's offerings appear ordinary and uncostly. Proximity does not explain these differences for Hicks was closely connected to the court through the Cecil family and operated within networks that would have known Elizabeth's preferences. Position or status, instead, may offer some insight. In a society dictated by precedent and place, people expected the gifts and hospitality given to appropriately match the status or wealth of the host.²⁵⁰ The divergence in position between Hicks and Caesar meant that Elizabeth expected and convention dictated that Caesar provide much more expensive and

²⁴⁵ 'Julius Caesar's Account of the Queen's Visit to Mitcham 12-13 September 1598', British Library, Additional MS 4160, fos. 20; also quoted in *John Nichols's*, vol. IV, p. 64.

²⁴⁶ Lurie, *Language of Clothes*, p. 205.

²⁴⁷ Hayward, *Rich Apparel*, p. 119.

²⁴⁸ Griffey, *On Display*, p. 27.

²⁴⁹ Henry Ellis, *Original Letters Illustrative of English History including numerous royal letters from autographs in the British Museum, and one of two other collections*, Vol. II (London, 1825), pp. 275-276.

²⁵⁰ Mary Hill Cole, *The Portable Queen: Elizabeth I and the Politics of Ceremony* (Amherst, 1999), p. 64.

luxurious gifts than Hicks for whom a useful, though stylish, accessory was deemed both acceptable and more appropriate. A ruff or waistcoat struck a good balance between honour for the Queen without making Hicks appear grandiose or gaudy. While rank did not necessarily regulate what was given by men, it could have implications for offerings and their monetary value.



Figure 15. Gloves, 16th century, British, Medium: leather, Credit Line: Gift of Miss Irene Lewisohn, 1940, Accession Number: C.I.40.194.28a, b, Public Domain, Metropolitan Museum of Art

The dress gifts Elizabeth received when she visited the University of Cambridge offer further insight into the implications of giving practices for men outside the court. In this context, gloves were a frequent choice associated with civic and aristocratic status. They were portable making them ideal for outside events, but could also be personalised and came at a range of prices that

allowed the giver financial flexibility similar to Hicks's accessories.²⁵¹ The gloves Elizabeth received when she visited the University of Cambridge in 1578 show how gloves could also facilitate a level of individual and symbolic detail which enabled givers to convey a series of messages through the offering in a similar manner to the symbolic jewellery given at New Year. Letters written between Doctor Richard Howland (baptized 1540-1600) and William Cecil as well as the description of the Queen's visit attest to this fact. In the letters, Howland sought advice about welcome gifts for Elizabeth, but William only provided instruction about how several men including the Earl of Leicester, the Lord of Oxford, the Vice Chamberlain, and himself should receive gloves with verses.²⁵² He left consideration of the gifts for Elizabeth to Howland. At the welcome, the Queen received a pair of beautiful gloves covered with embroidery, perfume, and goldsmiths' work.²⁵³ The letters reveal, then, that the choices behind this craftsmanship and fragrance were made by Howland or other Cambridge men rather than by those in the Queen's closest circle. It reflected what they thought would please Elizabeth and how they wanted to demonstrate their honour and respect for her by adding expensive and fashionable details, such as the perfume, to their offering. The gloves also included a series of verses lauding the monarch and her virtues:

A maxim on the most serene Queen Elizabeth. /ALWAYS UNIQUE. /Because you are always unique, because you are always the best sovereign/ How well do these two words suit you? / Because you are always devout, prudent, chaste, an unmarried maiden, /For this too you are always unique. / And because you love the people, because you are always loved in turn by the people, you remain constant here, always unique. / O, if only, since you are always unique, it were allowed us always to delight in you Eliza, alone.²⁵⁴

²⁵¹ Hayward, *Rich Apparel*, p. 126.

²⁵² 'Letter from Lord Burghley to Richard Howland, 15 July 1578', Cambridge University Archives, University Letters, Letter 9, item B.13a, fol. 67; 'Letter from William Cecil to Richard Howland, 25 July 1578', Cambridge University Archives, University Letters, Letter 9, item B. 13b, fos. 68; See also *John Nichols's*, vol. II, pp. 566-574.

²⁵³ 'Representatives of Cambridge University Greet the Queen', Cambridge University Archives, Misc. Collect. 4, fos. 126v-134t; See also *John Nichols's*, vol. II, pp. 566-574.

²⁵⁴ The maxim first appeared in Latin, but it has been translated here.

Here, through verses, these men described Elizabeth's unique status. Although they did mention gendered concepts like chasteness and maidenhood, these were inserted alongside devoutness, consistency, and prudence as well as love for the people. The overall statement did not present Elizabeth as unique because she was a Queen, but because she had properly fulfilled her role as monarch. The giving of these gloves tangibly and publicly conveyed these messages and strengthened the relationship between university and Queen, especially because Elizabeth not only approved of the gift, but showed her admiration for the gloves when she smelled them and placed one partially on her hand.²⁵⁵ This giving, then, demonstrates that university men understood and used fashion and gifting protocol in a manner similar to their courtly counterparts.

These sources suggest that men and corporations gave frequently, but how did this compare with women? While the available evidence does not allow for a completely illustrative comparison, the gift rolls do allow for certain comparisons to be made. The general giving habits of men versus women at New Year during the reign of Elizabeth provide some context.²⁵⁶ In total, men and women gave Elizabeth over 2,018 gifts of dress during her reign. This included 747 given by men and 1,271 from women. However, in two categories, jewellery and fabric, men gave more than women with 223 of the 403 jewellery gifts and 64 of the 100 fabric gifts offered by men. This was because of cost and connections. Jewellery gifts were often the most expensive offerings and, therefore, required larger sums of money or credit than many female or lesser male courtiers could access. The more novel gifts also required particular access to networks that either very wealthy, well-connected individuals or individuals within certain

²⁵⁵ 'Representatives of Cambridge University Greet the Queen'.

²⁵⁶ The gendered dynamics of female gift giving has been explored in Lisa M. Klein, 'Your Humble Handmaid: Elizabethan Gifts of Needlework', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 50:2 (1997), pp. 459-493 and Stearn, 'Fashioning Monarchy', pp. 142-156.

industries had. For example, fabric gifts held significant material value, such as cloth of gold, and often demonstrated innovation and skills particular to male cloth trades.

Although the analysis shows that women typically gave more clothing gifts, this did not increase to double digits until 1576 and men increasingly provided more clothing over the reign. In 1559, only one man gave a clothing gift, though by 1578 nine men gave and in 1603 Elizabeth received 25 dress gifts from men. Thus, both men and women evolved their giving to include more clothing as the reign progressed.

The category was also more nuanced in terms of gender than it might first seem. Although it often appears that women presented Elizabeth with more dress, Elizabeth's male subjects actually provided her with a greater diversity of items than women as well as more expensive objects. Men show a relatively even spread of different dress items, excluding fabric, with 28 per cent being clothing, 30 per cent being jewellery, 33 per cent being accessories, and 9 per cent being fabric in contrast to female givers whose two major categories of clothing and accessories comprised 83 per cent of all their gifts with 50 per cent of women's offerings being less expensive accessories. This brief discussion, then, supports the idea that dress was a fluid rather than limited gendered category for male givers. If anything, men's access to merchant networks and money enabled them to provide their Queen with a wider range of gifts which were often more expensive offerings. However, this did vary in different spaces and environments across society with status sometimes dictating what men offered or how they gave.

Giving Men and Giving Women

In addition to showing the status of gift-givers, the New Year's gift rolls highlight the joint giving practices of men and their wives who gave Elizabeth dress gifts together over sixty different times. This occurred from earls to gentlemen and included gifts both big and small. Sometimes joint giving meant the couple bestowed one garment in two parts or complementing

elements of an outfit, though it could also refer to matching accessories or jewels. Since this practice happened across the social range, it seems to reveal important insight into a specific mode of giving with certain aims found at the Elizabethan court versus just being a cost-cutting measure by individuals, couples, or families.

Lord and Lady Hunsdon, Henry Carey (1526-1596) and Anne Carey (c. 1529-1607), each provided the Queen with a part of an embroidered kirtle of satin of sundry colours in 1585, while in 1600 the Earl and Countess of Shrewsbury, Gilbert Talbot (1552-1616) and Mary Talbot (1557-1632) each gave a piece of a white satin doublet embroidered all over with snakes along with puffs of lawn embroidered with silver thread shaped like wheat.²⁵⁷ Sir John Scudamore (1542-1623), a courtier, and his wife Mary Scudamore (c. 1550-1603), a member of the Queen's Privy Chamber and one of her principal ladies-in-waiting, also each bestowed part of a loose gown of black taffeta with tufts of white silk and an embroidered border with chain lace in Venice gold, silver-gilt threads in 1589.²⁵⁸

²⁵⁷ Gift Rolls 1585, 57; 1600, 13; See Lawson, ed., *The Elizabethan New Year's gift exchanges*, pp. 350, 482; British Library, RP 294, Vol. 1 (1600).

²⁵⁸ Gift Rolls 1589, 162; See Lawson, ed., *The Elizabethan New Year's gift exchanges*, p. 395; British Library, Lansdowne Roll 17 (1589); For more on Mary Scudamore see Eleri Lynn, *Tudor Fashion* (London, 2017), p. 114.



Figure 16. Lace fragment, 16th century, Italian, Medium: Metal thread, bobbin lace, Dimensions: L. 5 x W. 3 1/2 inches (12.7 x 8.9 cm), Credit Line: Rogers Fund, 1908, Accession Number: 08.48.35, Public Domain, Metropolitan Museum of Art

Once again, these offerings incorporated both expensive fabrics and components like embroidery and lace. Lace had a particularly luxurious and ephemeral character. A garment loaded with lace trimmings, especially in threads of gold or silver, created texture and a glittering effect (See above lace fragment). Elizabeth would have appeared to radiate wealth, status, and position as the metal caught the light and the physical presence of materials—its weight and thread count—would have been imposing. These offerings were true status garments whose value was based on the materials.²⁵⁹

They also included colours from unique and challenging dyes—white, sundry (assorted), and black—which furthered their worth. This was another way of intentionally using materials to convey an idea or indicate value. Elizabeth received garments in many diverse colours which stood out brightly and took both time and expertise to make in the correct shade. Black, for

²⁵⁹ Frick, *Dressing Renaissance Florence*, p. 163.

example, had a particular cultural prestige because it relied on a dyer having a specific understanding of colour in order to produce the ‘correct’ black rather than a grey or ash colour.²⁶⁰ An individual’s ability to procure this ideal shade, therefore, indicated both their wealth and access to a network of talented makers. The Queen received colourful garments from men and, it should be noted, women. Francis Wolley (1583-1609), a member of Parliament, gave Elizabeth a petticoat in sea green while the before-mentioned Scudamore and Sir William Knolles (1544-1632), a nobleman and Controller of the Household between 1597 and 1602, gave garments in maiden blush pink—a gown of taffeta and a satin petticoat embroidered with flowers and daises.²⁶¹ These dyes had intrinsic material value, but they were also the result of innovations and expanded English trading networks in the sixteenth century similar to embroidery. This inherent novelty made them desirable for both those at court and throughout society. Sea green proved popular amongst well-connected members of the nobility while maiden blush is found in Suffolk draper inventories from the early seventeenth century showing its wider proliferation.²⁶²

However, garments were not the only dress gifts given jointly. Jewels were often given in a similar fashion. The Earl of Warwick and his wife, for example, each gave sets of gold buttons with amethysts and pearls while Lord William Howard (1563-1640) and Lady Elizabeth Howard (1564-1639) in 1581 both offered the Queen two gold bodkins, long pin or pin-shaped hair ornaments, set with diamonds, emeralds, and pearls.²⁶³ Mrs. Carre, a serving woman to Elizabeth from at least 1591, and her husband followed a similar pattern of joint giving when they each bestowed one of a pair of gold bracelets with pearls and amethysts in 1599. These

²⁶⁰ Currie, *Fashion and Masculinity in Renaissance Florence*, pp. 100-101.

²⁶¹ Gift Rolls 1588, 156; 1597, 126; 1598, 117; See Lawson, ed., *The Elizabethan New Year’s gift exchanges*, pp. 376, 431, 450; British Library, Additional MS 8159 (1588); British Library, Facs 672 (1597); The National Archives, Public Record Office at Kew C 47/3/40 (1598).

²⁶² *The 16th Century Household Secrets*, pp. 133-135; SRO Lowestoft S35/3/5/12, probate inventory of William Harrison, draper, Lowestoft, 1603; Quoted in Spufford and Mee, *The Clothing of the Common Sort*, pp. 234-235.

²⁶³ Gift Rolls 1581, 11; 1581, 59; See Lawson, ed., *The Elizabethan New Year’s gift exchanges*, pp. 268, 270; Arnold, *Queen Elizabeth’s Wardrobe Unlocked*, p. 360.

were most likely intended to be used together.²⁶⁴ Couples also gave complementary accessories for an outfit. In 1588, Lord and Baroness Hunsdon each provided a part of a lawn veil striped with Venice gold and ‘Owes’ in gold.²⁶⁵ Mr. George Kirkeham gave Elizabeth several ruffs of lawn cutwork while his wife presented a large handkerchief with a border of lawn cutwork in 1599.²⁶⁶



Figure 17. Fragment, 16th century, Italian, Medium: Linen, cutwork, Dimensions: H. 9 x W. 4 inches (22.9 x 10.2 cm), Credit Line: Anonymous Gift, 1879, Accession Number: 79.1.102, Public Domain, Metropolitan Museum of Art

Mr. William Huggyns, most likely an embroiderer, gifted a silk headdress in many colours to go with his wife’s presentation of a multi-coloured lawn scarf embroidered in silk.²⁶⁷ One again, we see the dominant presence of lawn fabric—though here it mainly emerges in the offerings of those at court rather than merchants or craftspeople. These particular gifts, however, occur later than those given by the urban elites, perhaps indicating lawn was now more readily accessible outside the city and becoming an established court fabric. It may have

²⁶⁴ Gift Rolls 1599, 154; See Lawson, ed., *The Elizabethan New Year’s gift exchanges*, p. 472.

²⁶⁵ Gift Rolls 1588, 56; See Lawson, ed., *The Elizabethan New Year’s gift exchanges*, p. 370; British Library, Additional MS 8159 (1588).

²⁶⁶ Gift Rolls 1599, 193; See Lawson, ed., *The Elizabethan New Year’s gift exchanges*, p. 474.

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

also had elevated prestige because the Queen was known by then to prefer it. Additionally, around the 1580s, the fashion for parlets, a cloth inserted into a low neckline, and crepins (Crippens), part of a hood, increasingly called for fine linen fabrics like lawn.²⁶⁸ Lawn's versatility made it ideal for these lightweight accessories and their combination with sleeves, veils, and ruffs. Thus, although the popularity of lawn seen in these later New Year's gift rolls still drew on its inherent properties as it had for urban elites, it was increasingly connected by courtiers with specific fashions and royal links. These later offerings help show how lawn and its value evolved from a mercantile novelty to an established court textile.

Couples who gave complementing accessories, including lawn or not, bequeathed especially versatile gifts that could be easily used together or joined with other elements of Elizabeth's wardrobe. Joint giving also enabled givers—both men and women—to underscore their familial or coupled connection as well as their link with the sovereign through the shared materials, styles, or constructions of the dress gift itself, which when worn tangibly represented these bonds.²⁶⁹ Joint giving was not a response to lack of wealth, status, or resources. Couples from all echelons of court society used this mode of exchange. It suggests, therefore, something about the value of this type of giving as a social mode in early modern English society as complementary to individual giving practices and perhaps indicative of a growing partnership between male and female courtiers during Elizabeth's reign.²⁷⁰ It also shows how the Queen's dress gifts were rarely the work of one individual but represented the culmination of choices and decisions made by men, women, families, and craftspeople. These deliberations are often

²⁶⁸ Spufford and Mee, *The Clothing of the Common Sort*, pp. 177, 179.

²⁶⁹ Joint giving does not seem to apply to fabric gifts. However, the Earl of Warwick did provide a fair cloth of Estate in silver with the Queen's Arm embroidered on it with seed pearls and a tree while his wife gave a fair cloth chair in silver embroidered with trees with cushions and a footstool. Gift Rolls 1582, 10; See Lawson, ed., *The Elizabethan New Year's gift exchanges*, p. 292; British Library, Harley 1644 (1582).

²⁷⁰ Helen Graham-Matheson, 'Petticoats and Politics: Elizabeth Parr and Female Agency at the Early Elizabethan Court' in *The Politics of Female Households: Ladies-in-Waiting across Early Modern Europe*, edited by Nadine Akkerman and Birgit Houben (Leiden, 2014), pp. 31-50, 36, 50.

lost within the historical record. Yet, the New Year's gift rolls help illuminate this important aspect of Elizabethan exchange.

Giving Networks

Male gift-giving relied on both female and male networks to ascertain Elizabeth's preferences and her inclination toward the message that the object sent. The Queen's women had a central role in the dispensation of this information because of their proximity to the monarch and her wardrobe.²⁷¹ Scholars such as Charlotte Merton, Catherine Howey Stearn, and Susan Doran have outlined some of these female networks and shown the specific and pivotal role of gentlewomen, especially those who served in the privy chamber, as intermediaries in the communication and ceremony of gift exchange.²⁷² Gentlewomen received both spontaneous gifts to the Queen as well as offerings from courtiers who could not attend at the New Year.²⁷³ They also cared for these gifts once they entered the royal wardrobe. These actions made these women valued participants in Elizabethan courtly culture and an early modern political structure rooted in reciprocal relationships and the construction of the monarchical image.²⁷⁴

The reputed scholar and tutor, Anthony Wingfield (c.1552-c.1611), for example, asked Lady Frances Cobham (c.1530-1592), Lady of the Bedchamber and Mistress of the Robes by 1565, and Countess Frances Sussex (1531-1589), Lady of the Bedchamber, what he should give Elizabeth. The women suggested a peach cloak embroidered with pretty flowers and leaves rather than a jewel, and Wingfield dutifully took their advice, presenting the gift to Elizabeth

²⁷¹ Merton 'The women who served Queen Mary and Queen Elizabeth', p. 101.

²⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 101; Doran, *Elizabeth I and Her Circle*, pp. 196, 205.

²⁷³ Doran, *Elizabeth I and Her Circle*, p. 205.

²⁷⁴ For another perspective on how women and men worked together in order to improve status at the Elizabethan court apart from gift exchange see Kristin Bundesen, 'No Other Faction But My Own': Dynastic Politics and Elizabeth I's Carey Cousins', PhD Thesis, University of Nottingham, 2008; Kristin Bundesen, 'Lousy with cousins: Elizabeth I's family at court' in *The Rituals and Rhetoric of Queenship: Medieval to Early Modern*, edited by Liz Oakley-Brown and Louise J. Wilkinson (Dublin, 2009), pp. 77-78. This work shows how Elizabeth's family relations worked effectively to gain position and wealth at her court.

on New Year 1576.²⁷⁵ Cobham and Sussex perhaps knew the Queen would much prefer a fashionably coloured and textured garment and would more likely use it than just another jewel. They perhaps also believed Wingfield's position and wealth were better suited to buy an attractive garment within budget than a jewel that might have to be more modest. This exchange, then, highlights the information and sensitivity that court women had because of their positions and relationships with the Queen. It also shows how these women could choose to disseminate or use this information in the processes of gift-giving and the reliance men had upon them and their insights.

However, despite the centrality of female networks in Elizabethan gift exchange, this chapter extends the analysis by focusing on the value of networks created and used by men. It specifically builds upon the contention by Catherine Howey Stearn that both women and men participated in a system of dress gifts encouraged by the Queen.²⁷⁶ However, this section investigates the reality, form, and function of this collaborative enterprise. This extends our appreciation of how gift-giving worked at Elizabeth's court. It reinforces the centrality and significance of gift exchange and clothing gifts as political tools and parts of court culture for both men and women while also revealing some of the complexity within its execution and practice. Finally, by establishing male courtiers' active participation, this section highlights the heterogeneous nature of the sartorial culture of the court and the hazards which arise when scholars sharply divide male and female political or social engagement within it.

While men often used female networks, they also equally relied on other men when determining the correct dress gift. The Queen's godson, Sir John Harrington (c. 1517-1582), for example, asked around 1579 for Sir Robert Sidney's (1563-1626) advice about what 'pretty jewel or garment' he should present to the Queen in order to garner favour and regain the lands his father

²⁷⁵ Folger, X, p. 429; printed in Arnold, *Queen Elizabeth's Wardrobe Unlocked*, p. 95.

²⁷⁶ Stearn, 'Fashioning Monarchy', pp. 148-149, 151; Stearn, 'Critique or Compliment?', pp., 126-127.

forfeited for supporting Richard III.²⁷⁷ Sir Arthur Throckmorton (c.1557-1626) requested similar information from Robert Cecil (1563-1612) in 1594 when Throckmorton sought Elizabeth's forgiveness for his family because his sister, Elizabeth, had married Sir Walter Raleigh which infuriated the Queen and disgraced them. The letter began in a convivial tone before turning to one central part of the entertainment—dress. Throckmorton noted how he intended to throw himself at the Queen's feet and present her with a ring made as a wedding band with diamonds and a ruby—like a heart placed in a cornet inscribed 'Elizabetha potest'.²⁷⁸ This inscription, as well as the setting as a wedding ring, materially emphasised Throckmorton's hope that Elizabeth would forgive him. Wedding rings—the perpetual circular shape—reinforced the fidelity and bond between spouses.²⁷⁹ Throckmorton's specific notation of this association indicates his desire that it be understood as an intrinsic part of the gift. Thus, the ring acted to assure her of his loyalty and acknowledge her power. This double meaning helps reveal what Throckmorton was really asking Robert Cecil. His question was not just one of fashionability—will the Queen approve of the jewellery—but was also concerned with whether she would accept its message carried in the materials, form, and presentation. Throckmorton saw Robert Cecil as having access to this information because of his proximity to the Queen and her confidence in him. Cecil also had a number of female relatives like his wife, Elizabeth Brooke, in the privy chamber who could help him gain knowledge about the Queen's preferences which he might then use and circulate. This made him an apt and valuable gift broker who understood both the power and the message that dress gifts could have between a subject and monarch. However, he was not a lone island from which other courtiers could find refuge, but instead he was a very important link in a chain of both men and women who

²⁷⁷ John Harrington, *Nugae Antiquae Being a Miscellaneous Collection of Original Papers, in Prose and Verse; Written During the Reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI, Queen Mary, Elizabeth, and King James*, Vol. I (London, 1804), p. 120.

²⁷⁸ 'Arthur Throgmorton to Sir Robert Cecil', January 1594, Hatfield House, Cecil Papers, 25/6.

²⁷⁹ R. Hooker, 'Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Politie' in *The Works of the Learned and Judicious Divine, Mr. Richard Hooker*, edited by J. Keble (Oxford, 1723), p. 267.

kept the system of sartorial gift-giving running smoothly. It seems Robert Cecil gave good advice because Throckmorton and his family were restored.

It was not only men who drew upon networks of information from other men: the information they held about dress was also valued by women. This seems like an inversion of what we might expect if we equate only women with an interest in clothing. However, Dowager Lady Elizabeth Russell's (1528-1609) correspondence from 1600 affirms that she viewed Robert Cecil as someone who understood the significance of dress as well as its place in the gift-giving process between subject and monarch. Lady Russell records how she gave Elizabeth several gifts, including a pearl pendant and two hats, one of which was a white beaver hat with a jewel on it worth over a hundred pounds. Additionally, she provided 'a gown and petticoat of such tissue as should have been for the Queen of Scots' wedding garment'.²⁸⁰



Although not in white beaver, this hat presents a similar example to the fashionable beaver hat described by Lady Russell in her letter to Robert Cecil. It, most likely, had an equivalent form and structure.

²⁸⁰ 'Elizabeth, Dowager Lady Russell to Mr. Secretary [Cecil]', 5 March 1600, Hatfield House, Cecil Papers, 178/132.

Figure 18. Beaver hat, England (made), 1590-1670 (made), Materials and Techniques: Beaver fur; felted, blocked, Credit Line: Given by Lady Spickernell, Museum number: T.22-1938, © The Victoria and Albert Museum



These doll's breeches are constructed from silver tissue with silks. In contrast to the gown provided by Lady Russell, this fabric has silver rather than gold thread. However, it helps demonstrate the fine quality of tissue material with its expensive looking shine which would have glimmered in the light because of its manufacture with gold or silver threads woven into the textile.

Figure 19. Doll's breeches, London (made), 1690-1700 (made), Materials and Techniques: Silver tissue with silks, lined with chamois leather, silk, and flannel, Credit Line: Purchased by public subscription, Museum number: T.847B-1974, Gallery location: Temporary Exhibition space, case CA11, © The Victoria and Albert Museum

This correspondence relays the magnificence of these offerings to Robert Cecil and the financial undertaking required from Lady Russell. For example, the actual cost of the hat jewel, worth over a hundred pounds, was noted in the letter while the materials and connection to the Queen of Scots demonstrated the expenditure and quality of the gown and petticoat to Cecil. The pieces of clothing Russell provided Elizabeth were constructed from the most expensive fabric

available.²⁸¹ Tissue as a textile included ‘raised loops of gilded metal thread as well as metal thread and wire forming part of the ground weave’.²⁸² It also accentuated Elizabeth’s position because the material—cloth of tissue—was reserved for royal use.²⁸³ This made it both exclusive and expensive since the material literally comprised gold. The fineness of the material was also conveyed in the letter. This reference from 1600 to the Queen of Scots’ most likely referred to the new Queen of Scots, Anne of Denmark, who married King James VI of Scotland in 1589, approximately twelve years before this letter was written.²⁸⁴ The tissue used for her wedding dress would have been of the highest calibre produced by the most skilled craftspeople. Russell wished to convey a similar sentiment about the quality of the tissue she provided for Elizabeth. The gown and petticoat were ‘of such tissue as should have been for the Queen of Scots’ wedding garment’. The tissue fabric was not only fit for royal use but extravagant enough for a royal bride.²⁸⁵ The value of this gift, therefore, was rooted in an understanding of both the material cost and the inaccessibility of this type of fabric to most in early modern society.

These gifts demonstrated a huge financial undertaking on the part of Lady Russell and proved her loyalty and devotion to the Queen. Yet, despite this generous and powerfully symbolic outpouring, Lady Russell pleaded with Robert Cecil because there had been no return of the promised lease of land that she desired despite the knowledge that Elizabeth liked the gifts.

²⁸¹ Hayward, *Rich Apparel*, p. 89.

²⁸² Clare Browne, ‘“Silks, Velvets, Cloths of Gold and Other Such Precious Raiments’: Clothing and Furnishing the Tudor and Stuart Courts’ in *Treasures of the Royal Courts: Tudors, Stuarts and the Russian Tsars*, edited by Olga Dmitrieva and Tessa Murdoch (London, 2013), pp. 126-143, 130.

²⁸³ Hayward, *Rich Apparel*, p. 89.

²⁸⁴ ‘Elizabeth, Dowager Lady Russell to Mr. Secretary [Cecil]’, 5 March 1600, Hatfield House, Cecil Papers, 178/132.

²⁸⁵ Although in this letter it appears that Elizabeth Russell was comparing the dress of tissue she bought as something suitable for Anna of Denmark’s wedding gown, an alternative reading might be that this letter shows Elizabeth Russell asserting that she had given Anna’s actual gown to Queen Elizabeth. This would have made the gift particularly political. However, this interpretation has not been chosen as the primary one since the wording of the text as well as further questions about why Queen Elizabeth and Elizabeth Russell would have wanted to potentially create conflict with Scotland and Denmark make it a more questionable interpretation.

The Give and Take of Dress Gifts

The Lady Russell letter encapsulates how gifts of dress actually operated at the Elizabethan court. They were not simply given altruistically but were given with an expectation of a return whether this be future political favour or, as in this case, an immediate tangible benefit of land. Lady Russell describes this as the accepted and understood format of gift exchange. Yet Elizabeth as the receiver had not fulfilled her part in the process, and Lady Russell thus believed that someone—Robert Cecil, in this instance—must address the situation and preserve the ‘correct’ process of exchange where the subject gave to receive and the Queen received to give. Lady Russell implicitly assumes Cecil will see both the value of these dress gifts and acknowledge how the process has broken down. This example, then, underlines men’s active role in the exchange and valuation of dress at the Elizabethan court. They understood and used it as an important political and social tool where subject and monarch had specific obligations to each other.

The Lady Russell letter also highlights another important aspect of Elizabeth’s wardrobe: it was not entirely controlled by her. Its construction significantly relied on dress gifts, especially elements of jewellery and accessories, from subjects who generally wanted a majestic monarch, but who also understood their vital role in this process and occasionally, as we see here, yielded their power when it broke down. This was especially the case as the reign progressed and Elizabeth increasingly relied on these dress gifts to supplement and expand her wardrobe without putting a financial strain on the crown’s finances. However, in exchange, her subjects like Lady Russell demanded returns from the assets the Queen did have in abundance—land and position, rather than merely plate. Yet, this letter indicated Elizabeth could be quite stingy in her offerings as she failed to uphold her part in the process of gift exchange and devalued this mode of early modern exchange.

Conclusion: Valuing Dress Gifts

Analysing the gifting practices of men enhances our understanding of the relational dynamics of the Elizabethan court and highlights the different regimes of value that existed and converged in these practices. This context shows the layered political and social value of clothing, jewellery, and accessories. It also demonstrates that, more often than not, Elizabethan men and women could access and offer similar types of gifts that demonstrated wealth and position. They even gave these gifts jointly, drawing on both their female and male knowledge networks to better understand the Queen's preferences and as a way to assert and represent the primacy of their power, influence, and resources as a couple rather than as individuals. This relational element of gift-giving amongst married couples is particularly novel and asserts the fundamental importance of clothing gifts within early modern courts for both men and women and the perceived significance for the roles each had in the practice of giving. The giving of dress, therefore, was a valued form of enacting and displaying the social and political bonds for those connected to the court and the Queen. These gifts also reveal the central role both mercantile and court men had alongside women in shaping the fashion and economy of early modern England as they provided innovative and tasteful offerings to the Queen and made the English court one of the most fashionable in Europe.

However, this chapter also shows that the value of these dress gifts was not static but instead influenced by a variety of factors. While merchant men, for example, offered items valued because of their novelty and innovation, most courtiers relied on the inherent expense of materials to give their gifts worth. The value of a dress gift could change depending on the context and the status of the giver. Accessories like gloves were deemed more appropriate at events like the university welcome and lesser courtiers were not expected to give garments of great expense when the Queen progressed throughout the country. This shows, therefore, that the value of a dress gift was not just about the gift itself but also about material knowledge,

access, and personal insights about the monarch's preferences. Men and women typically acquired this information through the interpersonal relationships of the court both inside and outside of it. This was also a valuable commodity as it increased a gift's effectiveness often making it more precious than a gift's materials.

William Cecil's sons, Thomas and Robert, help demonstrate how a dress gift could have added value because of its personalisation and context as well as its materials. In 1598, they presented Sir John Stanhope (1559 – 1611) with a jewel for Elizabeth.²⁸⁶ This jewel was heart-shaped and engraved with William's motto on the back: *Cor unum, via una* (One heart, one way). The design also included a golden sheaf of corn reminiscent of William's coat of arms and meant to remind the Queen of their father's desire for a fruitful and flourishing nation. The materials of this jewel were fine. However, it was the inclusion of the personal elements—the motto and coat of arms—which the two sons believed increased the value of the gift as a personal reminder to the Queen both of William's devotion to her and the love Thomas and Robert had for their father. The strength of this connection was underscored by the fact that the two sons gave this gift together—a physical manifestation of their unity. The choices made by Thomas and Robert in connection with the gifting of this jewel, therefore, offer one final example which highlights just how multifaceted the value of dress gifts was at the Elizabethan court and how regimes of value actually played out in this context.

²⁸⁶ 'Minute of Thomas, Baron Burghley and RC to Sir John Stanhope, Sept. 1598', Hatfield House, Cecil Papers, 64 f. 66r; for more information about the more general context surrounding the gifting of this jewel see Alford, *Burghley*, pp. 335-336

Chapter Three: Value in the Household

On the 22nd of December 1555, William Cecil recorded his recent payment of a tailor's bill in the household account book.²⁸⁷ This specific bill detailed the expenses for several garments including a nightshirt, a doublet, two jerkins, and two gowns. Yet, it was not just interested in the monetary value of each item. This bill was meticulous and specific. It recorded the fabrics needed to make each garment—satin, fustian, taffeta, velvet, silk, and cotton—as well as the colour of the cloth. The decorative materials, such as lace and buttons, were also documented with the price, yardage, and number of each item detailed. The accounts, for example, included the purchase of two dozen buttons for the doublet while two and a half yards of fustian were noted as necessary for the construction of one of the jerkins. Cecil's notes show an awareness of the materials—textiles and ornamentation—required to make a garment. In addition, they highlight an understanding of how different textiles served different purposes for a garment and its construction. His notes about the purchases made for the night shirt, for instance, recorded both the cloth used as the main fabric of the garment as well as the half yard of cotton needed to line the back. Additionally, the purchases for the jerkin included black velvet and silk which was bought specifically to support the application of lace and stabilise it against the velvet fabric. This detail made the garment more luxurious but also highlighted Cecil's awareness of how elements of the jerkin were made and the materials necessary for its completion.

Over fifty years later, on the 1st of June 1606, another tailor's bill was recorded in the household account book.²⁸⁸ It was for purchases made by Lord Cranborne, William Cecil's grandson, from Mr. Moore, the tailor. This later bill shared both striking similarities to and some distinct differences from Cecil's 1555 expenditure and record-keeping about clothing. Like the earlier example, the 1606 bill included materials bought for the making of several garments, although

²⁸⁷ Hatfield House, Cecil Papers, 11.2/96.

²⁸⁸ Hatfield House, Box G. 2., 'Lord Cranbornes apparel 1606-7'; Hatfield House, Bills 20, 'Mr Moore the Tailor his Bill for my Lord Cranborne, The first of June 1606'.

the inclusion of a pair of hose and a suit along with the doublet were a slightly different assemblage. The bill noted the specific fabrics—watered grosgrain, taffeta, canvas, and fustian—needed to make Cranborne’s clothing as well as the decorative materials—lace, buttons, and ribbons—that aided the construction and the ornamentation of the garments. The records, once again, are specific and meticulous. They included the prices and yardage of each material.²⁸⁹ Cranborne bought, for example, three ounces of lace, a quarter of white taffeta, and an ell of taffeta (approximately eighteen inches or 457 mm) for the doublet and hose. This later bill also shared a similar appreciation for different textiles and their use in the construction process as the 1555 bill. Two ells of taffeta, for instance, were bought specifically to line and face the hose for thirteen shillings along with an additional purchase of fustian for the making of the hose as well as the watered green grosgrain used as the primary garment fabric.

However, despite these similarities, the later 1606 bill highlighted several differences in the elite clothing of the household between the mid-sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Colour was the first divergence. While the 1555 bill included garments primarily in darker colours, the 1606 bill provides a glimpse to the expanding colours of cloth and clothing with the vibrant green grosgrain doublet. Additionally, the later bill reveals an expansion in the ornamentation of clothing with its inclusion of many decorative elements—three ounces of lace, white taffeta for the collar, silk, buttons, and pockets—in the expenditure for the doublet. The 1555 doublet, however, did not include any of these embellishments.

These detailed account books allow this thesis to consider the regimes of value associated with cloth and clothing in the Burghley and Salisbury household context. As noted in the introduction, William Cecil managed one of the largest households in early modern England with around 120 members.²⁹⁰ Yet, despite the exceptional size of William’s specific household,

²⁸⁹ Unlike in the earlier 1555 bill, the number of buttons is not recorded.

²⁹⁰ Sim, *Masters and Servants in Tudor England*, p. 2.

the household was still the most common social unit in which individuals found themselves in early modern England which makes it an important context for understanding, more generally, how Englishmen and women would have understood value and its relationship to dress.²⁹¹ This chapter helps us see how the story of value in cloth and clothing was not just about economic and government policies or the court but equally about households both urban and rural. Additionally, value was something with wider connections highlighting the intersection between values of record-keeping, material literacy, knowledge, and the making process.

Accounting for Cloth and Clothing

This chapter uses the Burghley and Salisbury household account books, such as the two bills discussed above, as its source. It specifically focuses on the daily records and re-copied bills compiled within the larger family records for William Cecil, Lord Burghley, and his son, Robert Cecil, the Earl of Salisbury. This chapter includes approximately seventy bills alongside three different series of expenses taken from 1557, 1600, and 1605-1606. The authorship of these sources is varied. It ranges from direct accounting by William and Robert Cecil to records kept by their secretaries and stewards as well as bills copied from the craftspeople and makers themselves. Together, these accounts provide evidence of the costs associated with cloth and clothing within the household.

This chapter focuses on two interconnected forms of financial record keeping—bills and expenditure accounts—which were combined and compiled into household account books. This is because of their extensive and detailed nature. For example, the 1608 bill detailing Robert Cecil's apparel purchased from the tailor, Mr. Collard included information about the cost, colour, material, and construction of each item rather than simply naming the garment and its total production cost:

²⁹¹ Sim, *Masters and Servants in Tudor England*, p. 2.

...Mr Collard's bill. Sum liij li. xvijij s. vj d. Received the 18th of June 1608.
Chr: Collard.

For iij yds + halfe of b. Sattine for a do. at xiiij s. the yeard—ij li. ix s.

For one elle + halfe of b. taffita sarsenet under the cuts—xij s.

For iij qr of chausable taffita next the shirte—x s.

For halfe an ell of b. taffita to face that do.—vij s.

For canvass steffninge + bombas for that do.—iiij s. vj d.

For bottons + silke to quilte that do.—iiij s.

For cuttinge your do. single + buttonhole silke—ij s. vj d.

For fustine to the sleeves + strings for that do. —ij s. vi d.

For making this doublat—x s.

For canvass steffninge + canvas for a whit sattine do. —iiij s. vj d.

For bottons + silke to quilte that do.—iiij s. vj d.

For rasinge + cuttinge that do. + silke—xxij s.

For strings to that doublat—xij d.

For making that do.—x s.

For canvass steffninge + canvas for a b. sattine do.—iiij s. vj d.

For bottons + silke to quilte that do.—iiij s. vj d.

For Rasinge + cutting that do. + buttonhole silke—xij s.

For strings to that doublat—xij d.

For b. taffita to face that do. —vij s.

For making that do.—x s.

For lyninge of a b. uncut velvat cloke imbroderd with tawnye—iiij s.

For silke to that cloke—ij s.

For lining of a b. grogerene with b. sattine Rased + silke to that cloake—vj s.

For making of a b. uncut velvat cloke wrought half an ell deepe—v li.

For silke to set this lace + gards—xxx s.

For x yeards of b. sattine to lyne that cloake—vij li.

For fustine to border it about—ijij s.

For Rasinge the lyninge of that cloake of b. sattine + cuttine —l s.

For strings to that cloake + stiffninge the coller—xviiij d.

For purple velvat to the Roabe + b. taffita—viij s.

For lyninge the coate + a bolster + ether to the same—iiij s.

For x yds of b. sattine to make a do. a peare of panne hoase + panne Jurkine at
xiiij s yd—vij li.

For iij els of b. taffita Sarsnet to the do. hoase and Jurkine—xxiiij s.

For iij els of b. taffita to line the panne Jurkine the pannes of the hoase make
cannons + face the do. + pockets of the hoase at xiiij s. an ell—ij li. ij s.

For one ell + halfe of Chansable taffita next the shirte of the doublat—xix s. ij
d.

For xij dosen of lace to make the pannes of the house + Jurkine at xij s a
dosen—vij li. iiij s.

For sike to set this lace one the hoase + Jurkine—xvj s.

For canvass bombast + stiffninge for a b. Sattine do.—iiij s. vj d.

For bottons + silke to quilte the do.—iiij s. vj d.

For cuttinge that do. single + buttonhole silke—ij s. vj d.

For strings to that doublat—xij d.

For making that doublat—x s.

For canvass bayes + bombast for the panne hoase—vj s.

For silke to lyne the pannes—iij s.

For cuttinge the drawings out + cannons—ij s. vj d.

For fustine to the leg lynings + pockets—iiij s.

For mackenge the pannes and a waistband—xviiij d.

For Rasinge the pannes of the hoase—viiij s.

For makinge the hoase to wrought—ij li.

For bottons + loupe lce to that Jurkine + strings—v s.

For macking that Jurkine + Rasinge the Same—vj s.

For makinge that Jurkine shutable to the hoase—xxxv s.

For drawing the wheele peeces of a moringe cloke—iiij s. vj d.

For Ribben to that cloke + string—ij s. vj d.

For saye to line that cloke in the backe—v s.

For buckram to the cape—vj d.

For makinge that cloake—iij s.

For making of iij morninge cloakes + Ribben —xij s.

Soma total. Lij li. xviiij s. vj d.²⁹²

²⁹² Hatfield House, Bills 33, p.2.

On the surface, account books like those compiled by the Burghley and Salisbury households may seem like straightforward sources. They provide useful insight into the cloth and clothing worn by a household. One could create a list of fabrics, colours, materials, and construction techniques from them or attempt to reconstruct the wardrobes of individual family members. One could also better understand who purchased items within a household and from whom these articles of dress were bought. These facts and details would provide important information about the dress of aristocratic families in early modern England.

Yet, recent work by scholars such as Jason Scott-Warren, Alexandra Walsham, Kate Peters, and Liesbeth Corens has complicated our assumptions about early modern account books. While in some ways, early modern account books were '[d]edicated to the piecemeal itemization of dates, places, purchases and prices...', they were hardly just '...utilitarian documents that...have no ulterior motives or hidden designs...'. Instead, '.... account books were subject to cultural pressures that make them distinctly partial and often perilous guides to the past.'²⁹³ They are 'fractured sources' often with gaps and silences particularly when it came to women and non-elites.²⁹⁴ This does not make account books useless for historians. Instead, it provides a necessary reminder for historians that they must probe the cultural context in which account books were formed and the bearing these 'cultural pressures' had on why different kinds of knowledge and information was recorded and how it was preserved and privileged in these records.

This chapter sees this reminder or caution as an opportunity. The potential 'ulterior motives' or 'hidden designs' of the Burghley and Salisbury household accounts provide the theoretical framework for this chapter's investigation into the wider cultural context in which the bills and

²⁹³ Jason Scott-Warren, 'Early Modern Bookkeeping and Life-Writing Revisited: Accounting for Richard Stonley' in *The Social History of the Archive: Record-Keeping in Early Modern Europe*, edited by Liesbeth Corens, Kate Peters, and Alexandra Walsham, *Past and Present Supplement* 11 (2016), pp. 151-170, 151.

²⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 157.

expenditure lists were written, in order to highlight how they offer unique insight into a transformative moment. This moment was transformative not only in terms of early modern English dress but also in the rising value of material knowledge and experimentation within early modern English society witnessed in the household as well as the government and at court.

Household Accounts: A Culture of Knowledge

William, Robert, and their secretaries' compiling of these household accounts provides initial insight into a specific knowledge culture interested in transmission and precision since they did not haphazardly assemble them. In fact, many of the bills appear within the records as copies rather than original receipts. This is evidenced through a comparison between the bill's language and that same document's hand. A payment from the 10th of January 1557 recorded the following purchase: 'Itm for lakis for my Mr shyrt' or 'Item for laces for my master's shirt'.²⁹⁵ The context reveals that the 'Master' referred to within the bill must be William Cecil. However, on closer inspection, this bill is written in William Cecil's hand meaning that he was referring to himself in the third person rather than altering the receipt to the first person as he transferred it into the household account books. It suggests, then, that the bill was being recopied word for word. William Cecil recopied many of these receipts in the sixteenth century while Robert Cecil and various other secretaries recopied those in the seventeenth-century account books. This initially seems peculiar but needs to be considered within the larger early modern culture of record-keeping where direct copying and re-copying were viewed as essential to the precision, detail, and authenticity of a document and the credibility of an individual.

Early modern English record-keeping had its own culture of correct practice largely influenced by the growing desire for more accurate accounting. This was not particular to the Burghley and Salisbury households or even those within aristocratic society. At its foundation was a

²⁹⁵ Hatfield House, General 139.1, 'Payments from the x day of Januarii to ye xvij of ye same, 1556/7'.

desire for trustworthy documents even in the process of transmission. This influenced both the theory and practice of record keeping and household accounting. Documents were viewed as becoming more and more accurate through their copying and recopying.²⁹⁶ The keeper of these accounts also proved their individual credibility and the truthfulness of their figures through this practice.²⁹⁷ This meant that recopying was not viewed as squandering time and energy but instead instilling integrity and value for both individuals and their records. This explains, therefore, why men like William Cecil and Robert Cecil would expend such time and energy on household accounts and the direct recopying of bills into these sources. It also underscores the significance of what they recorded and then re-recorded within these documents.

Account books have offered recent historiography a multitude of insights into the past. Early modern historians interested in autobiography, dress, sumptuary legislation, consumption, and cultural trends have greatly benefited from these sources.²⁹⁸ This chapter builds upon much of this historiographical work especially when it pertains to cloth and clothing. However, it asks if account books can actually be understood as part of a different early modern English context where their ‘hidden designs’ and ‘ulterior motives’ revealed the value placed in a household context on material knowledge, innovation, and experimentation and the influence these ideas had on society and its practices for individuals beyond just innovators and men of science.

Records of Value

This chapter has established that people in early modern society viewed account books as valuable. They were valuable as records of proper account and, when constructed correctly, reflected well on the monetary transactions and character of an individual and their household.

²⁹⁶ Adam Smyth, *Autobiography in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2010), p. 65.

²⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

²⁹⁸ Scott-Warren, ‘Early Modern Bookkeeping and Life-Writing Revisited’, p. 152; Sophie Pitman, ‘Prodigal Years? Negotiating Luxury and Fashioning Identity in a Seventeenth-century Account Book,’ *Luxury*, 3:1-2 (2016), pp. 7-31; Alford, *London’s Triumph*, p. 100; John Isham, *mercator and merchant adventurer: two account books of a London merchant in the reign of Elizabeth I*, edited by G.D. Ramsay, Vol. 21 (Gateshead, 1962), p. 158; Spufford and Mee, *The Clothing of the Common Sort*, pp. 132-133.

However, this also meant that what these account books recorded—the particular details—held specific value no matter how brief or detailed, such as several payments recorded by William Cecil from the 29th of November to the 6th of December 1556/1557:

Itm for a Brosshe by him [Thomas Tewsdai]—x d

Itm pd for xix payr of glovys by Margett Wyght—viiij s iiiij d

Itm paid for v ellys of lynyn cloth for Shyrtyis for Mr Thomas at xvj d ye elle by hyr [Margett Wyght]—vj s 8 d

Itm pd for iij qtrs. of a elle for bandes + Ruffes for ye same shyrtes—xxj d

Itm for a yard of cloth to make ye my dwyte a kercher—ij s²⁹⁹

What immediately strikes the observer of the Burghley and Salisbury household accounts is the attention to materials and construction. This chapter is not suggesting this attention is necessarily specific to these households and their accounts, but rather that the survival of these records may allow us to explore these ideas more broadly and thoroughly in a way which is not possible for other early modern English people. This offers insight into court documents or government and economic policy records from a different perspective.

This attention to materials and construction may initially seem straightforward. In a society where the materials constituted the primary cost of a garment, any prudent bookkeeper would desire to record these elements as with the New Year's gift rolls. Additionally, the design details about dress might allow the maker to differentiate the piece of clothing from others within the bill. And, yet, less expensive materials like ribbon and buttons are recorded as well as more invisible construction techniques like the linings of garments in these household accounts. The fabrics are also often given multiple layers of detail including colour and type of cloth. These details relied on a greater knowledge about the subtleties of materials and the processes of making and innovation in the early modern period. The intentional inclusion of this specific

²⁹⁹ Hatfield House, General 139.1, 'Payments from the xxix th day of novembr to ye vj of decembr; Endorsed, 1556-1557 Jan. 9'.

information within the bills and then the recopied household accounts suggests that these details were not only viewed as particularly valuable insights about dress but that these details were something known and understood by more than a select group of individuals in early modern English society. They indicate the necessity of a more widespread material knowledge in order to stay in fashion and present oneself as wealthy and powerful.

In the previous two chapters, this material knowledge was shown to be valued by courtiers like William Cecil and merchants like Benedict Spinola. The New Year gift rolls, for example, recorded similar details about colour and cloth. However, these household accounts differ from these accounts because they also noted less expensive materials and construction techniques. Thus, although the previous two chapters provide a foundation for understanding early modern English regimes of value, this chapter and its focus on the household helps us better appreciate the individual nuance in the evaluation of dress as well as the wider social ramifications for a culture increasingly valuing material literacy in contexts beyond the court or the city.

A Culture of Material Knowledge

Historians have often viewed London during the Elizabethan period as the epicentre for the development of an empirical culture which culminated in the Scientific Revolution.³⁰⁰ Here, the pursuit of knowledge centred on observation and constant processes of questioning and examination. Increasingly value was placed on ‘the acquisition of various literacies (including mathematical, technical, and instrumental literacies) ...’ and an awareness of different kinds of expertise found within the ever-expanding city full of invigorated trading networks.³⁰¹ Historians like Deborah Harkness have argued that this period should not be defined by its ‘few scientific breakthroughs’ but by the social foundations it formed and the cultures of knowledge-making and innovation which arose out of it.³⁰² This chapter is specifically interested in these

³⁰⁰ Harkness, *The Jewel House*, pp. xviii, 2.

³⁰¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 9-10.

³⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 10.

wider social foundations and cultures of knowledge-making and innovation in the context of the household. However, it seeks to understand these through a focus on a different kind of literacy—material literacy or material knowledge—which can be observed within the Burghley and Salisbury household account books. In doing so, it challenges previous historiographical assumptions about the separation between the knowledge cultures of Londoners and the gentlemen at court as well as the time scale of this phenomena.

This chapter shows the strong connections as well as the tension between the regimes of value associated with cloth and clothing in early modern England. Value could play out differently between contexts like the court, the city, and the household. However, while drawing attention to these differences, this chapter also demonstrates a strong shared value culture within these spaces centred on material literacy and the embodied experience of dress.

Material literacy or knowledge can seem like an abstract concept. However, it revolves around the idea that ‘the material nature of clothing *matters*’ and an awareness of its ‘...weight, fabric, shape, texture and even smell are significant’.³⁰³ Material literacy signals an understanding about the physical properties of dress as well as its construction or design processes. Work by historians like Ulinka Rublack and Sophie Pitman on early modern Germany and seventeenth-century England have established the almost ‘constant involvement with the making and maintenance’ of clothing by ‘early modern individuals’. They note that customers directly interacted with different materials ‘as fabrics and threads were chosen; designs were discussed with tailors, seamstresses and embroiderers; [and] materials ranging from fabrics to metals were customized’.³⁰⁴ Yet, this literacy and an overall interest in its properties are not simply empirical processes but socially produced and, therefore, subject to change and modification.³⁰⁵ The

³⁰³ Vincent, *Dressing the Elite*, p. 4.

³⁰⁴ Sophie Pitman, ‘Prodigal Years?’, p. 14; Ulinka Rublack, ‘Matter in the Material Renaissance’, *Past & Present*, 219(1) (2013), pp. 41–85, 45-46; Rublack, *Dressing Up*, p. 62.

³⁰⁵ Victor Buchli, *The Material Culture Reader* (Oxford, 2002), p. 15; ‘materiality is by no means a non-negotiable and unquestionable empirical reality, it is a produced social one’, p. 8; for more discussion about how the meanings of materiality can be shifted and modified see Tara Hamling and Catherine Richardson,

material literacy and knowledge investigated in this chapter is part of the wider cultural context of early modern England from the middle of the sixteenth to the beginning of the seventeenth centuries with its interest in experimentation and innovation.

This chapter is divided into a focused discussion about the material elements which comprised a garment or outfit. This includes fabric, decorative materials, and accessories. These categories were given the most detail within the household accounts highlighting their value or importance. Each section outlines the more general evidence of these materials in the household accounts as well as the specific details given about these elements. Particular attention is paid to the subtleties of materials and the knowledge necessary for appreciating the similarities and differences between pieces of clothing or entire wardrobes.

Fabric

Fabric, in the early modern world, was a particularly important element of a garment. It was typically the most expensive component since it was the materials rather than the labour, even if it was skilled, where an early modern individual made a significant monetary investment in their clothing. Fabrics were also often provided to the maker by the client.³⁰⁶ This was because the cost and access to the networks needed to gain foreign and luxury fabrics often made their purchase prohibitive except to the most wealthy and well-placed members of society. The 1555 and 1606 tailor's bills both show the substantial cost that could be incurred using fine fabrics.³⁰⁷ These bills show that it was the fabric price which constituted the majority of the cost of each garment whether this was the fustian necessary for the making and lining of William Cecil's doublet or the green grosgrain and taffeta for the construction of Lord Cranbourne's doublet. In fact, in this case, the bills recorded only the textile's prices and made no mention for any

'Introduction' in *Everyday Objects: Medieval and Early Modern Material Culture and its Meanings*, edited by Tara Hamling and Catherine Richardson (Farnham, 2010), pp. 1-23, 4.

³⁰⁶ Vincent, *Dressing the Elite*, p. 191.

³⁰⁷ Hatfield House, Cecil Papers, 11.2/96; Hatfield House, Box G. 2., 'Lord Cranbornes apparel 1606-7'; Hatfield House, Bills 20, 'Mr Moore the Taillor his Bill for my Lord Cranborne, The first of June 1606'.

expenditure for the actual construction or workmanship of the garment.³⁰⁸ The tailor had only charged for the materials bought from him rather than also charging for the making of the garment itself. This, therefore, underscored the value of the fabric versus the labour in the creation of early modern English clothing.

The expense of fabric was one important reason why it acted as a material signal of a wearer's wealth, power, and position in society. This has led some historians, such as Susan Vincent, to describe textiles or fabrics as a form of 'text' which was read and understood by most early modern viewers across the social spectrum.³⁰⁹ Early modern individuals had a learned knowledge about cloth and clothing which is generally quite distinct from our understanding today about what we wear, how it was made, and, even, what it is made from. Scholars have described this knowledge as a 'dress competence' or 'craft spectatorship' which refers to the ability of an individual to distinguish between different fabrics and styles, determine the quality of a garment through its materials and construction, and assess the monetary value of the clothing and the investment made by its wearer based on this varied information.³¹⁰ This complex knowledge allowed individuals to judge what others wore in an informed and detailed manner and reminds modern viewers about the role that fabrics had in carrying messages about wealth, power, and social station.

Yet, this knowledge did not mean that the messages carried by cloth and clothing were always straightforward or completely understood by the viewer. Wearers might wish to send one message while an observer saw or interpreted the garment and its fabric quite differently. Concern over the strength, ambiguity, and manipulation of these messages led early modern individuals and governments to seek to control and regulate the specific materials and fabrics that could be worn by certain people within early modern society. Sumptuary legislation tightly

³⁰⁸ This was apart from a payment made for the altering of the collars on the garment.

³⁰⁹ Vincent, *Dressing the Elite*, pp. 192-193.

³¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 140; Rublack, 'Matter in the Material Renaissance', p. 62.

controlled what men and women wore throughout early modern Europe, including in England until the early seventeenth century.³¹¹ This regulation controlled the colours and styles that could be worn as well as the materials, including fabrics, furs, and trims, which could be used in the construction and ornamentation of clothing. The legislation was purposefully hierarchical with

social status being directly linked to the quality of cloth that an individual was allowed to wear. Expensive, imported silks, furs and metal thread acted as material signifiers of status and the individuals permitted to wear them were clearly identified as the elite. These clothes were an essential expression of social identity, but the possession of the clothes alone would not make a man, or a woman for that matter, a member of the elite.³¹²

While only certain individuals might hope to own certain materials because of cost or contacts in the appropriate networks, early modern English law also regulated who could wear what. This further reinforced the messages that cloth and clothing carried about people within early modern society and was part of the material literacy instilled into individuals.

The Burghley and Salisbury households like all English subjects found themselves bound by this sumptuary legislation. However, despite this regulation, their elevated position enabled them to wear a larger diversity of colours and materials than most early modern English men and women—even those within the upper echelons of aristocratic society.

A wide variety of fabrics were used to make the clothing worn by the elite male members of the household between the middle of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth century. Several tailor's bills from 1555 are the earliest surviving records in the account books

³¹¹ Hooper, 'The Tudor Sumptuary Laws', pp. 437-438; Baldwin, *Sumptuary Legislation and Personal Regulation in England*; Vincent, *Dressing the Elite*, Ch. 4; Sophie Pitman, 'Codes: Redressing London – sumptuary laws and the control of clothing in the early modern city' in *A Cultural History of Law in the Early Modern Age*, edited by Peter Goodrich (London, 2019), pp. 65-86; Giorgio Riello and Ulinka Rublack, eds., *The Right to Dress: Sumptuary Laws in a Global Perspective, c.1200–1800* (Cambridge, 2019); Maria Hayward, '“Outlandish Superfluities”: Luxury and Clothing in Scottish and English Sumptuary Law from the Fourteenth to the Seventeenth Century' in *The Right to Dress*, pp. 96-120.

³¹² Hayward, *Rich Apparel*, p. 17.

that specifically referenced the family's expenditure on cloth for the construction of clothing.³¹³ These bills included clothing for William Cecil, his eldest son, Thomas Cecil, and a ward, Arthur Hall (1539 – 1605). Hall entered into the care of William Cecil around the age of twelve or thirteen after the death of his father who had been the surveyor of Calais.³¹⁴ He was brought up alongside Thomas in the family as an elite member receiving an education from Roger Ascham (1515 — 30 December 1568) and travelling throughout Europe. Thus, these bills helpfully chronicle the clothing purchased by William Cecil for some of the principal male members of the household. It details the fabrics specifically chosen for their garments which, in turn, begins to reveal both the personal and more corporate messages that the clothing they wore projected about the elite men of the Burghley household to the early modern viewer.

The first 1555 bills are for Cecil's wardrobe. They included materials for making a nightgown, two jerkins, two gowns, and one doublet. Together, this collection of garments reflected the quintessential elements of almost every early modern man's wardrobe, although the number of individual garments perhaps was more characteristic of someone higher on the social spectrum.³¹⁵ The doublet and hose were the core outerwear needed to protect men from the elements and often worn with a gown. The 1555 bill suggests that Cecil may have worn his clothing in this manner with the construction and payment for a doublet and hose alongside two gowns. When worn with a gown, men regularly had their doublet's sleeves or gown made out of a different, sometimes more expensive, fabric than the rest of their doublet. These varying fabrics made the sleeves stand out from the rest of the garment thereby drawing a viewer's attention and creating visual interest within the piece of clothing.³¹⁶ It also demonstrated that the wearer could afford and access a variety of materials rather than being dependent on a single fabric for the making of his clothes. This display strategy was used by Cecil and his tailor. For

³¹³ Hatfield House, Cecil Papers, 11.2/96.

³¹⁴ 'Arthur Hall', *Dictionary of National Biography* (London, 1885–1900).

³¹⁵ Vincent, *Dressing the Elite*, pp. 13-14.

³¹⁶ Hayward, *Rich Apparel*, p. 115.

example, while the tailor made Cecil's doublet from fustian—a cloth combining cotton, wool or linen—, he made the gowns out of black taffeta—a cloth made out of silk—and sea cloth—a form of linen.³¹⁷ The look and texture of the taffeta and sea cloth distinguished them visually and textually from the fustian used for the doublet—something which the well trained early modern eye would have distinguished and appreciated.



This garment has a similar form to those purchased for William Cecil, Thomas Cecil, and Arthur Hall.

Figure 20. Doublet, ca. 1580, European, Medium: silk, metallic thread, brass, Credit Line: Catharine Breyer Van Bomel Foundation Fund, 1978, Accession Number: 1978.128, Public Domain, The Metropolitan Museum of Art

The bills further note the diversity of cloth used to construct the other garments in his collection and worn by the elite male members of the household. The nightgown, for example, was made

³¹⁷ Hayward, *Rich Apparel*, pp. 89-93.

out of an unspecified cloth combined with silk and half a yard of cotton to line the back.³¹⁸

Black satin and silk were used in the construction of the first jerkin while black velvet and fustian were used in the creation of the second jerkin.³¹⁹ The satin and velvet were the primary fabrics while the silk and fustian lined the garments. Additionally, as noted previously, the first gown was made out of sea cloth and the second out of black taffeta.³²⁰ Finally, the bill recorded a specific purchase of black fustian and another further purchase of fustian for the doublet.³²¹ Thus, in total, the bills chronicled five to six different fabrics used to make Cecil's clothes.

Nevertheless, these were not just any fabrics. They were luxurious textiles that highlighted the wealth and connections of Cecil. His wardrobe showed his access to networks of fine, foreign-made fabrics and the social status and money needed to purchase and wear these garments. Although his clothing comprised the basic types worn by men across the social spectrum, the textiles used to construct these gowns, nightgown, jermans, and doublet distinguished Cecil from most other men in mid-sixteenth-century England. These textiles came from foreign places and needed to be imported to England, especially this early in the century. The silks, velvets, and satins were produced in Italy and Spain and then brought into England through extensive merchant networks.³²² This made them expensive and, therefore, they became associated with the wardrobes of elites and monarchs. This was reinforced through sumptuary legislation which regulated who could wear foreign-made fabrics.

³¹⁸ Hatfield House, Cecil Papers, 11.2/96.

³¹⁹ *Ibid.*

³²⁰ *Ibid.*

³²¹ *Ibid.*

³²² Valerie Cumming, *Royal Dress: The Image and the Reality 1580 to the present day* (London, 1989), pp. 16-17; Currie, *Fashion and Masculinity in Renaissance Florence*, p. 161; Hentschell, *The Culture of Cloth in Early Modern England*, especially Ch. 4, pp. 103-28.



Figure 21. Cotton Fabric with Silk Thread, 16th century, Italian, Dimensions: L. 12 x W. 5 inches (30.5 x 12.7 cm), Credit Line: Gift of The United Piece Dye Works, 1936, Accession Number: 36.90.1197, Public Domain, The Metropolitan Museum of Art

In addition to the luxurious fabrics found within William’s wardrobe, a collection of novel fabrics is also significant when different material knowledges are considered. The 1555 bill, for example, referenced the purchase of a half yard of cotton. William or the maker bought it to line the back of a nightgown. Despite the fabric being on the interior of the garment, the material cost the same amount—four pence—as the silk used on the exterior. Cotton, in the mid-sixteenth century, was still a novelty usually imported from the Levant rather than the more accessible textile that it would become in the following centuries. It could be worn as a pure cotton textile or mixed into combinations with wool or silk creating other fabrics like fustian. These were newer, more innovative textile combinations appearing in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Thus, Cecil perhaps chose cotton for his nightshirt because of its connections with innovation and trade.³²³ However, it is far more likely that he chose cotton for practicality, especially since the cotton appeared on the interior of the garment. One of the main reasons that cotton appealed as a fabric was because it could be cleaned and washed easier than

³²³ Styles, ‘Fashion and Innovation in Early Modern Europe’, p. 37.

textiles like wool or silk.³²⁴ Cecil wore his nightshirt every evening. This meant that it needed to be cleaned and washed regularly. The cotton lining facilitated this garment care making its use a sign of both functionality and well-placed connections.

Thomas Cecil and Arthur Hall

The fabrics found in William Cecil's wardrobe provide a helpful foundation for understanding the kinds of textiles worn by elite men in the household. However, these choices should also be studied in comparison with the fabrics used to construct the clothing worn by Cecil's eldest son, Thomas, and his ward, Arthur, in the 1555 tailor's bills since these men together comprised the elite male contingent of the family during this period. These choices are also important because they offer new insight into the garments worn by elite children in early modern England which are typically neglected in larger studies about early modern dress and, therefore, understudied.³²⁵ Finally, these choices highlight that material knowledge was not something confined to adult culture but part of the clothing choices for children as they grew up.

At the time of these purchases, Thomas and Arthur were in their early teenage years and, thus, wearing typical male garments like William Cecil.³²⁶ The bills each provided Thomas and Arthur with the same two garments—a coat and a doublet. The tailor constructed the two coats from a yard of unspecified cloth for the clothing's body with silk added for the lining.³²⁷ Each coat cost Cecil the same amount—eleven shillings and eight pence. However, the cloth used to make the main part of Thomas's coat was less expensive than that bought for Arthur's coat. While Thomas's cloth cost eight shillings, Arthur's fabric cost thirteen shillings. The cloth purchased for Arthur's coat must have been of a higher quality as indicated by this price

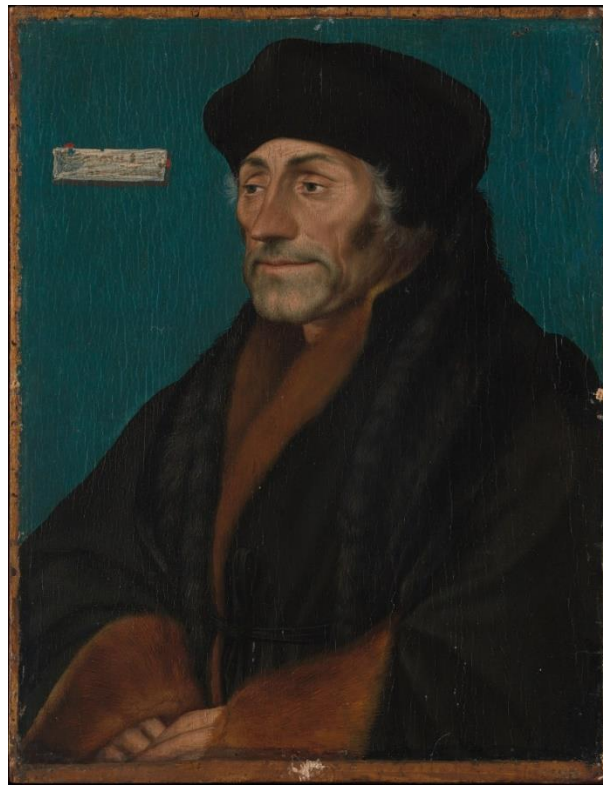
³²⁴ John E. Crowley, *The Invention of Comfort: Sensibilities and Design in Early Modern Britain and Early America* (Baltimore, 2000), p. 144.

³²⁵ For example, Susan Vincent, *Dressing the Elite*, makes practically no mention of the outfits worn by children; *The Tudor Child* is an exception to this but is its own separate study. See J. Huggett and N. Mikhaila, *The Tudor Child: Clothing and Culture 1485 to 1625* (Lightwater, 2013).

³²⁶ Vincent, *Dressing the Elite*, pp. 13-14.

³²⁷ Hatfield House, Cecil Papers, 11.2/96.

difference rather than any divergence in the amount of cloth or style of garment since the bill recorded the same amount of cloth for each coat and a similar design. This subtlety in the quality of the fabric would have been apparent both to the wearer and the viewer. In the record, however, it can only be glimpsed through the price difference where the purchaser—William Cecil—recognised and sanctioned the distinction between the materials by reimbursing the tailor more for Arthur’s coat than Thomas’s coat. Here, William Cecil showed off his material knowledge in understanding why the tailor charged him differently for the two garments and paid him more for the higher quality of fabric.



In this portrait, Erasmus wears a black gown with fur cuffs. Although most likely constructed from different materials, this painted coat helps one visually appreciate the form of the exterior garments purchased by William Cecil for Thomas Cecil and Arthur Hall.

Figure 22. Erasmus of Rotterdam, Hans Holbein the Younger (German, Augsburg 1497/98–1543 London) (and Workshop(?)), ca. 1532, Medium: Oil on linden panel, Dimensions: 7 1/4 x 5 9/16 in. (18.4 x 14.2 cm); painted surface 6 15/16 x 5 1/2 in. (17.6 x 14 cm), Credit Line: Robert Lehman Collection, 1975, Accession Number: 1975.1.138, Public Domain, The Metropolitan Museum of Art

Yet, the bills also showed that Thomas had a more intricate garment. His coat included quilted canvas and a larger number of buttons in addition to the primary cloth. Arthur's coat did not have these components either for function or decoration. The inclusion of these elements helped level Thomas's coat bill with that of Arthur's coat with its more expensive fabric. This is how the bills total equalled the same amount in the household account books. Yet, the choices detailed in this bill also highlights how clothing and its materials could be valued differently. Sometimes an individual invested more heavily in the main textile to make the garment more valuable, however, other times an individual could use decorations or add additional cloth alongside less expensive fabric to construct a piece of quality clothing. This highlights the depth and nuance of early modern material knowledge. This knowledge was not just linked to an understanding of the most expensive and luxurious textiles but also the nuances of design and construction. While Arthur's coat demonstrated its quality through its fabric, Thomas's garment used differences in its ornamentation and processes of making to distinguish it and make it an equally acceptable piece of clothing for a wealthy and well-positioned young man.

The two doublets fashioned for Thomas and Arthur also illustrate a different use of fabrics between these two men and the layers of material knowledge necessary for functional and fashionable dress. Although the primary cloth purchased for Thomas's doublet was not specified in the bill, the expenditure for the lining was noted and done in two and a quarter yards of fustian and two and a quarter yards of canvas. Arthur's doublet, in contrast to Thomas's garment, had the main body constructed out of two and a quarter yards of quilted canvas with two and a quarter yards of fustian and two and a quarter yards of canvas bought for the lining.³²⁸ In both bills, the lining was done in the same fabrics and cost the same amount—eighteenth pence—for the fustian. This indicated a similar, if not identical, quality of fabric. However, William Cecil paid slightly more for the canvas which lined Thomas's doublet versus that for

³²⁸ Hatfield House, Cecil Papers, 11.2/96.

Arthur's doublet. This price difference perhaps highlighted a finer quality of material for Thomas's clothing despite it being recorded as the same kind of textile, canvas, within the bill. This shows the subtleties that existed in early modern materials even in the same group of fabrics. Yet, the overall cost of Thomas's doublet—nine shillings and six pence—was less than that spent on Arthur's garment—ten shillings and five pence—perhaps because of the difference in the textiles used for the main body of the clothing.

Thus, despite Thomas being William Cecil's son, the Burghley household accounts show that Thomas did not necessarily receive the most expensive cloth or clothing. Some of his garments had finer textiles while others had nicer ornamentations added to less expensive fabrics in order to make his clothing more appropriate for his station. Arthur Hall, meanwhile, as a ward of William Cecil was an important representation of the family and their position in society. His clothing acted as an advertisement of the wealth and care which the Cecil family could provide those beyond their immediate family unit. Thus, his clothing held particular significance. It appears that William Cecil strategically spent similar amounts on the clothing for Thomas and Arthur. They needed similar outfits not only because of their almost identical ages but also because of what their attire demonstrated about the potential for elite men within this household. People should entrust their children to William Cecil since they would be raised alongside his own children and provided with analogous attention and expenditure.



This wall hanging is produced from linen canvas. It shows the texture and weave of canvas fabrics like those used for constructing the doublets of Thomas Cecil and Arthur Hall.

Figure 23. The Oxburgh Hangings, Sheffield (probably, made), ca. 1570 (made), Mary, Queen of Scots, born 1542 - died 1587 (maker), Talbot, Elizabeth Countess of Shrewsbury, born 1527 - died 1608 (maker), Materials and Techniques: Embroidered linen canvas with silk, gold and silver threads, Credit Line: Presented by Art Fund, Museum number: T.33CC-1955, Gallery location: British Galleries, Room 57, case 5, © The Victoria and Albert Museum

Yet, in providing this appropriate attire, William Cecil also demonstrated his awareness of and literacy in the nuances and subtleties of the material knowledge needed for fashionable early modern dress. The boys were sometimes clothed identically and almost always had clothing worth around the same amount. However, how William Cecil and his tailor allocated this similar expenditure could greatly diverge within the bills. Sometimes one boy received a higher quality of material to distinguish their garment, while other times additional decoration or the layers in the making processes, such as the inclusion of a finer lining, added the value to the ensemble.

Clothing William Cecil

In many ways, Cecil made his own clothing distinct from the younger elite male members of his household even if their wardrobes were quite similar. This section presents how an individual's value of materials and making directly influenced their own choices about dress rather than dictating the choices they made when commissioning gifts or garments for their own household. All three men, William, Thomas, and Arthur did own complementary garments. They each had a doublet constructed. The doublet was a key core element of every male wardrobe and one worn by men throughout their lives from teenager to adult.³²⁹ These doublets were constructed in quite similar ways. Fustian, for example, was used as a lining in all three garments. This shows that the making process, the materials necessary for different parts of the attire, and its form were quite consistent and well understood in the middle of the sixteenth century. Material knowledge was not just about understanding the different kinds of textiles available and their expense or quality. Instead, this consistent use of fustian as a lining shows how a deeper knowledge of a material's properties and the processes of construction were necessary. Makers and customers had to choose fabrics for the body, lining, and shaping of the garment which worked both for the display and the function. Fustian could be an ideal lining fabric because of its softness and strength depending on its quality.³³⁰ Other fabrics like velvet would not work as effectively as a lining because of the material's character. Thus, the choice relied on knowing what textile fit the purpose best.

Yet, fustian was not chosen just because of its practicality or functionality. For example, William Cecil had a doublet made from black fustian cloth. The fustian recorded in this purchase was perhaps of a finer quality known to look like velvet. In England, fustian had been

³²⁹ Stuart Peachey, ed., *Clothes of the Common People in Elizabethan and Early Stuart England: Fustians, Knitting, Felt, Furs, Skins, Leather, Stiffening and Padding*, Volume 5 (Bristol, 2013), p. 3; Vincent, *Dressing the Elite*, pp. 13-14.

³³⁰ Arnold, *Queen Elizabeth's Wardrobe Unlock'd*, pp. 143-153; Thirsk, *Economic Policy and Projects*, pp. 30-31; Peachey, *Clothes of the Common People in Elizabethan and Early Stuart England*, pp. 3-9.

an imported textile until the sixteenth century. This made it terribly expensive and, thus, almost exclusively worn by the highest echelons of society like William Cecil.³³¹ However, different varieties of fustian were available, and it often appeared as the preferred textile for working breeches. Janet Arnold, for instance, noted that ‘the fustian with soft, fleecy pile, linen warp and cotton weft, used for linings in surviving sixteenth-and seventeenth-century doublets and suits is of the cheapest variety...not all like velvet.’³³² This is perhaps more alike to the fustian described as the lining fabric for the doublets of William Cecil, Thomas Cecil, and Arthur Hall described above.

Understanding colour was also an important part of early modern material knowledge literacies and was valued in a variety of contexts including the household, government, and London. Chapter One, for example, highlighted William Cecil’s interest in the manufacture of woad and cochineal dyes. He sent agents throughout the country to learn more about woad’s agricultural development and supported government policies that encouraged its proliferation. Additionally, the process of dyeing greatly intrigued urban men interested in natural science like Hugh Plat during the sixteenth century.³³³ Although not appearing in Plat’s printed works, his extensive notes detailed conversations with artisans and experimentation with the dyeing of both woollen and silk cloth.³³⁴ He gained information about the technical processes of dying through discussions with woad growers and specifically credited two artisan dyers—Godfrey and Tilton—as contributors in his work.³³⁵ By 1598, Plat had compiled a detailed history of silk dyeing which included an entire section entitled ‘Colours’ describing ‘the many substances used by dyers to colour silk [like brazil wood, turmeric, madder, cochineal, logwood, and oak

³³¹ Arnold, *Queen Elizabeth’s Wardrobe Unlock’d*, p. 14.

³³² Janet Arnold, *Patterns of Fashion 1: Englishwomen’s Dresses and Their Construction C. 1660-1860* (New York, 1972), pp. 16-17.

³³³ Thick, *Sir Hugh Plat*, pp. 268-275; Harkness, *The Jewel House*, Ch. 6.

³³⁴ Thick, *Sir Hugh Plat*, pp. 268-269.

³³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 268-269; British Library, Sloane 2247, ff. 8, 20, 30, 33.

galls] and the distinct operations required to obtain a precise shade.³³⁶ For example, a light and fair straw colour might be achieved on silk by turning ‘your silck in your turmericke liquor before it bee blood warme, or els put a litle of a stronge turmerick liquor to a good quantitie of faire water & turn therin’.³³⁷ The material knowledge of colours made an individual attuned to the subtleties of colours as well as the technical expertise required to make certain dyes work effectively on different textiles. It also placed increasing cultural value on this type of literacy as individuals chose dress reliant on a widespread, nuanced understanding and interpretation of cloth, colour, and design in a variety of contexts.

The Burghley and Salisbury household accounts often recorded the colours of fabrics used for different items of clothing indicating its value. However, this was not always the case. The colour of the doublet cloth, for instance, of both Arthur and Thomas was not noted in the bills. This suggests that for these garments the colour of the fabric and the garment did not specifically matter. It was rather unimportant or extraordinary in determining the cost, construction, or value of the clothing in a household context and went unrecorded. This lack of information in some cases suggests that, in others, when the colours were recorded this detail was deemed particularly significant in determining the expense, design, or valuation of the garment.

³³⁶ Thick, *Sir Hugh Plat*, pp. 270, 272.

³³⁷ British Library, Sloane 2247, ff. 9-9v, 68, II, 13, 16, 17, 17v, 18v, 20v, 23.



William Cecil in black clothing like those described in the household account books.

Figure 24. William Cecil, 1st Baron Burghley, Unknown Anglo-Netherlandish artist, oil on panel, 1560s, 37 1/2 in. x 28 1/4 in. (953 mm x 718 mm), NPG 2184, © National Portrait Gallery, London



Figure 25. William Cecil, 1st Baron Burghley, by Unknown artist, oil on canvas, 1590s, 88 1/4 in. x 55 1/4 in. (2230 mm x 1403 mm), NPG 4881; © National Portrait Gallery, London

Men like William Cecil could distinguish themselves and their dress through the colour of fabric chosen for the exterior or interior of a piece of clothing. For example, William Cecil noted his specific expenditure on *black* fustian for his doublet rather than just fustian. Black clothing demonstrated luxury.³³⁸ Black was one of the most expensive dyes available in the sixteenth century because of the technological prowess needed for its production. A dyer needed to be particularly skilled to properly dye cloth into a quality black colour which was both vibrant and long-lasting. If done incorrectly, the fabric would become a washed out grey colour that faded

³³⁸ Currie, *Fashion and Masculinity in Renaissance Florence*, pp. 93-94, 100-101.

more and more over time. Plat's work reiterated the fraught nature of cloth dyeing which challenged the prowess of the maker. For example, in order to avoid an uneven spread of colour onto the fabric—a problem known as skewering—he encouraged the constant turning of the textile or having it soaked in a less intense dye solution for a longer period.³³⁹ Thus, the full impact of William Cecil's choice of black fustian could only fully be appreciated through material literacy and the knowledge, even generally, about these processes of dyeing black cloth. If understood, the black fabric acted as both a visual and tactile demonstration of William Cecil's wealth and artisanal connections. Interestingly, however, black clothing was only denoted for William Cecil in the 1555 household accounts rather than for all elite male members of the household, such as Thomas and Arthur. This perhaps reflects the different fashionable needs of older versus younger men or the different contexts that these garments might be worn. Additionally, this choice may have been intentionally made by William Cecil in order to differentiate his wardrobe as head of the household, and accentuate his power and social position both within the family and the community, relying on the nuances of materials to create these distinctions.

A series of bills from 1558 found in the Burghley household accounts enables further comparisons between the dress of William Cecil, Thomas Cecil, and Arthur Hall to be made. These reveal the congruence and evolution in the cloth and clothing worn by these three men as well as the material knowledge necessary for appreciating their choices. Most of these bills were re-copied by William Cecil into the account books.

Many similarities existed between the dress worn by the elite men of the family between 1555 and 1558. For example, in both series of bills William Cecil had a doublet, jerkin, and cloak made by the tailor. The cloak and jerkin were each constructed from fustian and silk. The doublet also used fustian as the primary cloth for the body of the garment. However, this doublet

³³⁹ British Library, Sloane 2247, ff. 34, 36; Thick, *Sir Hugh Plat*, p. 272.

had a different design than those previously recorded. William Cecil purchased *black* fustian specifically for the sleeves of the doublet. Since the body cloth was also fustian, the inclusion of the colour—*black*—to describe the cloth bought for the sleeves indicated that this fabric was of a different colour or quality than the fustian intended for the body of the garment. This created a tactile and visual differentiation which accentuated the sleeves on the doublet. It used the properties of the material to draw attention to the male arm with its correct posture and deportment.³⁴⁰ It also advertised the creativity of the maker and the wealth of the wearer who could access a range of textiles and incorporate them into one fashionable outfit.

William Cecil paid extra for this black fustian. Its cost was almost equivalent to that spent on the cloth used for the rest of the garment. While three shillings was expended on the three yards of fustian necessary as the main fabric, two shillings and six pence were paid just for the black fustian. The tailor also charged an additional six pence specifically for the construction and lining of the sleeves. This indicated the perceived extra value of this work which probably required more time and skill than the typical sleeves on a doublet. William Cecil validated this evaluation of the maker's processes by paying more for the work indicating his understanding about the craftsmanship necessary for the design of a fashionable garment. This artistry would also have been underscored to the viewers of the garment through the distinction between the two fabrics.

While William Cecil's dress had many similarities in the 1555 and 1558 household accounts, the clothing produced for Thomas Cecil and Arthur Hall changed more significantly. Practically, the wardrobes of both young men became more substantial and varied. Mr. Hall's tailoring bill, for example, included a doublet, jerkin, and coat for Thomas or Master Thomas.

³⁴⁰ Georges Vigarello, 'The Upward Training of the Body from the Age of Chivalry to Courtly Civility' in *Fragments for a History of the Human Body*, edited by Michel Feher, Volume II (New York, 1989), pp. 148-99; Susan Vincent, *The Anatomy of Fashion: Dressing the Body from the Renaissance to Today* (Oxford 2009), p. 58; Joaneath Spicer, 'The Renaissance Elbow' in *A Cultural History of Gesture*, edited by H. Roodenburgh (Oxford, 1991), pp. 84-128.

Arthur received two doublets, two jerkins, and a gown in this same bill. The change in the number of garments William Cecil had constructed for them may reflect their age, each boy was now three years older than in 1555 and firmly a young adult. In 1558, Thomas Cecil matriculated at Trinity College, Cambridge, and was admitted to Gray's Inn that same year.³⁴¹ Arthur Hall probably studied at St. John's College, Cambridge, around the same time.³⁴² Therefore, Thomas and Arthur were increasingly publicly visible parts of the Burghley household making their dress of greater significance to both themselves and William Cecil.



This kind of material, black satin, was used to construct a doublet and jerkin for Arthur Hall.

Figure 26. Black satin, late 16th century, British, Medium: Metal thread on satin, Dimensions: Overall assembled): 76 3/4 x 60 in. (194.9 x 152.4cm); Fragment .2a: 10 1/8 x 107 3/4 in. (25.7 x 273.7 cm); Fragment .2b: 20 1/2 x 87 5/8 in. (52.1 x 222.6 cm); Fragment .2c: 10 9/16 x 99 1/4 in. (26.8 x 252.1 cm); Fragment .2d: 21 x 78 3/4 in. (53.3 x 200 cm), Credit Line: Rogers Fund, 1920, Accession Number: 20.93.2a–d, Public Domain, The Metropolitan Museum of Art

This significance can also be seen reflected in the more varied materials chosen for the dress of Thomas and Arthur in 1558. These household accounts show more diversity in the fabrics chosen for their garments. Arthur had one doublet constructed from black fustian and a second

³⁴¹ 'Thomas Cecil (CCL558T)', A Cambridge Alumni Database, University of Cambridge.

³⁴² 'Arthur Hall (HL571A)', A Cambridge Alumni Database, University of Cambridge.

made from black satin. Additionally, he had a black satin jerkin and a grosgrain and camlet jerkin. Thomas also had a jerkin constructed from grosgrain and camlet in addition to the fustian used for his doublet and the frizado for his coat. Grosgrain and camlet did not appear in the earlier records. Instead, the addition of grosgrain, a lighter and less expensive form of silk, and camlet, a type of woollen fabric often produced from the soft, fine hairs of an angora goat, highlight the introduction of lighter and finer textiles into the Burghley household wardrobes.³⁴³

In earlier chapters, this thesis discussed how there was both a ‘reduction in the weight of existing fabrics’ as well as the introduction of ‘new, light fabrics made from combed, long-stable wool, often mixed with silk and other fibers’ in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.³⁴⁴ These new textiles originally emerged in Flanders and spread throughout Europe as the centuries progressed.³⁴⁵ Chapter One discussed William and Robert Cecil’s interest and engagement in the proliferation of these kinds of textiles through their support and encouragement of the New Draperies into England. The Burghley household accounts, however, reveal how these shifts in the manufacture and production of cloth influenced individual wardrobes and how these fabrics were incorporated into existing male garment designs. They also offer some insight into the level of acceptance and spread of these textile innovations into English households by the middle of the sixteenth century, as well as help us better understand if and how the value of these material was recognised within non-elite and aristocratic circles beyond the court.

The aristocratic use of these lighter textiles by men like William Cecil signalled their belief in a widespread grasp of material knowledge and the existence of a materially literate populous

³⁴³ *The 16th Century Household Secrets*, p. 131.

³⁴⁴ Styles, ‘Fashion and Innovation in Early Modern Europe’, pp. 37-38; Negley Harte, ed., *The New Draperies in the Low Countries and England, 1300-1800* (Oxford, 1997); for the displacement of heavier, traditional worsted fabrics see Luc N.D. Martin, ‘Textile Manufactures in Norwich and Norfolk, 1550-1622’, PhD dissertation, University of Cambridge, 1991, pp. 7, 60.

³⁴⁵ Historians like John Styles study this phenomenon in early modern Europe. He argues that in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, ‘textiles were becoming lighter in weight’ see for example: Styles, ‘Fashion and Innovation in Early Modern Europe’, p. 38.

who valued innovation and novelty. In specifically material terms, the acceptance of these new fabrics seems extraordinary. Elites had previously relied on the weight, quality, and cost of the dress to materially demonstrate their social superiority and wealth. However, these new fabrics were not only less durable than their predecessors but also less expensive. A grosgrain, for example, might cost ‘half to three-quarters of the price of the traditional heavy brocade velvets...’³⁴⁶ This meant that the previous tactile and visual understandings about the value of materials was being transformed. Textiles like grosgrain, sarcenet, satin, and damask were valued because of their variety in colour and design rather than their consistency or durability. This shifted the focus of material literacy. No longer was it primarily concerned with the material itself. Instead, it increasingly valued processes of production and the significance of innovative technological developments.



Camlet is an example of this type of lighter textile emerging in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries which was valued for its innovation and variation.

Figure 27. Panel of Printed Camlet, late 17th century, British, Medium: Wool, warp-faced plain weave, printed, Dimensions: Overall: 28 3/4 × 28 1/2 in. (73 × 72.4 cm), Credit Line:

³⁴⁶ Styles, ‘Fashion and Innovation in Early Modern Europe’, p. 38; Elizabeth Currie, ‘Diversity and Design in the Florentine Tailoring Trade, 1560-1620’ in *The Material Renaissance*, edited by Michelle O’Malley and Evelyn Welch (Manchester, 2008), pp. 154-173, 160.

Gift of Titi Halle, 2010, Accession Number: 2010.500.5, Public Domain, The Metropolitan Museum of Art

William Cecil's consistent choice of these fabrics for himself and Thomas and Arthur are examples of this shift and its significance in early modern England. William chose textiles like grosgrain and camlet because he believed they would still properly distinguish the wealth and position of his household. Fashion still relied on material knowledge but a material knowledge increasingly more sensitive to change, newness, and design. The shift in textiles observed in the wardrobes of William, Thomas, and Arthur is evidence of a wider societal shift in the material understanding of dress during the middle of the sixteenth century.

After investigating and exploring the Burghley household accounts from the sixteenth century, this chapter now seeks to further probe this evolving material knowledge or literacy through analysing the Salisbury accounts from the beginning of the seventeenth century. By this time, Robert Cecil and his household were firmly established parts of early modern aristocratic society. They had immense wealth, position, and political power.

Yet, despite the passing of around fifty years, the early seventeenth-century accounts share striking similarities with those from the middle of the sixteenth century. The elite male wardrobe, for example, still comprised many comparable items. Robert Cecil and his son, Lord Cranborne, both had doublets constructed for them in 1605 like William Cecil, Thomas Cecil, and Arthur Hall had done before. Robert Cecil also purchased his son a jerkin with a pair of hose just as William Cecil did for Thomas and Arthur. This suggests an overall consistency, therefore, in the basic 'type' or 'form' of dress found in the male wardrobe between the middle of the sixteenth and the early seventeenth century. Although many other aspects of early modern dress changed, some things remained more static.

These early seventeenth century records also provide further evidence of the shift toward lighter fabrics observed in the 1558 bills. For example, Lord Cranborne had a doublet constructed in

watered grosgrain as well as a doublet and hose made from taffeta sarcenet.³⁴⁷ Robert Cecil also had a satin doublet. However, these early seventeenth-century household accounts show an even more prevalent use of these fabrics and the inclusion of new textiles like sarcenet and taffeta. Sarcenet was one of the lightest and finest silk fabrics often described as being like ‘the finest gauze’.³⁴⁸ Taffeta, meanwhile, was another cheaper variety of silk, although less delicate than sarcenet.³⁴⁹ Both were produced in Italy and most likely imported into England.³⁵⁰



Although this waistcoat is a female garment, it represents another example of the use of lighter materials into clothing from the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries like those detailed in the Salisbury household accounts.

Figure 28. Pink Taffeta Waistcoat, Waistcoat, Great Britain (made), 1610-1620 (made), Materials and Techniques: Silk, linen, silk thread, linen thread, silver; hand-sewn and hand-embroidered, Museum number: 179-1900, © The Victoria and Albert Museum

³⁴⁷ Hatfield House, Bills 20, ‘The tailors bill. To the use of the Right Honorable The Lo: of Cranborne the firste of October Anno 1607’, p. 6.

³⁴⁸ Alford, *London’s Triumph*, p. 100.

³⁴⁹ Liza Picard, *Elizabeth’s London: Everyday Life in Elizabethan London* (London, 2003), p. 137; Currie, ‘Diversity and design in the Florentine tailoring trade, 1550-1620’, pp. 160-161.

³⁵⁰ Hayward, *Rich Apparel*, p. 92.

Additionally, weavers, artisans, and makers transformed older versions of textiles. Velvet was still prominently used in the wardrobes. Lord Cranborne, for example, had a cloak lined with 'pea coloured' velvet while Lady Francis Cecil had a petticoat construction from watched velvet.³⁵¹ Robert Cecil also received a piece of velvet on the 9 June 1595 as a token of gratitude.³⁵² This gift highlighted the continued use and value of velvet in the early modern material economy.

However, despite being referred to as a velvet, these cloths were further illustration of the shift toward lighter textiles. Velvet from the late sixteenth to the early seventeenth century felt and looked quite different from its predecessors. Production changes had altered and transformed how velvets were made and styled in the second half of the sixteenth century. These lighter velvets were 'formed of cut and uncut pile on a satin ground' and increasingly replaced the more luxurious and heavier pile-on-pile velvets. Their design also changed with 'smaller patterns formed of cut and uncut pile set on grounds' superseding larger designs in popularity.³⁵³ Here, the novelty of the composition made the fabric valuable and became part of how one needed to assess its material properties. However, unlike the introduction of new textiles, velvets offer an important case study of materials in early modern England. New objects were being introduced but older objects were also being transformed through technological development and innovative creativity. Velvets continued to demonstrate power, prestige, and fashionability, although these connotations were linked with evolving assumptions about material knowledge

These seventeenth-century household accounts, furthermore, highlight how makers used these newer textiles in different combinations to create novel and varied dress designs. This was often

³⁵¹ Hatfield House, Bills 20, 'Apparell for Lady Frances Cecil', p. 2.

³⁵² 'Niccolo di Menze to Sir Robert Cecil' in *Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Most Hon. The Marquis of Salisbury Preserved at Hatfield House, Hertfordshire*, edited by M.S. Giuseppi, Part V (London, 1894), p. 238; Hatfield House, Cecil Papers, 32/90.

³⁵³ Monnas, *Renaissance Velvets*, p. 20.

done to draw attention to certain parts of a garment or sections of the body.³⁵⁴ Lord Cranborne's doublet, for example, was constructed from a watered grosgrain fabric. However, the collar was done in taffeta.³⁵⁵ The taffeta collar drew visual and tactile interest to the neck through the differing material properties of the taffeta to the grosgrain. It was also practical as well as fashionable. A collar collected an individual's perspiration and rubbed against their neck, therefore, it needed to be washed or changed more regularly. By constructing it in a different fabric, the maker made the garment more useable. The collar, rather than the entire garment, could be altered either as a fashionable choice or when the collar needed refurbishment or reconstruction from wear and tear.

In addition to the larger variety of textiles, the household accounts from the beginning of the seventeenth century record more diversity and nuance in the colour of dress than in 1555 or 1558. Colour is also noted with increasing frequency in the records perhaps suggesting its heightened value in describing and evaluating the worth of a garment. The bills from 1555 and 1558 did mention the colours of cloth. However, when detailed, fabric was typically black or green and referred almost exclusively to the main textile. In contrast, the cloth from the early seventeenth century was found in many different colours which were used in the construction of various elements of a clothing item. Robert Cecil, for example, had a doublet made from carnation coloured satin while Lord Cranborne also had his doublet and hose done in a carnation coloured taffeta sarcenet.³⁵⁶ Carnation was not just a red dye. Instead, practitioners have described it as a sort of russet-red colour or a shade deeper than Catherine pear.³⁵⁷ Its appreciation required a deeper material literacy about the variations of dye colours and the

³⁵⁴ Maria Hayward suggests that taffetas and sarcenets were used as linings for pieces of clothing. This does not seem to appear within the clothing constructed for Robert Cecil or Lord Cranborne, although the material is used in other ways within the garment.

³⁵⁵ Hatfield House, Box G. 2., 'Lord Cranbornes apparel 1606-7'; Hatfield House, Bills 20, 'Mr Moore the Taillor his Bill for my Lord Cranborne, The first of June 1606'.

³⁵⁶ Hatfield House, Bills 20, 'Mr Moore the Taillor his Bill for my Lord Cranborne, The first of June 1606', p. 6.

³⁵⁷ Channing Linthicum, *Costume in the Drama of Shakespeare and his Contemporaries* (Oxford, 1936), pp. 33, 36-7.

technical expertise necessary for its production. Its notation within the accounts highlighted a widespread understanding and recognition of the colour.

The early seventeenth century bills recorded many kinds of subtle dress dyes. This emphasis and value in the subtleties of a material and an appreciation for its complex technical process were quite like the lawn and cambric cloth presented by the merchants in the New Year's gifts rolls which relied on nuanced material knowledge to properly ascertain its high value. In the cloth's case, the value came from its novelty and inaccessibility at court while these seventeenth-century dyes relied on a general understanding about the expertise needed for their production in order to be perceived as more valuable in both urban and rural contexts.

In the household, the accounts recorded colours like 'peach coloured' satin, 'ash coloured' taffeta, 'pea coloured' velvet, 'sand coloured' taffeta, 'skin coloured' taffeta, and 'straw coloured' taffeta. These were not simply red, grey, green or yellow but shades of these colours with often very subtle differences. A 'peach coloured' fabric, for instance, might be a combination of hues of pink and orange while 'sand coloured' textiles included elements of yellow and white. Colours like 'sand', 'skin', and 'straw' advertised their finesse through the delicate nuances between the pigments and the expertise needed to ensure the correct shade. The names for these colours were more than just whimsical fancy. Instead, the names themselves highlight the level of sophistication through which the early modern viewer understood and appreciated colours and the processes of their production.³⁵⁸ Colours made dress dynamic through variations in shade and brightness where the stark illumination of one dye might be offset through the subtlety of another. Yet, this could only be truly valued if one had a deep and nuanced understanding and appreciation of material literacy.

³⁵⁸ *The 16th Century Household Secrets*, p. 135.

This colour dynamism was often chosen by early modern elites for a particular event or context where the material properties might be best displayed. Francis Bacon, for example, noted the ascribed benefits of certain colours for certain occasions. His 1625 edition of the *Essays* had a section ‘Of Masques and Triumphs’ which offered wide-ranging opinions on format, music, and colour. In reference to attire, he noted the ideal shades. ‘The Colours’, such as ‘white, carnation, and a Kinde of Sea-Water-Greene...’ were known to be best displayed in the subtle, warm hues of candlelight.³⁵⁹ Nighttime or candlelight events like masques and balls, therefore, encouraged the use of particular colours over others. Knowledge about what pigments might present best in these contexts shows the material literacy necessary for maximising the fashionable presentation of dress in different situations and venues.

However, this knowledge was not confined to aristocratic circles like those of the Salisbury household. The probate inventory of a draper, William Harrison, from Suffolk showed a similar awareness and appreciation for the subtleties of colour. Alongside the white, blue, black, and green fabric recorded in his account, there appeared cloth of russet, carnation, and maiden’s blush—a combination of pink and red hues. Although he did professionally focus on textiles, his clientele was quite varied and he was not based in London.³⁶⁰ Yet, despite these differences, many of his offerings included colours comparable to those used for the clothing of Robert Cecil and Lord Cranborne.

This perhaps shows another shift in how dress was valued and how material literacy changed and evolved. As the availability of colours permeated throughout early modern English society, the intrinsic properties of colour and fabric no longer held the same power for distinction. Distinction increasingly relied on more subtle variations and functional properties like the

³⁵⁹ Francis Bacon, ‘Of Masques and Triumphs’ in *The Essays*, edited by John Pitcher (Harmondsworth, 1985), p. 176.

³⁶⁰ SRO Lowestoft S35/3/5/12, probate inventory of William Harrison, draper, Lowestoft, 1603, quoted in Spufford and Mee, *The Clothing of the Common Sort*, pp. 234-235.

colour fastness of a dye. It was no longer as much a question of access as quality or novelty in terms of colour. This differed slightly from fabrics where quality became secondary to innovative design and variation. However, in both cases, seventeenth-century individuals, especially those in aristocratic society, needed new forms of differentiation. This may provide one explanation for the increasing emergence of a society that focused on and privileged the ornamentation of dress over other elements.

Decorative Materials

Decorative materials had always been vital elements in both the construction and ornamentation of dress during the early modern period. Their presence could demonstrate the wearer's wealth, status, connections, and fashionability. Thus, English governments sought to tightly regulate and control them through sumptuary legislation and proclamations. A 1563 Elizabethan proclamation, for example, detailed how the trimmings and linings for an individual's leg must exclusively be made from English cloth, such as wool. This precluded the use of imported, foreign fabrics like silk or satin.³⁶¹ Further proclamations from 1574 forbade certain individuals from wearing any form of decorative material or silk ornamentation upon petticoats, cloaks or ruffs.³⁶² Although most sumptuary legislation did not directly restrict the dress of the Burghley or Salisbury households because of their social position, these regulations show the larger significance placed upon the materials which adorned clothing. The accounts reveal how both households invested in and used ornamentation as transformative parts of their wardrobes.

In both 1555 and 1558, William Cecil recorded the consistent purchase of decorative materials. William, as well as Thomas Cecil and Arthur Hall, were all provided with fine trimmings to distinguish different items of clothing. The most prominent decoration was 'lace' in these mid-

³⁶¹ Robert Steele, *Tudor and Stuart Proclamations 1485-1714*, 2 Vols. (Oxford, 1910), Vol. I, p. 66.

³⁶² *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 74, 77, 80, 87. Further regulations occurred in 1576-1577, 1579-1580, and 1587-1588 for long cloaks, ruffs, and other accessories through proclamations, pp. 224-225.

sixteenth century accounts. Lace appeared on nightgowns, jerkins, and doublets. All three men had it on their garments.

Yet, the term 'lace' or 'laces' referred to several distinct forms of decorative material. These included:

embroidered linen for collars, cuffs, and handkerchiefs (i.e. what we now call "lace"); "laces," made of ribbon, braid, or leather, sometimes with gold tips at the ends (when the name "points"), used for tying clothing together; and, most important of all in inventories, decorative braids of gold and silver that were added to outer garments.³⁶³

All three forms of 'lace' were quite different from each other. They were used on separate areas of the garment and each served a unique purpose. Some had a more utilitarian role in a garment's wear like a tie, while others acted primarily as ornamentation. 'Lace' or 'laces' were also composed of distinct materials. Lace, as we conceive of it today, was typically constructed from cloth whereas laces for tying came in a variety of non-fabric materials like leather. Yet, all three decorated and adorned a piece of clothing and were referred to in early modern English records as 'lace'.

The Burghley household accounts do seem to distinguish between at least two forms of lace. This can be discerned by comparing the wording and expenditure. Laces as 'tips' or 'ties' were typically recorded in the plural appearing as 'lakis' versus the notation of the singular 'lase' or 'lace'. This distinction is supported by the differing expense between the plural and the singular lace. The plural 'lakis' are significantly less expensive than the singular lace perhaps because they were constructed from poorer quality materials and did not require skilled craftsmanship. While the plural 'lakis' routinely cost William Cecil mere pence, the other forms of 'lace' cost him several shillings. Still, laces as ties were important and functional decorative features. William Cecil, for example, recorded the purchase of 'lakis' for a shirt which cost him two

³⁶³ Jones and Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing and the Materials of Memory*, p. 25.

pence. Additionally, the accounts showed a further expenditure of a pence for 'lakis' bought for an unspecified garment.³⁶⁴

However, more ornamental lace for collars, cuffs, and handkerchiefs was purchased, or at least documented, more frequently. This may partially reflect the cost difference whereby shillings were necessary to trace, while William Cecil was less worried about tracking the use of a couple of pence. Still, this related directly to the material valuation of this form of lace which was viewed as superior to that of laces or ties. William purchased lace in both yards and ounces. His purchases typically appeared in the household accounts as a standard format: 'It... [for a certain amount] of lase'.³⁶⁵ Yet, the amount varied greatly. He bought 'xi [nine] yards of lase...' for two shillings and nine pence as well as '...vii [seven] ounces of lase' for sixteen shillings.³⁶⁶

There was also the occasional notation about the variety of lace. For instance, William had his tailor use 'parchement [parchment] lase' to decorate his night shift in the form of a bow tie. This ornamentation added something fine to an otherwise rather basic cloth.³⁶⁷ William also had 'parchement lase' added to his black satin jerkin. In this bill, the lace included the expenditure for placing it onto the garment.³⁶⁸ The tailor described how he had used 'silke to set on the lace' and secure it properly.³⁶⁹

³⁶⁴ Hatfield House, General 139.1, 'Payments from the x day of Januarii to ye xvij of ye same, 1556/7' and Hatfield House, Bills 1, 'Payments from the xi day of Aprill to ye xvij of ye same, 1557'.

³⁶⁵ Hatfield House, Cecil Papers, 11.2/96.

³⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁶⁹ *Ibid.*



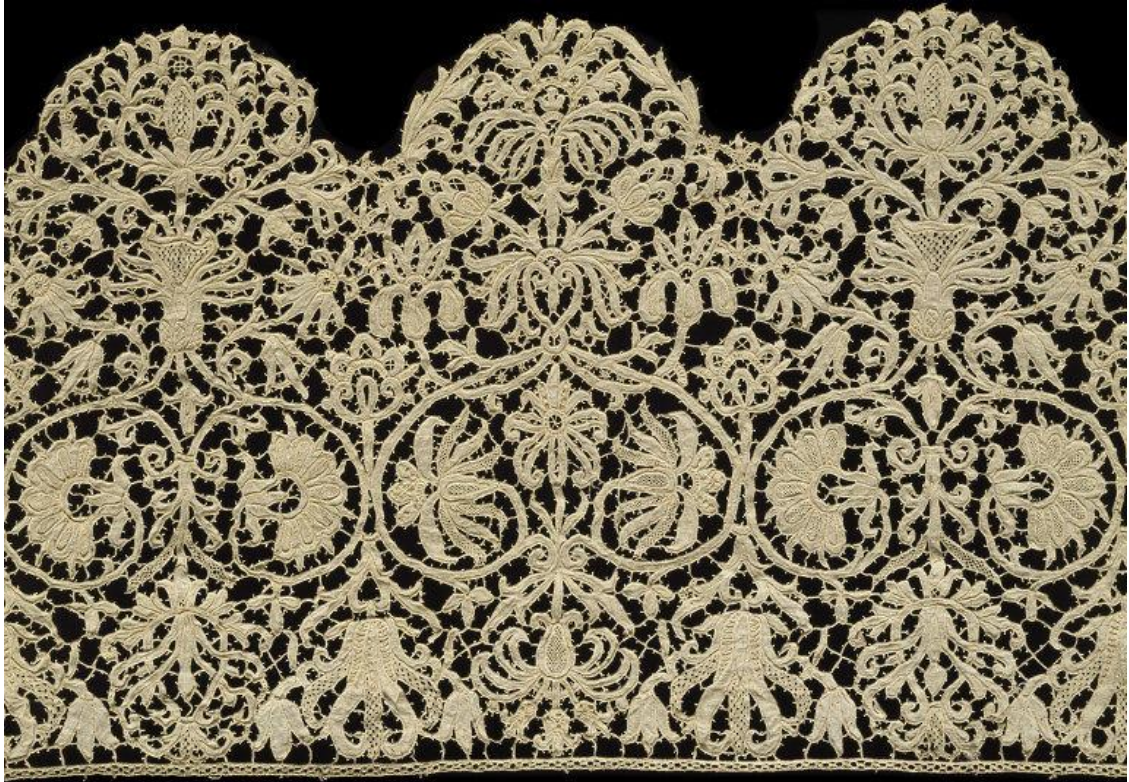
Figure 29. Lace, Italy (made), 16th century (made), Materials and Techniques: Needle lace on net, Credit Line: Given by the Trustees of the Bowes Museum, Durham, Museum number: T.64-1930, © The Victoria and Albert Museum

Lace became a significant decorative material for fashionable dress in the sixteenth century because of changes in style. Fundamental to its growing importance was the increased ‘use of linen’ clothing.³⁷⁰ The material qualities of linen made it a fertile ground for decoration since linen was typically quite a plain cloth and provided a clear and clean palette. However, lace’s materiality also made it an appealing form of ornamentation. It was a stark white colour which contrasted nicely with darker textiles. Additionally, the nuances of its whiteness could also play off silky surfaces in candlelight. This was maximised in larger quantities where lace could be ‘gathered or draped to produce rich effects of contrasting textures or of light and shade.’³⁷¹ These ephemeral and translucent properties created visual interest as the wearer had on the decoration and moved in light and dark spaces. Lace also provided tactile variation to a garment. Its raised surfaces and potential coarseness could be contrasted with the smoothness of fabric

³⁷⁰ Santina M. Levey, *Lace: A History* (Leeds, 1983), p. 4.

³⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

bringing attention to different elements of dress or parts of the body. Thus, lace and its attributes show how early modern knowledge was keenly aware and made use of the subtleties of ornamentation as well as textiles.



An example of the spidery form of lace developed around 1600. Its style and form can be compared with the earlier lace from the sixteenth century in the above image.

Figure 30. Lace Borders, Italy (made), 1620-1640 (made), Materials and Techniques: Linen cutwork, buttonhole stitches, and bobbin-lace borders, Museum number: T.33&A-1980, © The Victoria and Albert Museum

However, lace also flourished as a decorative material because of changes to its form and production.³⁷² This reveals a similar evolution in the valuation of materials to that of fabrics where novelty and variation were increasingly significant in its evaluation. The earliest forms of lace were like cutwork or embroidery. They had a woven ground and depended upon a ‘grid-work of woven threads...’³⁷³ Around 1600, a more ‘delicate, spidery form of lace’ developed.

³⁷² Levey, *Lace*, pp. 1-2.

³⁷³ *Ibid.*, pp. 1-2.

It quickly became popular throughout Europe.³⁷⁴ This new lace was a form of bobbin lace which could be produced faster than its predecessors. This allowed for more frequent changes in its design as well as experimentation with its creation. The thread, for example, could either incorporate linen or more expensive silk and metal. This variation enabled both higher and lower qualities of lace production.³⁷⁵ Individuals could also invest in several different kinds of lace rather than one more costly piece in order to change the style or design of their dress more frequently.

Along with lace, buttons were the other prominent decorative material found in the Burghley accounts from the middle of the sixteenth century.³⁷⁶ Almost every single garment from the doublets to the jerkins recorded in the accounts had buttons on them. William Cecil, Thomas Cecil, and Arthur Hall all had buttons on their dress. Typically, buttons, such as those described in 1555, were rather nondescript forms of ornamentation noted simply as ‘It. for buttones...’ in the lists of expenditure. Often, their cost was simply subsumed on the account line with other elements like silk. This was the case with the buttons purchased for Arthur’s doublet. However, the one detail often provided was the number of buttons. A receipt for William Cecil’s gown, for example, recorded the purchase of three dozen buttons for twelve pence. Thomas also had a coat constructed which required two dozen buttons costing six pence.³⁷⁷

These numbers illustrate the decorative as well as utilitarian nature of buttons on early modern clothing. Buttons were needed to open and close clothing. They secured elements and sections of dress. However, they could do more than this. For instance, it is doubtful that William Cecil’s gown really required three dozen buttons simply for function. Instead, the extra buttons were added for visual, tactile, and even auditory interest. Buttons could also be made from fine

³⁷⁴ Levey, *Lace*, p. 15.

³⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

³⁷⁶ For more general information about buttons see Stuart Peachey, ed., *Clothes of the Common People in Elizabethan and Early Stuart England: Haberdashery*, Volume 2 (Bristol, 2013), pp. 53-67.

³⁷⁷ Hatfield House, Cecil Papers, 11.2/96.

materials which furthered their decorative purpose. The 1558 household accounts show a growing interest in and preference for silk buttons. William Cecil often purchased them and had his tailor add them to pieces of clothing. In April 1557 [1558], William bought two silk buttons for a girdle while he acquired a dozen silk buttons while travelling in June.³⁷⁸ The silk elevated these buttons on an ordinary outfit or helped them better fit into a luxurious ensemble. It might also show that frugality was not necessary for the individual who could afford both the expensive cloth and the expensive accoutrements. In any of these cases, the silk made the buttons, and therefore the entire garment, more expensive. Yet, this added material expense required an attune eye which engaged with the subtle as well as more obvious elements chosen for ornamentation.

While lace and buttons were the predominant decorative features in the 1555 and 1557 to 1558 Burghley household accounts, the Salisbury records from the beginning of the seventeenth century present a shift toward different kinds of materials like ribbons. Ribbons appeared only occasionally in the earlier bills and were typically for the ornamentation of accessories like hats rather than pieces of clothing. William Cecil purchased a yard of ribbon worth four pence in 1558 to adorn his hat while a separate ribbon payment was made in 1557.³⁷⁹ This expenditure also rarely appeared within a bill alongside silk, buttons or lace as part of the construction of a garment. Instead, it was a separate and distinct purchase.

³⁷⁸ Hatfield House, Bills 1, 'Payments from the xi day of Aprill to ye xvij of ye same, 1557' and 'The charges of my Mrs Jorney in Rydyng to Mr Hobbys begynninge ye v of June 1557'.

³⁷⁹ Hatfield House, Bills 1, 'Payments from the xi day of Aprill to ye xvij of ye same, 1557'; Hatfield House, Cecil Papers, 143/97-8, 'Bills for Apparal 12 Janyary 1557—12 Jan 1558'.



Note the use of pink or red ribbon on the glove's edges.

Figure 31. Pair of Gloves, 1620s, British, Medium: Leather, satin worked with silk and metal thread, spangles; long-and-short, satin, detached buttonhole, couching stitches; metal bobbin lace; silk and metal ribbon, Dimensions: L. 13 1/2 x W. 6 1/2 inches (34.3 x 16.5 cm), Credit Line: Gift of Irwin Untermyer, 1964, Accession Number: 64.101.1248, .1249, Public Domain, The Metropolitan Museum of Art

Yet, in the Salisbury household accounts, ribbon decorated both clothing and accessories. Lord Cranborne, for example, routinely purchased ribbon for different assembled between 1605 and 1607. He had a pair of hose set with ribbon worth seven pence as well as ribbon around the pockets and knees of a doublet and pair of hose.³⁸⁰ The tailor, Mr. Moore, was paid two shillings for the ribbon required for this second outfit in 1606.³⁸¹ Robert Cecil also had ribbon

³⁸⁰ Hatfield House, Box G. 2, 'Lord Cranborne's expensides, June 22, 1605 to Sept 29, 1606'.

³⁸¹ Hatfield House, Bills 20, 'Mr Moore the Tailor his Bill for my Lord Cranborne, The first of June 1606'; Hatfield House, Box G. 2., 'Lord Cranbornes apparel 1606-7'.

adorning his outfits including a doublet where ribbons appeared at the pockets and around the knees. Yet, not just the elite men of the household wore ribbon. Thomas Johnson, who helped managed the Salisbury household, was also provided with a doublet with ribbon at the pockets and knees.³⁸² This more consistent use of ribbon also reveals its transformation from an extra ornamentation into an essential decorative feature of the male wardrobe in the seventeenth century. Garments like doublets and hose were increasingly expected to have ribbon on them, especially at the knees, to be considered fashionable.

In a similar manner to lace, ribbon benefited from technological advances and increased variation. These allowed it to become a more entrenched form of ornamentation across society.³⁸³ In fact, in the sixteenth century, ribbons shifted from an import commodity to an export commodity. While most fifteenth-century ribbon production occurred in European and near-Eastern centres, sixteenth-century manufacture happened in England.³⁸⁴ By 1608, the ribbon was viewed as a huge triumph of domestic ingenuity and technological advancement over foreign industry.³⁸⁵

Ribbons came in many expensive and inexpensive varieties making them sites for fashion and design innovation in the seventeenth century.³⁸⁶ This was facilitated by changes in their production which allowed for easier product differentiation and market segmentation.³⁸⁷ The development of the engine loom made ribbon less expensive and enabled more inexpensive varieties to be produced alongside higher qualities of ribbon still manufactured on a single

³⁸² Hatfield House, Box G. 2, 'Lord Cranborne's expensides, June 22, 1605 to Sept 29, 1606', p. 6.

³⁸³ Spufford and Mee, *The Clothing of the Common Sort*, pp. 104-105.

³⁸⁴ Cumming, *Royal Dress*, p. 17.

³⁸⁵ Thirsk, *Economic Policy and Projects*, p. 136.

³⁸⁶ Lemire, 'Plebian commercial circuits and everyday material exchange in England', pp. 245-266; Evelyn Welch and Juliet Claxton, 'Easy Innovation in Early Modern Europe' in *Fashioning the Early Modern: Dress, Textile, and Innovation in Europe, 1500-1800*, edited by Evelyn Welch (Oxford, 2017), pp. 87-109, 90.

³⁸⁷ John Styles has noted that 'It is curious, therefore, that studies of early modern fashion have focused more on identity than on temporality. Early modern Europe was the birthplace of the forms of innovation management and build-in obsolescence that, in an intensified form, provoke so much debate in fashion today.' See Styles, 'Fashion and Innovation in Early Modern Europe', p. 55. This section, therefore, specifically focuses on the temporality of certain decorative materials and how technological changes influenced them.

loom.³⁸⁸ Plain ribbons, for example, could vary in price by ‘up to 80 per cent’.³⁸⁹ These changes encouraged the making and selling of ‘an extraordinary variety of patterns and products’ since the customer could now more easily afford these decorative materials and, therefore, purchased them more frequently in accordance with their taste and fashion.³⁹⁰ This made weavers more willing to make and peddlers or haberdashers more willing to stock a wider variety of colours, qualities, patterns, and designs of ribbon creating a pattern where technological changes sparked innovation with the design and style of materials. Over time, this product diversity fuelled the growth of the ribbon industry in the seventeenth century as individuals increasingly desired, demanded, and could afford specific ribbons for clothing and household furnishings. In a sense, then, it was the very temporal and varied quality of the ribbon which drove its rise as an appreciated decorative material in a world where material literacy increasingly valued innovation and change.

Unfortunately, the ribbon recorded in the Burghley and Salisbury household accounts is mostly nondescript. While they recorded the quantity and value, they rarely included information about the colour, pattern, style or type of ribbon. There are a few notable exceptions. Lord Cranborne, for example, purchased a yard of light or sky blue ‘watched ribbon’ in 1605.³⁹¹ Cranborne’s sister, Lady Francis Cecil, also made several descriptive ribbon purchases. She bought two dozen ‘watched ribbon[s]’ for twelve shillings as well as two dozen ‘changeable ribbon[s]’ at four pence each. These ribbons were then attached to her apparel by the tailor, Mr. Bale.³⁹² Yet, even these ribbons do not appear to be particularly unique, they cost quite similar amounts to

³⁸⁸ Ulrich Pfister, ‘Craft Guilds and Technological Change: The Engine Loom in the European Silk Ribbon Industry in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries’ in *Guilds, Innovation and the European Economy, 1400-1800*, edited by Stephen R. Epstein and Maarten Prak (Cambridge 2008), pp. 172-98, 196; Andrea Caracausi, ‘Textile Manufacturing, Product Innovations and Transfers of Technology in Padua and Venice between the Sixteenth and Eighteenth Centuries’ in *Innovation and Creativity in Late Medieval and Early Modern European Cities*, edited by Karel Davids and Bert de Munck (Farnham, Surrey, 2014), pp. 131-160, 134.

³⁸⁹ Caracausi, ‘Textile Manufacturing, Product Innovations and Transfers of Technology’, p. 138.

³⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 138.

³⁹¹ Hatfield House, Box G. 2, ‘Lord Cranborne’s expensides, June 22, 1605 to Sept 29, 1606’.

³⁹² Hatfield House, Bills 20, ‘Mr Bale the tailor his Bill for my La: Francis Cecill for apparelll made since Mychaellmas 1607’, p. 1.

those without additional detail implying a similar quality. Thus, other sources must be consulted to understand the visual and tactile power of the ribbon in the Salisbury household where its colour, texture or design could accentuate and draw attention to individuals, dress, and objects. Nestled within the household accounts is a bill chronicling Robert Cecil's expenditure on the refurbishment of the library which highlighted the material potential of the ribbon. On the 2nd of April 1608, Mr. Vincent delivered a large quantity of supplies, including parchment, paper, tape, and ribbon, to the Salisbury household. This was because of the imminent arrival of King James I. Before this visit, Robert wished to redecorate the library and provide it with new ornamentation. Ribbon was central to these plans. In fact, the expenditure on ribbon comprised the largest expense of the entire redecoration project. The bill detailed the purchase of ribbons in a variety of colours and quantities:

24 yeardes of crimsine and grene 4 d. ribbin—viiij s.
24 yeardes of mingled cullers 4 d. ribbin—viiij s.
4 y. of watched and crimsine 6 d. ribbin—ij s.
6 yeards of crimson 4 d. ribbin—ij s.
24 yeardes of grene and crimsine 4 d. ribbin—viiij s.
32 yeards of white and carnation 4 d ribbin—x s. viij d.
36 yeards orange tanny and crimsine 4 d. ribbin—xij s.
9 yeards of crimson and orange tanny 4 d. ribbin—iij s.
12 yeards of crimsine 4 d. ribbin—iiij s.
12 yeards of orange tanny 4 d. ribbin—iiij s.
I y. of watched ribbin—iiij d.³⁹³

Ribbons appeared in shades of crimson, green, white, carnation, orange, and tawny. Some were singular colours like the twelve yards of crimson ribbon worth four shillings or the twelve yards of orange tawny ribbon worth four shillings while others were in more colourful combinations

³⁹³ Hatfield House, Bills 20, 'Mr Vincents bill for things used in the library against the Kings comg thether + before. Delivered to Mr Wilsson sence the 2th of Aprill 1608', pp. 0-7, 6.

and variations. These multi-coloured ribbons included twenty-four yards of crimson and green ribbon bought for eight shillings and thirty-two yards of white and carnation ribbon at ten shillings and eight pence. There was also thirty-six yards and nine yards of crimson and orange tawny ribbon purchased for twelve and three shillings, respectively. There were even twenty-four yards of ribbon described simply as ‘mingled cullers’—mingled or many colours. These ribbons were not dark and monochromatic but bold, vibrant, and varied.

Additionally, they appeared in a range of quantities. Mr. Vincent supplied Robert with anywhere from four yards of ‘watched and crimsine...’ ribbon to thirty-six yards of ‘orange tanny and crimsine...’ ribbon.³⁹⁴ These quantities were significantly greater than the yards of ribbon purchased for dress in the household accounts. While a redecoration project might require yards upon yards of material, a garment might require much less. The market variation of the ribbon allowed for these different choices and perhaps even encouraged them. Ribbon could be bought in sizes which best suited their use making it a flexible form of ornamentation suitable both for dress and household furnishings. Their purchase by Robert for the visit of the king also indicated their value and widespread use in aristocratic circles.

Accessories

In addition to textiles and decorative materials, accessories also benefited from a culture interested in and attuned to material knowledge. Accessories were important parts of early modern dress. While fabric and ornamentation were often essential for the construction of a garment, accessories helped make the ensemble. Accessories in various forms appear in both the Burghley and Salisbury household accounts. Socks and stockings, for example, were one of the most prominent purchases made from the middle of the sixteenth century to the beginning of the seventeenth century. However, the Burghley records are much less detailed. Socks were

³⁹⁴ Hatfield House, Bills 22, ‘Thes perticulars were bought of Mr Vincent and used in the library againe the kings incoming thether. Tho: Wilson’, pp. 0-7.

simply noted as ‘...one paier of sockes...’ or ‘Payd for iiij [four] payre of sockes at iiij [four] d ye payre’.³⁹⁵



Fine silk stockings like these were one of the most prominent accessories found in the Salisbury household accounts from the beginning of the seventeenth century.

Figure 32. Stockings, 16th century, Italian, Medium: linen, silk and metal thread, Credit Line: Rogers Fund, 1910, Accession Number: 10.124.6, Public Domain, The Metropolitan Museum of Art

In contrast, the Salisbury accounts provided more insight into the material distinctions particularly when the material accentuated the luxuriousness or value of the accessory. It was detailed, for instance, that Lord Cranborne had purchased a pair of *silk* stockings from Mr.

³⁹⁵ Hatfield House, Cecil Papers, 143/84, '16 May 1557'; Hatfield House, Bills 1, '5 June 1557'.

Sallam on the 26th of June 1606.³⁹⁶ Silk stockings were a novel and fashionable accessory found almost exclusively in London.³⁹⁷ Cranborne's stockings were worth the substantial sum of thirty-one shillings because of this silk. Interestingly, Robert Cecil also purchased a pair of silk stockings valued at thirty-eight shillings for his servant, John, in 1604.³⁹⁸ Early modern historians have long contended that masters provided their servants with luxurious and costly dress as a representation of the status and wealth of the household.³⁹⁹ This purchase highlights how this expenditure could be quite significant and even comparable to that spent on the accessories worn by the elite family members. These silk stockings were also newly purchased rather than just a luxurious hand-me-down—a difference which questions historiographical assumptions about how servants acquired fine clothing.⁴⁰⁰

In addition to the silk, colour also materially elevated early modern stockings. Colour was almost exclusively only recorded for *silk* stockings in the Salisbury household accounts. However, the colours described were quite varied. Robert Cecil, for example, paid twenty-five shillings for a pair of crimson silk stockings from Mr. Flud while Lord Cranborne purchased a pair of skin-coloured silk hose for thirty shillings.⁴⁰¹ Stockings could be bought generally or for a specific outfit. They were supposed to draw attention to the male leg by hugging the body tightly and accentuating the muscles. Certain colours like skin might work best as did light or dark contrasting with other elements of the ensemble. They could be further emphasised using garters. Lord Cranborne purchased several different pairs of garters including a pair with roses

³⁹⁶ Hatfield House, Box G. 2, 'Lord Cranborne's expendides, June 22, 1605 to Sept 29, 1606'.

³⁹⁷ Thirsk, *Economic Policy and Projects*, p. 109.

³⁹⁸ Hatfield House, Box G. 2, 'Lord Cranborne's expendides, June 22, 1605 to Sept 29, 1606'.

³⁹⁹ Sim, *Masters and Servants in Tudor England*, p. 9.

⁴⁰⁰ The significance and centrality of second-hand clothing between a master or mistress and their servants is explored in early modern scholarship. See Amanda Vickery, 'Women and the world of goods: a Lancashire consumer and her possessions, 1751-81' in *Consumption and the World of Goods*, edited by John Brewer and Roy Porter (London, 1993), pp. 274-301, 282; Stallybrass, 'Worn worlds: clothes and identity on the Renaissance stage', pp. 289-321.

⁴⁰¹ Hatfield House, Box G. 2, 'Lord Cranborne's expendides, June 22, 1605 to Sept 29, 1606'; Hatfield House, Bills 21 d., 'Januarye 14. 1606. Paid to Mr. Sollam uponkis (??) bill for stockinges and other nessecaryes for my lo.', p. 8.

in 1606.⁴⁰² Robert Cecil also bought an ell of blue sarsenet to make a pair of garters to match a girdle in the same colour.⁴⁰³

Although these silk stockings found in the Salisbury accounts were of a very fine quality, the material valuation of them did not seem to come from their colour. Colour added visual interest making the silk stockings stand out but this distinction did not translate into a higher monetary worth. When compared with the stockings in the household accounts where the colour was not given, the coloured stockings in crimson and skin were purchased at comparable prices. Thus, silk stockings provide an informative contrast to many other dress examples explored in this chapter where an expansion of the material knowledge about dress increased its value. The record of its colour indicated it mattered but its significance was more complicated.

Although the diversity of coloured seventeenth-century stockings is perhaps unsurprising, the household accounts reveal that colour variation was available and more accessible earlier than different materials like silk. These colours also appeared on *non-silk* stockings rather than silk stockings. William Cecil, for example, purchased a pair of green kersey stockings for Arthur Ward in 1555. Kersey was a lightweight woollen fabric fashionable in the middle of the sixteenth century, although it became increasingly associated with lower class dress as the period progressed.⁴⁰⁴ Green also came with different connotations depending on the quality. While the Levant Company had gifted finely dyed green clothes to Sultan Murad III, less vibrant and colourfast green dyes were routinely used for clothing of yeoman and labourers.⁴⁰⁵

Thus, the value in the material properties of Arthur's stockings were partially lost. While these

⁴⁰² Hatfield House, Bills 21 d., 'Januarye 14. 1606. Paid to Mr. Sollam uponkis (??) bill for stockinges and other nessecaryes for my lo.', p. 8.

⁴⁰³ Hatfield House, Bills 22, 'Mr Singleton his bill of Chardges laid out bye home about the shewe in the librarie made the 16th of Maie 1608'.

⁴⁰⁴ Hatfield House, Bills 1. 35; Alford, *London's Triumph*, p. 40; Kersey was the most common English fabric used for stockings and hose of the more common people, See Stuart Peachey, ed., *Clothes of the Common People in Elizabethan and Early Stuart England: Unisex Accessories: Stockings, Garters, Gloves, Belts, Badges, Bags, Pouches and Jewellery*, volume 18 (Bristol, 2013), p. 14 and Spufford and Mee, *The Clothing of the Common Sort*, p. 46.

⁴⁰⁵ William Foster, ed., *Travels of John Sanderson in the Levant, 1584-1602* (London, 1931), p. xii; Spufford and Mee, *The Clothing of the Common Sort*, p. 83.

stockings may have been quite fashionable, they could also be simply utilitarian. However, these still show the significance of dyed stockings where the colour as well as cloth mattered and was recorded.



Figure 33. Pair of gloves; Great Britain (made); 1615-1625 (made); Materials and Techniques: Kidskin, silk, silver-gilt thread, silk thread; hand sewn, hand embroidered; Museum number: 202&A-1900; Gallery location: British Galleries, Room 56, The Djanogly Gallery, case 9; © The Victoria and Albert Museum

Apart from socks and stockings, the Burghley and Salisbury household accounts also frequently recorded the purchase of gloves. Gloves were suitable gifts in early modern gift-giving culture. They blended fashionability, intimacy, and practicality. This meant that they were appropriate and given in many different contexts from courtship to friendship. This social significance is chronicled within the household accounts. Robert Cecil, for example, sent Elizabeth Knollys (15 June 1549 – 1605), Lady Leighton, a pair of sweet gloves as a gift. She was an important woman at court as a Gentlewoman of the Privy Chamber and a cousin once removed to Queen

Elizabeth.⁴⁰⁶ On the 13th of October 1599, she wrote him thanking him for the thoughtful gesture.⁴⁰⁷ Lord Cranborne also used gloves as gifts. He gave a pair to Mrs. Brett worth five shillings and six pence for New Year in 1606.⁴⁰⁸ Additionally, his large purchase of twelve pairs of perfumed gloves in 1609 were perhaps intended for both personal use and as gifts.⁴⁰⁹

The Burghley and Salisbury accounts often noted the materials as well as the colour of gloves. William Cecil bought two pairs of doe leather gloves for sixteen pence in 1557.⁴¹⁰ Additionally, Lord Cranborne had the craftsman, Shepperd, make him two pairs of buck leather gloves for eighteen shillings in 1604.⁴¹¹ During this period, the most expensive gloves were drawn buck like Cranborne's gloves.⁴¹² Fine leather was imported from Spain, although the market shifted during the sixteenth century.⁴¹³

Foreign gloves persisted as fashionable and luxurious accessories. Correspondence between Robert Cecil and the Italian, Cablo Lan Lanfbanchi, highlighted how Englishmen might desire and procure Spanish gloves even at the end of the sixteenth century. Robert wrote Lanfbanchi because he desired four pairs of Spanish gloves in 1599. Lanfbanchi, in turn, desired Robert's favour so pursued this request. He wrote that he had

...sent the four pair of gloves you [Robert] asked for...They are Spanish gloves, the best I could get. I wish you would take them as a present from me, but as you won't, you may pay the bearer for them—8 crowns a pair. This I hope will be some return for your kindness in his business.⁴¹⁴

⁴⁰⁶ Violet A. Wilson, *Queen Elizabeth's Maids of Honour and Ladies of the Privy Chamber* (New York, 1923), p. 10.

⁴⁰⁷ 'E. Lady Leighton to Sir Robert Cecil' (95.162) in *Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Most Hon. The Marquis of Salisbury Preserved at Hatfield House, Hertfordshire*, Vol. XIV (London, 1933), p. 112.

⁴⁰⁸ Hatfield House, Box G. 2, 'Lord Cranborne's expendides, June 22, 1605 to Sept 29, 1606'.

⁴⁰⁹ Hatfield House, Bills 34 A and B, 'November, 1608-1609'.

⁴¹⁰ Hatfield House, Bills 1.51, 'Ano 1557. 2wyntyns accompt From the 29 of September to the 24th of October'.

⁴¹¹ Hatfield House, Box G. 2, 'Lord Cranborne's expendides, June 22, 1605 to Sept 29, 1606'.

⁴¹² Peachey, *Clothes of the Common People in Elizabethan and Early Stuart England: Unisex Accessories*, p. 40.

⁴¹³ Cumming, *Royal Dress*, p. 17.

⁴¹⁴ 'Cablo Lanfbanchi to Sir Robert Cecil' (60.30) in *Calendar of the Cecil Manuscripts Preserved at Hatfield House, Hertfordshire*, Part IX (London, 1893), p. 84.

Leather was just one aspect of a glove's material construction. Colour and scent also added to its material statement and distinguished it as an accessory. Entries from the early seventeenth century Salisbury accounts revealed just how elaborate and ornate gloves had become. Lord Cranborne, for instance, purchased two pairs of perfumed leather gloves with silver and crimson fringe.⁴¹⁵ He also bought two pairs of long perfumed gloves in cordovan. Cordovan was a colour like a rich shade of burgundy or a slightly darker shade of red rose.⁴¹⁶ It was typically associated with elegant but mid-range gloves.⁴¹⁷ Lord Cranborne's largest purchase was twelve pairs of perfumed gloves worth the substantial sum of thirty-six shillings.⁴¹⁸

Perfuming was often used to differentiate gloves and link them with individuals. The perfumer, John Shacrosse, outlined this process in a correspondence between Robert Cecil and his secretary, Sir Walter Cope (c. 1553 – 1614) around 1601. Cope wrote that 'The bearer John Shacrosse, perfumer, has brought you [Robert] such a glove as he had now lying by him, but he says, if he may have allowance of stuff and time, he hopes to fit you with as pleasing scents as Spain or Portingall do afford...'⁴¹⁹ Additionally, Queen Elizabeth I was associated with or known to prefer certain scents on her gloves. In preparation for her 1578 visit to Cambridge, Doctor Howland specifically asked William Cecil to recommend or clarify the scent that should be used for the Queen's gloves that they intended to provide as a gift.⁴²⁰ This mattered greatly. In fact, the Queen expressed her pleasure with the perfume choice by smelling them and placing one partially on her hand when she received them.

⁴¹⁵ Hatfield House, Bills 34 A and B, 'November, 1608-1609'.

⁴¹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴¹⁷ Vincent, *Dressing the Elite*, p. 69; Peachey, ed. *Clothes of the Common People in Elizabethan and Early Stuart England: Unisex Accessories*, p. 40.

⁴¹⁸ Hatfield House, Bills 34 A and B, 'November, 1608-1609'.

⁴¹⁹ 'Walter Cope to Sir Robert Cecil' (90.60) in *Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Most Hon. The Marquis of Salisbury Preserved at Hatfield House, Hertfordshire*, Vol. XI (London, 1906), pp. 543-544.

⁴²⁰ 'Letter from Lord Burghley to Richard Howland, 15 July 1578', Cambridge University Archives, University letters, Lett. 9, item B.13a, fol. 67; 'Letter from William Cecil to Richard Howland, 25 July 1578', Cambridge University Archives, University letters, Lett. 9, item B. 13b, fo. 68; See *John Nichols's*, Vol. II, pp. 566-574; 'Representatives of Cambridge University Greet the Queen', Cambridge University Library, Misc. Collect. 4, fos. 126v-134t; See *John Nichols's*, Vol. II, pp. 566-574.



Note the presence of gloves in Queen Elizabeth's right hand. Unfortunately, a visual source cannot tell us about the aromatic elements of these accessories but it does provide helpful insight into the form and style.

Figure 34. Queen Elizabeth I ('The Ditchley portrait') by Marcus Gheeraerts the Younger, oil on canvas, circa 1592, 95 in. x 60 in. (2413 mm x 1524 mm), Bequeathed by Harold Lee-Dillon, 17th Viscount Dillon, 1932, NPG 2561, © National Portrait Gallery, London

Gloves made a powerful statement through their visual, tactile, and aromatic elements. While the colour and quality of leather provided visual and tactile interest, scent offered added aromatic personalisation and variation. The specific notation of material, colour, and scent within the Burghley and Salisbury household accounts signal that these were vital pieces of material information about a pair of gloves. They indicated the individuality, fashionability,

luxury, and utility about the accessory. Together, these characteristics indicated how gloves might be valued by the maker, wearer, and observer.

The final significant accessory recorded in the Burghley and Salisbury household accounts was the hat or cap. Head coverings remained important and, even, mandatory parts of early modern English wardrobes.⁴²¹ The wool cap, for instance, was viewed as a symbol of Englishness and the success of domestic industry.⁴²² While zero wool caps were recorded in the household accounts, a variety of other headwear appeared constructed from a variety of materials.

The earliest expenditure was in 1557 when William Cecil bought a straw hat for a child worth two pence.⁴²³ Straw was a relatively inexpensive material often worn by female apprentices or workmen.⁴²⁴ This perhaps also made it good for children who constantly outgrew and wore out their dress. That same year, William Cecil also purchased an expensive velvet hat for fifteen shillings most likely intended for his own use.⁴²⁵ Lord Cranborne, meanwhile, received a black felt hat lined with rich taffeta and a band valued at eleven shillings in 1606.⁴²⁶ This bill, from the 16th of January 1606, included a lot of detail about the hats constructed, decorated, and bought from the haberdasher, Thomas Carter. Particular attention was paid to different materials like fabric and skins:

January 3 1606 [16-6/1607] Paid to Thomas Carter haberdeshher for hates for my lo [Cranborne]. Some is viij li.

My Lord Crambourn.

It. the 16th of Januarye 1606 for a black felt lynd with rych taffeta with a sipis band—xj s.

It. the 26th of May for luning your black fe. with tafitta + edging it.—iij s. vj d.

⁴²¹ Sumptuary legislation often dictated the wearing of hats by certain people at times. See Danby Pickering, ed., *Statutes at Large from Magna Carta to the End of the Eleventh Parliament of Great Britain, Anno 1761* (Cambridge, 1762), Vol. VI, p. 288; Baldwin, *Sumptuary Legislation and Personal Regulation in England*, pp. 210-212.

⁴²² Hentschell, 'A Question of Nation', pp. 50-52.

⁴²³ Hatfield House, Cecil Papers, 143/84.

⁴²⁴ Spufford and Mee, *The Clothing of the Common Sort*, p. 55.

⁴²⁵ Hatfield House, Bills 1.9, 'Payments the xxij of february to ye first of marche, 1557', p. 1.

⁴²⁶ Hatfield House, Bills 20, 'January 3 1606 [16-6/1607] Paid to Thomas Carter haberdeshher for hates for my lo [Cranborne]'.

It. the 26th of July for skowring and fashioning your whyghte beavyr + lyning it in the head tafata—iiij s. vj d.

It. the 3th of August for a whight smoth beavyr lynd with tafata with a pearle band—iiij l.

It. the 10th of October for deying and fashioning your beavyer lyning it in the head with taffeta—iiij s. vj d.

It. for a boxe—viiij d.

It. the 20th of December for deying your honors whight beaver black + lyning it in the head with taffeta—iiij s. vj d.

It. for a doble sips band thick foulded—v s. vj d.

It. the 25th December for a whight Smoth beavyr lyned with taffeta with a doble sips ban thick foulded—x l. vj s.

Som is viij l. ij d.⁴²⁷

Beaver skins were particularly central in Lord Cranborne's expenditure. Beaver was an expensive material imported from Russia or the New World. It denoted a fashionable and luxurious man. Sir Thomas Overbury commented that 'a pair of silk stockings and a beaver hat' were the characteristics of young men at the Inns of Court during the seventeenth century.⁴²⁸ White beaver was even more rare. Thus, Lord Cranborne's purchase of not one but two beaver hats indicated his high social position and wealth as well as his youth.

⁴²⁷ Hatfield House, Bills 20, 'January 3 1606 [16-6/1607] Paid to Thomas Carter haberdeshier for hates for my lo [Cranborne]'.
⁴²⁸ Henry Morley, ed., 'Sir Thomas Overbury's Characters' in *Character Writings of the Seventeenth Century* (London, 1891), p. 61.



This kind of beaver felt hat was quite fashionable and, most likely, similar in style to those described in the Burghley and Salisbury household accounts. Until about 1600, the beaver for these kinds of hats originated in Europe. However, by the early seventeenth century, most hats were made from beaver pelts imported in large quantities from North America. ‘During the felting process, the hair was removed from the skin and then fused together under heat and pressure. The resulting textile was further moulded around a wooden block to shape it into the fashionable style. Some beaver hats had short crowns and wide brims while others, like this example, had a tall, narrow crown, known as the steeple shape, because it resembled a church steeple.’⁴²⁹

Figure 35. Hat, England (made); 1590 - 1680 (made); Materials and Techniques: Beaver Felt; Height: 37.4 cm overall, Height: 36.0 cm crown, Width: 42.0 cm overall, side to side, Depth: 43.5 cm overall, front to back, Width: 11.5 cm brim approx, Circumference: 62.0 cm crown at base, Circumference: 40.8 cm crown at top, Thickness: 1.7 mm felt at edge of brim; Museum number: 752-1893; © The Victoria and Albert Museum

The hats included in the household accounts were defined by more than their strict materiality. Instead, additional ornamentation was used in their construction to further visually and tactilely

⁴²⁹ ‘Hat’, The Victoria and Albert Museum, <http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O98558/hat-unknown/>, accessed 13 April 2020.

accentuate the hats. In 1606, for example, a black felt hat was edged and lined with taffeta while another fine hat was lined for Robert Cecil by Myles in 1603.⁴³⁰ Beaver hats could even be further ornamented through embellishment or different dyes. The 1606 bill recorded these possibilities, in which some of the hats also had a fine folded band or a pearl band on them. Additionally, the bill noted when Thomas Carter had dyed or fashioned the hat perhaps adding more subtle colours or details. These would have made the hats even more distinctive creating further value in a society knowledgeable about the nuances in materials and the processes of making.

Conclusion

The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were significant moments in the evolution of English knowledge cultures. Ultimately, these moments are viewed as foundational for the later emergence of the Royal Society and men like Sir Francis Bacon despite their own suspicion or scepticism about these earlier and more anonymous vernacular figures.⁴³¹ This chapter has investigated these ideas from a different perspective. It has shown how the urban and artisanal culture of experimentation and innovation previously identified by scholars was a wider societal phenomenon that made early modern Englishmen and women interested in and knowledgeable about materials and processes of making and construction.

This material literacy was translated into how people dressed. Garments were chosen and designed with an appreciation of fabrics, colours, ornamentation, scent, and style. This is seen time and again in the Burghley and Salisbury household accounts. Men like William Cecil and Robert Cecil were particularly well placed to maximise this elevation of the material with their clothing and accessories because of wealth and social status which allowed them access to

⁴³⁰ Hatfield House, Bills 20, 'January 3 1606 [16-6/1607] Paid to Thomas Carter haberdeshier for hats for my lo [Cranborne]'; Hatfield House, Household Accounts, Volume I, 1552-1607, 6/3, 'A note of ale the rewardes gaeven the last progresse from the xxth of July to the first of September. 1603.'

⁴³¹ Harkness, *The Jewel House*, p. 2.

networks of trade, production, and innovation. Their participation in this culture of material knowledge and their detailed material literacy underscored the significance and value of it. Furthermore, they highlight the importance of pursuing what was fashionable in both aristocratic circles and household contexts in early modern England.

By interlinking dress with cultures of material knowledge, this chapter has challenged previous assumptions about this moment in early modern England regarding who participated and when it occurred. Innovation, experimentation, and empiricism are often connected with an urban sensibility rooted in London and its networks of artisans, innovators, naturalists, and alchemists at the end of the sixteenth century. This urban based knowledge has been seen as distinct from the interest in the natural world demonstrated by men and women at court or the natural knowledge pursued by those at the university.⁴³² However, the Burghley and Salisbury dress shows how this urban culture directly intersected with aristocratic and university priorities about the material even by the middle of the sixteenth century in the household. The individuals who inhabited all these realms dressed in a manner which showed their material literacy and their knowledge of materials which valued innovation, variation, and experimentation.

⁴³² Harkness, *The Jewel House*, p. xvii.

Chapter Four: The Value of the Maker

On the 11th of May 1608, Inigo Jones (1573 – 1652), the renowned architect and designer, received a partial payment for decorative materials.⁴³³ These materials ranged from prime necessities like glue, paper, pencils, thread, and wire to luxurious commodities like gold and silver. The bill also included textiles, such as calico and cotton. Jones purchased and used these goods for an entertainment commissioned by Robert Cecil in 1608. This bill detailed these expenditures, the partial reimbursement of them, and Jones's need for further reimbursement. It also offered insight into the different types and values of labour within the creation of the entertainment. Most of the bill—fifteen out of seventeenth items—recorded expenditure for goods rather than services. Yet, the manufacture of the project also required labour, craftsmanship, and design in the form of porters, painters, and Jones himself. The quantifiable value or expense for these men and their work was detailed within the bill. For example, the painters were paid nine pounds, two shillings, and six pence while the porters were paid four shillings for carrying materials. The expenditure on the painters was the highest recorded cost in the entire bill. It was substantially more than the next most expensive item—the gold, which was worth four pounds and twelve shillings.

Jones and his labour received the greatest reimbursement. The bill noted the twenty pounds that he had already gotten for the project as well as the twenty-two pounds and four pence that remained to be paid. This total of forty-two pounds and four pence was a substantial cost for the period if one considers that a typical shopkeeper or artisan made between ten to thirteen pounds each year.⁴³⁴ It was also four times more than the painters received.

⁴³³ Hatfield House, Bills 22, 'Inygo Jones his Bill for dyvrs necessities about the Shewe. Inigo Jones his Accounte for ye works done for ye Right Honorabl ye Lo: Treasurer. 1608', pp. 0-1.

⁴³⁴ Peter Laslett, *The World we have lost further explored* (Abingdon, 1994), pp. 32-33; Stuart Peachey, ed., *Clothes of the Common People in Elizabethan and Early Stuart England: The Evidence and Construction Methods*, Volume 1 (Bristol, 2013), pp. 6-7.

This bill highlighted how the work done by these men was reimbursed differently. There were stark gaps between the three groups and the quantified monetary value of each of their labours. This suggested that early modern English society viewed and valued their skills and knowledge as distinct from each other. The skilled labour of Jones and the painters was perceived more highly than the unskilled work of the porters as illustrated by the discrepancy between the expenditure on the painters versus porters and, ultimately, by that paid to Inigo Jones.

Within the bill, Jones himself offered insight into how different skills might be characterised and considered. After the final sum, he wrote that this total was ‘For my Invention and care of ye [Robert Cecil’s] works for which I have Reaseaved twentie poundes...’ This statement recorded how much Jones had already been paid for the project. Yet, the word choice surrounding these sums was interesting. Jones specifically contextualised his work as ‘invention’ and ‘care’. He used words that separated himself from just being an overseer or a labourer within the project. Instead, the choice use of ‘invention’ implied innovation, creativity, and skill while ‘care’ presented the project as nuanced, thoughtful, even visionary—something which needed leadership and expertise. These words distinguished Jones and his work from those who simply laboured like the porters as well as from other skilled craftsmen like the painters who did not have the same ability or power to execute and handle a project of this nature. This, in Jones’s mind, portrayed his work. Jones made strategic use of language in describing himself and what he did because he believed his ‘creativity’, ‘innovation’, and ‘vision’ would distinguish his workmanship raising its value in early seventeenth-century English society.

The Evolving World of the Maker

Sixteenth and seventeenth-century England saw a breakdown in the separation between the knowledge of scholars and that of artisans. This breakdown was fundamental for the foundation of the Scientific Revolution and part of a larger phenomenon occurring throughout early

modern Europe. The previous distinction between these two kinds of knowledge was part of a widespread Aristotelian worldview which drew sharp separation between theory (*episteme* or *scientia*) and practice (*praxis* or *experientia*).⁴³⁵ Further dispersion was also placed upon ‘things made’ which needed bodily labour (*technē*). In this epistemology, ideas rather than process were valued while the scholar rather than the practitioner was held up as an ideal.

Yet, the work of historians like Pamela Smith, Deborah Harkness, and Sven Dupré have shown how this epistemology shifted as information acquired through *technē* became increasingly valued and privileged in early modern knowledge-making beginning in the sixteenth century.⁴³⁶

The connection between *technē* and innovation was seen to benefit the state which made it more valuable within society. Thus, the creative processes and prowess of artisans and craftspeople were essential rather than superfluous or corruptive.⁴³⁷ Despite previous associations of inferiority with their bodily labour, this new culture enabled artisans and craftspeople to assert themselves as they provided direct access to the natural world and the processes of making through their specialities.⁴³⁸ The late sixteenth-century records of Hugh Plat, for example, chronicled his search for useful knowledge in early modern England. This search was aided by artisans in over fifty different trades whom Plat turned to as experts and teachers.⁴³⁹ William Cecil, Lord Burghley, similarly valued and relied upon the technological expertise of practitioners and artisans. His papers included information by makers about the proper distillation processes and qualities of beer and *aqua vita*.⁴⁴⁰ In these contexts, artisans and

⁴³⁵ Pamela Smith, *The Body of the Artisan: Art and Experience in the Scientific Revolution* (Chicago, 2004), pp. 17-18

⁴³⁶ Sven Dupré, ‘Introduction’ in *Laboratories of Art: Alchemy and Art Technology from Antiquity to the 18th Century*, edited by Sven Dupré (New York, 2014), pp. vii-xix, xiv; Smith, *Body of the Artisan*, pp. 95-127; Harkness, *The Jewel House*.

⁴³⁷ Smith, *Body of the Artisan*, p. 19.

⁴³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 238.

⁴³⁹ British Library, Sloane 2216, ff. 44; British Library, Sloane 2203, f. 87.

⁴⁴⁰ British Library, Lansdowne 74, f. 10; Harkness, *The Jewel House*, pp. 145-150.

craftspeople as well as their work and knowledges were valued as vitally important for the progression and elevation of early modern society.

This historiographical narrative about the significance of the artisan and the increasing value of ‘artisanal literacy’ has been a vital shift away from viewing early modern intellectual life and culture through the lens of either a monolithic, solitary artist genius or the singular privileging of matter over process. It has helpfully reminded historians about the relationship between makers, materials, and skill as well as the increased value of human ingenuity and expertise in sixteenth and seventeenth century Europe.⁴⁴¹ However, while this chapter emerges out of this historiography, it shows how the rise of the artisan or craftsperson in sixteenth and seventeenth-century Europe was not linear nor necessarily connected to the monetary privileging of making over materials. While men like Inigo Jones might benefit in this emerging culture through asserting their innovative and creative expertise, most of the makers who dressed the Burghley and Salisbury households were not part of this triumphant narrative. Their work did not receive increasing compensation even as the Aristotelian epistemological culture broke down and the value of *technē* rose. This chapter shows that, despite the increased societal or intellectual value of the maker, this reality was perhaps more abstract or exceptional than real or widespread. Most makers were undervalued and underpaid individuals who are often anonymous or insignificant within the written records.

Scholars have not investigated this chasm between the rise of artisanal culture and the lack of increased monetary valuation for artisanal expertise in early modern England. Few studies have even directly addressed the poverty of skilled makers throughout Europe. Ann Rosalind Jones’ work on Venetian lace-makers is an exception which highlighted how little lace-makers made

⁴⁴¹ Michael Baxandall, *The Limewood Sculptors of Renaissance Germany* (London, 1980).

despite the fashionability and demand for their work and the precision needed for its execution.⁴⁴²

Additionally, historiography about aristocratic English dress in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries remains relatively silent about the maker, although a lot of scholarship is devoted to the actual construction and technological innovation of the making process itself.⁴⁴³ These studies are largely centred on materials or manufacture rather than individuals. Very little, therefore, is known about the men and women who supplied, produced, and made the garments, accessories, and jewellery for those in aristocratic circles. The work that does exist, most notably studies by Janet Arnold and Maria Hayward, are focused on the artificers who worked for the Crown and facilitated the royal wardrobes for Elizabeth I and Henry VIII.⁴⁴⁴ These rarely consider the earnings of the tailor or maker within a larger narrative about the valuation of making in early modern England. Susan Vincent's research into elite clothing reminds historians that decisions about dress by early modern English elites reflected '...moral, religious and political debates.'⁴⁴⁵ Yet, despite the useful insight into the garments worn by elites, her work does not discuss the actual production of clothing or how expenditure on dress

⁴⁴² Ann Rosalind Jones, 'Labor and Lace: The Crafts of Giacomo Franco's *Habiti delle donne venetiane*', *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance*, Vol. 17, No. 2 (September 2014), pp. 399-425.

⁴⁴³ See for example: Styles 'Fashion and Innovation in Early Modern Europe', pp. 33-55; John Styles, 'Product innovation in early modern London', *Past and Present*, 168.1 (2000), pp. 124-69.

⁴⁴⁴ Arnold, *Queen Elizabeth's Wardrobe Unlock'd*, Chapter VIII, pp. 177-240; Maria Hayward, *Dress at the Court of King Henry VIII: The Wardrobe Book of the Wardrobe of the Robes prepared by James Worsley in December 1516, edited from Harley MS 2284, and his Inventory prepared on 17 January 1521, edited from Harley MS 4217, both in the British Library* (Leeds, 2007), Chapter XIV, pp. 317-343; Lynn, *Tudor Fashion*, pp. 147-149; Ian W. Archer, 'Conspicuous Consumption Revisited: City and Court in the Reign of Elizabeth I' in *London and the Kingdom: Essays in Honour of Caroline M. Barron*, edited by Matthew Davies and Andrew Prescott (Lincolnshire, 2008), pp. 38-57; Milton and Anna Grass, *Stockings for a Queen: The Life of Rev. William Lee, the Elizabethan Inventor* (London, 1967). One exception is a study about Catherine Tollemache at Helmingham Hall which includes some detail about her work with the tailor, Roger Jones. However, although she was an elite, Catherine and her household remained relatively remote from the court and its daily proceedings see *The 16th Century Household Secrets*, pp. 133-135. See also Janet Arnold, Jenny Tiramani, and Santana Levy, *Patterns of Fashion 4: the Cut and Construction of Linen Shirts, Smocks, Neckwear, Headwear and Accessories for Men and Women, c. 1540-1660* (London, 2008); Janet Arnold, *Patterns of Fashion: The Cut and Construction of Clothes for Men and Women c. 1560-1620* (London, 1985); Jenny Tiramani, 'Janet Arnold and the Globe Wardrobe: Handmade Clothes for Shakespeare's Actors', *Costume: The Journal of the Costume Society*, 34 (2000), pp. 118-22; Ninya Mikhaila and Jane Malcolm-Davies, *The Tudor Tailor: Reconstructing 16th-Century Dress* (London, 2006).

⁴⁴⁵ Susan Vincent, *Dressing the Elite*, p. 5.

might reflect an evaluation of the skills and expertise of the maker forming part of the intellectual and cultural debates at the time.

Value in the Household Accounts

This chapter, once again, uses the Burghley and Salisbury household account books as its source. It specifically focuses on the daily records and re-copied bills compiled within the larger family records for William Cecil, Lord Burghley, and his son, Robert Cecil, the Earl of Salisbury. Approximately seventy bills were consulted alongside three different series of expenses taken from 1557, 1600, and 1605-1606. These records provide evidence of the labour costs associated with cloth and clothing. They show the value given to these skills both in terms of direct monetary expenditure and in the more abstract connection between the inclusion or exclusion of certain steps in the construction process which warranted additional costs.

This chapter engages with these sources in order to understand more about the holders of material knowledge and their value within early modern English society rather than the previous chapter's focus on the garments being produced for the household. While shifting to the perspective of the makers, it reveals how William Cecil engaged with these individuals in a household or shop context. This chapter also explores who cared for the clothing and accessories within the household and how and when this was done. In doing so, it investigates the cost of clothing construction and care of clothing construction, both in relation to the expenditure on making, rather than the expenditure on materials. It is particularly attuned to a more nuanced understanding about the importance placed on work within the process of production as well as the evolution in the role and significance of the maker between the middle of the sixteenth and the early seventeenth centuries in English society. Although this chapter occasionally includes references to well-known men like Inigo Jones, it primarily investigates the men and women whose names and reputations are less renowned. This allows them and their skills to be placed properly into the historical record, often for the first time.

Along with the focus on the value of the maker in the Burghley and Salisbury households, this chapter investigates the dress of those who served these aristocratic families. It presents the material conditions experienced by the servants, retainers, and makers who lived with and provided for the households. These were the very men and women whose skills, expertise, and ingenuity produced and cared for the elite clothing. Sometimes their clothing was quite like the elite members while other times it was categorically different. This highlights, therefore, how knowledge about dress—its materials, construction, and ornamentation—went beyond a personal experience of clothing and the garments within one’s wardrobe.

Dressing Non-Elites

Servants are often overlooked in studies about early modern English dress. Yet, historians have long asserted the significance of servant clothing as a social and political statement. Elite families used the garments worn by their servants and retainers to demonstrate the wealth, position, and magnificence of the household and its patriarch. A well-dressed household was an early modern symbol of power and prestige.⁴⁴⁶

Existing scholarship about English servants in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries largely focuses on livery and its distinction within sumptuary legislation.⁴⁴⁷ Livery originally included ‘...all sorts of non-monetary payment including food, lodging, and hay for horse’ and was provided by a master or mistress. However, it increasingly became synonymous with dress, specifically the marked clothing worn by the servants and retainers of an elite family.⁴⁴⁸ In the sixteenth century, badges also became integral elements of marked dress in England. Badges appeared on clothing and jewellery as well as on the exteriors of homes and business, on dishware, and in books.⁴⁴⁹ Famous royal badges included the Tudor rose and the Beaufort

⁴⁴⁶ Sim, *Masters and Servants in Tudor England*, p. 9.

⁴⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 85; Amanda Bailey, *Flaunting: Style and the Subversive Male Body in Renaissance England* (Toronto, 2007), p. 55.

⁴⁴⁸ Jones and Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing and the Materials of Memory*, p. 17.

⁴⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

portcullis. The wearing of this marked clothing demonstrated loyalty and acted as an external signifier of one's allegiance or subjugation to the person or household whose colours or sign was worn. In theory, the symbol provided the wearer with protection and privileges from the family. However, it also tangibly demonstrated and displayed an individual's social inferiority and dependence upon another.

Livery and badges both appeared in the Burghley and Salisbury household accounts, although the badges were primarily issued in the sixteenth century. This marked dress was worn by those who served the household as well as those who benefitted from different charitable endeavours.⁴⁵⁰ Yet, most of the clothing issued to household servants was not livery but unmarked dress with specific colours, symbols or designs. These garments were not primarily elite hand-me-downs which challenges certain historiographical assumptions about the acquisition of fine clothing by servants as typically secondhand.⁴⁵¹ Thus, this chapter highlights the diversity of dress worn by servants as well as its intentional construction for them. In doing so, it investigates the material variation of household clothing and the ways in which dress could physically manifest more subtle power dynamics and the significance of position, gender, and age in determining who wore what in an elite household.⁴⁵²

A Tale of Two Bills

While the 1606 bill for Inigo Jones's work highlights different evaluations of labour and skill, another early seventeenth-century bill found within the account books illustrates the innovation and expertise provided by the less well-known men and women who supported the household.

⁴⁵⁰ 'Servants and their liveryes. 1553' (151. 122) in *Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Most Hon. The Marquis of Salisbury Preserved at Hatfield House, Hertfordshire*, Part I (London, 1883), p. 142; The indenture for Burghley Hospital, 20 Sept. 1597 is Burghley House, MS Ex 76/109 cited in Alford, *Burghley*, p. 326.

⁴⁵¹ The significance and centrality of second-hand clothing between a master or mistress and their servants is explored in early modern scholarship. See Vickery, 'Women and the world of goods', p. 282; Stallybrass, 'Worn worlds: clothes and identity on the Renaissance stage', pp. 289-321.

⁴⁵² Jane Whittle and Elizabeth Griffiths, *Consumption and Gender in the Early Seventeenth-Century Household: The World of Alice Le Strange* (Oxford, 2012), p. 8; P. Griffiths, *Youth and Authority: Formative Experiences in England 1560-1640* (Oxford, 1996), Ch. 2.

This bill was for upholstery produced for Theobalds, Robert Cecil's family home. It presented textile expertise and its valuation within early seventeenth-century society.

On the 27th of June 1606, John Lofte, an upholster, billed for the work he had completed and the wares he had delivered to Robert Cecil.⁴⁵³ This bill included many diverse textiles used in the upholstering of a bed and chair and in the making of curtains and wall hangings. Velvet, silk, taffeta, cotton, and buckram all appeared. These fabrics came in diverse colours. For instance, the bill designated blue and yellow taffeta costing ten shillings for the making of three curtains. Additionally, crimson and yellow taffeta was acquired for ten shillings and used in the construction of the curtains in the Queen's bedchamber. These colours incorporated bright and subtler shades. This allowed for many different combinations.



The Great Bed of Ware offers insight into the appearance of early modern English bed curtains like those described in Lofte's bill. Lofte made Cecil curtains from yellow and

⁴⁵³ Hatfield House, Bills 12, 'John Lofte the upholster his bill for worke done at Theoballes. [1606]', pp. 1-2.

blue taffeta, while these curtains are red and yellow say, a twill-woven wool. However, Lofte did also record say in his bill as well as tick which formed the stuffing of the pillows on the Great Bed of Ware.

Figure 36. Bed; Ware (probably, made); 1590-1600 (made); Vredeman de Vries, Hans, born 1527 - died 1604 (designer); Oak, carved and originally painted, with panels of marquetry; Credit Line: Purchased with Art Fund support; Museum number: W.47:1 to 28-1931; Gallery location: British Galleries, Room 57, case 2; © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

While Lofte purchased different types and colours, he also bought different lengths of fabric for this project. For example, he bought fifty-six yards of red say for five pounds and twelve shillings—the largest length—as well as four yards of blue say at two shillings and four pence per yard for a total of nine shillings and four pence—the smallest length. These various lengths better facilitated the upholstering of various pieces of furniture but also demonstrate the conceptual expertise Lofte had in knowing the different amounts of fabric which would be necessary for each item and its construction.

Alongside these textiles, the bill recorded various constructive and decorative elements. In terms of construction, Lofte purchased eight pounds of feathers to stuff the bed. Additionally, the chair required tick, leather for its back, and six yards of cotton costing ten shillings for its casing. The most prevalent decorative item was fringe bought by the ounce for the curtains and the chair. Four different fringes appeared in the bill. For instance, six ounces of crimson silk and silver fringe was purchased for a pound and ten shillings while three ounces of gold and silver fringe was bought for fifteenth shillings. There was also four ounces of crimson deep and short fringe purchased at sixteen shillings for the construction of the chair and fourteen ounces of gold and silver fringe procured for four pounds and four shillings.



This fringe shares similarities with that used by Lofte for the curtains and chair. Both this extant example and Lofte’s bill show fringe constructed from silk and with metal threads like silver and gold incorporated into its design.

Figure 37. Fringe; ca. 1650; Italian; Medium: Silk and metal thread; Dimensions: 5 x 25 inches (12.7 x 63.5 cm); Credit Line: Rogers Fund, 1908; Accession Number: 08.48.39; Public Domain; The Metropolitan Museum of Art

This 1606 bill, then, clearly demonstrated the materials necessary for each of Lofte’s projects. It helpfully categorised each individual item rather than presented a nondescript category like ‘chair materials’. The step-by-step nature of this list chronicled the different kinds of supplies and their different uses throughout the making process. It showed how one object might require multiple elements. The production of the chair, for example, needed separate materials for its back, base, and covering. Yet, not only did an upholster like Lofte depend upon diverse components like those recorded in this bill, they also required the knowledge and skills to harness these elements and produce a finished product. This was not so easy. Although it might take one individual to complete a chair, this individual had to have a variety of expertise in using fabrics, leather, and trimmings for creating and decorating. He knew how to match textiles with disparate textures, colours, and lengths. He also understood how to make many different kinds of household furnishings, such as chairs, curtains, and beds. An upholster like Lofte, therefore, was a craftsman who had a diverse knowledge about making.

Additionally, like the Inigo Jones's bill, Lofte's upholstery bill included expenditure for labour. In fact, three specific labour costs were recorded within the receipt. The first was for the making of three blue and yellow taffeta curtains used in the Queen's dining chamber. This labour cost ten shillings. Here, the payment was for a finished product rather than individual steps within the making process. However, the second and third labour costs—lining and sewing on silk—were the opposite. They referenced specific expertise necessary for completing different elements in the construction of seven pairs of crimson velvet hangings. The lining labour cost one pound, which may have also included materials, while the sewing of silk cost two shillings. These specific expenditures are helpful in understanding and appreciating the social and economic valuations of early modern work since many parts of making were simply subsumed under more generalised headings, such as the one found within this bill entitled 'Wares delivered and worke done'. This was because, in many cases, early modern individuals viewed the intrinsic value of an object through its materials rather than its craftsmanship or manufacture. There was no linear development between an earlier view that placed materials above craftsmanship or artistry and a later view which reversed this valuation. In fact, as this chapter highlights, materials, in many cases, continued to comprise the main expenditure for garments even those that incorporated novel and innovative designs.

However, in this instance, the expertise of the upholster and an economic appreciation of his skill is recorded. This allows the value of the upholster's expertise to be compared with other skilled workmen of the period, such as Inigo Jones and the painters from the first bill, both of whom received substantially more than Lofte. While the latter received a pound and twelve shillings, the painters got nine pounds, two shillings, and six pence and Inigo Jones was compensated forty-two pounds and four pence. This reveals just how wide the assessment and payment for skilled labour was in this period. It also highlights how factors beyond expertise

or creativity like reputation, demand, and novelty could dictate how much a maker received and how his or her work was viewed and valued.

The bills of Inigo Jones and John Lofte may appear somewhat peculiar starting points for this chapter focused on cloth and clothing, although the upholstery bill does offer interesting insight into fabrics and ornamentation. However, these two bills straightforwardly introduce the variation in the types of labour and the diversity of skills used in the Burghley and Salisbury households. They also highlight the chasm in the celebration and compensation of makers like Jones versus those skilled craftsmen like Lofte.

The Makers

The investigation of the account books now turns toward the records of men and women who constructed the clothing, paying particular attention to those who made dress for the elite members of the family. At this point, it is necessary to address the presence of silences in the archive, which provide more absences than answers or certainties. Many receipts and entries simply provide tantalising trails of information that cannot be confirmed or completed. This is only partially a consequence of the passage of time and the loss or destruction of documents.

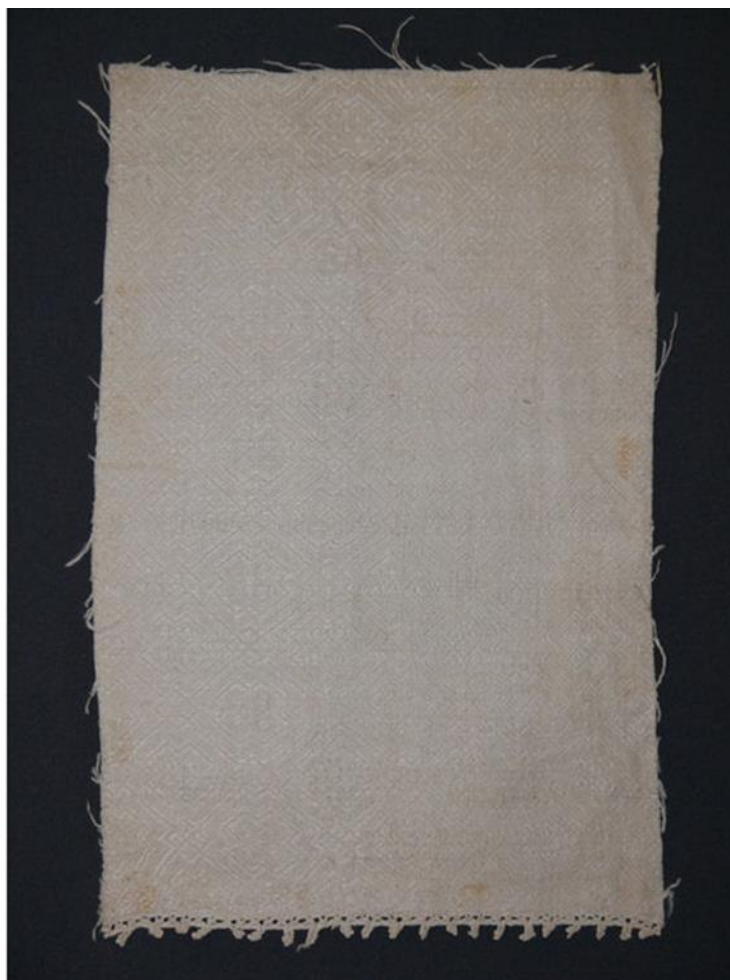
These silences are also particularly prominent because of the nature of this investigation, which focuses on the makers, artisans, and craftspeople. They were men and women who, in general, were not members of the upper echelons of early modern society and whose skills were often under-appreciated and undervalued. In fact, their expertise was often seen as secondary in terms of importance and worth to the materials used for construction. This explains why greater detail and description was provided about the different types of fabrics, colours, quantities, and qualities of materials than to the men and women who created and looked after these clothes and accessories. Thus, the absence as well as the presence of information offers precious insights into the evaluation of sartorial labour within early modern English society and the

influence this had on the compensation of makers, the appreciation of their knowledge, and the historical survival of their stories.

Despite the potential for silences, the household account books from the middle of the sixteenth to the early seventeenth century do include information about the producers and makers who supplied the elite members of the family with dress. Many of their names appear within recopied bills and daily familial expenditure. These records contained both men and women and occurred throughout the source materials. For example, William Cecil noted that he paid a Margaret Wyght for her production of linen, which was necessary for the construction of shirts worn by gentlemen in Cecil's household.⁴⁵⁴ Wyght also provided him with canvas for these shirts. In total, Cecil paid her twenty-nine shillings and four pence on the 22nd of December 1555. Additionally, he reimbursed a Mrs. Ward the small sum of four pence for sewing a dozen napkins and two girls' shirts in 1555.⁴⁵⁵

⁴⁵⁴ Hatfield House, Cecil Papers, 11.2/96.

⁴⁵⁵ *Ibid.*



An example of the kind of fabric provided to William Cecil by Margaret Wyght in 1555 and recorded in the household accounts. She was one of the few female makers included in these accounts from the middle of the sixteenth century.

Figure 38. Woven linen; 15th century-16th century (made); Width: 17.5 cm, Flemish ?; Diaper pattern; Museum Number: 1166A-1888; © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

However, despite these early female entries, male makers appeared more prominently within the Burghley household accounts. For instance, Cecil routinely received and endorsed bills from the tailor Mathew Brygam in 1555.⁴⁵⁶ In total, Brygam received a payment of six pounds, fifteen shillings, and nine pence. This included the cost of both materials and labour for constructing a variety of garments for William Cecil, his eldest son, Thomas Cecil (1542 – 1623), and Cecil's

⁴⁵⁶ Hatfield House, Cecil Papers, 11.2/96., 'It. remenyng of the owld recenyng xxx s uppo a bill pd. Cost this sum totalis vj te xv s. ix d. ye xxij day of December 1555. Receybed of Sir Wyllm Cycell Knyght ye contentacion of this byll Syxe pound xv s. ix d. By me Mathew Brygam. [Endorsed by William Cecil] The Taylord Bill...'

ward, Arthur Hall (1539 – 1605). In total, he made a nightgown, two jerkins, three doublets, two gowns, and two coats for these three men. A variety of materials, such as lace, fabric, silk, and buttons, were necessary for the completion of these garments. Their purchase was detailed within the bill. However, the overall cost of making each garment was noted at the beginning of each entry before the itemisation of these other materials. For instance, the tailor billed William Cecil two shillings to make a cloth nightgown with a lace bowtie. In contrast, he charged Cecil just twenty pence to construct Cecil's black satin jerkin with parchment lace added for decoration. The lace itself on the garment, of the value of three shillings, cost substantially more than the labour for its production, which was worth less than a shilling.

The highest labour expenditure within the bill was for a black velvet striped jerkin made with lace and for a gown of black taffeta. For producing each of these garments, Brygam received three shillings. The design and materials may help explain this higher making cost. Striped fabric was complicated since it presented a big challenge to a tailor who needed to pattern match as he made the piece of clothing. Pattern matching meant that each cut section of the fabric needed to be aligned properly along the striped line so it looked congruent rather than haphazardly placed and sewed together with stripes meeting each other in strange places. In order to apply this skill correctly, a tailor required specific expertise in cutting and laying a pattern as well as sewing the garment together.



An example of striped fabric which would have offered technical challenges for a tailor as he constructed a garment. The technique of pattern-matching required additional skills and knowledge.

Figure 39. Fragmentary Silk Velvet with Repeating Tiger-stripe and 'Chintamani' Design; second half 15th century; Attributed to Turkey, Bursa; Materials: Silk, metal wrapped thread; cut and voided velvet (çatma), brocaded; Textile: H. 29 1/2 in. (74.9 cm) W. 28 in. (71.1 cm) Mount: H. 31 1/2 in. (80 cm) W. 30 11/16 in. (78 cm); Accession Number: 08.109.23; Public Domain; Metropolitan Museum of Art

The additional money Brygam received for the jerkin perhaps represented an appreciation of his ability to create a nicely constructed piece with striped cloth. Since not everyone would have been able to work easily with this kind of textile, it represented a recognition that he was a highly knowledgeable tailor who possessed nuanced skills. Additionally, the presence of these stripes in a black velvet fabric increased the stakes. Black velvet and black taffeta were expensive and luxurious cloths, especially during the middle of the sixteenth century. These were not materials to make mistakes with, from the perspective of both purchaser and tailor. Thus, the employment of Brygam by Cecil to work with this type of material reveals a great

deal about Brygam's expertise and the wider recognition and valuation of his skills. Cecil had the confidence to use Brygam as his tailor for more general articles of clothing as well as for more complex and luxurious garments with stripes or black velvet and black taffeta, for which he received greater compensation.

In contrast, the most inexpensive pieces of clothing Brygam made for Cecil were two doublets. These were constructed for Arthur Hall and Thomas Cecil while they were younger men in 1555. The bill recorded that the labour for these garments cost just twelve pence. This low expenditure perhaps resulted because of the smaller size of these doublets in comparison with more regularly sized adult clothing. At the time of the construction, both Thomas and Arthur were only around thirteen years old. However, the bill also highlighted that doublets were generally more inexpensive garments in terms of their making cost. For example, while Thomas's and Arthur's doublets cost just twelve pence to make, the doublet for Cecil did not cost much more. Brygam charged Cecil only fourteen pence to create a black fustian doublet, despite it being constructed in an adult size and requiring both a larger quantity and a finer quality of fabric.⁴⁵⁷

The expenditure on the two younger men was often consistent in the 1555 bill. This related both to the kinds of garments Cecil bought them and how much Brygam charged to make these pieces of clothing. The doublets were good examples of this trend. Something similar also occurred with the making of the two coats for Arthur and Thomas. For each coat, Brygam billed the same amount of sixteen pence for its construction. Overall, the bill highlighted a consistent monetary valuation of the time, expertise, and skills used by the tailor in his making process, especially for certain garments like the doublets and coats. However, under specific circumstances, the tailor received greater payment that signified a higher evaluation of his work.

⁴⁵⁷ Arthur's doublet was constructed from canvas while any detail about the cloth for Thomas's garment was not recorded.

These cases show how both buyer and maker believed that expensive fabrics and difficult design required more specialised workmanship, time, and innovation, all of which ought to be more generously compensated.

The 1555 expenditure on sartorial consumption should also be compared with that found within a set of bills from the 12th of January 1557, which included clothing constructed for William Cecil, Thomas Cecil, and Arthur Hall.⁴⁵⁸ The tailor made Cecil a cloak, jerkin, and doublet while Arthur received a gown, two doublets, and two jerkins and Thomas received a coat, doublet, and jerkin. Each garment expense was itemised within the bill. Following a format consistent with that found in the 1555 records, the cost of making was often noted at the beginning of each dress entry and appeared separately from the individual materials, such as fabric, buttons, and lace, purchased for the item of clothing.

This 1557 bill began with the expenditure for making Cecil's cloak, whose labour production cost four shillings. Meanwhile, the tailor charged sixteen pence for the construction of the jerkin. These cases provide instances where the tailor made Cecil pay one total fee that included all the tailoring and sewing done for a garment. This method did not separate individual elements, skills, or parts of the making process. However, this practice was not the only way the tailor charged Cecil. For example, the bill detailed a specific and separate expenditure for the construction and lining of a doublet's sleeves. These cost six and twelve pence each. In fact, labour for the doublet's lining was almost equal to that spent on the entire jerkin's construction. There was only a four pence difference, despite one being an entire garment and the other being just one section. This highlighted the different value of workmanship that existed even between distinct types or elements of garments. The tailor viewed the construction and lining of these sleeves as a more time-consuming part of making perhaps also requiring more specialised skills. Thus, he could charge for these specific parts of the making process separately, believing that

⁴⁵⁸ Hatfield House, Cecil Papers, 143/97-8, 'Bills for Apparal 12 Janyary 1557—12 Jan 1558'.

buyers would be knowledgeable about the craftsmanship and sensitive to the additional time and expertise required. However, with certain pieces of clothing like the jerkin or cloak, a simple overall labour cost worked well and could absorb the more regularised time it took to make each part. In total, Cecil spent between four shillings and six pence to pay the tailor for his labour in 1557.

In contrast to Cecil's purchase, the tailor constructed Arthur Hall and Thomas Cecil different clothes with different making costs. For example, the tailor charged three shillings and three pence for Hall's gown. Additionally, another gown in the bill cost two shillings and eight pence for its production. This time, the tailor did not construct any gowns for Thomas. Instead, he made him a frizado (frizado) coat, which cost sixteen pence to make and eighteen pence to line. Frizado was a distinct worsted fabric that had a raised nap that created a fuzzy or 'frised' surface. This made it thick and ideal for colder weather similar to frieze, although frizado was finer and more lightweight than frieze. Thus, frizado commanded a higher price per yard making it relatively expensive.⁴⁵⁹ Hall also had both a black fustian doublet and a black satin doublet produced by the tailor. For these, the labour expenditure amounted to sixteen pence and six shillings. Similarly, Thomas had a fustian doublet constructed for sixteen pence. Hall also had two jerkins made while Thomas had one. All three items – the making cost of Hall's black satin jerkin, his grosgrain camlet jerkin, and the making cost of Thomas's grosgrain camlet jerkin – cost two shillings and eight pence. The bill highlights, once again, that the tailor charged more for the making of certain garments versus others. He could also demand additional payment for various elements of the making process, such as the six pence he desired for the making of a pair of canvas sleeves for both Hall and Thomas.

⁴⁵⁹ Spufford and Mee, *The Clothing of the Common Sort*, p. 176; Jane E. Huggett, 'Rural Costume in Elizabethan Essex: A Study Based on the Evidence from Wills', *Costume*, 33:1 (1999), pp. 74-88, 83.

However, this later bill suggests that the contrasts between the tailor's payments were more directly related to the value and complexity of materials than to the specific types of garments that the tailor could make. The different expenditure on Hall's two doublets best illustrates this point. For the construction of the first doublet, made from fustian, the tailor charged sixteen pence. Meanwhile, the second doublet was made from satin and cost six shillings to make.



This waistcoat is unusual because it is constructed out of fustian fabric. This is the same material that the tailor used to make Arthur Hall's more inexpensive doublet in 1557.

Figure 40. A woman's waistcoat; England (made); 1630-1640 (made); Fustian with a handsewn pattern from linen thread, embroidered with silver thread and spangles, and edged with silver bobbin lace and spangles; Museum number: T.70-2004; Gallery location: British Galleries, Room 56; The Djanogly Gallery, case 9; © Victoria and Albert Museum, London



When compared with the fustian waistcoat above, this piece of satin looks quite different. The textile is like that used by the tailor to construct Arthur Hall's more expensive doublet in 1557. The finer quality and expense of this material may help explain why the tailor received more compensation.

Figure 41. Cloak; Spain (made), 1580-1600 (made); Red satin, couched and embroidered with silver, silver-gilt and coloured silk threads, trimmed with silver-gilt and silk thread fringe and tassel, and lined with pink linen; Museum number: 793-1901; © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

This second piece of satin clothing was, therefore, a substantially more expensive garment than the first both in terms of its fabric and its making. This difference in cost can be directly linked with the materials for several reasons. First, the discrepancy was not related to a distinction in two sizes of dress. This type of distinction was seen in the earlier bill where garments were constructed for both older and younger men with differing expenditure to make them. In this case, however, the tailor produced the two doublets for one individual at the same time. It is

thus safe to assume that the recipient would have been the same size throughout the process, and this did not influence the change in cost. The disparate prices were also not explained by contrasting quantities of material, as Hall's doublets used the exact same amount of fabric—two yards and a quarter. Additionally, both garments had similar elements for construction, such as canvas and bombast, and decorative designs, such as buttons and silk. Therefore, the difference in making cost between the two doublets did not reflect any additional time the tailor would have required for the constructing or decorating of one versus the other. In this case, then, the only major distinction between the two garments was their primary fabric—fustian for the first and satin for the second.

Fustian was a combination fabric which often included cotton, linen, and wool.⁴⁶⁰ By the end of the sixteenth century, it was largely manufactured in England making it a domestic commodity. In fact, Robert Cecil himself promoted fustian production, employing a fustian maker at Hatfield and commissioning him to train the poor how to make this textile.⁴⁶¹ Fustian was used regularly in the construction of garments, especially as a lining.⁴⁶² It was a strong and sturdy textile that could range in both quality and price. However, it was not considered particularly luxurious. In contrast, the satin used for Hall's second doublet had a different reputation as a novel and foreign-made luxury, signalling wealth and access to global markets.

William Cecil had maximised satin's appeal throughout his domestic furnishings at the end of the sixteenth century. As he designed and decorated his home Theobalds, Cecil chose fabrics befitting his high position as Lord Treasurer within the Elizabethan government and his social position as a member of the Order of the Garter. This included expensive and luxurious textiles, such as satin. For example, the room referred to as the king's bedchamber had a tester, doublet

⁴⁶⁰ Hayward, *Rich Apparel*, p. 93.

⁴⁶¹ *Calendar of State Papers Domestic: James I, 1603-1610*, edited by Mary Anne Everett Green (London, 1857), p. 478; Joan Thirsk 'England's Provinces: Did They Serve or Drive Material London?' in *Material London, ca. 1660*, edited by Len Cowen Orlin (Philadelphia, 2000), pp. 97-109.

⁴⁶² Arnold, *Queen Elizabeth's Wardrobe Unlock'd*, p. 153.

valance, and curtains all done in white satin and crimson velvet for the bedstead. Additionally, the room contained wall-hangings consisting of 'six pieces of crimson velvet and white satin paned, embroidered with silk and gold.'⁴⁶³ These objects showed satin at its very finest quality mixed with other costly materials and dyes.

Hall's doublet was perhaps not quite of the same calibre. Yet, these examples highlighted satin's reputation and connotations within elite circles. Its use as a fabric for Hall's doublet provided similar connections for the early modern viewer. However, its great expense and value meant the tailor who used this cloth had to be careful and skilled. This expertise was worth more and explained why Cecil paid more for the making of Hall's satin doublet versus the construction of the fustian one.

The difference in making cost between the wardrobe constructed for Cecil, Hall, and Thomas was another important insight from these bills. The overall expenditure, in terms of production, was less for Thomas than Cecil or Hall. Although Cecil's age, size, and position easily explain this discrepancy, the disparity between Hall and Thomas was more surprising because the two men were around the same age and Thomas had a greater place within society as the son of Cecil rather than just his ward. Additionally, the items within the two bills and overall expenditure on each garment had quite similar costs. It was only the making costs that significantly differed. This helped to show how the garments and the process of production were valued. This 1557 evaluation was not necessarily based upon a specific type of clothing as it appeared to be within the 1555 bills that recorded a comparable cost between the garments made for Hall and Thomas. Instead, the making expenditure incorporated multiple factors including the complexity of materials and intricacy of design as well as the skill and time needed by the tailor or maker. Thus, early modern English garments did not have a set price. Although the consistencies found within certain bills may highlight a particular standardisation of practice

⁴⁶³ Gapper, Newman, and Ricketts, 'Hatfield: A House for a Lord Treasurer', p. 80.

and cost, many simply represented the typical practices of one tailor rather than the homogeneity of a trade or make of clothing.

The sixteenth-century bills can also be compared with those from the beginning of the seventeenth century. In a series of bills from 1607 to 1609, Robert Cecil paid two tailors, Mr. Bale and Mr. Moore.⁴⁶⁴ These men constructed clothing for Robert and his eldest son William Cecil (1591 – 1668), Lord Cranbourne as well as Robert's daughter, Lady Francis Cecil. These bills contained expenditure for several different garments including gowns and doublets. For example, one recorded three separate expenditures for the construction of a black satin gown with carnation taffeta.⁴⁶⁵ While the making of this gown, including its lacing and lining, cost fourteen shillings, its cutting and ravelling cost thirty-three shillings. In contrast, another gown made from changeable camlet cost just six shillings for its cutting single between the laces, although the tailor did charge thirty shillings for its construction.

These examples highlight how a tailor could charge drastically different sums for a similar skill or step within the making process. In this case, he billed five times more for the cutting of the black satin gown versus the changeable camlet one. The primary distinction between these two garments was the fabric: a satin lined with taffeta compared to a camlet lined with fustian. These, therefore, provided further insight into how tailors altered their production costs based upon materials, such as the increased risk and time needed for cutting and constructing garments made from luxurious and expensive fabrics like satin and taffeta. It shows how this practice amongst makers continued from the middle of the sixteenth century into the early seventeenth century. This case, however, did present a cautionary illustration that this explanation was not entirely straightforward since the making cost of the camlet garment was actually more than the satin one.

⁴⁶⁴ Hatfield House, Bills 20.

⁴⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 1.



The early seventeenth century Salisbury household accounts are filled with payments for the construction of doublets. Some of these were made from fine materials like satin, such as the doublet pictured in the above example. This doublet also shows the decorative technique of slashing which used extra fabric and required additional expertise. Tailors and makers often charged more for designs with these elements similar to pinking.

Figure 42. Doublet and breeches; England (made); ca. 1618 (made); Materials and Techniques: Satin, slashed, over taffeta; Credit Line: Given by Lady Spickernell; Museum number: T.28&A-1938; © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

These early seventeenth-century bills also included expenditure for a carnation satin doublet that perhaps went with the black satin and carnation taffeta gown.⁴⁶⁶ The doublet cost seven shillings to make. Finally, the bill detailed the amount spent on the construction of a watered grosgrain green doublet and hose for Lord Cranbourne.⁴⁶⁷ Overall, this garment was quite expensive—three pounds, fourteen shillings, and nine pence just for the fabric. However, in comparison, the making cost much less—just ten shillings. Despite this expenditure inequality,

⁴⁶⁶ Hatfield House, Bills 20, p. 2.

⁴⁶⁷ Hatfield House, Box G. 2., 'Lord Cranbornes apparel 1606-7'; Hatfield House, Bills 20, 'Mr Moore the Taillor his Bill for my Lord Cranborne, The first of June 1606', p. 1.

this doublet and hose constructed in the early seventeenth century had a higher making cost than those doublets recorded in the 1557 bills. In these later examples, the maker typically received a reimbursement worth several shillings while in the mid-sixteenth century makers often only got several pence for their work.⁴⁶⁸ Despite the greater expense, these later seventeenth-century labour costs comprised less of the overall expenditure on the entire garment than in the middle of the previous century. This was a consequence of the fact that the total price spent for the earlier doublets was overall smaller, thus making the labour cost more significant within the total bill. Yet, even as the expenditure on clothing garments increased, it did not appear that the making cost proportionally grew. For instance, the most expensive doublet in the 1557 bill recorded twenty-five shillings spent on fabric and six shillings on its construction. This meant that the labour cost was approximately a quarter of the price of the main material used for the garment. However, while the 1606 bill included ten shillings for making the doublet, this amount did not come remotely close to a quarter of the primary fabric's cost.

This fact prompts questions about the changing expense of clothing construction and the valuation of artisanal making within English society from the middle of the sixteenth to the beginning of the seventeenth century. This period saw a growth in innovation for cloth and clothing and more specialised expertise in making as outlined in Chapter Four.⁴⁶⁹ This, in turn, led to an increased appreciation of the artisan's skill. These bills, however, highlight that such appreciation was not necessarily linked with a monetary increment in the value of their labour and may have been limited to certain individuals or sections of society. Additionally, this comparison between the bills suggests that the reality about how the tailor valued his own skill and labour was more complicated and not entirely consistent or regular. Sometimes it could

⁴⁶⁸ There is one exception to this difference. The 1557 bill did record an expenditure of six shillings for the making of the black satin doublet perhaps because of the cost of the fabric and the skill needed for its use.

⁴⁶⁹ Welch, *Fashioning the Early Modern*; Styles 'Fashion and Innovation in Early Modern Europe', pp. 33-55; Styles, 'Product innovation in early modern London', pp. 124-69.

relate to an innovative use of techniques or materials, but it often just seemed to correspond with the kind of materials being used rather than the type of garment being made, the age of the individual, a person's rank, or the amount of material that the tailor was working with for each sartorial project.

Finally, the comparison between the bills from the middle of the sixteenth century and those from the early seventeenth century offers insight into the changing relationship between tailor and client. This contact could be quite personal since some tailors even lived with their elite clientele and worked for families over extended periods of time.⁴⁷⁰ There is no indication, however, that any tailor lived as a member of the Burghley household. Nonetheless, the extant bills from the middle of the sixteenth century do show the family routinely using Mathew Brygam as their tailor rather than a number of different individuals. By the seventeenth century, the account books included the names of more tailors including a Mr. Bale, a Mr. Moore, a Mr. Collard, and an individual simply referred to as the tailor of Cambridge who provided Lord Cranbourne with a university hood and gown. Thus, within the Salisbury household, it appears that by the beginning of the seventeenth century a diverse group of tailors were employed. This perhaps reflected the growth of the tailoring trade as well as the family's residence in multiple locations during this period. This itinerant living arrangement necessitated procuring multiple tailors since the professional exchange between tailor and client required close communications and multiple fittings to ensure clothing was well-fitted to the body. This relationship was always deeply personal since the making of clothing entailed a detailed knowledge and understanding of each individual's body.

The records also highlighted changes in the seasonal procurement of clothing within the household—though this may simply reflect the survival of extant material. The bills from the

⁴⁷⁰ Currie, 'Diversity and design in the Florentine tailoring trade', p. 156; Spufford and Mee, *The Clothing of the Common Sort*, p. 250.

middle of the sixteenth century primarily showed the expenditure for elite male garments occurring during the very end of the year or the beginning of the New Year. The series of bills from 1555 were from December while those from 1557 were from January. This concentration in December and January might reflect the purchase of new clothing specifically for the festivities at Christmas and New Year's or the settling of debt around this time. These bills, however, included garments like jerkins, doublets, gowns, and coats in fabrics that would have worked in both cold and warmer weather indicating that perhaps some individuals purchased the basic elements of their wardrobe all at once. Yet, at least for some individuals, this singular sartorial influx does not seem to have been the only one and other strategies were used to construct certain individual's wardrobes. For example, in December 1555, Thomas Cecil received only a coat and a doublet. This would not have been enough clothing for a growing boy or elite member of the household. These bills, therefore, suggest that garments must have been added to Thomas's wardrobe later in the year, although these records of further expenditure have now been lost.

Additionally, the household account books showed how elite clothing consumption in the middle of the sixteenth century did not follow previously identified trends in the Royal Household and other nobles' homes where 'the ordinary servants were given new clothes in the spring and autumn.'⁴⁷¹ Instead, the Burghley household had its own rhythm of purchase and use that seemed to congregate around certain larger purchases as opposed to more regular purchases. These were not typically in the spring or the autumn for the servants or the elite members of the family. In contrast, the bills from the beginning of the seventeenth century were even more disparate and reflect the better survival of records. Major clothing expenditure for both elite and non-elite members of the household occurred throughout the year including in August, October, December, January, February, and March. Here, there is some preference for

⁴⁷¹ Sim, *Masters and Servants in Tudor England*, p. 84; Jones and Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing and the Materials of Memory*, p. 18.

purchasing clothing in the autumn and spring as well as new finery for the winter holidays, but overall the bills highlight a more regular habit of procuring clothing and accessories than in the sixteenth century.

More frequent expenditure meant that there would have been more consistent contact with tailors and makers throughout the year as they provided the clothing and accessories for the household. However, it also indicated the emergence of a different attitude towards dress and the construction of one's wardrobe where individuals engaged more often with tailors and makers to produce their clothing in the early seventeenth century. Additionally, individuals made smaller, more regular purchases than in the sixteenth century where a wardrobe was formed through only one or two larger moments of expenditure.

The Cleaners

The garments and accessories found in the household accounts books required cleaning. This section briefly explores some of the examples of garment and accessory care. Storage was rarely mentioned. However, an occasional purchase of a box or container did occur perhaps indicating these were used for keeping items like hats. Lord Cranbourne's 1606 bills, for instance, detailed payment for an eight pence box alongside his other hat expenditures.⁴⁷² Yet, most care and cleaning examples relate to the washing and mending of items.

Washing took many different forms. It might mean the cleaning of footwear or the laundering of undergarments. The servant responsible could use water or other substances, such as perfume or rose water. Rose water is recorded in a 1558 bill for four pence.⁴⁷³ In the sixteenth-century accounts, cleaning accessories were most prominent. Cecil regularly had his boots cleaned at home and throughout his travels. His accounts included various entries like 'Itm for maikyng

⁴⁷² Hatfield House, Bills 20, 'January 3 1606 [16-6/1607] Paid to Thomas Carter haberdeshier for hates for my lo [Cranborne]'.
⁴⁷³ Hatfield House, Bills 6.

cleane of... bootes at Royston' for one pence or 'Itm for the maikyng cleane of...bottes ij nyghtes' for two pence—probably one pence per cleaning.⁴⁷⁴ Shoe wear dominated cleanliness. However, as the records move into the early seventeenth century, washing became increasingly prominent. This is demonstrated through both qualitative and quantitative evidence. Lord Cranbourne, for instance, had his cloaks laundered in 1604 for three and two pence each.⁴⁷⁵ Washing linen also occurred more and more frequently. Robert Cecil, for example, paid to have his linens cleaned whether at home or as he travelled between London and Theobalds or Hatfield. A Richmond laundress received regular payments between two shillings and four pence to three shillings and nine pence for this job.⁴⁷⁶ While a John Soothworth got three pence for 'washinge my lordes [Lord Cranborne's] lynninge' at Theobalds with additional payments of eighteen pence made for 'Itm for washinge my lords lyninge at Thibales'.⁴⁷⁷ Lord Cranbourne also had his washing done while he was away at Cambridge. His expenditure accounts recorded a month's payment of thirteen shillings and eight pence for washing his linen in Cambridge.⁴⁷⁸ Washing could be done by both male and female workers. Different individuals are mentioned within the accounts including a Mrs. Child and John Soothworth—though most launders and laundresses are nameless simply referred to by their labour.

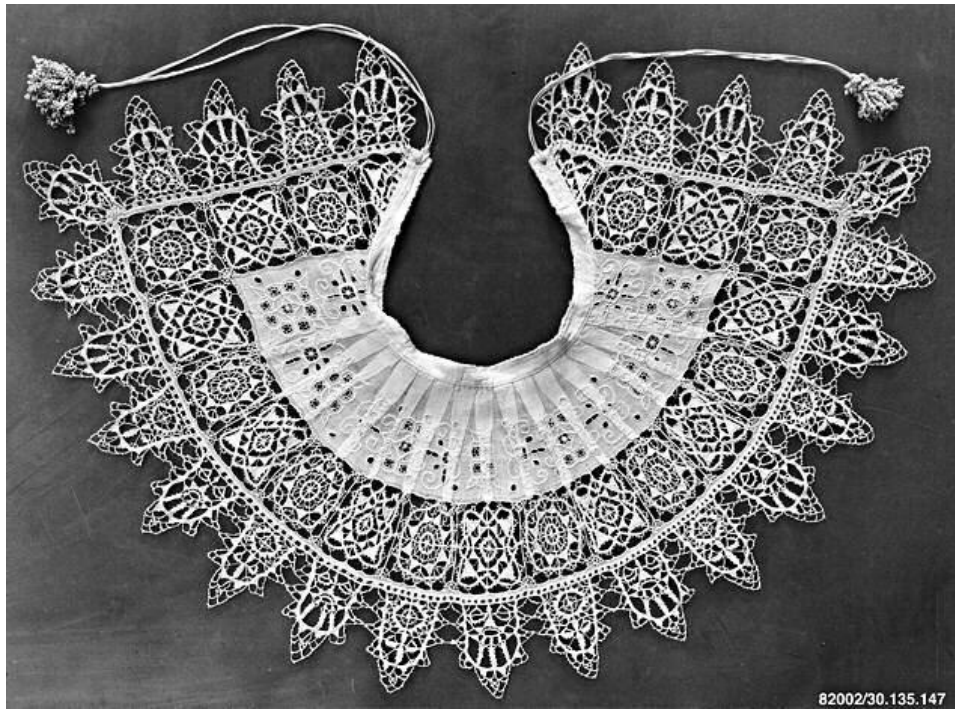
⁴⁷⁴ Hatfield House, Bills 1. 51, '2wyntyns accompt From the 29 of September to the 24th of October'; Hatfield House, Cecil Papers, 143/84.

⁴⁷⁵ Hatfield House, Box G. 2., 'Lord Cranborne's expendides, June 22, 1605 to Sept 29, 1606.'

⁴⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷⁸ *Ibid.*



This is an example of the fine white linen items like collars, shirts, and ruffs which needed to be laundered and pressed more regularly. The early seventeenth century Salisbury accounts show the increased payments for laundry services.

Figure 43. Standing Band (collar) with tassels; ca. 1610–20; possibly French; Medium: Cutwork, needle lace, reticello, punto in aria, embroidery, linen; Dimensions: Overall: 19 1/2 x 8 in. (49.5 x 20.3 cm); Credit Line: Gift of Mrs. Edward S. Harkness, 1930; Accession Number: 30.135.147; Public Domain; The Metropolitan Museum of Art

In addition to this more qualitative evidence, Lord Cranbourne's expenditures between the 22nd of June 1605 and the 29th of September 1606 can provide some quantitative context for the consistency of washing linen as well as other means of cleanliness.⁴⁷⁹ These records from the beginning of the seventeenth century represented the only complete accounts which routinely included references to the care of lining and other items of clothing. Although this might simply reflect gaps in the surviving archival records, these silences might also indicate the lack of importance placed on these matters. However, the increasing regularity and centrality of cleanliness in the seventeenth century helps explain why the household account books so meticulously recorded Cranbourne's expenditures in these areas.

⁴⁷⁹ Hatfield House, Box G. 2., 'Lord Cranborne's expenidides, June 22, 1605 to Sept 29, 1606.'

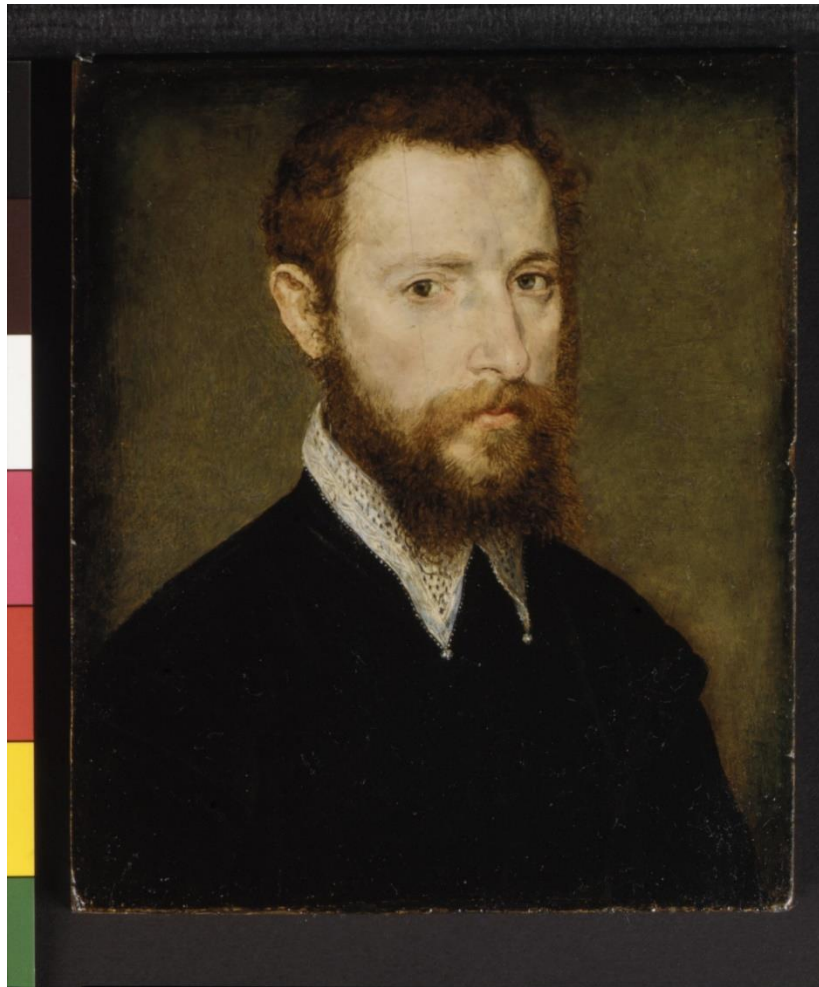
Cranbourne's accounts included entries on fifty-four days between the 22nd of June 1605 and the 29th of September 1606. Of these fifty-four days, twenty-four of them—approximately forty-five percent—included expenditure for cleaning linen. However, if 'cleanliness' was interpreted more broadly, such as the washing of linen, the trimming of facial hair, or the purchase of combs, then thirty days—approximately fifty-six percent—contained this type of entry. The only category of entry with a higher percentage was the acquisition or the mending of clothing and accessories which occurred on thirty-five—approximately sixty-five percent—of the fifty-four days. However, in some instances, these expenditures like the mending of clothing could perhaps be equally interpreted as efforts to maintain a neat and clean appearance. Overall, these examples reaffirm the growing importance of cleanliness within early modern England. Noble families like the Cecils could afford the labour and time necessary for this constant garment care. Thus, white and clean linen increasingly became a sign of luxury and social status worth both the investment and the record of this expenditure.

Non-Elite Clothing

After considering the value of the maker and their expertise, this chapter now turns to an investigation into the dress of non-elites within the Burghley and Salisbury households to understand their material world better. On the 4th of August 1606, Robert Cecil re-copied an extensive bill into his account books from the tailor.⁴⁸⁰ This bill included clothing, specifically the making of a suit and cloak, for Robert's servant, referred to in the document as 'his man'. The construction of the two garments required many different materials. These were recorded within the bill. For example, fustian was necessary for lining the suit and canvas and bombast for its construction. These materials cost eight shillings and three shillings each.

⁴⁸⁰ Hatfield House, Bills 20, 'The 4th of Auguste 1606 for your man', p. 1.

This suit was not basic in its construction or ornamentation. In fact, the tailor used several different fabrics to make it. A half an ell of taffeta was bought to lace the suit while a quarter of white taffeta was purchased specifically for the construction of the suit's collar. The whiteness of the collar's fabric would have contrasted nicely with the rest of the suit done in a darker textile.



This portrait shows how the whiteness of collar's fabric could contrast nicely with the rest of the suit done in a darker textile as with the clothing provided for Robert's servant in 1606.

Figure 44. Portrait of a Man with a Pointed Collar; Attributed to Corneille de Lyon (Netherlandish, The Hague, active by 1533–died 1575 Lyons); Oil on wood; Dimensions: 5 5/8 x 4 3/4 in. (14.3 x 12.1 cm); Credit Line: The Friedsam Collection, Bequest of Michael Friedsam, 1931; Accession Number: 32.100.131; Public Domain; The Metropolitan Museum of Art

Additionally, the continued whiteness of the collar drew attention to the sustained cleanliness of the garment and, thus, the time and expertise necessary for preserving this state. The bill also recorded the purchase of decorative materials which elevated the suit and made it more luxurious. For example, the expenditure included buttons and silk costing five shillings as well as five and a half ounces of lace purchased at thirteen shillings and nine pence. The suit also had a corresponding pair of hose constructed along with the suit. These hose had downward hanging lace (lope lace), ribbon, and pockets added to ornament them more fully. This made the overall outfit—suit and hose—more bespoke as the tailor added different kinds of lace and colours of ribbon. However, it also made this garment more in line with other examples of elite hose found in the account books which often included expenditure for lace, ribbon, and pockets. Thus, the man's clothes would not have stood out negatively because they lacked fashion or skill. Instead, the clothing distinguished itself in a positive way through its construction and ornamentation.

The bill also recorded the construction and decoration of the cloak. It was made from seven yards of ash-coloured grosgrain fabric which cost five pounds, six shillings, and eight pence. Additionally, three ells of ash-coloured taffeta were purchased to line the cloak for ten pounds and ten shillings. On the surface, the 'ash-coloured' characterisation appears negative perhaps describing a grey fabric intended to be black but coming out grey since it was produced through a cheap and poor dye process. Plenty of inexpensive grey textiles did exist and were used by members from the lower echelons of early modern society, such as that which servants like Robert's man belonged to. However, there is another possible interpretation of this description which offers insight into a higher fabric quality. Ash-coloured cloth also denoted a subtlety and softness of colour. It was often chosen for these traits over more stark shades of black.⁴⁸¹ In

⁴⁸¹ Currie, *Fashion and Masculinity in Renaissance Florence*, pp. 93-94; Andrea Feeser, Mauren Daly Goggin, and Beth Fowkes Tobin, 'Introduction: The Value of Color' in *The Materiality of Color: The Production, Circulation, and Application of Dyes and Pigments, 1400-1800*, edited by Andrea Feeser, Mauren Daly Goggin, and Beth Fowkes Tobin (Aldershot, 2012), pp. 1-10, 1.

fact, in order to achieve a high-quality version of grey, a dyer would have to be quite skilled. This expertise made the fabric costly and a symbol of luxurious consumption rather than of poor craftsmanship.⁴⁸² The bill supports this interpretation through the expenditure on the cloth which cost over fifteen pounds in total—a significant monetary investment in the materials for Robert.

Beyond the dye, other elements of the cloak contributed to its fine quality presentation. The bill recorded specific payment made both for the cloak's construction and its ornamentation through the decorative technique of pinking—a specialised tailoring skill. While the tailor charged three shillings and four pence to make the garment, he included an additional labour cost of four shillings just for pinking the lining. It would be unusual that the actual lining was pinked. Therefore, the word choice found in this bill perhaps simply described the decorative technique whereby the lining fabric showed. This expense was quite a sum especially in comparison to that spent on the overall construction of the garment. The separate cost for and mention of the pinking highlights its significance to the overall design and appearance of the cloak. The monetary value given for this skill also illustrates how it was an acknowledged and appreciated expertise—something more specialised within the making process and, therefore, worth more—than the general skills of construction. This different valuation is supported by the divergent expenditure between the sums paid to the tailor for the cloak's making versus its pinking.

⁴⁸² Spufford and Mee, *The Clothing of the Common Sort*, p. 110; David Hopkins, *The Art of the Dyer, 1500-1700* (Bristol, 2000), pp. 34, 40; Currie, *Fashion and Masculinity in Renaissance Florence*, pp. 100-101; Lena Cowen Orlin, ed., *Material London, ca. 1600* (Philadelphia, 2000), p. 111 highlights how poor quality black cloth relatively easy to produce throughout Europe by the eleventh century but was about the challenges in producing high quality black cloth.





This gown includes the decorative technique of pinking in the pink silk lining of the sleeves where a grid of tiny holes has been punched or pinked. ‘The practice of making deliberate decorative holes in fabric was known as ‘pinking’ and it was a popular method of adorning dress from the mid-16th century to the mid-17th century. The fabric would be folded several times and cushioned with paper, then placed on a block of lead. Striking a metal punch through the silk with a hammer created a pattern of regular cuts or ‘pinks’.’⁴⁸³ Pinking was used to reveal linings, shirts, and chemises of different colours underneath.

Figure 45. Gown; England (made), Italy (velvet is Italian, woven); 1610-1620 (made); Materials and Techniques: Silk velvet, silk, linen, silk thread, linen thread, hand-sewn; Museum number: 178-1900; © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Pinking became popular in the middle of the sixteenth century.⁴⁸⁴ It involved using a special knife to make decorative patterns on a garment through a series of small cuts of the top fabric. These openings within the main textile then allowed lining fabric to be pulled through the top layer to create cloth puffs.⁴⁸⁵ Many wealthy men and women favoured this decorative technique because it allowed them to display two colours or textures of fabric within one garment. This demonstrated a wearer’s wealth in several ways. First, since pinking basically destroyed fine

⁴⁸³ ‘Gown’, The Victoria and Albert Museum, <http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O137749/gown-unknown/>, accessed 13 April 2020.

⁴⁸⁴ Lynn, *Tudor Fashion*, pp. 31, 33.

⁴⁸⁵ Picard, *Elizabeth’s London*, p. 137.

quality textiles by cutting them to create the puff look, only an individual with both access and money could afford to be so flippant about his or her use of expensive fabrics. Additionally, pinking demonstrated a wearer's ability to purchase and own a diversity of textiles in colour and texture as well as their awareness and appreciation, along with that of the tailor, for combining textiles in both unique and subtle ways. For example, this pinked cloak made for Robert's man mixed a lighter silken grosgrain fabric on the exterior with a woven silken taffeta for the lining of the garment. Taffeta was often chosen as a fabric to line garments since it worked well with the puffed pulls necessary for the success of the pinking technique.⁴⁸⁶ Thus, despite being made for a servant, this piece of clothing presented a visual and tactile message of wealth and fashionability at the beginning of the seventeenth century.

Robert Cecil's man received several fine garments during this year. Another bill from the 9th of August 1606 exists within the household accounts. It allows for some interesting comparisons as well as the development of a greater understanding about this man's wardrobe. Like the first bill, this later one included a payment made to the tailor for the construction of a suit.⁴⁸⁷ It cost seven shillings to make. In fact, Robert paid exactly the same amount—seven shillings—for the construction of both the earlier and later suits. This was perhaps because the two suits were made from the same type of fabric though in slightly different yardages. While the earlier suit used seven yards of fabric costing a pound and eight shillings, the later suit contained six and a half yards of fabric costing twenty-six shillings. However, despite the slight discrepancy in yardage and price, the textiles were very similar allowing the tailor to charge a comparable amount for construction, although the earlier fabric may have been of a slightly higher quality allowing for its greater expense. In both cases, however, the expenditure on the actual construction of the suits was significantly more than that spent on the cloak despite its use of

⁴⁸⁶ Arnold, *Queen Elizabeth's Wardrobe Unlock'd*, p. 153.

⁴⁸⁷ Hatfield House, Box G. 2., 'Lord Cranbornes apparel 1606-7'; Hatfield House, Bills 20, 'Mr Moore the Tailor his Bill for my Lord Cranborne, The first of June 1606', p. 2.

the pinking technique. For instance, while each suit cost seven shillings, the tailor only charged three shillings and four pence to make and four shillings to pink the lining of the grosgrain and taffeta cloak found in the earlier bill. This was perhaps because of the greater time and expertise it took for a tailor to make a full suit versus either constructing or lining the cloak.

The two bills contained other striking similarities. For example, both suits were lined with fustian fabric costing the same amount—eight shillings. They also used quite similar amounts of fabric for the main material of the garment only differing by a half a yard and analogous items for construction—canvas and bombast—worth three shillings each. Yet, there were not just similarities between the two garments and their basic construction and primary fabrics. Additionally, the decorative aspects were also nearly identical. For example, each bill included expenditure for five and a half ounces of lace for each suit costing thirteen shillings and nine pence. They also had buttons and silk worth five shillings each and looped lace, ribbons, and pockets costing one shilling in total for individualising the garment. These elements made the suits both distinctive and more alike highlighting how a garment might be distinguished through its ornamentation, such as the particular colours or types of ribbons and lace chosen by the wearer or maker, but might also contain certain expected decorative elements like pockets that signified a precise type of garment or form of dress.



This doublet highlights how buttons could be used in a decorative manner perhaps similar to how these appeared on the clothing of Robert’s man in the bills from the early seventeenth century.

Figure 46. Doublet; Great Britain (made); France (woven); 1625-1630 (made); Materials and Techniques: Silk and linen, hand woven and hand sewn; Museum number: 170-1869; © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

The shared decoration of the two garments went beyond ornamental elements. Instead, both bills also highlighted a concerted effort to use different fabrics within the making of each suit in order to draw attention to specific parts of the clothing. For instance, the tailor charged Robert for a quarter of white taffeta used in the construction of the collar. This cost three shillings and four pence each. A half an ell of taffeta—approximately nine inches (22.86 cm)—was also purchased for each suit to lace it worth six shillings and eight pence. These two expenditures illustrate how a garment’s visual and tactile value could come from the creativity or playfulness of clothing’s construction as well as through individual elements like fabrics or ornamentation. How the fabric was used within the making of a garment contributed to its design and could influence its perceived fashionability or luxuriousness. Although not radically expensive or complicated, these two bills show how the dress worn by Robert’s man had been intentionally and strategically constructed to demonstrate a certain degree of wealth and position through

both its ornamentation and its utilisation of multiple fabrics, maximising their different properties.

Although the two previously discussed bills corresponded with a servant simply referred to as ‘your man’, other household accounts detailed purchases made for named men who served the family in the early seventeenth century. A bill from the 6th of October 1606 was an example of this kind of record.⁴⁸⁸ In fact, this bill illuminated who ‘your man’ might be, referring to ‘your man’ as Thomas Johnson later in the source. Johnson worked for Robert with people, such as the tailor, associating Johnson and the Salisbury household. The 6th of October bill included expenditure for the making of several garments including a fustian doublet and a pair of cloth hose. In total, the tailor was paid seven shillings for the construction of these two pieces of clothing. This was the same amount each suit cost in the previous bills. Thus, these later outfits for Johnson were much less expensive than those previously purchased for him. Overall, the cost of the main fabrics was also more inexpensive. While the earlier suits used taffeta and fustian to line the garment, these later suits were produced from fustian and cloth—generally less luxurious or novel textiles. Two and a quarter yards of fustian were bought for the doublet costing ten shillings and ten pence. A yard, a half yard, and a half of a quarter yard of cloth was also purchased for the hose worth twenty-one shillings and eight pence. Interestingly, this expenditure revealed that the tailor charged significantly more for the cloth than the fustian. Although this cloth fabric was non-descript, the price discrepancy suggested that it was a higher quality textile than the cloth for the doublet. The bill especially reinforced this point since the overall amount of fabric needed for making the hose was over a yard less than that needed for the doublet. Thus, despite having more yardage, the fustian still cost less. However, this fustian was more expensive than that purchased for the lining of the two previous suits which had cost

⁴⁸⁸ Hatfield House, Box G. 2., ‘Lord Cranbornes apparel 1606-7’; Hatfield House, Bills 20, ‘Mr Moore the Tailor his Bill for my Lord Cranborne, The first of June 1606’, p. 2

eight shillings suggesting this fustian for the doublet was of a finer quality than fustian used as a lining material.

Yet, like the previous bills, the tailor also included other textiles in the construction and decoration of Johnson's garments. Once again, canvas bombast, stiffening, and fustian for the lining appeared as costs for the making of the doublet and hose. Cotton was also purchased for the lining of the hose. Interestingly, the fustian bought to line the doublet cost eight shillings—the same amount as the fustian used to line the previous two suits, although less than the value of the fustian for the main fabric of this doublet. This perhaps suggests, then, that fustian lining had a standardised quality and price. It may even have been sold in a more standardised yardage which facilitated this consistency in price across different types of garments.

A similar phenomenon was seen with the cotton expenditure across the bills. The construction of all Johnson's hose included cotton. Each time, it was purchased for the same price—six shillings. This made it slightly less expensive than the fustian lining—though without the exact yardage given, this might simply reflect the fact that less of it was necessary than the fustian which lined larger parts of garments in the wardrobe. However, cotton's similarities across the bills did suggest its standardisation of use in the making process for hose which enabled a consistency in its price since tailors routinely purchased the same amount to serve a specific purpose in the garment's construction. Additionally, the canvas bombast and stiffening cost equivalent amounts—three shillings—to each other and to the suits in the previous bills. These materials were necessary for the construction of the doublet, hose, and suits giving them shape and form. Once again, this consistency demonstrated a level of standardisation of materials and their role within the design and making process. All three garments required canvas bombast and stiffening despite them being different types of clothing. Yet, these items also had specific functions within the construction of the garments which allowed for them to have a certain level of steadiness in product and price. Finally, all three bills contained similarities between the

decorative elements used in garments for male servants within the Salisbury household. For example, loop lace and ribbons were purchased for both utility and decoration of the waist and knees of the hose. All three bills had these items and they all cost the same amount—one shilling.

Together, these bills highlight an important consistency in the making of clothing and the cost of certain materials necessary for construction at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Although garments continued to be largely custom-made for individuals, the suits, doublet, and cloak commissioned by Robert all showed a trend towards a standardisation of production and design. This presents an interesting paradox. The early seventeenth century was very much a time of profound and important innovation and ingenuity in cloth and clothing which made it more individualised and unique. These bills highlight these changes. Different coloured ribbons or diverse fabric combinations allowed for exciting possibilities for the personalisation of dress and its presentation. However, at the same time, the innovation and ingenuity described in the early seventeenth century bills also resulted in garments being more consistent in how they were made than those found in the records from the middle of the sixteenth century. It appeared that, over time, individuals desired a certain level of regularity in construction while makers became more homogenous within their making processes. For example, the bills show this in the consistent use of fustian as a lining material. Thus, in some ways, the innovation found in the Salisbury's dress led to standardisation rather than differentiation.

Beyond Thomas Johnson, the Salisbury household account included other examples of clothing purchased for non-elite men. Some of this dress was bought for specific purposes or events. For example, on the 16th of May 1608, Mr. Singleton billed Robert Cecil for items used during a show put on in Robert's library.⁴⁸⁹ In fact, the 16th of May bill was for materials delivered on

⁴⁸⁹ Hatfield House, Bills 22, 'Mr Singleton his bill of Chardges laid out bye home about the shewe in the librarie made the 16th of Maie 1608'.

the 5th of May 1608. It took twelve days for Mr. Singleton to charge Robert. This indicated that expenses were not paid in advance or, even, upon the acquisition of the goods. Instead, the maker incurred all the costs before receiving his payment after completion of the project.⁴⁹⁰

This bill included both non-textile and textile materials. The textile items constituted a variety of different garments bought for participants within the play. These purchases provide unique insight into the different types of garments worn by non-elite individuals and the different functions these articles of clothing might play in terms of utility and display for the wearer and the man who bought them and commissioned the show. Several men were referred to within the account. For example, a Mr. Allen was named repeatedly throughout the bill. Others, such as ‘a boy’ and several other participants, remained nameless and unidentifiable. Yet, all received specific clothing for the production. Mr. Allen was provided with a robe, a girdle, garters, and two pairs of gloves while the boy got a robe, hose, garters, a skin coat, two hats, and another nondescript garment. The garments, though perhaps they should be considered costumes, were very eye-catching and colourful. Most of them were constructed from light taffeta fabric in a variety of colours including crimson, white, blue, green, and multi-coloured. In this case, it was not as much about the subtlety of colour combinations as it was about the boldness and diversity of shades. These vibrant colours drew attention to the range of dyes used rather than the slight differences—skin, sand, and straw—which could be created within an individual colour. This would have been important within a theatrical context to draw attention to the actors and make their dress vibrant and distinctive against rich backdrops. It also allowed the clothing in the show to demonstrate the wealth and connections of Robert and his household.

⁴⁹⁰ This great cost to the maker made him or her reliant upon credit from the producers of the materials. For more information about the early modern English culture of credit see Craig Muldrew, *The Economy of Obligation: The Culture of Credit and Social Relations in Early Modern England* (London, 1998).



This early portrait of the future Charles I has several dress elements which were also found in the costumes provided for Robert Cecil's servant actors in the early seventeenth century. The picture shows Charles with a girdle to hold his sword. This was an accessory like a belt, and something provided to Mr. Allen. Additionally, Charles wears a pair of hose with a garter ribbon around the right leg. The boy was given a similar style of outfit with hose and garters.

Figure 47. King Charles I; oil on canvas, circa 1616; 79 in. x 45 1/2 in. (2007 mm x 1156 mm); Purchased, 1897; NPG 1112; © National Portrait Gallery, London

Additionally, the actual expenditure on these garments highlighted the significance that this dress had in displaying Robert's power and prestige during the performance. This bill included

much more expensive materials with higher costs than in the bills for either Thomas Johnson or 'your man'. For example, the unspecified animal skin coat for the boy was constructed and guarded from crimson taffeta—four yards for the main garment and two and a half yards for its guarding. This cost nineteen shillings and six pence. Mr. Allen also had a robe made from five ells of broad crimson taffeta worth three pounds and ten shillings. In both cases, the quantity of fabric was much larger than that purchased for Thomas Johnson or 'your man'. This partially contributed to its increased cost. However, despite the difference in the amount, the large divergence in price also suggested a discrepancy between the qualities of the various textiles.

This quality difference was further indicated by the characterisation and description of the fabrics as 'rich' in this bill. For instance, the itemisation of the broad crimson taffeta used for Mr. Allen's robe included the adjective 'rich' as did the three quarters of an ell of white taffeta for constructing some closed sleeves described as 'white Richa Taffaty'. Additionally, the bill included other fabrics with this denotation, such as the two and a half ells of 'watchet Rich Taffaty' and the two ells and three quarters of 'Blew Rich Taffaty' which, in total, cost two pounds and seventeen shillings. This use of the word 'rich' within the expenditure indicated two things. It either referred to the quality of the fabric or the quality of the colour and its dye. A rich colour was a strong and well-produced one. For example, a rich red would be water fast and vibrant rather than runny, fading, and washed out. The quality of the colour along with the construction and design of a garment demonstrated the skill, expertise, and innovation of the maker to the early modern viewer. Thus, the characterisation of these clothes as 'rich' highlighted their fineness in terms of fabric, colour, and craftsmanship. These elements made these costumes much more in line with the garments worn by the elite men of the household rather than dress worn by men like Thomas Johnson. They were intended for performative use versus everyday wear. Thus, a detailed analysis of this bill further strengthens the idea that

Robert saw the dress in this show as an important and worthy monetary investment. Since, in this case, his servants reflected him even more publicly during their performance.

These various bills have provided insight into what clothing was worn by male non-elite members of the Salisbury household at the beginning of the seventeenth century. They have shown the different contexts in which Robert provided his male servants with garments and the different roles these clothes had within these various contexts. Overall, non-elite dress in the Salisbury household had a fine quality which often included decorative variation. Attention was paid to both fashionable and individualised details in the construction of the clothing which created a sense of style using different materials for collars or the linings of the garment. However, these records have also shown shifts toward the standardisation of certain elements of clothing and the making process rather than just a linear individualisation of dress. These changes in the processes of production were not necessarily a sign of cost-cutting or mass-market manufacture. Still, they present a more nuanced narrative about early modern dress which illustrates the complicated and sometimes paradoxical repercussions of innovation and the specialisation of expertise within the tailoring trade.

Finally, these bills have also highlighted the significant and routine monetary investment that Robert made in dress worn by his servants. Men like Thomas Johnson and Mr. Allen could be connected with the family through their clothing, despite it not being marked livery or a distinguishable badge. Thomas Johnson, in fact, was so conjoined with Robert that the tailor simply referred to him as 'your [Robert's] man' in the bill when detailing the expenditure for his clothing by the same maker. These men and their dress represented the family and reflected their wealth, power, and position in early modern English society. The investment into their clothing was vitally important because it was an investment into the family's image. Thus, servants, as well as elite members of the household, required garments made from quality materials with the occasional fashionable touch. However, the power dynamics or distinctions

between individuals in the household could still be preserved through subtle material differences like non-elites rarely having the finest quality textiles or novel fabrics and ornamentation incorporated into their clothing.

Conclusion

Through an analysis of the Burghley and Salisbury household account books, this chapter has complicated historiographical assumptions about servants and makers in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. It has shown how those who served elite families had varied wardrobes with a diversity of fabrics, styles, ornamentations, and tailoring techniques. While some of these garments were less expensive than those worn by elites, others cost equivalent amounts and came from the same tailor or maker—sometimes even appearing within the same bill. Servants also wore similar types of cloth and clothing to the elite members of the household which highlights important similarities between the wardrobes of those across the social spectrum in early modern England.

Additionally, this chapter has provided vital insight into the knowledge of the maker and the value of their abilities from the middle of the sixteenth to the early seventeenth centuries. Despite the historiographical narrative that skill, innovation, and expertise were increasingly valued and appreciated within early modern European society, the evidence of the Burghley and Salisbury household account books suggests this development was a bit more complicated and not linear. English society might celebrate the skill of the artisan or craftsperson but there existed a societal dissonance between this glorification and a more tangible acknowledgement of the importance of this knowledge through increased monetary compensation.

This chapter, therefore, provides a cautionary tale for historians and argues for a more nuanced understanding about the supremacy of early modern artisanal culture culminating in the Scientific Revolution. It also highlights how the breakdown in the Aristotelian epistemological worldview did not herald a straightforward shift from the supremacy of materials to the

supremacy of the maker. Many early modern makers continued to be paid relatively little while materials commended larger proportions of expenditure. As shown in the Burghley and Salisbury bills, materials remained the primary cost for both elite and non-elite dress and often acted as the influencing factor if and when makers received more for their workmanship even at the beginning of the seventeenth century.

The perception and role of the artisan and craftsperson evolved and changed in early modern societies through Europe between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries. England was a part of this phenomenon. New knowledges and expertise were elevated and discovered through increasing contact with the New World and Asia.⁴⁹¹ However, despite these changes, historians must remember that through the material microcosm of households, such as the Burghley's and Salisbury's, the period can be characterised as much by its consistency as by its transformation.

⁴⁹¹ Lemire, *Global Trade and the Transformation of Consumer Cultures*.

Chapter Five: Historical Reconstruction and the Value of Making

On the 22nd of December 1555, William Cecil re-copied a bill into his household account books. The bill recorded payments for several garments purchased for the elite members of the Burghley household. The first payment referenced a Margaret Wyght whom William owed twenty-nine shillings and four pence. She had provided him with linen cloth and canvas for the making of men's shirts. Wyght appeared several times in the Burghley household accounts from the middle of the sixteenth century. The records typically recorded remittance to her for shirts or the materials to make them. However, she also occasionally supplied the household with accessories. Between the 29th of November and the 6th of December 1556, for example, she procured nineteen pairs of gloves for William.⁴⁹²

Margaret Wyght was one of the few women included in the Burghley and Salisbury household account books from the middle of the sixteenth to the early seventeenth centuries. In the accounts from the sixteenth century, she was one of only two named women, the other being, Mrs. Ward, who received compensation for the sewing of a dozen napkins and two girls' shirts.⁴⁹³ Yet, despite the paucity of this information, these records do still offer important insight into the lives of these women and their work as well as the value of their engagement with cloth and clothing in early modern English society. Additionally, they reveal the contributions made by these women and others like them to the dress of elite sixteenth-century households, something which was investigated more thoroughly in Chapter Four.

Unlike many female and male makers in written records from the period, however, these two women are named in these household accounts. Margaret Wyght's full name was recorded while Mrs. Ward's marital status could be determined through her title. She was 'Mrs.' Ward rather than 'Miss' Ward, 'Widow' Ward or Ward 'Spinster' which indicated her current status

⁴⁹² Hatfield House, General 139.1, 'Payments from the xxix th day of novembr to ye vj of decembr'.

⁴⁹³ Hatfield House, Cecil Papers, 11.2/96.

as a married woman. The inclusion of this information, despite its paucity, underscored the value placed on the work done by these women and their role as makers since most entries, even in the Burghley and Salisbury household accounts, offered no insight into the male or female maker or procurers of dress. William Cecil, for example, purchased a yard of cloth for the construction of his daughter's kercher, an accessory covering the neck, in the middle of the sixteenth century. However, the records did not include any information about the construction of the accessory including who made it or from whom he procured the fabric for its production.⁴⁹⁴ Yet, Margaret Wyght and Mrs. Ward are named specifically and connected with their work.

As discussed in Chapter Four, these household accounts also recorded the monetary values of this work in early modern English society highlighting important differentiations in the societal evaluation of knowledge, expertise, and labour. Margaret Wyght, for instance, received twenty-nine shillings and four pence for the linen and canvas, that she provided William Cecil, in contrast to Mrs. Ward who received just four shillings for her sewing of a dozen napkins and two shirts for girls in the Burghley household. William paid Margaret over seven times more than Mrs. Ward. Twenty-nine shillings and four pence was a significant sum of money, much more equivalent with that paid to the aforementioned famed designer and architect, Inigo Jones, by Robert Cecil in 1608 than the salary of shopkeepers or artisans who made around ten pounds per year.⁴⁹⁵

As suggested in the previous chapter, then, Margaret and Mrs. Ward were not perceived as doing the same work with the same value. Margaret acted as a supplier of materials while Mrs. Ward sewed garments. Both had material knowledge though their expertise was different. When

⁴⁹⁴ Hatfield House, General 139.1, 'Payments from the xxix th day of novembr to ye vj of decembr, Endorsed, 1556—1557 Jan. 9'.

⁴⁹⁵ Hatfield House, Bills 22, 'Inygo Jones his Bill for dyvrs necessities about the Shewe. Inigo Jones his Accounte for ye works done for ye Right Honorabl ye Lo: Treasurer. 1608', pp. 0-1; Laslett, *The World we have lost further explored*, pp. 32-33; Peachey, ed., *Clothes of the Common People in Elizabethan and Early Stuart England: The Evidence and Construction Methods*, pp. 6-7.

Margaret supplied the Burghley household with cloth, she made choices about the quality and look of materials. Her discernment had large implications for their dress and its perception within society. She may have also had the skills to produce these materials herself. Mrs. Ward, meanwhile, did not provide materials but labour. She sewed the napkins and the shirts while making vital choices about the construction and perhaps style of these items and garments. Her work also mattered but perhaps in a more utilitarian way than Margaret Wyght's job since Mrs. Ward constructed less visible clothing and more household items.

The difference in their monetary compensation, therefore, shows that William Cecil valued the skills and expertise of Margaret more than Mrs. Ward. This demonstrates a subtle hierarchy within early modern material knowledges about cloth and clothing whereby the facilitators or manufacturers of dress and their skill set were valued more highly than those who worked with cloth. This is different from an argument which simply privileges materials over labour but instead supports the conclusions drawn in Chapters Three and Four about the value and spread of an early modern English materially literate culture to contexts as diverse as the court and household.

Earlier chapters have already demonstrated that these subtle distinctions are important for developing a deeper historiographical understanding about the cultures of material knowledge and material literacy emerging in sixteenth and seventeenth-century English society. Yet, the written records analysed in Chapters Three, Four, and Five only offer a glimpse into these nuances and any visual record of these women is nonexistent. The existing information is still sparse, therefore, about the lives and value of the work done by Margaret and Mrs. Ward in the Burghley household accounts. There are many silences and unanswered questions which would provide helpful detail about the distinctions present within the societal evaluation of material expertise observed in Chapter Four and the differentiations between the skills and knowledge of the two women and the many others who engaged with cloth and clothing in various

capacities. This information would also better present how William Cecil engaged with makers and their skills in both a household and shop context and demonstrate the importance of rural England to this culture of experimentation which has long focused on London and other urban environments. What proficiencies, for example, did women or men like Mrs. Ward or Margaret Wyght possess? How much did their expertise differ? How did they access or gain material knowledge? How aware was society of these distinctions? Additionally, questions could be asked about the construction process and the role of materials within it. Where would women like Mrs. Ward or Margaret Wyght gain materials like linen cloth or canvas? How active were they in networks of trade or credit in order to procure goods? How long would it have taken a maker to construct a garment like a shirt? How would these shirts have appeared or felt to either a viewer, wearer, or maker? How apparent were these different qualities of these materials? The household accounts, however, show us the futility of answering most of these questions through just the surviving written or visual records. While some of these questions may not be answerable, others can be through other methods of historical investigation. Thus, although this chapter builds on the previous chapters of the thesis, its use of historical reconstruction enables it to engage with the arguments and conclusions of these chapters in new ways which support, complicate, and nuance our understanding about the regimes of value in early modern England and the importance of material literacy for individuals in a variety of urban and rural contexts.

Chapter Four, for example, showed that a historian of the early modern period interested in dress would most often encounter and contend with silences in fully understanding the material knowledge of those in the past. These silences are exacerbated by the fact that the construction of cloth and clothing was often done by women or those who lived and worked within the lower strata of society. Merry E. Wiesner's seminal work on female workers in Germany, for example, argued that 'although virtually every society has had a sexual division of labor, with men's

labor generally valued higher than women's, the Renaissance brought a much sharper division and a harsher devaluation of women's labor.⁴⁹⁶ This was especially true in the cloth and clothing industries where traditional associations of this kind of work with women meant that 'weavers and associated craftsmen had to make the distinction between what they did and this devalued "women's work" more sharply than other trades' with certain stages of production associated with male and female labour. While men wove cloth and cut it, women spun it.⁴⁹⁷ Female labour 'was, by definition, low-status, unskilled, and badly paid' and, therefore, underrepresented in the written records from the period since the skills and expertise of these individuals was devalued even within a society interested in material knowledge.⁴⁹⁸

Further gaps are made apparent in an understanding about dress in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries because of the divergence between the materials and construction processes of cloth and clothing then and now. Once commonplace garments no longer exist, and surviving objects are often novelties or items available and worn only by those at the upper echelons of society. Additionally, manufacture processes have massively shifted while certain methods of production have changed beyond recognition or simply vanished. We rarely understand or appreciate the subtleties of cloth, thread, or decoration as well as the craftsmanship needed in either sewing or tailoring glimpsed in the account books. How did the properties of cloth influence the making or wearing of a garment? How was a piece of clothing put together? What additional materials were necessary? What kinds of unquantifiable skills might be needed? Certain knowledges have also been lost. While the Burghley household accounts analysed in Chapters Three and Four, for example, recorded the frequent use of linen, these entries seem

⁴⁹⁶ Merry E. Wiesner, 'Spinsters and Seamstresses: Women in Cloth and Clothing Production' in *Rewriting the Renaissance: The Discourse of Sexual Difference in Early Modern Europe*, edited by Margaret W. Ferguson, Maureen Quilligan, and Nancy J. Vickers (Chicago, 1986), pp. 191-205, 205.

⁴⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 204; For more about the value of female work like spinning in early modern England and different historiographic views of its centrality see Jane Humphrey and Benjamin Schneider, 'Spinning the Industrial Revolution', *The Economic History Review*, 72, 1 (2019), pp. 126-155 and Craig Muldrew, 'The "ancient Distaff" and "Whirling Spindle": measuring the contribution of spinning to household earnings and the national economy in England, 1550-1770', *Economic History Review*, 65 (2012), pp. 498-526.

⁴⁹⁸ Wiesner, 'Spinsters and Seamstresses', p. 204.

rather sparse from our vantage-point simply providing the expenditure amount. However, as suggested in the previous chapters, an understanding of this information by an early modern Englishman or woman would have been more layered because of their material knowledge about quality, texture, and provenance. They would have known, for instance, that the finest quality linen, such as Holland or lawn, came from the Netherlands or Laon in France while coarser linen like flax would have been grown more locally.⁴⁹⁹ This knowledge is often lost to the historian through more traditional methods of historical inquiry and investigation.

However, this chapter uses a still emerging methodology in the study of history—historical reconstruction—and utilises it alongside the more conventional investigation into the written and visual source materials about the cloth and clothing of the Cecil household between the middle of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth centuries provided in the previous chapters. In doing so, it asks different sorts of questions and engages with the silences of the past.

The chapter is structured in the following manner. First, it presents the methodology of historical reconstruction and its applicability for this research project. This section positions this chapter as part of a larger discussion about the emerging engagement with materials and growing material literacy in sixteenth-century England analysed earlier in the thesis. It shows how this methodology shares many similarities with William Cecil's own engagement with processes of production and kinds of expertise during the period presented in Chapter One. This section demonstrates the importance of rural England to an early modern culture of experimentation and the role of the farmer or agricultural expert in addition to the urban artisan or London shopkeeper. Next, this chapter is situated within a larger historiography about experimental approaches to the past which engage with ephemeral aspects of history like dress. This section shows how different historiographical 'turns' both in history and the humanities,

⁴⁹⁹ Lynn, *Tudor Fashion*, p. 126.

more broadly, have influenced a growing interest in historical reconstruction as a lens for viewing different elements of the past and asking different questions. This chapter then presents two different case studies. The first case study investigates the material knowledge and expertise necessary for the reconstruction of drafting tailor's patterns for men's legwear. It is particularly interested in the processes of construction and the different proficiencies necessary even before a tailor used materials. The second case study is more traditional and reconstructs a mini-scale shirt or shift from the sixteenth century. Its reconstruction is not a reproduction but focuses on the historical processes of production and the knowledge about fabric and thread needed for the making of even the most basic garment. Each of these case studies begin by outlining the methodological approach being used and the questions guiding the reconstruction. They conclude by presenting new insights about the past garnered from using this specific methodology and its accessibility as a form of historical inquiry.

Overall, this chapter contends that a carefully researched and thorough reconstruction of historical clothing can not only provide insight into the complexity of early modern artisanal cultures and making techniques but can also reveal information about nameless individuals within the historical record. This helps historians better understand how the Burghley and Salisbury households engaged with cloth and clothing and how this engagement fit into a larger social, cultural, and intellectual interest in the material. Additionally, this chapter sheds important light into how historians can engage differently with sources and underscores the importance of the kinds of questions we ask about the past which often direct and inform our conclusions.

Why Historical Reconstruction?

At its core, historical reconstruction seeks to better understand the past through doing, making, and creating in order to gain insight into unfamiliar skills and expertise—forms of embodied knowledge. This type of experimentation is not a modern invention, but something based in

historical methods of inquiry and knowledge creation. As discussed in Chapter Three, historians like Deborah Harkness and Malcolm Thick have shown the existence of this culture in sixteenth and early seventeenth-century England and its significance for the later Scientific Revolution. This form of vernacular science placed great value on practices ‘that led to an increasingly sophisticated hands-on exploration of the natural world’ and offered new insight into the cultures of making.⁵⁰⁰ This hands-on study helped develop technical and material knowledges for individuals outside traditional trades, disciplines or skill sets which then informed ‘the theories that were taught in classrooms, studies, and lecture halls across’ London.⁵⁰¹ Hands-on practice was considered an important social endeavour for the pursuit of embodied knowledge, although Harkness and Thick primarily present this culture as an urban London phenomenon.

As suggested in Chapter Three and Four, however, men like Hugh Plat and William Cecil were champions of this emergent methodology in early modern England and often used hands-on methods to gain new knowledges in both urban and rural contexts. Hugh Plat, for example, learned about how ‘leather is to be made and coloured’ before advocating for improvements in its production.⁵⁰² As discussed in Chapter Three, he also dyed his own cloth in order to understand the practices of cloth dying better.⁵⁰³ Additionally, William Cecil gained insight into different cultures of making and forms of embodied knowledge using similar methods. He sometimes used hands-on experimentation himself like when he learned how to tan hides from a local tanner to understand more about the production of leather.⁵⁰⁴ However, he often showed his support and interest in this method of inquiry by extension. Chapter One, for example, detailed the information network William created throughout rural England in order to better understand the agricultural processes of woad production and manufacture. In fact, William

⁵⁰⁰ Harkness, *The Jewel House*, p. 10.

⁵⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 101.

⁵⁰² British Library, Sloane 2189, ff. 75v; Thick, *Sir Hugh Plat*, pp. 253-254.

⁵⁰³ British Library, Sloane 2247, ff. 8, 20, 30, 33; Thick, *Sir Hugh Plat*, pp. 268-275; Harkness, *The Jewel House*, Ch. 6.

⁵⁰⁴ Harkness, *The Jewel House*, p. 130.

developed a reputation ‘for always consulting artificers in their own art’ which was commented upon by both later seventeenth century historians like Thomas Fuller and modern-day scholars like Joan Thirsk.⁵⁰⁵

As first alluded to in Chapter Four, William’s interest in hands-on experimentation is immortalised in a collection of records which form part of the Lansdowne Manuscripts at the British Library.⁵⁰⁶ This collection detailed the contacts, agents, and tradespeople whom William employed or communicated with throughout both urban and rural England. These individuals sent detailed reports about the hands-on practices which formed part of their investigations into the processes of making. One of William Cecil’s main agents, Anthony Radclyff, wrote a thorough report in 1593 about the production of *aqua vita* and vinegar, for example, which detailed each individual step necessary for the making of these solutions. It also explained the different qualities that could be made by varying this process or its use of materials. In order to produce fine vinegar, for instance, Radclyff wrote that he

fynd that in makeinge of vinegar the brewer augst to bewe as good mault as they doe/ brewe of the best sente for the subiert ethe puyred of with soused of beere is from vnto viiiij d the baurell, and that the beeregen of viij the barrel will continue and holde out when the/ smaller will petrifie and decaye./⁵⁰⁷

Radclyff reassured William Cecil that this understanding about the embodied knowledges of brewing came only from ‘the best and substanciale off men’ who were known experts in the preparation and brewing of these beverages rather than potential frauds.⁵⁰⁸ This ensured the truthfulness of this form of hands-on inquiry. Interestingly, it also reveals some of the scepticism or caution surrounding the use of this methodology where certain individuals and their expertise were elevated above others with less ‘formal’ or ‘trustworthy’ skills or training.

⁵⁰⁵ E.P. Cheyney, *A Short History of England*, Volume II (London, 1926), p. 289; Thirsk, *Economic Policy and Projects*, pp. 86-87.

⁵⁰⁶ British Library, Lansdowne 74:10.

⁵⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

Additionally, these reports highlight the importance of this kind of inquiry in informing and shaping government and economic policies like those described in Chapter One.⁵⁰⁹ Another report from the 19th of November 1593 by Anthony Radclyff, for example, used his encounters with the making process itself in order to counter the arguments made by Parliament. While Parliament worried about the potential for deception in the production of *aqua vita* and vinegar, Radclyff reiterated to William that ‘having therefore travayled with them [the makers], and had the your opinion...I find, that the matter vas longe since moved to be unfounded by /Parliament as a matter...’⁵¹⁰ Radclyff’s experience with these truthful and upstanding makers was contrasted with others he encountered and described in his reports who manufactured with poor materials to reduce costs. The following report included one such occurrence:

Lastelie I myself have founde cominge by chaunte info the yarde of one of the vinegar / makers of this cittye that a brewers drayman had brought vnto him a barrel of dregge/ gathered owt of dybers mes howsed, and he confessed that he sould the same to the/ vinegar makers sometime for xxd and ij d the barrel whertof I milslikinge/ the vinegar maker prayed me, that I would not harm him in the report thereof, / and since that time I have examinded a venye honest man of that rrade, whoe confesseth/ that it is f**e that these abuses be vsed./⁵¹¹

By contrasting the two brewers in this report, Radclyff demonstrated an interest as well as a growing awareness in the technicalities of brewing and the materials necessary for its production. This expertise was gained only through direct engagement which underscored the validity and value of these observations in early modern English society. The inclusion of highly detailed examples within the reports also indicated William’s desire and expectation to be informed in this manner where experience in ‘doing’ could directly inform and validate the decisions he made as a government official.

⁵⁰⁹ Thirsk, *Economic Policy and Projects*, pp. 94-95; British Library, Lansdowne 74, no. 10, 11, and 12; British Library, Lansdowne 81, no. 21.

⁵¹⁰ British Library, Lansdowne 74, no. 10.

⁵¹¹ *Ibid.*

Other examples of William Cecil's engagement with hands-on practice related directly to cloth and clothing. As we saw in Chapter One, he was quite interested in the production of woad as a dye and the promotion of materials necessary for the manufacture of cloth.⁵¹² He even had his own woad project on the island of Helbry and encouraged its proliferation in his hometown of Stamford.⁵¹³ His information network also provided him with additional information about the growing processes. One of his agents, Alexander King, travelled throughout southern England talking with farmers in Hampshire, Worcestershire, and Suffolk about woad growing and the best cultivation practices.⁵¹⁴ Additionally, William Herle, an advisor, reported to William Cecil about cloth production by offering insight into the materials essential for its manufacture like oil from 'seeds, herbs, roots, minerals'.⁵¹⁵ Cloth making relied on hemp seed, flax seed, and coleseed (the seed of the rape plant). Its necessity was underscored to both Herle and William Cecil only through hands-on engagement and direct observation of different cultures of making and growing.

As first suggested in Chapter One, many of William's agricultural interests and those of his informant network, therefore, had a direct link to cloth and clothing and the interactions these individuals had with rural farmers as well as makers and artisans. Herle's experience speaking to growers, for instance, resulted in him urging William to support government statutes and policies that promoted hemp, flax growing, and additional acreages of coleseed for the good of the commonwealth. He noted that the proliferation of these crops 'will be more gainful to the owners and farmers of land than any corn.'⁵¹⁶ This phrase was underlined in the report, most likely, by William Cecil.⁵¹⁷ Through these conversations with rural agricultural experts, it

⁵¹² *Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Most Hon. The Marquis of Salisbury Preserved at Hatfield House, Hertfordshire*, Vol. XIII, Addenda (London, 1915), p. 10; *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic series, of the reigns of Elizabeth and James I*, 77, no. 65.

⁵¹³ Thirsk, *Economic Policy and Projects*, p. 76.

⁵¹⁴ British Library, Lansdowne 21, no. 23; Thirsk, *Economic Policy and Projects*, pp. 86-87.

⁵¹⁵ British Library, Lansdowne 22, nos. 30 and 31.

⁵¹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵¹⁷ Thirsk, *Economic Policy and Projects*, pp. 69-70.

seems that both Herle and William were convinced about the necessity of government support which would allow and encourage larger domestic manufacture of oil from hemp seed, flax seed, and coleseed thereby enabling the preparation and production of cloth in a manner similar to Flanders and France.⁵¹⁸

These records, therefore, highlight the value given by men like William Cecil to methods of hands-on inquiry and the desire to learn more about how things were made and how one might acquire these embodied knowledges in sixteenth and seventeenth-century England through urban and rural networks in the context of both the city and the farm. This chapter's engagement with historical reproduction, therefore, arises from a similar interest and forms part of this larger culture of experimentation which hopes to offer new insights into cultures of making and the subtleties of materials. However, before discussing two specific examples of historical reconstruction, this methodology must be placed into its broader historiographical framework.

A Historiographic Base

Historical reconstruction is an emerging methodology in the discipline of history. Until quite recently, it was mainly used by reenactors, living history museums, and costume designers who investigated historical processes of making in order to make garments for theatres, museums, and themselves. However, recent shifts in both the study and practice of history have brought the method of historical reconstruction to the forefront of historical scholarship. It has grown increasingly acceptable as a form of inquiry and is used more frequently by historians interested in many areas including dress, material culture, economics, and science.

Several academic 'turns' in both the humanities and history as a discipline have precipitated these changes. The 'material turn', for example, has helped prioritise the study of objects and revealed the information they can convey about the past in addition to written and visual source

⁵¹⁸ British Library, Lansdowne 22, nos. 30 and 31.

materials. This object-based methodology has been fruitfully used by historians studying a variety of topics. Between 2007 and 2009, for instance, The Early Modern Dress and Textile Research Network encouraged material-based approaches amongst its participants. Its interdisciplinary discussions between researchers, conservators, and more general investigators facilitated hands-on encounters with objects and materials in order to gain a deeper understanding about the subtleties of materials and the dialogue in dress between materials, construction, form, appearance, and wear. The network's practitioners showed the insights gained when one wrote 'the history *of* objects as well as histories *from* objects.'⁵¹⁹

Additionally, economic historians like Giorgio Riello and John Styles have championed the study of the materials themselves, such as cotton, linen, and ribbons, in order to gain additional or more nuanced insight into the production of textiles and the making of clothing in the early modern period.⁵²⁰ This renewed focus on material culture and a material understanding of objects amongst those interested in consumption and production has shown that 'objects themselves are not simply props of history, but are tools through which people shape their lives' where emotional and sensory factors strongly inform what is owned, consumed, and gifted.⁵²¹ Thus, consumption in many ways informs production and manufacture.

Historians like Maxine Berg and Giorgio Riello highlight, therefore, how engaging with the actual products to see 'how they were designed and made' offers historians insight into what motivated and drove practices of consumption as well as production.⁵²² For Riello, the study of actual objects from the early modern period helps historians engage with and see the differences

⁵¹⁹ Paula Findlen, 'Early modern things: objects in motion, 1500-1800' in *Early Modern Things: Objects and their Histories, 1500-1800*, edited by Paula Findlen (London, 2013), pp. 3-27, 6.

⁵²⁰ John Styles, *Dress of the People: Everyday Fashion in Eighteenth-Century England* (New Haven, 2008); Riello, *A Foot in the Past*; Giorgio Riello, *Cotton: The Fabric That Made the Modern World* (West Nyack, 2013); Giorgio Riello, 'The Object of Fashion: Methodological Approaches to the History of Fashion', *Journal of Aesthetics and Culture*, 3 (1) (2011), pp. 1-9; Giorgio Riello and Prasannan Parthasarathi, eds., *The Spinning World: A Global History of Cotton Textiles, 1200-1850* (Oxford, 2009).

⁵²¹ Anne Gerritsen and Giorgio Riello, 'Introduction: Writing Material Culture History' in *Writing Material Culture History*, edited by Anne Gerritsen and Giorgio Riello (London, 2015), pp. 1-13, 7.

⁵²² Maxime Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Oxford, 2005), p. 13.

in materials and their qualities which helped transform consumption practices. Ultimately, these objects show how and why ‘production lost its independent status and became conditioned to consumption’ ultimately driving an Industrial Revolution precipitated by innovation, ingenuity, and variation in the development of new products.⁵²³

The ‘embodied turn’ has further energised this growing interest in materiality. Anthropologists, such as Reinhart Meyer-Kalkus, note how embodiment emphasises the body and elevates its direct interaction with fabric and form. His scholarship on work, dance, and song shows how understanding these actions as embodied practices reveals that ‘the eye is not independent of the other senses’ but ‘is substantially steered by acoustic, tactile, and proprioceptive information, as well as memory.’⁵²⁴ Historical reconstruction does something similar because it illuminates the feel, sight, and sound of dress and its construction in ways otherwise inaccessible. It highlights the quality and colour of fabrics, the length and width of garments, the quality of the lining, and the number of layers. It shows how small changes, such as the use of a particular stitch or an additional material like a button, can affect the fit and experience of dress—changing gesture, movement, and gait.

This focus on embodiment or embodied practices also reminds historians of the temporal specificity of written, visual, and object-based sources. Peter Burke, for example, has emphasised the need for scholars to ‘relocate artefacts in their social contexts’ and understand the assumptions implicit in the survival of these sources or items.⁵²⁵ This is particularly important when dealing with sources or archives associated with women or those farther down the social spectrum who are often completely absent or characterised certain ways within the surviving records. Thus, certain forms of knowledge or perspectives are more prominent in historical studies just because they simply still exist. This helps continue historically or modern

⁵²³ Riello, *A Foot in the Past*, p. 246.

⁵²⁴ Meyer-Kalkus, ‘Work, Rhythm, Dance’, p. 166.

⁵²⁵ Peter Burke, *Eyewitnessing: The Use of Images as Historical Evidence* (London, 2001), p. 117.

based biases about the value of written over embodied knowledges where concepts like expertise, skill, and learning are narrowly defined often in ways that are anachronistic. This makes historical reconstruction an important methodology for including these more marginalised individuals in our interpretation and understanding of the past and the value of embodied understandings about the world. Historical reconstruction allows

...scholars to engage with the many material and cognitive absences [that] our understanding of the clothed past is predicated upon: surviving examples, dye colours, fibers, construction techniques. Close investigation of dress requires filling the gaps, conjecturing or reading absence into incomplete presents. Reconstruction creates new garments that tell us about past ones in unique ways.⁵²⁶

Defining Historical Reconstruction

Historical reconstruction has meant many different things to many different people. This chapter, however, uses a definition provided by the historian Hilary Davidson in its interpretation. She described historical reconstruction as ‘the trend for scholars of history to appreciate and incorporate embodied, experimental, implicit or tacit knowledge gained through making and doing...’⁵²⁷ This

*experimental approach is one of many possible historical tools whose purpose is to aid us in our endeavour to understand the past. It opens the door to a fuller understanding of texts and artefacts through an active engagement with the practices these texts and objects describe or instantiate. Furthermore, it offers fresh and potentially vivid approaches to what historical actors were doing and thinking, as well as why...The physical engagement with processes or objects of the past provides insights that cannot be obtained simply by reading about them. Experimental reproduction, in short, can help bridge the unavoidable gap that exists between the actions and ideas of historical actors and the textual descriptions or artefactual residues of those actions and ideas that have come down to us.*⁵²⁸

⁵²⁶ Hilary Davidson, ‘The Embodied Turn: Making and Remaking Dress as an Academic Practice’, *Fashion Theory*, 23: 3 (2019), pp. 329-362, 332.

⁵²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 330.

⁵²⁸ Hjalmar Fors, Lawrence M. Principe, and H. Otto Sibum, ‘From the Library to the Laboratory and Back Again: Experiment as a Tool for Historians of Science’, *Ambix*, 63:2 (2016), pp. 85-97, 89.

This form of historical reconstruction is not something new in the academy. Archaeologists have used this methodology as part of ‘experimental archaeology’ where they reconstruct processes of early metallurgy while art historians and conservators have investigated historical materials in order to better restore and care for paintings, sculptures, prints, and objects.⁵²⁹ Historians of science have also been quite active in incorporating this form of embodied learning into their investigations. Throughout the 1950s and the 1960s, these scholars performed experiments in order to learn more about the history of physics, optics, and pharmacy.⁵³⁰ In the 1980s and 1990s, further hands-on experimentation reproduced different alchemical processes and replicated the specific experiments of different men of science.⁵³¹ Scholars have continued to perceive this form of inquiry as relevant and important.⁵³²

There are also increasingly prominent examples of reconstruction and experimentation in history which use embodied approaches to access knowledge about early modern cultures of making and the centrality of materials. The most famous is perhaps *The Making and Knowing Project* led by Professor Pamela Smith at Columbia University. The project simultaneously

⁵²⁹ Marjolijn Bol, ‘Coloring Topaz, Crystal and Moonstone: Gems and the Imitation of Art and Nature, 300–1500’ in *Fakes!?: Hoaxes, Counterfeits and Deception in Early Modern Science*, edited by Marco Beretta and Maria Conforti (Sagamore Beach, MA, 2014), pp. 108–29; Sven Dupré, ‘ARTECHNE: Technique in the Arts 1500–1950’ at Utrecht University and the University of Amsterdam; Pamela Smith and co-workers, ‘Making and Knowing’ project at Columbia University.

⁵³⁰ Stillman Drake, ‘Galileo’s Experimental Confirmation of Horizontal Inertia: Unpublished Manuscripts’, *Isis*, 64 (1973), pp. 291–305; Thomas B. Settle, ‘An Experiment in the History of Science’, *Science*, 133 (6 January 1961), pp. 19–23; J. MacLachlan, ‘Galileo’s Experiments with Pendulums: Real and Imaginary’, *Annals of Science* 33 (1976), pp. 173–85; Roger Stuewer, ‘A Critical Analysis of Newton’s Work on Diffraction’, *Isis*, 61 (1970), pp. 188–205.

⁵³¹ Lawrence Principe, ‘Chemical Translation’ and the Role of Impurities in Alchemy: Examples from Basil Valentine’s Triumph-Wagen’, *Ambix*, 34 (1987), pp. 21–30; Lawrence Principe, ‘The Gold Process: Directions in the Study of Robert Boyle’s Alchemy’ in *Alchemy Revisited: Proceedings of the International Conference on the History of Alchemy at the University of Groningen*, edited by Z. R. W. M. van Martels (Leiden, 1990), pp. 200–5; Lawrence Principe, ‘Apparatus and Reproducibility in Alchemy’ in *Instruments and Experimentation in the History of Chemistry*, edited by Frederic L. Holmes and Trevor Levere (Cambridge, MA, 2000), pp. 55–74; Lawrence Principe, *The Secrets of Alchemy* (Chicago, 2013), pp. 143–66; H. Otto Sibum, ‘Reworking the Mechanical Value of Heat: Instruments of Precision and Gestures of Accuracy in Early Victorian England’, *Studies in the History and Philosophy of Science*, 26 (1995), pp. 73–106; H. Otto Sibum, ‘Working Experiments: A History of Gestural Knowledge’, *The Cambridge Review* (1995), pp. 25–37; H. Otto Sibum, ‘Experimental History of Science’ in *Museums of Modern Science*, edited by Svante Lindqvist (Sagamore Beach, MA, 2000), pp. 77–86.

⁵³² Nils-Otto Ahnfelt and Hjalmar Fors, ‘Making Early Modern Medicine: Reproducing Swedish Bitters’, *Ambix*, 63:2 (2016), pp. 162–183; Hjalmar Fors, Lawrence M. Principe and H. Otto Sibum, ‘From the Library to the Laboratory and Back Again: Experiment as a Tool for Historians of Science’, *Ambix*, 63:2 (2016), pp. 85–97, 89.

investigates and compares the written source of a late sixteenth-century French recipe book with the physical reconstruction of the recipes within the text.⁵³³ This hands-on form of inquiry is privileged and valued. The project emphasises that ‘the value of hands-on experience as a form of research and learning’ is ‘not just for makers, art conservators, and artists...’ but should also be used by ‘students of the humanities’ in order to garner unique findings about the past.⁵³⁴ Further historical projects with reconstruction at their core have emerged in recent years like the *Refashioning the Renaissance Project* at Aalto University, Finland. This project’s investigative methodology combines archival research, scientific testing, and digital modelling with the historical reconstruction of garments in order to better understand the cloth and clothing worn by early modern Europeans who were non-elite. The reconstruction of historical materials enables the investigators in this project to better study the nuances of materials, styles, and forms of dress as well as the different cultures and processes of cloth and clothing production.⁵³⁵

Apart from these larger projects, individual historians have also increasingly used historical reconstruction in their scholarship. Scholars like Ulinka Rublack, Hilary Davidson, Sophie Pitman, Rebecca Unsworth, and Sarah A. Bendall have all incorporated the reconstruction of early modern clothing into their work investigating a range of topics from farthingales to the production of linen to Jane Austen’s silk pelisse.⁵³⁶

As previously discussed, Ulinka Rublack, Jenny Tiramani, and The School of Historical Dress in London reconstructed one of Matthäus Schwarz’s most politically important outfits, a pair

⁵³³ Pamela Smith, ‘Making and Knowing Project’, Columbia University.

⁵³⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵³⁵ *Refashioning the Renaissance* 2019.

⁵³⁶ Sarah A. Bendall, ‘The Case of the “French Vardingale”: A Methodological Approach to Reconstruction and Understanding Ephemeral Garments’, *Fashion Theory*, 23: 3 (2019), pp. 363-399; Sarah A. Bendall, ‘Take Measure of Your Wide and Flaunting Garments’: The Farthingale, Gender and the Consumption of Space in Elizabethan and Jacobean England’, *Renaissance Studies* (2018), pp. 1-27; Hilary Davidson, ‘Reconstructing Jane Austen’s Silk Pelisse, 1812-1814’, *Costume*, 49. 2 (2015), pp. 198-222; Rebecca Unsworth, ‘Impossible Fashions? Making and Wearing Late Sixteenth-Century Clothing’, MA dissertation, Royal College of Art, London, 2013; Sophie Pitman, ‘The making of clothing and the making of London, 1560-1660’, PhD Dissertation, University of Cambridge, 2018.

of yellow and red hose, in their wider engagement with his wardrobe.⁵³⁷ However, this is not the only reconstruction that Rublack and Tiramani have completed together alongside other colleagues at The School of Historical Dress. They recently also reconstructed Matthäus Schwarz's ostrich feather bonnet. In this project, Rublack argued that the historical methodology of reconstruction enabled her to participate in a form of experimental inquiry which offered her work a deeper appreciation of the ingenuity of early modern featherworkers, as well as made her more aware of the different material properties of the feather and the technology needed for the construction of a feather bonnet. Her investigation made more readily apparent the necessary intersection between local and foreign knowledges in the global economy of the early modern world and the emerging hierarchy of expertise, skill, and innovation in the construction of novel dress like the feather bonnet in this period.⁵³⁸

Most historical reconstruction projects engage with the methodological process in one of two ways. They either work with experts or bring their own expert knowledge to the research. Rublack's scholarship, for example, is done in partnership with the experts at The School of Historical Dress including Tiramani who previously worked constructing historically accurate costumes at Shakespeare's Globe. The research done by Hilary Davidson, meanwhile, builds upon her previous experience as a formal shoemaking apprentice before entering academia. In both cases, the backgrounds of Tiramani and Davidson provide them with unique insight and specialised expertise into material knowledge and cultures of making.⁵³⁹ Unlike many historians, they can engage with historical reconstruction with an already detailed and nuanced understanding of fabrics and have a mastery over certain sewing techniques that are challenging or complicated for the average historian.⁵⁴⁰ These skills and embodied knowledges are quite

⁵³⁷ Rublack, Tiramani, and Hayward, *The First Book of Fashion*.

⁵³⁸ Ulinka Rublack, "'Be-feathered' men: Reconstructing a Renaissance Fashion", *Reconstruction: Methods and Practices in Research, Exhibitions, and Conservation*, University of Cambridge, 25 February 2020.

⁵³⁹ Tiramani, 'Janet Arnold and the Globe Wardrobe', pp. 118-122.

⁵⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 118-122.

beneficial when using historical reconstruction as a methodology. Thus, although these research projects provide a helpful framework for understanding the benefits of historical reconstruction and how the methodology can successfully operate, this chapter differs from these studies since my own engagement with historical reconstruction does not emerge from a high level of expertise or previous material knowledge. In this way, this chapter hopes to show the accessibility of historical reconstruction as a methodology for non-expert historians interested in engaging with the past in different ways.

The accessibility of historical reconstruction is an important issue. On the surface, it may seem like a prohibitive methodology since most historians do not have the experience, background, connections, time, or funds necessary to become a maker or expert in the construction of cloth or clothing. They also do not have the opportunity to complete reconstruction projects with skilled and knowledgeable artisans and craftspeople with particular expertise. This observation is not meant to discount the important and highly informative collaborations that historians can and should have with experts. These encounters are vital. However, this chapter highlights how historical reconstruction as an embodied material approach to history can also be done on a smaller scale by non-experts which still reveals new insight about the past. Thus, it hopefully encourages those with less knowledge about making processes or materials to not simply dismiss or discount this form of historical inquiry because they lack certain skills or information.

A Foundation

Historical reconstruction works best when it is guided by a set of well-formulated questions which determine the direction and purpose of the project. This helps avoid repetition and making without specific purpose. It also helps focus the engagement and the importance of each step in the process of reconstruction since the practitioner clearly knows what is trying to be

‘achieved’ or ‘completed’. In this way, textual analysis is quite like reconstruction or reproduction. They

are both potential sources of historical information, but the quality of that information is determined in large part by the quality of the questions asked and the rigour of the interpretations given. Thus, doing good experimental history...requires the *historical* training that enables one to ask productive *historical* questions...Acuity of questions and proper contextualization are what make a source—whether textual, experimental, or artefactual—a powerful historical witness.⁵⁴¹

Sources should not be simply read without direction since this introduces the potential for misleading or nonproductive research about the past. ‘[I]n the best cases there will be a dynamic relationship between library and laboratory’ or site of reconstruction where each historical methodology offers information which helps illuminate more about the conclusions presented in other forms of inquiry helping to ‘augment, clarify, or provide fresh insight’.⁵⁴²

These questions alter how a historian approaches historical reconstruction in their research. They also determine what is a successful or unsuccessful project. For example, if the purpose of the reconstruction is to reproduce a garment based as closely as possible to an extant artefact then the historian will have different aims and priorities than if they were seeking to understand more about processes of production or the quality of materials. Additionally, specific choices must be made around how the reconstruction itself is studied. Will time play a role? Will the object be studied only as an initial final product or also as it disintegrates? Is the item intended to be worn? This chapter, therefore, begins each reconstruction case study by presenting the questions which were asked and directed the aims, focus, and steps of each project.

Case Study One: Pattern Drafting for Early Modern Male Legwear

This chapter first presents a historical reconstruction of pattern drafting for early modern male legwear. This case study was undertaken through a workshop, The Development of Men’s

⁵⁴¹ Fors, Principe, and Sibum, ‘From the Library to the Laboratory and Back Again’, p. 89.

⁵⁴² *Ibid.*, pp. 89-90.

Legwear c. 1400-1800, at The School of Historical Dress co-taught by Jenny Tiramani and Melanie Braun, the Head of Wardrobe at the Dutch national touring opera company, Nationale Reisopera, Enschede. This course was completed over a two-day period from the 10th of February 2018 to the 11th of February 2018 during the second year of my doctorate.⁵⁴³ As the course began, it was important to discern the purpose of the historical reconstruction for my dissertation and ask the appropriate questions to direct my engagement.

By adding a historical reconstruction to my thesis, this investigation sought to learn more about the material knowledge of both the elite and non-elite members of the Burghley and Salisbury households between the middle of the sixteenth to the beginning of the seventeenth centuries. It also desired to glean more about the nuances in the styles, decorations, and construction of their garments. Additionally, the historical reconstruction enabled a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the expertise and skills which were second nature to early modern makers and tailors. Although makers were present within the written sources, the kind of knowledges they needed and the depth of understanding they had about bodies, fabrics, designs, and materials was largely absent from this record. Thus, a historical reconstruction had the potential to offer vital insight into early modern cultures of making dress. This was the purpose of the reconstruction.

This purpose guided the questions and helpfully directed and focused the engagement with this methodology. Some of these initial questions could be answered through existing historiography which relied on written, visual, and artifactual records. What kind of men's legwear, for example, existed from the middle of the sixteenth to the early seventeenth century? Which of these trends or styles would have been appropriate for the elite members of the household versus the servants or the retainers? What did different kinds of legwear demonstrate

⁵⁴³ It was the first time that I had sewed or constructed clothing using historical methods since my internship at The Margaret Hunter Shop, Colonial Williamsburg in 2012.

about the wearer? However, many answers to the questions were absent or could not be entirely understood through written, visual, and artifactual sources or through traditional historical processes of analysis. What skills, for instance, did tailors and seamstresses need? What kinds of material knowledge did they and their clients have about textiles, decorations, and construction? What knowledge did they have about the body? How was this obtained? What did the actual making of dress indicate about the production and manufacture of cloth and clothing in the early modern period?

Male legwear figures prominently in both historiographical and contemporary discussions about early modern English dress. Much historical scholarship, for example, has focused on the centrality of legwear garments in the male wardrobe as well as the evolution of styles throughout the period using written, visual, and artefactual sources to explore these topics. Historians like Susan Vincent, Maria Hayward, Jenny Tiramani, Jane E. Huggett, and Stuart Peachey have helped scholars differentiate between different kinds of early modern legwear like ‘hose, which covered the legs’ and were ‘comprised of two sections: upper and nether. Upper hose, synonymous with breeches, enclosed the body from the waist to somewhere between thigh and knee, depending on the style.’⁵⁴⁴ With these upper hose, ‘the lower portion of the leg was covered by a garment variously named as nether hose, nether stocks, or stockings. There were gartered either over, or underneath the breeches.’⁵⁴⁵ Hose were considered one of ‘the most basic articles of male dress for most of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries...’ and ‘formed the core of a man’s outer clothing for all but the poorest.’⁵⁴⁶

Hose existed in many styles and varieties during the early modern period often evolving between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Wills from the late sixteenth century, for

⁵⁴⁴ Vincent, *Dressing the Elite*, p. 15; Melanie Braun, Luca Costigliolo, Susan North, Claire Thornton, and Jenny Tiramani, *17th-century men's dress patterns, 1600-1630* (London, 2016).

⁵⁴⁵ Vincent, *Dressing the Elite*, p. 17.

⁵⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 13-14; Hayward, *Rich Apparel*, p. 115.

example, show the proliferation of different hose described in many ways including ‘paned hose, round hose, short hose, gaskins/galligaskins, breeches, sliding breeches and breeches with scalings.’⁵⁴⁷ Each name represented a distinct look or construction:

The term breeches seems to have been used to describe hose that were longer and/or fuller and bombasted [typically stuffed either with multiple linings or using hair, wool or suitable other materials⁵⁴⁸]. Gaskins, scaling hose and ‘sliding’ (probably sliving) breeches were all cut very full, and the former two were stuffed with bombast [a form of stuffing]... Round hose were short padded trunk hose [‘short, full breeches that thrust out from the waist but extended, at most, only to the mid-tight, with a girth achieved with wadding and linings’⁵⁴⁹] and venetians were knee-length and either narrow, or full and bombasted narrowing towards the knee. The wills clearly reflect current fashion with shorter trunk hose being replaced by ‘breeches’ ending either just above or just below the knee’ in the Elizabethan period.⁵⁵⁰

Breeches or hose also came in a variety of materials. The Earl of Leicester’s servants, for example, received three yards of plain linen for the construction of their hose while Thomas Coulson, a servant to Lord William Howard, had a pair of fustian and buff hose as well as two pairs of venetians—one in blue cloth and the other in purple—in his possession on death.⁵⁵¹ Additionally, King Henry VIII wore both cloth hose and those made from taffety, ‘a fine, smooth, glossy silk-fabric’.⁵⁵² He probably used the cloth for more informal occasions while the smooth silk was worn for official events and entertainments.

Stockings also came in a range of varieties and styles which were meant to draw attention to the shape and form of the male leg in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Stockings were

⁵⁴⁷ Huggett, ‘Rural Costume in Elizabethan Essex’, pp. 77-78.

⁵⁴⁸ Vincent, *Dressing the Elite*, p. 30.

⁵⁴⁹ Vincent, *The Anatomy of Fashion*, p. 66.

⁵⁵⁰ Huggett, ‘Rural Costume in Elizabethan Essex’, pp. 77-78.

⁵⁵¹ Discussed in Stuart Peachey, ed., *Clothes of the Common People in Elizabethan and Early Stuart England: Who Wore What and When: Rural*, Volume 8 (Bristol, 2013), pp. 53-54; Earl of Leicester’s servants received clothing including a hose cloth and lyming for the boy that kept the spaniels in 1558 as well as The Boyes of the Kytchen Servants of an Earl received V yards shepes russet at iis a yeard....x s, iii yards of walche playne lyming for the same hoos 2s 6d, viii yards of black fryse at 16d the yard xs8d, making of 3 pair of hoose, cloth for lyming and making of cottes and hossen...32s in London in 1560; Thomas Coulson servant to the right honourable the Lord William Howard in 1587 got similar types of cloth and clothing—1 frieze jerkin, my million fustian doublet, 1 canvas doublet, 1 pair of purple venetians, 1 pair of French hose of million fustian, 1 pair of buff hose, 1 pair of venetians of blue cloth, 1 falling band, 2 handkerchiefs, 1 pair of knit netherstocks, 1 pair new shoes, also a rapier on loan and dagger.

⁵⁵² Grass, *Stockings for a Queen*, p. 55.

often knitted ‘from various types of yarn or cut from various types of cloth. Netherstocks and lowerstocks seem to have been an earlier term for some form of what would now be called stockings.’⁵⁵³ The inventories and wills of Elizabethan men, for instance, showed the presence of netherstocks ‘from the 1570s to the end of Elizabeth’s reign’ while stockings were ‘found by the 1580s but continue[d] strongly through the early and mid-17th century.’⁵⁵⁴

‘Silk-knitted stockings were an outstanding [, novel, and expensive] fashion item; there were many different kinds as variety, shapes, and colours changed rapidly. The shape of the leg was emphasised by the decorative elements of the stockings, viz. the clock, the gusset, and the mid-back pattern forming the false seam.’⁵⁵⁵ Men like William Cecil gifted, owned, and used these items. William, for example, received a gift of black knit silk stockings from Sir Thomas Gresham in 1560. These stockings were imported from Spain. Gresham wrote William saying that he had ‘written into Spayne for silke hose...both for you, and for My-Lady, your wife’ later sending ‘two payre of black knit silke hoses...’ to William and his wife, Mildred Cecil.⁵⁵⁶

However, these kinds of hose and stockings attracted attention from early modern moralists like Sir Thomas Smith and William Harrison because they were constructed from fine materials like silk and came in a variety of bright and bold colours. These moralists bemoaned the fact that Englishmen were no longer ‘content to have...hose...made in his countrey’ preferring them made in London or ‘beyonde the sea’.⁵⁵⁷ No longer was ‘an Englishman...known abroad by his cloth and contented himself at home with his fine kersey hosen...’⁵⁵⁸ Yet, stockings were not just produced from fine silk. They could also be knitted from woollen or worsted yarn

⁵⁵³ Peachey, ed., *Clothes of the Common People in Elizabethan and Early Stuart England: Unisex Accessories*, p. 3.

⁵⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁵⁵⁵ Maj Ringgaard, ‘Framing Early Modern Knitting’ in *Fashioning the Early Modern*, pp. 283-312, 307; Hayward ‘The Compass of a Lie?’, p. 30.

⁵⁵⁶ T.W. Burgon, *Life and Times of Sir Thomas Gresham* (1839), quoted in Anna Grass, *Stockings for a Queen*, p. 101.

⁵⁵⁷ *A Discourse of the Common Weal of this Realm of England: First Printed in 1581 and Commonly Attributed to W.S.*, edited by E. Lamond (Cambridge, 1929), pp. 125-126.

⁵⁵⁸ Harrison, *The Description of England*, p. 148.

typically by women.⁵⁵⁹ Even these woollen stockings prompted moral outrage because of their colourful varieties. Phillip Stubbes expressed dismay at the fact that men, women, and even children were ‘not ashamed to weare hose of...greene, red, white, russet, tawny and els what, whiche wanton light colors, any sober chaste Christian...can hardly without any suspicion of lightness at any time weare.’⁵⁶⁰

Using written and visual sources as well as extant objects, historians like Stuart Peachey have shown how the construction of stockings in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries relied on skilled expertise and forms of embodied knowledge:

Knitted stockings were knitted in the round in a spiral on 4 needles or more. To shape the stocking required periodic increases or decreases in the number of stitches required to get round the leg. This shaping was done up the back of the leg producing a line which could look like a seam. Back lines and clocks might also be decorative.⁵⁶¹

Knitted stockings were more flexible because of the knitted material and its form of construction. Excavations from the Mary Rose and at Quintfall Hill in Northern Scotland, for instance, have revealed how both sets of stockings were ‘cut on the cross for greater elasticity, important when putting them on.’⁵⁶² However, stockings could also be produced by cutting ‘from whole pieces of coloured woven woollen or linen cloths by a member of the Merchant Taylor’s Guild, measured and fitted to the leg and foot, and then seamed up the back.’⁵⁶³

⁵⁵⁹ Peachey, ed., *Clothes of the Common People in Elizabethan and Early Stuart England: Unisex Accessories*, pp. 9-10.

⁵⁶⁰ Jane Schneider, ‘Fantastical Colors in Foggy London: The New Fashion Potential of the Late Sixteenth Century’ in *Material London*, pp. 109-128; Joan Thirsk, ‘“The Fantastical Folly of Fashion”: The English Stocking Knitting Industry, 1500-1700’ in Joan Thirsk, *The Rural Economy of London: Collected Essays* (London, 1984), pp. 235-257; Joan Thirsk, ‘The Fanatical Folly of Fashion: The English Stocking Knitting Industry 1500-1700’ in *Textile History and Economic History: Essays in Honour of Miss Julia de Lacy Mann*, edited by N.B. Harte and K.G. Ponting (Manchester, 1973), pp. 50-73; Quoted in Grant McCracken, ‘Dress Colour at the Court of Elizabeth I: An Essay in Historical Anthropology’, *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology*, 22 (1985), pp. 515-33, 522.

⁵⁶¹ Peachey, ed., *Clothes of the Common People in Elizabethan and Early Stuart England: Unisex Accessories*, p. 13.

⁵⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 20, a pattern to reproduce both knitted and cloth stockings like this is found on p. 21 whereas the reconstruction of a hose is found on pp. 22-25.

⁵⁶³ Grass, *Stockings for a Queen*, p. 55; Thirsk ‘The Fantastical Folly of Fashion’, pp. 50-73; Peachey, ed., *Clothes of the Common People in Elizabethan and Early Stuart England: Unisex Accessories*, p. 4.

Although most garments were cut on the straight of the fabric, hose were ‘cut on the bias to provide flexibility and stretch.’⁵⁶⁴ This information reveals some material understanding about the processes of production and making in the early modern period as it relates to male legwear. However, the historiography of male legwear has not just focused on the definition, style, or construction of the garment but also on the social concern about its prominence in early modern fashion and its importance for certain forms of masculinity. Historians like Susan Vincent, Bella Mirabella, and Roze Hentschell have used written sources to demonstrate the anxiety of moralists and legislators toward the ‘the use of the monstrous and outrageous greatness of hose’ which improperly altered the ‘body’s...God-given shape’ and might conceal the blemishes or deformities of an individual.⁵⁶⁵ A 1562 proclamation decried the shape and size of male legwear while a 1563 and 1571 Parliamentary bill sought to regulate and punish those who wore or made great hosen.⁵⁶⁶

Yet, despite this anxiety about style, male legwear remained an important demarcation for manhood in early modern society. A ‘first pair of hose or breeches’ was considered ‘a rite of passage’ for boys making them acutely ‘aware of the quality of cuts and construction to an unprecedented extent.’⁵⁶⁷ In many ways, ‘the dressing and display of legs [was] a history of

⁵⁶⁴ Lynn, *Tudor Fashion*, p. 27.

⁵⁶⁵ Susan Vincent, ‘From the Cradle to the Grave: Clothing the Early Modern Body’ in *The Routledge History of Sex and the Body: 1500 to Present*, edited by Sarah Toulalan and Kate Fisher (London, 2013), pp. 163-178, 171-172; Margaret Pelling, ‘Appearance and Reality: Barber-Surgeons, the Body and Disease’ in *London 1500-1700: The Making of a Metropolis*, edited by A.L. Beier and Roger Finlay (London, 1986), pp. 82-112; Vincent, *Dressing the Elite*, pp. 51, 128; Proclamation 6 May 1562 (493); Proclamation 12 February 1580 (646); Bella Mirabella, ‘Apparel oft Proclaims the Man’: Dressing Othello on the English Renaissance Stage’ in *Shakespeare and Costume*, edited by Patricia Lennox and Bella Mirabella (London, 2015), pp. 105-128, 113-114; Jane Ashelford, *Dress in the Age of Elizabeth I* (London, 1988), p. 46; Hollander, *Seeing Through Clothes*, p. 231.

⁵⁶⁶ Proclamation 6 May 1562 (493); Proclamation 12 February 1580 (646); A bill for the punishment of such as shall make or wear great hosen was introduced to the House of Commons on 9 March 1563. However, it did not pass but did in 1571 by one vote in the Commons. Yet, it never went to the House of Lords. See Vincent, *The Anatomy of Fashion*, p. 66; Hughes and Larkin, eds., *Tudor Royal Proclamations*, Vol. II, pp. 189-90, Steele, *Tudor and Stuart Proclamations*, Vol. I, p. 60.

⁵⁶⁷ Rublack, *Dressing Up*, p. 19.

men' and, since men only had legs that appeared in early modern dress, 'the bifurcated clothing that covered them' became 'the defining garments of gender' during the period.⁵⁶⁸

Bella Mirabella's unique study of portraiture further demonstrated differences in the construction of masculinity through dress by highlighting the distinctions between the English dress of Robert Dudley and Walter Raleigh and the Moorish ambassador.⁵⁶⁹ In these portraits, she contended that 'the doublet and hose are essentials that constitute England and, for that matter, European maleness...'⁵⁷⁰ The work of Susan Vincent has further emphasised the centrality of the leg in the portrayal of sophisticated masculinity in portraiture where

The placing and appearance of the subject's legs are as significant as the negligent thrust of his elbow. One is planted slightly forward of the other, the toes of both turned somewhat outwards. Legs are never shown in parallel; they are always angled to show the definition of muscle, the swell of the calf, and the shape of the ankle. It is a pose repeated again and again. Clad in silk stockings...without even a hint of wrinkle or sagging, these idealized legs of the time were long, slim and well defined. Often they appear, improbably smooth and unrealistically elongated, from beneath those large, full, hip-enhancing breeches and trunk hose. There is, particularly in the contrast between the two, a daintiness about these limbs, a neatness: the sort of legs on which the phrase well-turned would sit nicely. In the early years of the seventeenth century, they were further embellished with outsized garters and elaborate shoe roses—decorative rosettes, often laced and spangled, that adorned footwear. These were courtier's legs, made for elegance, for those courtly arts of salutation and bowing, of dancing, of riding and martial display...in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries it was the legs that did the work of deference...early modern conduct books taught their readers to draw one foot back and then bend the knees. The depth of the reverence was indicated by the depth of the knee bend.⁵⁷¹

A proper leg was 'vital to the image of a courtier' showing the correct 'aristocratic elegance suitable for' courtly pursuits like 'dancing, fencing, or riding'.⁵⁷² This information gleaned

⁵⁶⁸ Vincent, *The Anatomy of Fashion*, p. 97.

⁵⁶⁹ Mirabella 'Apparel oft Proclaims the Man', pp. 107-108.

⁵⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 107-108, 113-115.

⁵⁷¹ Vincent, *The Anatomy of Fashion*, pp. 98-99; Ellen Chirelstein, 'Emblem and Reckless Presence: the Drury Portrait at Yale' in *Albion's Classicism: the Visual Arts in Britain, 1550-1650*, edited by Lucy Gent (New Haven, 1995), pp. 287-312, 295; Joan Wildeblood and Peter Brinson, *The Polite World: a Guide to English Manners and Deportment from the Thirteenth to the Nineteenth Century* (London, 1965), pp. 133, 165, 261-263.

⁵⁷² Vincent, *Dressing the Elite*, p. 30; Chirelstein, 'Emblem and Reckless Presence', p. 295.

through written and visual sources, therefore, helps early modern historians better appreciate the importance of male legwear in early modern portraiture as well as written narratives like Ben Jonson's 1598 comedy, *Every Man in His Humour*. In this narrative, the county dupe, Master Stephen, asks his servant, Brainworm, 'How dost thou like my leg' to which the servant replies 'You have an excellent leg, Master...'⁵⁷³ Previous historiography has revealed that this conversation is about more than just a leg. Instead, through an historical appreciation of the social context of male legwear, we understand that this leg signalled important information about the status, position, and fashionability of the Master in early modern society.

However, despite the depth and breadth of this information about male legwear in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, written, visual, and artifactual sources alone did not answer many of the questions that motivated and focused my case study into this topic. These kinds of records were especially silent in helping me understand certain forms of embodied knowledge about materials and cultures of making. The use of historical reconstruction, therefore, was both helpful and necessary as it worked alongside these other sources and sometimes filled the gaps left by them.

Historical reconstruction furthered an interaction with the material and its properties in a unique way. During the reconstruction, for example, various materials like leather, silk, and velvet were handled to see how the properties of the material influenced the cut or construction of the garment. Leather as a material form, for instance, always has slightly different qualities since it is from an animal who will have its own characteristics which are influenced by its environment, diet, and family history. No two pieces of leather will be the same. They will have distinct textures and tightness because of their origin as part of a unique and individual animal. This makes a maker's choice of leather more complicated in the making process. They cannot easily

⁵⁷³ Ben Jonson, *Every Man in His Humour* (first acted 1598, pub. 1601), I, iii, lines 31-41; Vincent, *The Anatomy of Fashion*, pp. 102-103.

add different pieces together in the formation of a garment and they cannot create a mock garment before the final one which will behave in a similar manner. Thus, they must be more confident in their processes of making and in their own expertise and precision in measuring the body exactly before cutting the material. Additionally, they must be aware of the inherent properties of leather like its stretch which will change the appearance and feel of the garment as it is worn over time.



Figure 48. Matthäus Schwarz's yellow and red hose: back lacing

This is the back leather on the Matthäus Schwarz's yellow and red hose. Even though this workshop participant tried on the garment, it did not fit them because of the stretch of the material and its moulding to the actual individual for whom it was designed. This can be noted in the left foot which does not fit and appears too loose around the foot. Additionally, the back lacing shows how some tailors tried to combat the natural change

of materials over time by providing a means to tighten or loosen the leather even as it stretched.

Textiles can also have their own characteristics. The tightness of the weave as well as the smoothness of the material, or a pattern on the fabric, can alter how a maker constructed or fit different items of clothing especially those as skintight as trousers, hose, and stockings for men. As a historical reconstruction of Matthäus Schwarz's yellow and red hose was tried on, these differences became more readily apparent when actual fabrics were seen and touched with these characteristics.



Figure 49. Matthäus Schwarz's yellow and red hose: side view

Further evidence of the fit and change of materials to individuals and over time seem in the feet of the reconstructed hose. Despite the use of lacing, they still did not quite fit this individual correctly.

Historical reconstruction enabled a further engagement with dress and these characteristics of materials in a less contrived manner. The School of Historical Dress had fabrics and ornamentation from the early modern period, however, these extant objects were quite old and engagement with them had to be regulated. They were handled with extreme care or viewed only. Yet, this was a very inauthentic existence. In the past and today, clothing and its materials were not regulated when they were handled. People turned their clothing inside out. They threw it on the floor. They tugged and pulled it. They rubbed it. They moved and lived in clothing. Historical reconstruction allows for a more authentic interaction with clothing. During the workshop, for instance, Matthäus Schwarz's yellow and red hose were tried on by some participants. In doing so, it became more readily apparent that the fit of these hose was quite particular to the individual for whom they were constructed. The leather, for example, stretched with wear and folded in peculiar ways around the body to fit its form. If one had two legs with caves of slightly different proportions then the leather conformed to the body and its irregularities despite the specific cut of the material. It also worked better when the pair of hose were put on sitting down or with assistance, rather than standing up, because of the tightness of the material particularly around the ankles and feet. Additionally, when the garment was worn, the softness of the leather against the body became apparent as well as its breathability.



Figure 50. Matthäus Schwarz's yellow and red hose: trying on garment

One of the workshop's participants trying on the leather hose showing how much easier they were to put on while sitting down rather than standing.

This interaction and its corresponding insights answered many still unanswered questions about early modern men's legwear in ways which were distinct from the other kinds of written, visual, and artefactual sources previously explored in the thesis. In the first place, historical reconstruction brought the tactile and sensory experience of dress to the forefront of the engagement helping focus the investigation on these elements alongside the visual appeal or look of clothing. It also made more apparent some of the unique skills that early modern tailors had and the forms of embodied knowledge necessary about the general human body and the individual bodies of their clients. In fact, the relationship between a tailor or maker and their

client was quite intimate. In order to construct clothing, they would have known the distinct features and the flaws of their client's anatomy. This interaction would also have to be quite regular since the body changed frequently. The leather hose and the differences between the two calves made this point particularly clear. Additionally, tailors or makers needed an intense understanding of materials and their properties. They would need to be aware about the durability, stretch, and give of materials like textiles, leather, and thread. Thus, they could plan for the changes of a material as it moved through the construction process or even after the garment was finished and it began to be worn.

However, this chapter shows a further understanding and appreciation for the expertise of the early modern tailor through the reconstruction of an early modern pattern for a fitted hose from around 1550. In the drafting of this pattern, the awareness of the body was made even more apparent especially regarding what measurements were needed and where they had to be taken from an individual. Although some pattern books existed in this period, most tailors worked independently of these written sources.⁵⁷⁴

This reconstructed pattern required measurements to be taken of a 'client's body' along the back of the calves, the length of each foot, around the ankle, and the calf. Additional measurements were taken from the groin area to the knee and then along the entire length of the leg. The precision of these measurements was paramount since any discrepancy would result in a garment that did not fit properly and created potential for the waste of expensive materials and time. Good fit, therefore, was essential both from the perspective of the client and the maker. This motivated the tailor or maker to work intentionally. In order to do this, they developed techniques and specific processes of making like the use of measurement tapes specific to their client's body with cut tick marks at the important measurements along the body,

⁵⁷⁴ Janet Arnold, *Patterns of Fashion 3: The Cut and Construction of Clothes for Men and Women C. 1560-1620* (London, 1985), p. 4.

rather than the use of numbers along a ruler. These tapes were saved and later altered as the client's body changed over time.⁵⁷⁵ Tailor and maker also needed a nuanced awareness of space and geometry in order to draft a pattern which made the most economic use of materials. This was a form of embodied knowledge passed down between individuals through the process of doing. These knowledges were particularly important in the early modern period where the value of materials was significant and typically more than the cost of the actual making. Thus, their expertise was not solely material based but also relied upon important simultaneous knowledges of mathematics and the body.

⁵⁷⁵ Arnold, *Patterns of Fashion 3*, p. 4.

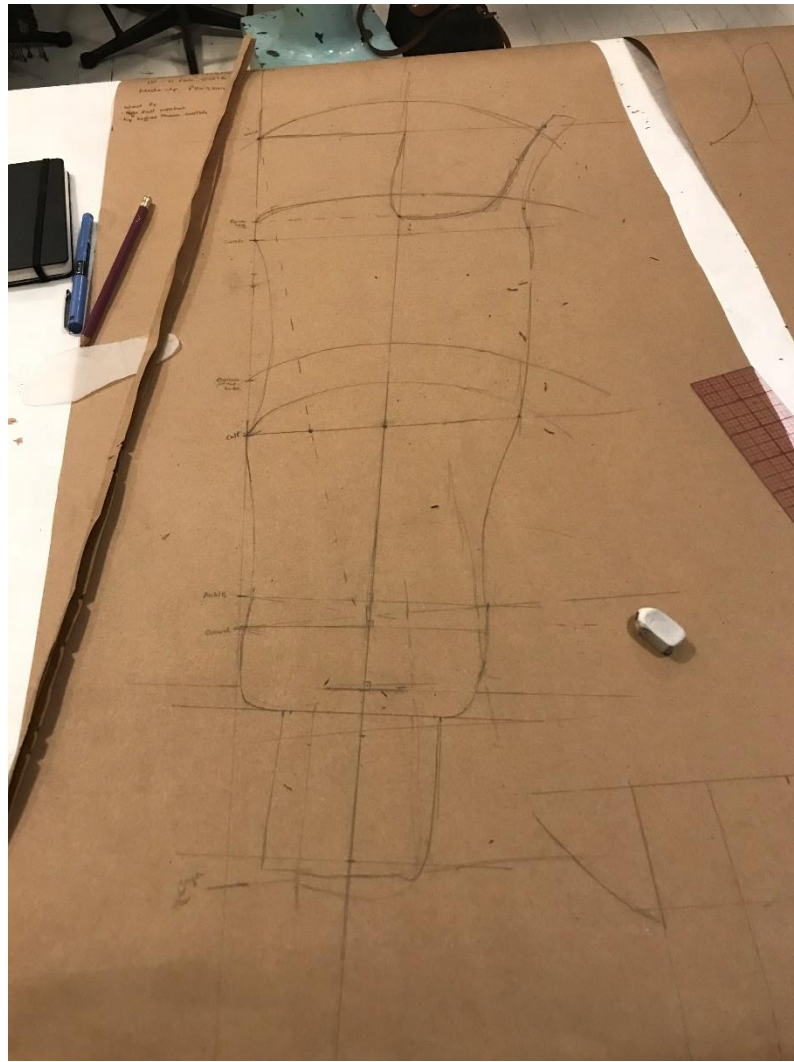


Figure 51. Reconstruction of Pattern Drafting

The reconstructed pattern based on the measurements taken from a ‘client’s body’ along the back of the calves, the length of each foot, around the ankle, and the calf as well as from the groin area to the knee and then along the entire length of the leg. Please note the measurement tape with its cut tick marks specific to the client’s body rather than the use of numbers along a ruler on the left-hand side of the pattern created through this process of making.

A reconstructed pattern helped better appreciate these skills and their necessity and value within the processes of garment construction during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It tangibly showed the intricacies of artisanal workmanship where tailors and makers operated in environments of both creativity in fashion and design as well as flux and uncertainty as they closely engaged with the human body and its changes. Making could be quite regimented with

attention to detail and space not just desired but essential. There were small margins between success and failure which became more readily apparent through making the pattern.

Case Study Two: Reconstructing an Early Modern Shirt

This chapter now presents the second historical reconstruction case study which involved the reconstruction of an early modern shirt. This case study was undertaken through another workshop at The School of Historical Dress, Men's Shirts at the Court of Henry VIII, cotaught by Jenny Tiramani and Maria Hayward and completed over a two-day period from the 27th of April 2019 to the 29th of April 2019 during the third year of my doctorate. Since completing the other reconstruction during the previous year, this workshop was the second interaction with the methodology of historical reconstruction in the thesis making me more comfortable with some of the techniques and the environment of making than during my first course. Still, it was important to discern the purpose of this specific historical reconstruction for the thesis and ask the appropriate questions to direct the engagement.

During this workshop, we undertook a reconstruction in order to learn more about the materials and making processes of early modern shirts, particularly those aspects which were unavailable in existing written, visual, and artifactual sources, in order to better understand and reconstruct the material world of the Burghley and Salisbury households. This was the purpose of the historical reconstruction and guided the questions. What kinds of shirts, for instance, did elite and non-elite English men and women wear between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries? Were shirts invisible undergarments or essential parts of the display and styling of an outfit? Did the material or style of a shirt differ across society? What did these different fashions or fabrics communicate about the wearer? Did people decorate their shirts? What decorative materials were used and what did they demonstrate? Many of these questions could be answered, at least partially, by existing contemporary sources and historiographical analysis.

However, it was more challenging to fully understand the construction of shirts or the experience of wearing them without the addition of a historical reconstruction. What skills, for example, were necessary for the making of a shirt? How were shirts constructed and who made them? What were the processes of making? What embodied knowledges were necessary for the maker of a shirt regarding skill, expertise, and innovation? What did makers have to know about fabrics, materials, designs, and styles? Historical reconstruction offered important insights to these questions which worked in conjunction with and supplemented my existing understanding about early modern shirts formed through historiography that used surviving written, visual, and artifactual records.

Although not as substantial as male legwear, current historiography has shown an interest in early modern shirts and contemporary accounts about them. Much of this scholarship has focused on the design and fabric of shirts as well as their social significance as signs of cleanliness and proper hygiene in early modern Europe. Scholars like Susan Vincent, Maria Hayward, Jane E. Huggett, and Liza Picard have shown the foundational importance of shirts to the wardrobe as well as elements of its making and the evolution of decorative styles. Like hose, shirts were part of the ‘most basic articles of male dress of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries...’ with most external garments being ‘worn over a shirt...’⁵⁷⁶ Both men and women wore shirts as a form of undergarments, although the principal female undergarment was called ‘the linen shift or smock’. This female article of dress ‘was similar in cut and construction to the shirt but with extra fullness created by the insertion of additional sections of fabric into the side seams.’⁵⁷⁷

Apart from the poorest, Englishmen typically had ‘between three and six shirts each’ in their wardrobe ‘allowing for not infrequent changes’, although wills and inventories show this

⁵⁷⁶ Vincent, *Dressing the Elite*, pp. 13-14.

⁵⁷⁷ Hayward, *Rich Apparel*, p. 122; Janet Arnold, ‘Elizabethan and Jacobean smocks and shirts’, *Waffen-und Kostumkunde* (1977), pp. 89-110.

number should be considered an average since even men who served elite households might possess fewer shirts.⁵⁷⁸ Shirts ‘were full T-shaped garments, long to the wrist and falling well down the lower portion of the body...These were often embroidered at neck and wrist, those points in the vestimentary topography where such undergarments were glimpsed as outer wear.’⁵⁷⁹ Existing artefactual sources have shown that these garments typically made economical use of fabric with each section constructed from a different width: ‘a wider piece of fabric was chosen for the body of a shirt or shift, whilst the sleeves and gussets [pieces of fabric inserted under the arms to allow flexibility and ease of movement] were made from a narrower piece.’⁵⁸⁰

Shirts were also constructed from a variety of materials. In many settings, women sewed and supervised the creation of these garments.⁵⁸¹ They also frequently gifted them or bequeathed them as charitable offerings. Mildred Cecil, for example, issued shirts and smocks for the needy of Cheshunt and London.⁵⁸² Henry VIII, meanwhile, received many embroidered shirts from court women as gifts at New Year.⁵⁸³ The highest quality shirts were made using holland cloth, ‘a fine, light to medium weight linen’ or from cambric ‘a fine or medium weight linen’.⁵⁸⁴ However, shirts could also be made from coarser textiles like canvas, hemp, flax, and lesser qualities of linen, such as lockram or dowlas. These materials were more accessible and perhaps even preferred by those who did physical labour or had lower status.⁵⁸⁵ Different qualities of materials might also be used in the construction of a garment in order to reduce its cost. The

⁵⁷⁸ Huggett, ‘Rural Costume in Elizabethan Essex’, p. 78; For case studies of servants like John White, David Anvicke, and William Coleman who served elite households see Spufford and Mee, *The Clothing of the Common Sort*, pp. 52-54.

⁵⁷⁹ Vincent, *Dressing the Elite*, p. 51.

⁵⁸⁰ Spufford and Mee, *The Clothing of the Common Sort*, p. 51; Arnold, *Patterns of Fashion 4*; Mikhaila and Malcolm-Davies, *The Tudor Tailor*.

⁵⁸¹ Vincent, *Dressing the Elite*, p. 54.

⁵⁸² Alford, *Burghley*, p. 309.

⁵⁸³ Maria Hayward, ‘Gift Giving at the Court of Henry VIII: the 1539 New Year’s Gift Roll in Context’, *The Antiquaries Journal*, Vol. 85 (September 2005), pp. 126-175, 140; The National Archives, State Papers, 1/37, fols 32r-36v.

⁵⁸⁴ Hayward, *Rich Apparel*, p. 92.

⁵⁸⁵ Huggett, ‘Rural Costume in Elizabethan Essex’, p. 81; Picard, *Elizabeth’s London*; Spufford and Mee, *The Clothing of the Common Sort*, p. 96.

1578 probate account of Anthony Deale, for example, outlined the use of ‘good and strong’ holland cloth to make shirts for his children as well coarse holland cloth for the bands of these same shirts and fine holland cloth for the ruffs.⁵⁸⁶ The best quality was often reserved for more visible areas like the collar or cuffs.

Shirts were also ornamented and decorated, especially those which were constructed from fine linen. This was a way to demonstrate wealth and style. In fact, the ‘finer the linen, the more easily it could be pleated and gathered, and these techniques required additional cloth than for a plain shirt.’⁵⁸⁷ Yet, these decorative techniques concerned the government. Sumptuary legislation attempted to limit shirts which were ‘decorated with pleating, embroidery or drawn-thread work.’⁵⁸⁸ A 1562 proclamation, for example, forbade anyone below the rank of a knight from wearing ‘a shirt with double ruffs’.⁵⁸⁹ Ruffs were one style that shirts facilitated.

In fact, shirts allowed for many different styles of dress or accessorising. These changed and evolved throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The collar of the shirt, for instance, morphed from being ‘left untied and with the strings hanging’ into the ruff by the seventeenth century.⁵⁹⁰ The neck band helped precipitate this change. Ruffs

...began as the narrow frill that happens when you gather the billowing fullness of an Elizabethan shirt into a band at the neck, leaving perhaps an inch of the skirt to stick up from the top of the band in a frill. It stands upright because of the high collar of the doublet. If you stiffen the frill slightly by edging it with a fine cord, it can be persuaded to make a wavy pattern. Then the doublet collar gets higher and so does the frill. By about 1570...the neck band and the fill part company with the shirt altogether, and become a band as long as the wearer’s neck size, buttoned or tied with tape at the ends to fit the neck closely, plus a strip of material anything from two to nine yards wide and sometimes as much as *six yards* long, sewn on the band in minute regular cartridge pleats.⁵⁹¹

⁵⁸⁶ CKS PRC21/2/275, probate account of Anthony Deale, charge value 902.3.2, end date of account 15/11/1578 in Spufford and Mee, *The Clothing of the Common Sort*, pp. 170-171.

⁵⁸⁷ Hayward, *Rich Apparel*, p. 119.

⁵⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 119.

⁵⁸⁹ Steele, *Tudor and Stuart Proclamations*, Vol. I, p. 60.

⁵⁹⁰ Baldwin, *Sumptuary Legislation and Personal Regulation in England*, p. 177.

⁵⁹¹ Picard, *Elizabeth’s London*, p. 123; C. and P. Cunnington, *Handbook of English Costume in the Sixteenth Century* (London, 1954); Arnold, *Queen Elizabeth’s Wardrobe Unlock’d*; Arnold, *Patterns of Fashion*.

An elite ruff could have ‘as many as 600 of these pleats which were constructed from fine linen like lawn or cambric to ensure the garment was not too bulky.’⁵⁹² Working dress might also include a neck band with pleats. However, these were made from coarser fabric with ‘the strip shorter and narrower, so that it stands up on its own. An apprentice’s ruff was not supposed to be more than 1 ½ yards long, which would make a very modest ruff.’⁵⁹³ Yet, as the sixteenth century progressed, the collars and cuffs of shirts became ‘separate items attached each morning, with integral collars now seen as the preserve of the lower orders only.’⁵⁹⁴ This shows how fashion, construction, and material worked in conjunction with each other often precipitating or informing the other.

Beyond style and construction, scholars like Susan Vincent and Catherine Richardson have also explored the social significance of the shirt in early modern society with its associations to cleanliness and hygiene. Susan Vincent showed how ‘intimate linen garments’ like the shirt for men and the smock for women ‘were indelibly marked by their association with the body.’⁵⁹⁵ In fact, the boundaries between the two were often blurred with ‘the index of beauty and desirability’ connected both to the ‘fineness of texture and the whiteness of appearance.’⁵⁹⁶ Shirts and smocks absorbed the secretions of the body since they laid on the skin and in between the skin and other pieces of clothing. This meant that they needed to be cleaned and changed regularly to maintain an individual’s good smell and fresh appearance. Using literary sources, Catherine Richardson’s work, therefore, demonstrated how these concepts of ‘personal cleanliness’ became increasingly associated with ‘the laundering of linen’ undergarments and ‘the regular changing of underwear’ in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. In

⁵⁹² Picard, *Elizabeth’s London*, p. 124.

⁵⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 124; Henry Humpherus, *History of the Origin and Progress of the Company of Watermen and Lightermen of the River Thames: 1514-1829*, Vol. I (London, 1999).

⁵⁹⁴ Lynn, *Tudor Fashion*, p. 56.

⁵⁹⁵ Vincent, *Dressing the Elite*, pp. 52-53.

⁵⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 52-53.

time, then, status and respectability were linked with ‘a crisp, whitened exterior’ formed through clean, white, and pressed garments close to the skin which demonstrated the purity of an individual’s body as well as their soul.⁵⁹⁷

However, despite the depth and breadth of historiographic information about shirts in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, written, visual, and artifactual sources alone do not answer many of the questions that motivated and focused my case study into this topic. This is exacerbated by the fact that the topic is early modern shirts. In many visual sources, for example, shirts are completely or partially hidden from view under the other layers of clothing revealing only parts of the form and design like the neckline. Additionally, when observable, these garments appear ‘in pristine condition, untainted by signs of wear such as stains...’ and hanging ‘...in flawless folds, ruffs arranged in perfectly regular pleats...’⁵⁹⁸ This, therefore, provides an inauthentic presentation of a perfect past.

Extant shirts tell a different story about these garments with ‘sweat marks, alterations and occasional mistakes in decorative elements...’⁵⁹⁹ Patterns by scholars like Janet Arnold, based on surviving artefacts, only reinforce the peculiarities and individualism of shirt design and wear.⁶⁰⁰ However, while these extant shirts often offer helpful details about construction and use, they do not reveal many of the invisible but important choices and embodied knowledges of makers producing early modern shirts. The use of historical reconstruction, therefore, is both helpful and necessary as it works alongside these other sources and sometimes fills the gaps left by them.

⁵⁹⁷ Catherine Richardson, ‘“Honest Clothes” in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*’ in *Shakespeare and Costume*, pp. 63-84, 77-78; Vincent, *Dressing the Elite*, p. 52; Bella Mirabella, ‘Embellishing Herself with a Cloth: The Contradictory Life of the Handkerchief’ in *Ornamentalism: The Art of Renaissance Accessories*, edited by Bella Mirabella (Ann Arbor, 2011), pp. 59-84.

⁵⁹⁸ Reynolds, *In Fine Style*, p. 26.

⁵⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

⁶⁰⁰ Arnold, Tiramani, and Levy, *Patterns of Fashion 4*; Mikhaila and Malcolm-Davies, *The Tudor Tailor*.

This historical reconstruction began by determining the pattern layout for a particular shirt design. This design influenced how the fabric was cut and how the garment was constructed. The inclusion of a gusset, for example, required extra material as did other details like ruffles or a neckband. This process highlighted how style or fashion really determined the entire making process. Each step in this process was also interconnected to a specific skill, and this expertise was entirely necessary for the completion of a garment, even one as seemingly simple as a shirt. Historical reconstruction made this technical culture of making readily apparent though doing. One could not simply take for granted that the collar of a shirt lay perfectly flat. A flat collar on an extant garment or visual source was no longer just a flat collar. Instead, the reconstruction presented the skills needed to make this collar lay flat and how a flat collar was a glimpse into a larger process of design and construction.

In contrast to the first reconstruction, this shirt project was based around a surviving extant object from the Victoria and Albert Museum. This 1540 shirt was made from fine white lawn fabric embroidered with blue silk thread along the cuffs and collar. In style, it was quite reminiscent of shirts worn by Henry VIII in portraiture by Hans Holbein the Younger. This shirt design was chosen to reconstruct for two specific reasons. First, it was dated from the middle of the sixteenth century like many of the shirts found in the Burghley household accounts. This made it seem more representative of the kinds of shirts present in these written records and less anachronistic in terms of style or design. Additionally, it was most definitely a shirt constructed and worn by a more elite member of early modern society because of its use of fine white lawn fabric and silk thread. Silk thread was around '20 times the price of normal thread' making it 'unlikely to be widely used by common people.'⁶⁰¹ This also made it seem like a reasonable comparative garment for understanding more about the dress worn by the prominent members of the Burghley and Salisbury families as well as the types of materials handled by their makers.

⁶⁰¹ Peachey, ed., *Clothes of the Common People in Elizabethan and Early Stuart England: Haberdashery*, p. 7.



The historical reconstruction is based on an extant shirt quite like the one worn by King Henry VIII in this portrait. In particular, the shirts both have a gusset in their structure suggested by the small line of triangular stitches on Henry's shoulder.

Figure 52. King Henry VIII; Hans Holbein the Younger; c. 1537; Oil and tempera on oak; Dimensions: 200 mm wide and 280 mm high; Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum, Madrid; Public Domain





The historical reconstruction was based on this extant shirt. ‘The main body of the shirt is made from two flat panels cut across the width of the fabric with the selvedges forming the hem. A section, nine inches deep and four inches wide, is cut from the top of each side to take the sleeves, which are set-in square. A gusset is formed by a piece of the main shirt cut out on the diagonal to form an triangle under the arm. The top edges of the two main panels are seamed for about two inches and the remainder is slightly gathered and whipped onto the straight neck band. The front panel is slit open for about ten inches and is secured by three pairs of plaited tie-strings attached to the neck band. The lower 13.5 inches of the side seams are left open. The straight, full sleeves are tightly gathered onto narrow wrist bands.’⁶⁰²

Figure 53. Shirt; England (made); ca. 1540 (made); Materials and Techniques: Lawn linen, linen thread, silk thread; hand-woven, hand-embroidered, hand-sewn; Dimensions: Length: 35.25 in centre back, Length: 89.8 cm centre back, Width: in 27.75, Width: 70.5 cm, Length: 22 in sleeve, Length: 60 cm sleeve; Museum number: T.112-1972; © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Although reconstructed on a smaller scale than the original, the reconstructed shirt followed a similar pattern to this extant shirt. The front panel was shorter than the back panel keeping in line with common shirt designs of the period. The main body of the garment was formed from two flat panels cut across the width of the fabric with the selvedges forming the hem. This

⁶⁰² Angus Patterson, *Fashion and Armour in Renaissance Europe: Proud Lookes and Brave Attire* (London, 2009), p. 40.

technique, where the selvages formed the hem, was a skill used by expert seamstresses in order to construct garments with as little waste as possible. The fineness of the materials, however, facilitated this process since only evenly woven linen could be cut across the width and form its own hemline. Lesser quality fabrics would make this almost impossible or compromise the composition of the shirt. Although the reconstructed shirt did not use handspun linen, it was still some of the finest material available having 108 threads per inch in the warp and 112 threads per inch in the weft. This enabled the reconstruction to manually grapple with this construction technique while also understanding how the less excellent weave of the fabric or the lack of expert embodied skill might undermine the use of it.



Figure 54. Reconstruction of a Hemmed Sleeve

Part of a hemmed sleeve for my reconstructed shirt. Each piece of the garment had to be hemmed apart from the centre back of the body pieces. This image also shows the fine quality of the linen material used in the reconstruction which had 108 threads per inch in the warp and 112 threads per inch in the weft.

During the shirt reconstruction, the most challenging part was the construction of the sleeves and gusset which required precise placement. Each sleeve was cut as a rectangular shape. This

rectangle was folded and sewn inside out along the triangular part of the body piece. A gusset was then formed by taking a piece of the main shirt and cutting it out on the diagonal to form a triangle under the arm. This piece was sewn with tiny, intricate stitching into a set-in square. The top edges of the two main panels were then seamed together, although space was left for these panels to be joined onto the separate straight neck band piece. Additionally, the ends of the straight, full sleeves were each gathered into a 12.7 cm (5 inch) hem to fit the 6 mm (1/4 inch) wide narrow wrist band. In fact, after being cut, each piece of the garment had to be hemmed, except for the centre back of the body pieces.



Figure 55. Reconstruction of the Body Part of the Shirt

The body piece of the linen shirt with the triangular cut to place the sleeve. This triangular cut enabled the wearer greater mobility and flexibility. A gusset is formed by a piece of the main shirt cut out on the diagonal to form an triangle under the arm.



Figure 56. Reconstruction of a Rectangular Piece of the Sleeve

The folded rectangular piece of the sleeve being sewn into the cut triangular area of the main body part of the linen shirt. This is the inside portion of the garment.



Figure 57. Reconstruction of the Sleeve Placement

The placement of the sleeve into the main body of the garment. Great precision was needed in this part of the reconstruction since a misplacement would limit mobility and decrease the flexibility added by the gusset. This is the inside portion of the garment.

Throughout this making process, the need for precision was undermined by the materials and their qualities. The use of fine linen with its bouncy nature exacerbated the problems with precision and made matching each piece even more difficult. While others with sewing

backgrounds quickly put together these elements, my reconstruction struggled and often relied on help from the experts. The whole process took me much longer and was only partially completed after over five hours. These steps, therefore, tangibly highlighted to me the depth and nuance of making expertise where manual dexterity and precision were paramount skills.



Figure 58. Reconstruction of the Exterior Side of Sleeve and the Body of the Shirt

The exterior side of the sleeve and body of the reconstructed linen shirt after the sleeve had been properly placed and connected to the body. The stitches that are still visible should not be there but required expertise that I was still acquiring.

Yet, this process also revealed the innovation and creativity of early modern makers. The original extant shirt had several forms of decoration on it. The neck and cuffs, for example, had cross stitches embroidered with blue silk. The edges of the neck and the cuff frills were also whipped into overcast stitches while the side, shoulder, and arm seams used a buttonhole stitch to add further decoration in cross and back stitches. Additionally, the shirt included more angular, interlaced seams forming flowers and leaves as well as rope-like patterns at the wrists. These different styles and techniques added visual interest to a piece of clothing. They were also important elements in demonstrating the varied skills of the maker and their level of

craftsmanship through the actual stitches, as well as their handling of differing materials like coloured or metal threads that added additional cost to the garment.



‘At the neck and cuffs are cross stitches and the edges of the neck and cuff frills are whipped in overcast stitches. The side, shoulder and arm seams are worked in interlaced buttonhole stitches with additional ornamentation in cross and back stitches.’⁶⁰³

‘The deep, two-inch, neck piece and the cuff frills are decorated with an angular, interlaced stem bearing columbine flowers and leaves. Around the wrists are lines of rope in an interlace pattern and the narrow neck frill is patterned with isolated leaf motifs. The seams are decorated with tiny Renaissance motifs.’⁶⁰⁴

Figure 59. Shirt; England (made); ca. 1540 (made); Materials and Techniques: Lawn linen, linen thread, silk thread; hand-woven, hand-embroidered, hand-sewn; Dimensions: Length: 35.25 in centre back, Length: 89.8 cm centre back, Width: in 27.75, Width: 70.5 cm, Length: 22 in sleeve, Length: 60 cm sleeve; Museum number: T.112-1972; © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Embroidery patterns like those found on the shirt were found in written handbooks and single sheets from the period. These sources printed lace and sewing techniques in block prints which

⁶⁰³ Patterson, *Fashion and Armour in Renaissance Europe*, p. 40.

⁶⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

made them relatively accessible. In fact, women would often pin prick these designs and rub chalk or ink onto the fabric in order to imprint the embroidery or lace pattern and then follow it using thread.⁶⁰⁵ However, others would simply create their own designs or free form ones without chalk or ink. My reconstruction followed this latter method which made the innovation and creativity of embroidery more evident in several ways. It taught me, for example, that a maker only had a limited number of stitches that they knew or even existed at the time. Therefore, part of the ingenuity and creativity of their work was being able to take this small collection of stitches and put or work them together into unique and interesting combinations and patterns based on thickness, length, width, texture, colour, design, and motif.

Additionally, different threads carried different weights and thicknesses to them. A metal thread had either a silk or linen core (often yellow or white) with one or more metal strips made from gold or silver wrapped around the thread. This meant that when the thread was held in the hand and sewn into the fabric, it required more force and drive than when using plain silk or linen thread without the metal. The right tension and thrust were skills learned through embodied practice and perfected through repetition as tacit knowledge. They were tactile rather than visual. They were so synonymous with sewing and craftsmanship that they are not even detailed which makes them challenging to appreciate or understand the complexity of the skill except through the actual processes of making.

⁶⁰⁵ Lemire, *Global Trade and the Transformation of Consumer Cultures*, pp. 249-250.

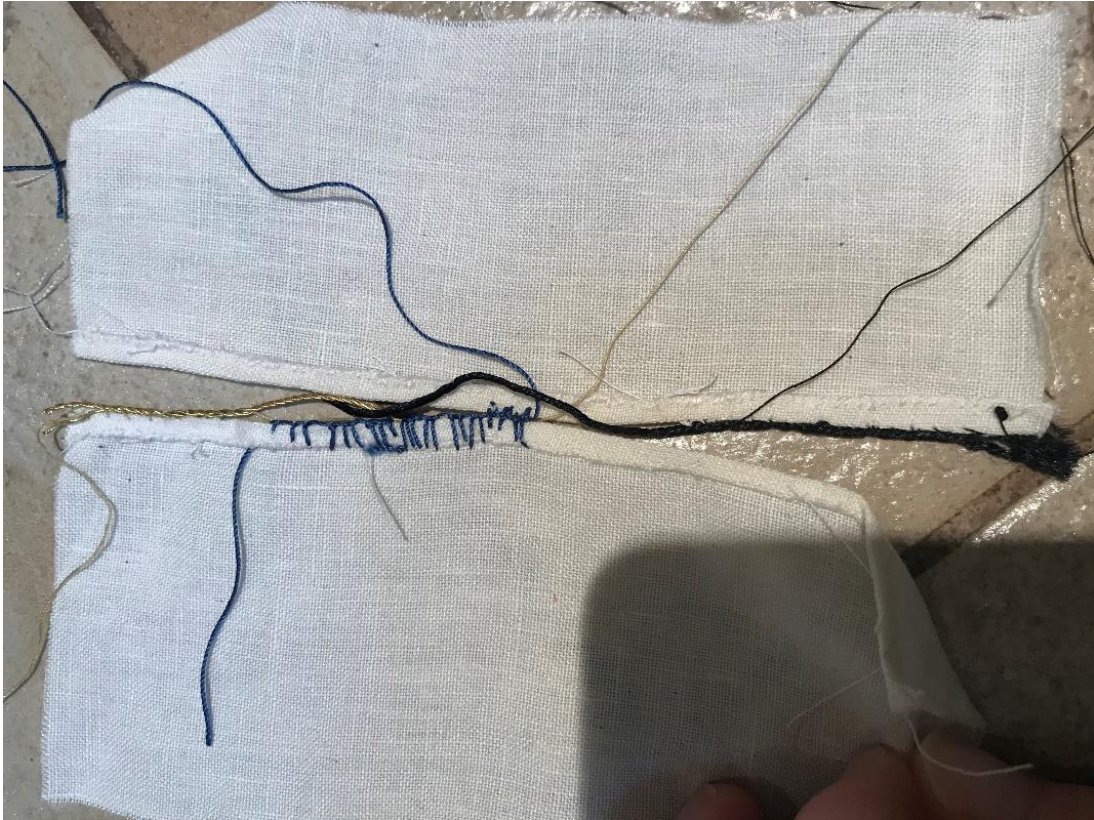


Figure 60. Reconstruction of Some Decorative Stitching Techniques

After hemming these parts of the reconstructed shirt, I used different coloured threads to try distinct decorative techniques and stitching. The gold braid on the left bottom linen had actual gold in it while the black braid on the right top linen had a heavier weight and greater thickness than the blue silk thread. The blue silk thread on the bottom fabric was used for doing a wrap stitch. The two kinds of braid showed the embodied skills and tacit knowledge necessary for knowing the correct tension to hold the material and connect it to the linen as well as the force of the thrust to get the needle through the differing consistencies of the braid. The one with gold, for example, required greater force but also easily came apart so also needed finesse.



This portrait of Edward VI as a child shows him dressed in a luxurious outfit over a fine white linen shirt. This shirt is edged with fine gold braid on the cuffs and the top of the collar. This gold trim is similar the gold braid used in my historical reconstruction. Its decorative effect can be appreciated through this portrait.

Figure 61. Edward VI as a Child; Hans Holbein the Younger; c. 1538; Oil on panel; Dimensions: 440 cm width and 568 cm high; Andrew W. Mellon Collection; Public Domain

The reconstruction also made evident the interplay between the maker's knowledges about fabric, thread, and construction and their creativity in the design and style of the garment. Makers could choose to place decorative stitches in places where the construction of the garment also required sewing together as with pieces like the gusset. This ensured that materials were not wasted despite the presence of ornamentation. Thus, stitching could simultaneously serve both strategic and decorative purposes. These were choices that the maker or the wearer

made when a piece of clothing was constructed. However, these choices rested on the skills that the maker embodied as well as the material knowledges and preferences of both the maker and the wearer.

A reconstructed shirt helped me better appreciate these skills and their value within the processes of garment construction during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It tangibly showed me the intricacies of construction and composition where makers operated in environments driven by precision and their knowledge about the differences between materials. However, within these boundaries, shirts could also be sites where makers showed off their skills and creativity through innovative or whimsical styles and designs. In this way, shirts were valued as more than essential elements in an early modern wardrobe.

Conclusion

This chapter has shown the benefits of using historical reconstruction alongside existing written, visual, and artefactual sources. Its use has allowed for deeper and more nuanced insight into the complex and technical knowledge and expertise of early modern makers. Additionally, it has shown how historians can consider the properties of material and processes of making in new and unique ways. These insights are vital and can offer information about groups like women and non-elites whose skills are often sidelined or absent from surviving sources. In this way, then, the methodology of historical reconstruction helps dismantle certain hierarchies of knowledge and value both from the past and in current historiography.

At its core, historical reconstruction is an exercise in possibilities and in asking the right questions of our sources. This makes it the same as any other historical methodology. Historians always need to acquire and refine their skills. We may all know how to read but interrogating and explaining texts like a historian is different than just opening a book. We may all open our eyes in the morning but looking at a painting or studying visual imagery requires a more focused approach. As historians we are also aware that even when these approaches are refined and

practiced, we cannot read or see how exactly someone in the early modern period did. This does not make our study meaningless but informs how we approach our study and present the conclusions of our methods. This chapter has shown the same thing for historical reconstruction. If the right questions are asked, even a basic engagement with materials and the construction of garments, provides historians with a new lens for a greater awareness about cloth and clothing in the early modern period.

Conclusion

In August 1557, William Cecil and his wife Mildred attended the Chelsea auction of Anne of Cleve's goods. At the auction, they purchased several articles of female dress including gowns constructed from red cloth of gold, cloth of silver, purple velvet, taffeta, black wrought velvet, and black velvet furred at the arms. They also acquired some rich embroidery, an old kirtle of silver, and a kirtle with pearls.⁶⁰⁶ In total, William and Mildred spent around 100 pounds at the auction.

Despite being pre-owned and potentially already worn, the fabrics of these garments still had great monetary value. They could be reworked into new dress. This was a common practice, even amongst elites, because the materials themselves were typically the most expensive part of construction rather than the labour.⁶⁰⁷ Thus, it made more sense to reuse or recycle fabrics into styles as fashion or preferences changed. Yet, the auction of Anne of Cleve's clothing represented a unique opportunity for people like William and Mildred to access and acquire more exclusive or high-quality textiles, colours, and decorations. These purchases, therefore, provide insight into existing regimes of value at court related to cloth and clothing in the middle of the sixteenth century.

Although Anne of Cleve is perhaps best remembered as the 'ugly' former wife of Henry VIII, her wardrobe positioned her within a highly exclusive subsection of elite society in early modern England. Within the auction list, for example, her dress included fabrics almost entirely limited to royal and noble use like cloth of silver and cloth of gold.⁶⁰⁸ These textiles were comprised of silk woven with metal threads and imported from Italy.⁶⁰⁹ They were very expensive because of the inherent material cost as well as the necessary payment to a highly

⁶⁰⁶ British Library, Lansdowne 118, f. 78v; Croft, 'Mildred, Lady Burghley', p. 284; Loades, *The Cecils*, p. 55.

⁶⁰⁷ This was something discussed in greater detail in Chapters Three and Four of the thesis.

⁶⁰⁸ Hayward, *Rich Apparel*, p. 89.

⁶⁰⁹ Browne, 'Silks, Velvets, Cloths of Gold and Other Such Precious Raiments', p. 130.

skilled weaver with specific technical expertise in order to make them.⁶¹⁰ The list also included a purple velvet gown—a highly regulated colour, especially on textiles like velvet that included silk.⁶¹¹ On this fabric, purple was viewed ‘as a royal prerogative’ because of ‘the cost of purple dyes as well as the imperial and religious connotations of the colour.’⁶¹² Thus, several of Anne’s garments in the auction directly linked her with royalty.

In addition to her regal status, her wardrobe was also constructed from the finest materials like the kirtle with pearls or the black gowns produced from rare black dye by an expert dyer. These articles of clothing relied on access to the best merchant networks and the highest calibre craftspeople both foreign and domestic who almost exclusively supplied the court. As a member of the royal family, therefore, Anne had a privileged connection to these makers, even at the end of her life, which few at the English court had.

Anne’s will further attested to her ability to access luxurious and expensive dress through the detailed list of her possessions on death. This legal document included, for example, several bequests of fine jewellery, such as ‘a ring therein a great rock ruby, the ring being back enamelled’ to her sister-in-law, the Duchess of Cleve, and ‘a ring of gold, having therein a three-cornered diamond’ to Lord Paget, the lord privy-seal in Queen Mary I’s government.⁶¹³

In addition to the dress sold at auction, these bequests, therefore, suggested that Anne demonstrated both her high status and access to the best merchants and makers by what she wore, even as she aged. Her wardrobe was furthermore a testament to the central value that materials had in the construction of clothing during the early modern period. However, certain elements of her garments like the black dye also offered glimpses into the growing connection between a garment’s worth and the value of its production rather than just the inherent cost of

⁶¹⁰ Hayward, *Rich Apparel*, pp. 89, 172.

⁶¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 344.

⁶¹² Hayward, ‘The Compass of a Lie’, p. 28.

⁶¹³ Quoted in Agnes Strickland and Elizabeth Strickland, *The Lives of the Queens of England: From the Norman Conquest*, Vol. III (Cambridge, 1854), pp. 93-95.

the materials. This auction, then, presented a world on the cusp of change where regimes of value and their link with cloth and clothing would be shifted and changed in early modern England. It was a world where traditional high-status fabrics and techniques would soon be superseded by new textiles and technologies of colour and ornamentation like lace and ribbon. This thesis has charted and detailed this transformation.

Although this auction reveals observations about Anne and her wardrobe, this event also provides important insight into the status and position of the Burghley household and their dress in the middle of the sixteenth century. It appears that William and Mildred saw this auction as an opportunity to access and acquire cloth and materials with clear royal and elite associations as well as those produced to be the finest quality. However, many of these elements were also novel additions to their wardrobes. The earlier household accounts from 1555 and 1557, discussed in Chapters Three and Four, do not record any garments, for instance, constructed from cloth of gold or cloth of silver. Additionally, they do not include any purple cloth or clothing. Thus, it appears that this auction, more specifically, was about William and Mildred obtaining materials that they otherwise did not have the ability to own or access, except by purchasing secondhand.

Although William Cecil and his household are often viewed and treated as the power behind the Elizabethan throne, this auction places them in a context before that time. Here, William and Mildred are shown as participants in elite court contexts. They had access to the auction of Anne's clothing and money to purchase many articles there. They also attended together in order to purchase items—an act of joint acquisition like the joint gift-giving described in Chapter Two. This mode of purchase like the mode of courtly giving may, therefore, demonstrate a way in which early modern English elite couples chose to buy materials and garments that would project the wealth and position of the household. It also offers some insights into how elite women were involved in the household acquisition of dress since their

names and contributions are often absent in the account books detailed by the master of the house.

However, despite William and Mildred's actions in a court-related space, their actions showed that they were not fully integrated into this context. They did not own the finest garments but, more importantly, they did not have access to the merchants and makers who offered the best materials. In the middle of the sixteenth century, William and his household were still on the rise rather than established members of the early modern English court. Their wardrobe demonstrated this perhaps surprising distinction for a man who would later become renowned for his power, his position, his merchant connections, and his artisanal network. This auction, therefore, presents a family as well as an early modern England on the cusp of change shown through cloth and clothing.

The conclusion of this study first reviews how different contexts influenced regimes of value while revealing the strength and spread of material literacy in early modern England. It then turns to a larger discussion about the wider historiographic significance of the thesis, especially to discussions about early modern England and the centrality of cloth and clothing at the beginning of an ambitious age. In doing so, these conclusions demonstrate the distinct nature of this thesis' methodology which combined written and visual source material with historical reconstruction. While the Burghley and Salisbury households and their world provided the key perspective focusing the work, this thesis was about much more than what these two households wore. Instead, its unique methodology built up a material microcosm mapping out the relational, social, material, visual, economic, and political world in which cloth and clothing were made to matter. This was achieved by a close reading of quite varied sources from household account books to pieces of leather. Additionally, extant objects were provided throughout the thesis in order to more materially illuminate the other records while engaging the visual and sensorial perceptions of the reader. Finally, this thesis culminated its embodied engagement with dress

by including several historical reconstructions which enabled a deeper and more nuanced concentration on the material, as well as highlighting the value of tacit knowledge in the processes of making.

Regimes of Value

This thesis has shown how cloth and clothing were valued in different contexts throughout early modern England. Chapter One presented a political and economic context for cloth and clothing by investigating William Cecil and his varied actions connected to sumptuary legislation, importing textiles, and developing domestic dyes. In this context, value was placed on the good of the commonwealth or the English nation. This fundamental value, however, created tensions in how cloth and clothing was viewed and engaged with by the English government as epitomised by William Cecil. While the good of the commonwealth sometimes directed William towards more conservative political or economic measures like the reissuing of sumptuary statutes, at other times, the benefit of the nation propelled him to support and promote novel innovation and experimentation like the New Draperies or the domestic woad industry. These two perspectives also dictated how artisans and makers were viewed and valued. While in many instances, official government policy lauded innovating men and women who brought new expertise and industry to England, sometimes even facilitating their work, these policies could also denounce foreignness, novelty, and luxury as well as be suspicious of the people who made these goods. Thus, this chapter presented William Cecil as an individual indicative of a larger government and economic context which was perched between conventional policies and a new world of projects.

This chapter also demonstrated how this ideology about the good of the commonwealth or nation evolved from the middle of the sixteenth century to the beginning of the seventeenth century. However, this change was not linear as shown through William Cecil and his actions. While William had supported sumptuary legislation till the 1570s, for example, he still received

petitions with more conservative rhetoric directed toward him until at least 1601. In contrast, even before the Elizabethan period, William had advocated and supported the development of novelty dye production in England like woad. Thus, this period should not be characterised as a time of straightforward change from the traditional sixteenth century to the progressive seventeenth century.

After establishing the values of cloth and clothing in the English government, Chapter Two shifted the context to the court, specifically the Elizabethan court, through its discussion of New Year's gift-giving and the role of men as well as women as significant gift-givers. This chapter used several microstudies to explore the individual giving practices of William Cecil, Robert Cecil, and a new class of influential merchants and artisans connecting themselves to the court, like the Genoese Benedict Spinola. While previous historiography asserted the importance of London as the centre of materially based knowledge cultures in early modern England, this chapter suggested the existence and importance of an interlocking culture of material literacy at court and amongst courtiers.⁶¹⁴ This, therefore, demonstrated the relevance and value of this kind of understanding about materials, colours, decorations, and processes of construction to the court as a driver of fashion alongside merchants.

However, the value of materials could still differ within the court context. Many male courtiers, for example, placed the value of their gift in the inherent worth of materials like cloth of gold, velvet, or diamonds. William and Mildred had also acted quite similarly at the auction of Anne of Cleve's dress in 1557. Thus, in this instance, they behaved as more traditional style courtiers. Merchant men, meanwhile, relied less on the inherent material value of a piece of cloth or type of gemstone at New Years. Instead, they chose gifts like lawn or cambric fabric which gained

⁶¹⁴ While this thesis focused on the Tudor and early Stuart courts, the recent work of Maria Hayward has explored how the Stuart court, more generally, could be interconnected between courtiers and the monarch. She investigated to what extent 'Stuart kings used clothing to create a group identity at court' arguing that '[a] shared clothing style...had the potential to unite the male elite of the Stuarts', although the success of this shared identity depended greatly on time and place often becoming more of an illusion than a reality. Please see Maria Hayward, *Stuart Style: Monarchy, Dress and the Scottish Male Elite* (New Haven, 2020), pp. 18, 21.

value because of the associations with novelty and accessibility only made possible through urban merchant networks. Over time, the dress of the Burghley and Salisbury households also included these newer and more innovative textiles perhaps as a result of their increased connection to the merchant community and integration into domestic and foreign trade networks as they rose in status and prominence. Thus, in both the New Years gift rolls and the clothing of the Burghley and Salisbury's households, a profile of change can be seen. These examples, therefore, highlight the different priorities found in regimes of value, even within the same context, and the evolution of these values over time.

Additionally, Chapter Two showed how the perceived value of dress could shift based on the subtleties of the court context. This occurred as the Queen progressed throughout the country and visited universities and the homes of lesser nobles. In these spaces, dress gifts were more often valued based on their personalisation and appropriateness rather than the extreme expense or innovation of the materials. Thus, in these contexts, the Queen and her courtiers viewed a fashionable accessory like a pair of cuffs or a pair of nice leather gloves as a better and more acceptable gift. Yet, this knowledge about gift-giving and the value of a gift was not necessarily straightforward but rather quite multifaceted. As William Cecil asserted in 1584:

Be sure ever to keep some great man thy friend, but trouble him not for trifles, compliment him often, present [him] with many yet small gifts and of little charge, and if thou have cause to bestow any great gratuity let I then be some such thing as may be daily in sight, for otherwise in **this ambitious age** thou mayest remain like a hop without a pole, living in obscurity, and be made a football for every insulting companion to spurn at.⁶¹⁵

Thus, as Chapter Two demonstrated, correct giving relied on an enmeshed interpersonal network of men and women like William and Robert Cecil who often acted as gift negotiators or gift facilitators. These individuals had highly valued insights about both materials as well as

⁶¹⁵ William Cecil, Lord Burghley, *Certain Precepts for The Well Ordering of A Man's Life' in Advice to a Son: Precepts of Lord Burghley, Sir Walter Raleigh, and Francis Osborn* (ca. 1584), edited by Louis B. Write (Ithaca, 1962), p. 12.

the Queen's preferences and desires. They also understood the subtleties and nuances within the regimes of value at court where context, status, position, wealth, and networks could direct and dictate how one gave cloth and clothing.

Chapter Three, meanwhile, shifted the investigation from the context of the court to the household both urban and rural. Through a detailed analysis of the Burghley and Salisbury household account books, this chapter presented a material microcosm of the families' engagement with dress, specifically the relational and social world of cloth and clothing in which they found themselves. This discussion was particularly important because of the centrality of the household as a social unit in early modern England as well as William Cecil's personal belief in the significance of the household as a symbol of correct personal management and restraint. Around 1564, for example, he wrote the Earl of Bedford advising him that '...your household be an example of order. Allow no excess of apparel...Be hospitable but avoid excess.'⁶¹⁶ Chapter Three, therefore, presented how William Cecil dressed himself as well as his family and the other elite members of the household. It showed when he paid attention to fabrics, colours, ornamentations, and decorative materials demonstrating his desire for restraint or disregard of it.

In this way, Chapter Three extended the discussion about regimes and spaces of value in early modern England and their close connection with material literacy. While Chapter Two suggested the existence of a wider culture of material literacy at the Elizabethan court, this chapter provided further evidence of the spread and depth of these values throughout society and into the household as evidenced in the detailed attention paid to dress in the Burghley and Salisbury records. These accounts, for example, showed when and how William made divergent choices for his clothing versus the garments worn by his eldest son, Thomas, or his ward, Arthur, because of differences in age, social status, context, and visibility. They also highlighted

⁶¹⁶ *Calendar of State Papers Domestic Series, Elizabeth*, Vol. VI (London, 1856-72), p. 555.

his awareness of the subtleties of colours and fabrics which he chose for specific uses, like the outer part of an article of clothing, or as a lining.

Chapter Three and Chapter Four provided interesting counterpoints to each other in the thesis. While Chapter Three introduced the household context, Chapter Four extended and complicated the assumptions that this context presented about regimes of value connected to cloth and clothing in both the home and the workshop in early modern England. It also shifted the focus from the consumer and the good to the maker and the processes of production.

Chapter Four presented two very different narratives about the role and the value of the maker in English society. On the surface, the record of specific names seemed to underscore the significance of the individual artisan or craftsman. Inigo Jones also demonstrated the heights of fame and compensation that lauded makers could reach. However, the majority of records in the Burghley and Salisbury households showed just how little the men and women who sewed, constructed, tailored, designed, cleaned, and cared for the dress of the household were paid. This lack of compensation, especially in contrast to the continued expense on materials, seemingly indicated the stagnation in the reality of the early modern English maker rather than his or her rise. Although this chapter did reveal some cases where special skills were monetarily valued more highly, such as designs like pinking, the cutting of particularly expensive materials or fine embroidery, the evidence overall did not suggest a growing appreciation either for the value of the maker or the value of their expertise.⁶¹⁷ Thus, early modern English society did not experience a distinct shift in how it valued cloth and clothing from materials to craftsmanship.

⁶¹⁷ In the case of embroidery, fine needlework was often done by elite women at home as unpaid labour. It was the materials which often comprised the cost since silk embroidery threads or those of fine metals were quite expensive. Please see Schneider, 'Fantastical Colors in Foggy London', p. 116; Peachey, ed., *Clothes of the Common People in Elizabethan and Early Stuart England: Haberdashery*, pp. 6-7; Additionally, as Beverly Lemire asserted, most embroidery was 'crafted by a mass of largely *unlettered* women and men' who 'were deeply literate in signs and symbols' but whose work, she implies, was not compensated greatly for the skill and expertise they provided. See Lemire, *Global Trade and the Transformation of Consumer Cultures*, p. 250.

Instead, in most instances, the value of dress was still inherent to its materials and dictated how consumers paid makers.

Thus, the Burghley and Salisbury records presented a very interesting tension within early modern English society. While Chapter One highlighted the increasing value of the maker and their technical abilities in government or economic contexts, Chapter Four revealed that this celebration or glorification did not influence changes in the compensation of these individuals in an urban or rural household context. This indicated, therefore, how regimes of value could stagnate in different contexts and be more limited than certain kinds of source materials might first suggest.

Chapter Four also presented a material microcosm for the cloth and clothing worn by the servants and retainers of the Burghley and Salisbury households. This novel side by side analysis of elite and non-elite dress allowed for a useful mapping of the social dynamics as well as economic decisions of cloth and clothing in the urban and rural household context. Although most historiography focuses on livery or hand-me-down garments, this chapter revealed that most servant clothing and liveries had quite similar form, style, and material to those purchased for the elite members, though it was constructed from less high-quality textiles and with limited ornamentation. This context, therefore, revealed how status and power dynamics also influenced the specific choices made by masters, servants, and makers as they purchased, designed, and made dress for the non-elite members of a household. These factors also had ramifications for how these individuals translated their understanding about material literacy within a specific regime of value.

This thesis concluded with Chapter Five and its use of historical reconstruction, including a pattern drafting exercise and the reconstruction of a mini-scale fine linen shirt. This chapter extended the discussion about the value of cloth and clothing in the household context as well as engaging more fully with the context of the workshop where makers constructed dress and

made choices about style, design, and construction. This investigation uniquely combined written and visual materials alongside extant objects and hands-on experimentation in order to better understand material literacy and the lived experience of dress. Through this methodology, the chapter revealed the kinds of tacit knowledge necessary to an early modern maker as well as the level of material understanding valuable to both an urban and rural maker or consumer in early modern England. It made more tangible, for example, the interconnection between construction steps and the influence of a material's quality on design, look, feel, and sound of the garment.

This chapter, therefore, extended the overall arguments put forth in Chapters One, Two, Three, and Four about the widespread culture of material literacy and its value for individuals in a variety of early modern English contexts from the government to the court to the home and finally to the workshop. However, it also offered a different perspective on the expert maker discussed throughout the thesis. While Chapter One showed William Cecil's reliance on a wider information network of skilled makers which informed and influenced his political and economic policy-making, Chapter Four discussed how early modern consumers undervalued the maker and their knowledge. In contrast, Chapter Five returned the thesis to an appreciation of the embodied knowledge and tacit expertise of the maker showing how it could be simultaneously valued and ignored in both early modern society and historiography.

This Ambitious Age

This conclusion opened with a discussion of the auction of Anne of Cleve's dress after her death and the participation of William and Mildred Cecil in it. This example demonstrated how the Burghley household was not fully a part of the early modern English court but on the edge of it. More generally, this example also suggested that the value of cloth and clothing was at a moment of change and reassessment. The significance of dress was shifting from more traditional materials valued just for their inherent worth to innovative materials now valued for

their variety, construction, and novelty. In essence, then, this thesis has investigated and charted how both the Burghley household and early modern English society moved from the outskirts and into their ambitious age through cloth and clothing.

William Cecil specifically referred to his world as ‘this ambitious age’ in the aforementioned 1584 quote where he discussed how one should gain and maintain relationships with high-ranking people:

Be sure ever to keep some great man thy friend, but trouble him not for trifles, compliment him often, present [him] with many yet small gifts and of little charge, and if thou have cause to bestow any great gratuity let I then be some such thing as may be daily in sight, for otherwise in **this ambitious age** thou mayest remain like a hop without a pole, living in obscurity, and be made a football for every insulting companion to spurn at.⁶¹⁸

In this age, William highlighted the importance of being remembered through a presence that was gained in relationships with high-ranking people, not least through dress and dress gifts. He asserted that the best gifts were those that constantly reminded the receiver of the giver. Thus, visibility mattered greatly so that an individual did not remain in obscurity without purpose becoming a laughingstock to their peers.

This was particularly pivotal in this new age of ambition that allowed new elites, such as merchants and bureaucrats, to have their ambition successfully realised as they entered and participated in government and court contexts. This increasingly occurred as economic policies were established as essential fields of governance, as part of what the political philosopher, Giovanni Botero, called ‘the reason of state’ in the late sixteenth century.⁶¹⁹ This shift made merchants, bureaucrats, and artisans vital experts as policies were developed and maintained. It also meant that their knowledge increasingly became valued. This thesis has chartered the

⁶¹⁸ William Cecil, Lord Burghley, *Certain Precepts for The Well Ordering of A Man's Life' in Advice to a Son: Precepts of Lord Burghley, Sir Walter Raleigh, and Francis Osborn* (ca. 1584), edited by Louis B. Write (Ithaca, 1962), p. 12.

⁶¹⁹ Giovanni Botero, *The Reason of State*, edited by Robert Bireley (Cambridge, 2017).

foundations of this shift and the centrality of cloth and clothing in its development which enabled early modern England to enter the ambitious age as it became a maritime power with an extensive trading network and overseas territories.

It has also chronicled the Burghley and Salisbury households who took advantage of this ambitious age as they rose and advanced, moving from a family of bureaucrats to established members of the aristocracy and fixtures of the English court. It has detailed how, over time, they leveraged their economic information network and used their merchant connections to participate in this new form of economic state-making. Additionally, it has shown how they used the wearing and giving of dress to demonstrate and strengthen their political power and social position. This thesis has, therefore, underscored the value of cloth and clothing in the ambitious age for both individuals and the state.

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