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SUMPTUARY LEGISLATION AND OTHER REGULATIONS  
PERTAINING TO PERSONAL APPEARANCE  
IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

by

Joana W. Phillips

I am most grateful acknowledgment of the aid and encouragement given to me by Mrs. Helen K. Staley, my advisor, in selecting the thesis topic and her time and effort expended in assisting me through the writing period. I would also like to extend my thanks to Dr. Pauline Henry, Dr. Walter M. Greenfield, and Dr. Donald W. Russell for their helpful comments and suggestions.

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## Chapter I

### INTRODUCTION

#### Purpose of the Study

This is a study of "sumptuary regulation", its growth, change, and decline from 1300 to 1700. Specifically, the study will be limited to consideration of the sumptuary legislation and other regulations pertaining to personal appearance, in the English Colonies in North America, and Western Europe to include Italy, Germany, Switzerland, France, and England. In considering the growth, change, and decline of sumptuary regulation, the term growth has been interpreted to mean the frequency of occurrence and the northwestward spread of such laws through Europe to America; change was regarded as indicative of a change in character as well as a change from simple to complex; decline was related to the strictness of enforcement and the frequency of occurrence of sumptuary regulations.

Modern sumptuary laws are different in character than those considered in this study. Today they usually refer to the control of items that are considered harmful to health, such as tobacco or alcoholic beverages, and narcotics. Currently, they are also concerned with dress or costume as it appears on the stage or in motion pictures. In times of national emergencies, such as World War II, national governments have used sumptuary laws to control the civilian consumption of goods. However, the earlier meaning and use of the term sumptuary law has become obsolete today.

It is hoped that this study of the growth, change, and decline of sumptuary legislation will be a valuable reference for students and

teachers of clothing. A collection of sumptuary laws and other pertinent materials are presented in the appendix as a resource in the development of a fuller understanding of the significance of clothing and its implications in society.

### Definition of Terms

Regulations which attempt to control the personal and individual expenditure of funds are sumptuary in character and have been termed sumptuary laws. Webster defines the term sumptuary as, "relating to or regulating expenditure", and the term sumptuary law as:

...a law to prevent extravagance in private life by limiting the expenditure for clothing, food, furniture, etc., a law designed to regulate habits primarily on moral or religious grounds, but regarded as justified under the police powers of the state.<sup>1</sup>

M. Augustin Challamel in The History of Fashion in France explains sumptuary laws as, "remedial measures against excesses of caprice and luxury".<sup>2</sup>

The terms sumptuary law and sumptuary legislation will be used herein to include any regulations concerned with personal appearance which carries a penalty to be enforced by state or church bodies. It will be interpreted to include the following types of authorized imposition: law, legislation, act, decree, edict, codex, ordinance,

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<sup>1</sup>Webster's New International Dictionary (2nd ed.), (Springfield, Mass: G & C Merriam Co., 1959).

<sup>2</sup>M. Augustin Challamel, The History of Fashion in France (New York: Scribner and Welford, 1899), p. 92.

statute, regulation, proclamation, pronouncement, announcement, injunction, assize, and precept.

The term clothing will encompass all forms of bodily ornamentation, and portable articles which are worn or carried by a person. This will include decorations such as body painting or mutilations, ornaments, and garments.

#### Statement of Hypotheses

Seven hypotheses were formulated preliminary to investigation of certain correlates that were believed to exist between sumptuary legislation and the course of history. In order to develop a general understanding of these correlates, it seemed advisable to limit the study to a presentation of the socio-economic developments that appeared to be related to the spread of sumptuary legislation.

The study will attempt to test the following major and four supporting hypotheses as well as two minor hypotheses:

- A. Sumptuary regulations were short lived in the English Colonies in North America, because their decline had begun in Continental Europe and England before America was colonized.
  - A<sub>1</sub>. Sumptuary laws spread from Italy northwestward through Europe, to England, and to the English Colonies in America.
  - A<sub>2</sub>. The spread of sumptuary legislation paralleled the rise of middle class economic control in Continental Europe and England.
  - A<sub>3</sub>. Early sumptuary laws were used primarily for the purpose of maintaining class distinctions, but as socio-economic conditions changed, sumptuary laws became primarily a means of economic control.
  - A<sub>4</sub>. The sumptuary laws of England developed differently than those of the Continent due to certain historic factors that were peculiar to England.



- B. Wars had no significant influence on sumptuary laws during the fourteenth through the seventeenth centuries.
- C. The concept of fashion, or changes in styles of clothing, had no direct or important influence on sumptuary legislation.

#### Plan of Procedure

Research was undertaken in the Library of Congress in Washington, District of Columbia, in the archives of the Virginia and North Carolina legislatures, in the libraries of the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill, The Woman's College in Greensboro, Duke University in Durham, and the libraries in the cities of Raleigh and Greensboro. A detailed search of the available literature was made to investigate the purposes and significance of these laws as being more than just curious laws about costumes, and more than mere curbs against extravagances.

Historical studies and more specialized works on the psychological and historical development of clothing were consulted. In these works the sumptuary regulations usually appeared as digests of the laws with references to certain clothing items or styles which were prohibited, but the laws were rarely listed or stated in full. Sumptuary laws, as they were promulgated, often gave permissions as well as prohibitions, which were important considerations in understanding the development of personal regulations and sumptuary laws through the four centuries considered in this study.

Charts were constructed of 472 laws and other regulations found in the literature available for study. Tables of frequency of occurrence, which appear throughout the text, were also developed as tools for classifying

information and for testing the hypotheses. The charts of some periods and of certain countries were more detailed than others, depending on the availability of information. The "Sample of Sumptuary Regulations", Table IV, includes digests of the collected laws, arranged chronologically by country. This Sample, examples of more complete laws, and prologues to original laws appear in the appendix, and are included for those interested in a more detailed study of sumptuary legislation. The laws, often lengthy and repetitive of purpose and in content, have been charted in briefer form with the original phraseology retained where it was possible.

Table IV was constructed with vertical columns designating such information as the dates and places the laws were issued, to whom the law was specifically directed, and the article, fabric, or style which was restricted or prohibited. Originally a column was used in order to list the instances in which directions were given for wearing certain items and for permissions which were allowed under the law. Later, this category was enlarged to include the exceptions, the people who were exempt from the restrictions and prohibitions.

Further variations in the laws were covered by the use of a miscellaneous column under which were listed explanatory phrases from the laws which added to the scope of information contained in the charts. The penalties which were invoked by disobeying the laws were listed whenever they appeared. This column is, however, incomplete because there was little information available regarding court cases and penalties imposed.

The amount of information available for study was influenced by two factors. One factor was the absence of fully stated laws in the

literature which refers to them. Fully stated laws were preceded by prologues which contained explanations of the purposes of the law, and often contributed knowledge of past failures of laws. The absence of prologues or the complete laws have, therefore, left certain gaps in the completeness of their listings. Another factor was the variety of methods used in recording the laws in various countries and at various times in history. Due to these differences in recording there are gaps in the completeness of the laws at their source.

The findings of the study will be stated in the form of generalizations which will be supported by an analysis of the data presented, as well as by the conclusions reached by testing the hypotheses. These findings will also be suggestive of further possibilities for research in relation to sumptuary legislation. The present study does not aim to be comprehensive in its treatment of the subject of sumptuary legislation, but it is hoped that this work will encourage further research in similar areas of the clothing field.

Background of the Study

The first evidences of recorded sumptuary laws appeared during the reign of the Greek lawmaker, Solon, about the beginning of the sixth century B.C.<sup>3</sup> The ancient law of the Greeks mentions gold and embroidered garments as being forbidden, as were all expensive forms of attire. The goal of such laws seems to have been to inculcate the habits of a simple life in women, since clothing regulations were directed toward the wearing apparel of females.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>"Sumptuary Laws," Everyman's Encyclopedia (3rd ed.), XII, 112.

<sup>4</sup>"Sumptuary Laws," The New International Encyclopedia (2nd ed.), XXI, 666.

The first sumptuary law in regard to dress in Rome was passed in 215 B.C. during the rule of Lex Oppia, and was directed against the extravagances of dress and jewelry.<sup>5</sup> The repeal of this law in twenty years typifies the fate of many of the personal regulations which followed through the centuries and which attempted to control, direct, or dictate the kind of garments and decorations which the populace could wear. Throughout history such laws were generally ignored, flagrantly opposed, only slightly enforced, and gradually became obsolete.<sup>6</sup>

The Romans were determined in their efforts to protect the people from the deleterious effects of luxurious living; to this end they appointed officials known as censors, who were entrusted with superintending public and private morality.<sup>7</sup> It was their responsibility to punish all people guilty of excessive consumption. Control of extravagances was a constant concern of the Roman politicians. Sulla, Caesar, and Augustus passed laws that restricted the amount of money which could be spent on private luxuries.<sup>8</sup> The word sumptuary, in fact, comes from the Latin word sumptuarius meaning expenditure.<sup>9</sup>

There are few evidences available of any sumptuary laws or diatribes against extravagant dressing during the Dark Ages. Laver

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<sup>5</sup>"Sumptuary Laws," The Encyclopedia Americana (1955 ed.), XXVI, 18.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>The New International Encyclopedia, loc. cit.

<sup>8</sup>Everyman's Encyclopedia, loc. cit.

<sup>9</sup>"Sumptuary Law," The World Book Encyclopedia (1955 ed.), XV, 7798.

says this is due, in all probability, to the fact that the records have not survived and, perhaps, because clothing was somewhat ragged and uncouth during that period.<sup>10</sup> It was Charlemagne who revived the use of sumptuary laws with decrees against dress and furniture during his reign.<sup>11</sup>

Moralists of the early Middle Ages took up the crusade once again against elegance and fashion. As civilization developed with the Renaissance movement, Italy appeared to become the first European country to make frequent use of sumptuary laws in an effort to control excessive display and extravagance. Soon all of Europe was caught in the Renaissance movement and made use of this method of controlling expenditure.

The simplicity of the Medieval governmental structure favored sumptuary legislation. It was a paternalistic ruling body that sought to regulate the lives of its subjects, not only legally and politically, but morally and spiritually as well.<sup>12</sup> Sumptuary legislation was a pronounced expression of this concept of government.

It is generally agreed that the Church exhibited powerful control in the matter of extravagance.<sup>13</sup> In part this is true, because the Church was intricately bound up in the affairs of the state as well

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<sup>10</sup>James Laver, Clothes (New York: Horizon Press, 1935), p. 30.

<sup>11</sup>The Encyclopedia Americana, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

<sup>12</sup>John Martin Vincent, Costume and Conduct in the Laws of Basel, Bern, and Zurich, 1300-1800 (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1935), p. 1.

<sup>13</sup>Kent Roberts Greenfield, Sumptuary Law in Nurnberg (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1918), p. 110.



as in the daily lives of the people.<sup>14</sup> The Church was, however, very sumptuous and extravagant itself. The moralists of the ages, who may or may not have been religious zealots, and who in truth were more often religieuse than not, grumbled against extravagances; but the majority of the dignitaries of the Church were not listening as they adorned themselves in rich silks, brocades, and laces.<sup>15</sup>

The Reformation brought a change in this ecclesiastical sumptuousness, as well as contributing to a sharpening of conscience among the people, but it was not a strong force in originating sumptuary laws.<sup>16</sup> Long before the influences of Protestantism were felt, sumptuary laws had existed as a normal part of the legislation.<sup>17</sup> The sumptuary laws were not products of the Protestant Reformation, nor were they directly Church originated. They were devised by secular ruling bodies and were secular, not ecclesiastical, in origin.<sup>18</sup>

These secular ruling bodies were, however, aristocratic in class.<sup>19</sup> Their privileged position was indicated by the exceptions which they wrote into the laws. Also, they were persistent in

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<sup>14</sup>Vincent, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

<sup>15</sup>Jacques Wilhelm, *Histoire de la Mode* (Paris: Hachette, 1955), p. 4.

<sup>16</sup>Greenfield, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

<sup>17</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 12.

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 25, 27, 31.

<sup>19</sup>Vincent, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

ignoring the restricting laws themselves and contributed to their own inability to enforce them.<sup>20</sup>

As this approach to the limitation of extravagance spread with the westward flow of civilization, sumptuary laws appeared in Italy, Switzerland, Germany, France, the British Isles, and the English Colonies of America. The early sumptuary laws in these countries were simple in statement and general in scope, but grew more lengthy and detailed as trade extended and wealth increased.<sup>21</sup>

Historians have evidenced interest in this aspect of life in the Middle Ages and Renaissance period, primarily for its incidental sidelights on manners. A study of sumptuary laws of any age, however, offers insights into the economic, social, and spiritual concepts of a government, as well as the customs, dress, and furnishings of its people.<sup>22</sup>

Sumptuary laws originally encompassed the entire scheme of living and were enacted in an attempt to regulate excesses and extravagances of personal life in general.<sup>23</sup> They even included the extent to which an individual might be permitted to mourn for the dead. Restrictions regarding funeral observances were a strongly recurring theme of sumptuary laws.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>20</sup>Greenfield, loc. cit.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 133.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>23</sup>Encyclopedia Americana, op. cit., p. 18.

<sup>24</sup>Vincent, op. cit., p. 26.

Sumptuary laws were seldom as effective as the governing bodies might have desired.<sup>25</sup> They were enacted for many centuries for diverse reasons, and the shifting purposes and aims that augmented sumptuary legislation resulted in the appearance of similar laws in different countries at different times. Whatever the motives behind them, they were largely ignored by the people and often by the lawmakers themselves. The inability of the governing bodies to enforce such regulations placed the lawmakers in a dilemma. To admit that the laws were not effective was to imply that the government was weak. On the other hand, to stiffen the laws would have precipitated an intricate enforcement that would have been impossibly cumbersome.

The great mass of sumptuary laws in Europe occurred in the period which began early in the fourteenth century and ended with the latter part of the seventeenth century. Vincent explains the difficulty of confining the laws to a specific period of history when he states:

It would be difficult to divide sumptuary laws into fixed limits of time, for some it remains throughout the whole period, and fashions pay no attention to advances of the calendar.<sup>26</sup>

#### Classification of the Apparent Purposes of Sumptuary Laws

A consideration of the apparent purposes underlying sumptuary

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<sup>25</sup>Greenfield, op. cit., p. 134.

Vincent, op. cit., p. 4.

Wilhelm, op. cit., p. 4.

Encyclopedia Americana, loc. cit.

Quentin Bell, On Human Finery (New York: A. A. Wynn, Inc., 1949), p. 19.

Herman P. Goebel, "Sumptuary Laws; the Personal Rights and Liberties of Man," (Speech to the House of Representatives, Washington, D.C., April 28, 1908).

<sup>26</sup>Vincent, op. cit., p. 51.

legislation makes it possible to understand why governing bodies persisted in enacting sumptuary laws. A review of the collected laws disclosed the following apparent purposes:

Purpose Number One, maintenance of class distinctions

Sumptuary laws enforced class distinctions by attempting to classify society through the medium of clothing. This classed social structure was considered natural and was accepted by society until the time of the French Revolution.

Purpose Number Two, preservation of morals

Sumptuary laws supported moral motives by curbing luxuries, when they were considered an evil. The government took for granted the right to check extravagances, since the desire for luxuries promoted immorality and crime in individuals. This presumably led to corruption of the state, thereby endangering its national existence.

Purpose Number Three, protection of home industries

Sumptuary laws often favored certain political and commercial interests. The wealth of a country hinged on keeping money within the country, therefore, foreign styles and foreign-made clothing was prohibited.

Purpose Number Four, retaining revenue for the state

Sumptuary laws increased the amount of possible income to the state by restricting individual expenditure.

Purpose Number Five, reduction of government expenses

Sumptuary laws, by limiting extravagances, helped prevent poverty and thereby reduced the cost of the state of supporting the poor.

Purpose Number Six, emergency measures or war acts

Sumptuary laws sometimes appeared in times of emergencies as remedial measures against shortages or for individual protection.

Purpose Number Seven, consumer protection

Sumptuary laws were sometimes directed toward manufacturers or retailers of goods to meet certain standards or retain certain prices.

Purpose Number Eight, protection of health

Sumptuary laws curbed the use of commodities that were considered dangerous to health or morals. From ancient to modern times governments have felt a moral responsibility to control products which are considered dangerous to man.

## Chapter II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

References to legislation of a sumptuary nature are widespread throughout history texts and books of costume. There are, nevertheless, very few books that deal with the subject at any length. A serious search in the literature available for this study revealed that little specific information exists locally for the student of sumptuary regulations.

The subject of sumptuary legislation is intricately connected with the subject of clothing. In an effort to portray the various facets of clothing, authors in the fields of economics, philosophy, sociology, and psychology have discussed and developed theories of dress and have included the subject of sumptuary legislation in their studies. Their views, as well as those of historians, have offered insight into the use and purposes of sumptuary laws. For this reason, the works of selected authors from these various fields were considered in this review of literature.

Three authors, Greenfield, Vincent, and Baldwin have restricted their investigations to translation of recorded sumptuary laws from the original language into English, and the interpretation of such regulations in light of their special interests. These three studies of specific localities formed a basis on which to begin this study of sumptuary legislation. They were part of a series from the departments of Political Science, Political Economy, and History at Johns Hopkins University. These books dealt with sumptuary legislation in particular



and are valued by students of clothing for their detailed descriptions of costume.

Greenfield's<sup>1</sup> interest was directed toward an understanding of medieval governmental structure. It is a study of paternal government from the inception of Nurnberg in the eleventh century through the seventeenth century. He did not carry the study beyond the Reformation and stated the following conclusion:

...In tracing the laws in their historic growth it has shown the intimate details of conduct over which such a government would press its control under the sense of paternal responsibility; and has served to illuminate the medieval view of the relation of the state and the individual at the points of closest contact. In setting forth the restrictions which the city fathers of Nurnberg proposed, it paves the way for the study of the interesting problems of its enforceability; equips one to proceed with a survey of its course in Nurnberg after the Reformation; and furnishes a basis for comparative observations of its development in communities differently governed and differently circumstanced.<sup>2</sup>

Greenfield interpreted the motives of early sumptuary laws as the protection of morals, and those of later laws as that of maintaining class distinctions. He made repeated references to the growth and change of sumptuary laws and related these to the increase of wealth that began in medieval Europe and continued through the Renaissance period.

He asserted that the fourteenth century ordinance was promulgated by a concern for morals and points out that:

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<sup>1</sup>Kent Roberts Greenfield, Sumptuary Law in Nurnberg (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1918).

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 135.

... Class distinction, to maintain which was to become a later principle object of the clothing laws in Nurnberg, did not figure at all in the fourteenth century ordinance...<sup>3</sup>

It was not until the fifteenth century that a regard for social distinctions appeared. This he explained by pointing out the absence of wealth among the lower classes at that time. In reference to this ordinance he stated:

...The law reflects the increase in variety and costliness in apparel that necessarily attended the accumulation of wealth. Regulation is shown to have kept pace, in some measure at least, with luxury.<sup>4</sup>

Greenfield presents examples of ordinances which demonstrate the growth from simple statements of absolute prohibitions to lengthy, complex, and detailed sumptuary laws. When judged on the basis of his examples, Greenfield's interpretations of the laws of Nurnberg appear to be justified. It is difficult, however, to relate the laws to their place in history or to each other, since no complete collection appeared in his study.

Vincent's<sup>5</sup> small volume is a condensation of materials found in the printed laws of Switzerland and in the manuscript deposits in the archives of Basel, Bern, and Zurich. This is, in effect, another study in paternal government. It, too, is rich in detailed information regarding the costumes of the times.

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 116.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 124.

<sup>5</sup>John Martin Vincent, Costume and Conduct in the Laws of Basel, Bern, and Zurich, 1370-1800. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1935).

This book supported his interpretation that a principle of government lay behind this form of law:

...That principle is the conception of the interest and duty which governments believed they had in all their subjects, not only in their political and legal behavior, but also in their moral and spiritual welfare...The paternal conception of government appears plainly enough in the Swiss legislation.<sup>6</sup>

Vincent developed the same theme as Greenfield. There is, in fact, a striking similarity between the two books. His major reason for choosing to portray the historical development of sumptuary legislation in certain cities of Switzerland is of special interest for this thesis:

Ordinances of certain cities of Switzerland are here brought to view, not because of their singularity, but because they are typical of other regions of central Europe where local government was not under the control of national legislation. In France and England sumptuary laws were either the product of royal decree or of national statute, but...the absence of central government in Switzerland left to the great cities like Zurich, Basel, and others the duty of making and administering their own laws, both in political matters and minor police matters.<sup>7</sup>

Vincent carried his study through the eighteenth century and clearly indicated the changes that marked the beginning of a decline in sumptuary legislation:

Small relaxations in the details of the ordinances are seen from time to time, as the authorities reluctantly permit modifications of garments previously forbidden, and the fines for disobedience change with the temper of the councils...The sumptuary laws as a whole were less voluminous than many enacted in the seventeenth century, and sometimes the later rules counselled moderation instead of ordering proscription, but the intention to curb expense was never wanting.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 1.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 92-93.

Baldwin<sup>9</sup> published the second in the series of Johns Hopkins studies. This monograph traced English sumptuary laws which attempted to regulate the personal conduct of Englishmen from the time of Edward III to James I.

Baldwin consistently pointed out that the laws of England were somewhat different than those of Central Europe, being national in scope rather than local; a point she makes clear with the following statement:

...In contrast to the mass of sumptuary laws found in central Europe, the English ordinances were national rather than local in character, and dealt with fewer subjects than did those of other countries. In fact, the English laws were almost entirely concerned with regulation of food and clothing, especially the latter.<sup>10</sup>

Because the English were more prolific in their legislation regarding clothing, a greater number of their laws were available and therefore occupy a great deal of space in this thesis. Also, it appeared that England was the sum and substance of the new colonies in North America, an observation which made desirable a deeper probe into the English laws.

Baldwin noted that the laws changed in accordance with periods of English history rather than with the changing personality types who ruled England. For this reason she indicated the changing characteristics of civilization which were illustrated by the sumptuary laws.

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<sup>9</sup>Frances E. Baldwin, Sumptuary Legislation and Personal Regulation in England (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1926).

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 10.

In this study of sumptuary legislation, Baldwin's theory will be tested through a consideration of certain factors which influenced English laws. Baldwin provided, in large measure, the background for a comparison of the changing character of sumptuary laws.

Laver<sup>11</sup> established the two main principles which perpetuate fashionable dress as the Attraction Principle and the Hierarchical Principle. Through the centuries both governments and churches have harangued the people for dress beyond what is needed for covering and protection. Laver, by presenting quotations from works which have appeared through the course of history, found that protection of morals and the preservation of class lines were the main justifications of sumptuary laws:

We dress either to attract the other sex or to demonstrate our position in society, and both these purposes are inevitably viewed with suspicion and distaste by our rulers, both ecclesiastical and civil.<sup>12</sup>

...In general it may be said that the Attraction Principle is the one chiefly frowned upon by priests, and Hierarchical Principle the one disliked by princes. The reason for the first disapproval is obvious; the reason for the second needs, perhaps, a little more consideration.<sup>13</sup>

...It is an unfortunate fact that fine clothes are expensive, and nobles, at least in the third or fourth generations are sometimes poor. And merchants and other base persons are often in a prosperous and expanding community, sometimes very rich. The nobleman is entitled to wear the furs and jewel but sometimes cannot afford to buy them. The merchant can afford them but is not entitled to wear them. What was feared was an overturning of the social structure if people were allowed to wear the finest clothes they could afford.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>James Laver, Clothes (New York: Horizon Press, 1935).

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 33.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 39.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 40.

...Sooner or later the rich, rising man ventures to assume the fine clothes... and consternation, not to say panic, ensues among the upper classes. Hastily a sumptuary law is drafted, and hastily passed; but, unfortunately, it is never effective.<sup>15</sup>

Stubbes,<sup>16</sup> while he did not write directly of sumptuary legislation, reflected this fear of the overturning of the social structure. He wrote prolifically against the abuses and extravagances of dress in his time and became, ironically, one of the main sources of information on the fashions of the Elizabethan era. He exemplified the acceptance of the stratified social order of the sixteenth century in his attacks on the excesses of his age. He admitted that what was considered unlawful for the middle class was considered perfectly acceptable for the aristocracy:

I doubt not but it is lawfull for the nobilitie, the gentrie, and magisterie, to wear riche attire, every one in their calling... But now there is suche a confuse mingle of apparell in Ailgna,<sup>17</sup> and suche preposterous excesse thereof, as every one is permitted to flaunt it out in what apparell he lusteth himself, or can get by any kinde of meanes. So that it is very hard to know who is a gentleman, who is not; for you shal haue those which are neither of the nobilitie, gentilitie, nor yeomanerie, no, nor yet any magistrate or officer in the common wealthe, go daiely in silkes, veluettes, satens, damaskes, taffaties, and suche like; not withstanding that they be bothe base by birthe, meane by estate, seruile by calling. And this compte a greate confusion, and a generall disorder in a Christian common wealth.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 42.

<sup>16</sup>Phillip Stubbes, The Anatomie of Abuses (n.p.: n.n., 1585).

<sup>17</sup>England

<sup>18</sup>Laver, op. cit., p. 41-42, citing The Anatomie of Abuses (n.p.: n.n., 1585).



Binder<sup>19</sup> supported the social theory behind the motives for clothing which claimed that fashion aims primarily at bolstering social status. She stated that one of the functions of fashion was to draw a line between the noble by birth and between the richer and the poorer. It is this aspect of fashion that links it with sumptuary legislation. This is effectively illustrated by a passage from her book in which is found, also, a sound explanation for the persistence of laws which were constantly ignored:

...Sumptuary laws have been a useful, if not always effective, means of enforcing class privilege. For men and women, in their absolute determination to struggle into a higher social class, while at the same time jealously preventing any intrusion into their own class from the class below, have risked fines, imprisonment, and even death itself. Consequently new sumptuary laws have been constantly necessary.<sup>20</sup>

Parsons<sup>21</sup> approached the problem of psychology and dress in his book which discussed the development of style in clothing. He maintained that the mainspring of fashion was its ability to lend social distinction to the wearer.

He stated that as Italy, first of the European countries to grow civilized, grew wealthier, there was an accompanying increase of luxurious and extravagant display. His statement implies that the intended purpose of sumptuary laws was to control the display by people with money, but without noble birth, from encroaching on the higher classes:

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<sup>19</sup>Pearl Binder, Muffs and Morals (New York: William Morrow and Co., 1954 ).

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 158.

<sup>21</sup>Frank A. Parsons, The Psychology of Dress (New York: Doubleday, Page, and Co., 1920).

...Extravagance became so universal and the railings of the Church against inordinate display so vociferous, that certain statutes, called Sumptuary Laws were passed to curb the ostentatious display of the newly rich. These laws, partly clerical and partly secular, united to make all comfort as well as luxury odious in the eyes of the world.<sup>22</sup>

Hurlock<sup>23</sup> analyzed fashion and its motives in explaining the nature of fashion and the significant problems which it creates. In defending fashion as a force for good in society, she outlined the course of sumptuary legislation. Hurlock claimed that this type of legislation was an attempt to make fashions stand still, and was perpetrated wherever there was an aristocratic form of government. She showed the threefold parallel to the development of the middle class by pointing out that as wealth increased, fashions flourished, and sumptuary laws multiplied:

...Where an aristocratic form of government prevailed, there seemed to be a strong tendency for fashions to remain over long periods of time. The upper classes saw to it that there were "sumptuary laws" passed to prevent social inferiors from copying their clothing or manner of living. In a feudal society where the line of demarcation between classes was strictly drawn, the nobility displayed its superiority by abstaining from any form of productive labor. But as trade and commerce increased, and as the towns became the centers of wealth, the feudal lords found competition in the wealthy middle class, and, as a consequence were forced to set a new standard of differentiations. This took the form of conspicuous consumption of money, rather than abstinence from work. Commercial aristocracies soon grew up in the different trading centers of Europe, and these set a new standard of luxury of living quite unknown in feudal days. The merchants who were princes of wealth, rather than by birth, were able, on account of

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<sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 31.

<sup>23</sup>Elizabeth B. Hurlock, The Psychology of Dress (New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1929).

their wealth, to outstrip the true nobility. Extravagance became so universal that the Church and the Crown thought it necessary to put some check on the ostentatious display of the newly rich.<sup>24</sup>

Hurlock stated that the primary function of sumptuary laws was to maintain class distinction. She suggested two other motives: a means of inducing people to save money, and, a means of encouraging domestic trade.

Quentin Bell<sup>25</sup> made several references to sumptuary legislation in his treatise and indicated two conclusions regarding such regulations: they were for the preservation of class lines primarily, and, they had no effect on the flow of fashion changes. He is quite definite as to why they existed:

...from very early times until the emergence of modern capitalism every civilized country has enacted sumptuary laws for the preservation of morality and thrift, and above all for the maintenance of proper differences of rank in dress.<sup>26</sup>

Nystrom<sup>27</sup> believed that the fashion movement had a powerful influence on modern business economics. He suggested that fashion was the result of restive forces in human nature, and as such was subjected to opposition by the conservative organizations of society, namely the Church and the government. Nystrom indicated a clear purpose of sumptuary legislation when he discussed the opposition of governments to fashion changes:

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<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 62.

<sup>25</sup>Quentin Bell, On Human Finery (New York: A.A. Wynn, Inc., 1949).

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 19.

<sup>27</sup>Paul H. Nystrom, Economics of Fashion (New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1928).

...Governments, as a rule, whenever the subject of fashion has come up, are generally opposed. The sumptuary laws of the Middle ages were direct disapprovals of fashion tendencies to imitate the luxurious expenditures of the higher classes.<sup>28</sup>

Davenport<sup>29</sup> dealt with the subject of sumptuary regulations briefly, but makes one clearly stated point about them in her chapter, "The Rising Bourgeoisie: XIV Century":

Sumptuary laws multiplied each year during the XIV-XV c., as kings tried fruitlessly to control the manner of living of the steadily rising lower classes...Sumptuary laws fell into disuse or were ignored, were repealed and reimposed.<sup>30</sup>

This statement lends support to the theory that the problem of maintaining class distinctions was a primary force in the enactment of sumptuary laws. According to Baldwin, this problem of class appears to occur earlier in France than in Switzerland and Central Europe.

The fact that the laws were ineffective was reflected in the action of the lawmakers who first repealed, then re-stated, then re-legislated the laws. Sometimes the laws were ignored and forgotten by both the governing bodies and the people.

It is from Challamel's<sup>31</sup> book that most of the sumptuary laws of France have been gathered for this study. They are, however, treated incidentally and are mentioned in relation to the extremes of fashion that appeared in France from time to time.

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<sup>28</sup>Ibid., p. 145.

<sup>29</sup>Millia Davenport, The Book of Costume (New York: Crown Publishers, 1948).

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., p. 190.

<sup>31</sup>M. Augustin Challamel, The History of Fashion in France (New York: Scribner and Welford, 1882).

Challamel does not present a clear explanation of sumptuary laws. This treatment implies that the lawmakers meant to impart wisdom to the people in matters of dress, while maintaining class distinctions. It leaves no doubt, however, as to the conclusion that the regulations failed to accomplish either objective.

Challamel and Bell share the similar opinion that sumptuary laws failed because people were not content to remain classified, the power of fashion being stronger than the power of law. Challamel said:

...It is certain that sumptuary laws, even if they could be revived at the present day, would be as ineffectual as in the Middle Ages or the Renaissance. Neither fines nor even imprisonment would put a stop to coquetry, in whatever rank of life.<sup>32</sup>

Quentin Bell stated:

The spectacle presented by the history of dress in Europe is therefore one of conflict between two inimical forces existing within the same persons (the legislators were frequently among the worst offenders). In that conflict the written sumptuary law and the unwritten laws of public opinion have usually been based upon all that we usually hold most precious in our civilization: our religious and moral standards, our sense of decency and dignity, our concern for public health, our desire to see the lower classes kept in their proper place, our common sense, and our humanity. Nevertheless both public opinion and formal regulations are invariably set at naught; while Fashion, whose laws are imposed without formal sanctions, is obeyed with wonderful docility, and this despite the fact that her demands are unreasonable, arbitrary, and not infrequently cruel.<sup>33</sup>

Lawrence Langner<sup>34</sup> discussed modern attempts at governing dress in his chapter, "Clothes and the Law". His one reference to sumptuary legislation leaves no doubt as to their purpose:

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<sup>32</sup>Ibid., p. 93.

<sup>33</sup>Bell, op. cit., p. 19.

<sup>34</sup>Lawrence Langner, The Importance of Wearing Clothes (New York: Hastings House, 1959).



In the past there have been numerous sumptuary laws regarding clothing which would make half of us criminals were they in force today. The purpose of most of these was to prevent the lower classes from trying to ape the clothes of their so-called betters.<sup>35</sup>

An unknown author<sup>36</sup> at an unknown, but early date, commented on the Articles and Laws of Virginia stating that the Blue Laws were identical in the nature of crimes and punishments of the Blue Laws of England of the same period, that is, during the reign of James I. Among the Blue Laws of New England were some which directed the manner of dress of the colonists. These were duplications of similar sumptuary laws that appeared in England at the same time. They were not peculiar to Puritan legislation in New England.

McClellan<sup>37</sup> discussed a number of sumptuary laws of the early colonies in her discussion of historic dress. She stated as purposes of sumptuary legislation: the preservation of morals, and the maintenance of class distinctions. The following quotation from her book will illustrate that the preferred social order of seventeenth century America was not a democratic organization:

...It was about this time [1652] that the General Court of Massachusetts passed sumptuary laws to repress the spending of too large a proportion of income on apparel. Weedon<sup>38</sup> says: "When the Court was not occupied with grave business of State, it devoted itself to correcting morals and regulating dress.

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<sup>35</sup>Ibid., p. 179.

<sup>36</sup>The Articles, Laws, and Orders, Divine Politique, and Martial For the Colony of Virginia (n.p.: n.n., n.d.), p. 347.

<sup>37</sup>Elisabeth McClellan, Historic Dress in America, 1607-1800 (London: William Clowes & Sons, Ltd., 1904).

<sup>38</sup>McClellan, Ibid., p. 90, citing Weedon, Every Man Out of His Humor (n.p.: n.n., n.d.).

The function of dress in the minds of the anxious Fathers was not only to cover and protect people, but to classify and arrange them. The same conserving prejudice which marked their treatment of labourers and apprentices controlled their notions of dress. Social prestige, rank, caste, and breeding were to be formulated in the garments of the wearer. It was not only that the precious capital of the community was wasted by expensive dressing, but the well ordered ranks of society were jostled and disturbed by the glitter of lace and show of silken hoods, the tramp of strong boots!"<sup>39</sup>

Earle<sup>40</sup> in writing on the apparel of the Puritan and Pilgrim Fathers discussed the attitude of the conscientious Puritan, Phillips Stubbes, who described the dress of English men and women of his day with great precision, agitating against excesses, but not against class differences in dress. This reveals the Puritan outlook on clothing. Earle stated:

...This regard of dress was, I take it, the regard of the Puritan reformer in general; it was only the excess in dress that was hated. This was certainly the estimate of the best of the Puritans, and it was certainly the belief of the New England Puritan. It would be thought, and was thought by some men, that in the New World of liberty of religious belief the liberty of dress would be given to all. Not at all!--the Puritan magistrates at once set to work to show, by means of sumptuary laws,...that nothing of the kind was expected or intended, or would be permitted willingly...no one could wear rich dress save gentlefolk, and folk of wealth or some distinction---as Stubbes said, "by being in some sort of office".<sup>41</sup>

The true Puritan dress, stripped of decoration, was not a typical New England dress. As Earle commented:

...It would be thought...that in a new world with all the hardships, restraints, lacks, and inconveniences, no one, even the vainest woman would think much upon dress, save that it should

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<sup>39</sup>Ibid., p. 90.

<sup>40</sup>Alice Morse Earle, Two Centuries of Costume in America. Vol. I, (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1903).

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., p. 16.

be warm, comfortable, ample, and durable. But, in truth, such was not the case. Even in the first years the settlers paid close attention to their attire, to its richness, its elegance, and its modishness, and watched narrowly also the attire of their neighbors, not only from a distinct liking of dress, but from a regard for the proprieties and relations of life. Dress was a badge of rank, of social standing and dignity; and class distinctions were just as zealously guarded in America, the land of liberty, as in England.<sup>42</sup>

Earle indicated that the protection of morals in the English Colonies was a strong motive of sumptuary laws. She also indicated the acceptance of a stratified social order in the colonies that supported sumptuary laws as a means of maintaining class distinctions.

Historians<sup>43</sup> of the colonies were in agreement that class distinctions existed in America. Among these, Alexander, Chumbley, Prince, Spruill, and Stith are best known. However, in the works cited there were no direct statements regarding sumptuary laws. Prologues to the laws promulgated preservation of morals as being the expedient

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<sup>42</sup>Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>43</sup>Phillips Bruce Alexander, Institutional History of Virginia in the Seventeenth Century (New York: Knickerbocker Press, 1910).

George Lewis Chumbley, Colonial Justice in Virginia (Richmond: The Dietz Press, 1938).

Walter F. Prince, "An Examination of Peter's Blue Laws," American History Association Report of 1898 (Wash: Government Printing Office, 1899).

Julia Cherry Spruill, "Virginia and Carolina Homes Before the Revolution," North Carolina Historical Review, Vol. XII, Jan.-Oct., (Raleigh: North Carolina Historical Commission, 1935).

\_\_\_\_\_, "Southern Housewives Before the Revolution," North Carolina Historical Review, Vol. XIII, Jan.-Oct., (Raleigh: North Carolina Historical Comm., 1936).

William Smith, The History of the First Discovery and Settlement of Virginia (Williamsburg: Wm. Parks, M,DCC,XLVII).

reason for such laws, and openly stated the preservation of an orderly arrangement of society as being a just cause for sumptuary laws. The following excerpts from two sumptuary laws of New England will show the double intent of the lawmakers--to preserve morals and to maintain class lines:

Whereas excess in apparel amongst us is unbecoming a wilderness condition and the profession of the gospel, whereby the rising generation is in danger to be corrupted, which practices are testified against in God's Holy word, it is therefore ordered by this Court and authority thereof, that what person soever shall wear gold or silver lace, or gold or silver buttons, silk ribbons, or other costly superfluous trimmings, or any bone lace above three shillings per yard, or silk scarfes, the Listmakers of the respective townes are hereby required to assess such persons offending...in the list of Estates at 150 pounds Estate,...

...It is further ordered that all such persons as shall for the future make, or weave, or buy any apparell exceeding the quality and condition of their persons and Estates, or that is apparently beyond the necessary end of apparell for covering or comeliness, either of these to be judged by the grand jury and county court where such presentments are made, shall forfeit for every such offence ten shillings.<sup>44</sup>

Notwithstanding the late order concerning the restraint of excess in apparel, yet divers persons of several ranks are observed still to exceed therein: It is therefore ordered that the constables of every town...observe and take notice of any particular person or persons within their several limits, and all such as they judge to exceed their condition and ranks therein, they shall present and warn to appear at the particular court... and the court hath power to censure...in the particulars before mentioned.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>44</sup>The Blue Laws of New Haven Colony (Hartford: Case, Tiffany and Co., 1838), p. 116.

<sup>45</sup>James Hammond Trumbull, The Blue Laws of Connecticut and New Haven, and the False Blue Laws Invented by the Rev. Samuel Peters (Hartford: American Publishing Co., 1876), p. 151.

## CHAPTER III

### ANALYSIS OF THE DATA AND REPORT OF THE FINDINGS

#### I. THE CLASSIFICATION OF PURPOSES OF SUMPTUARY LEGISLATION

A study of the laws indicated eight classification of stated or implied purposes for the laws within each country. The classification of purposes into eight groups arose from the suggested reasons found in the literature that dealt with sumptuary laws. The laws themselves were suggestive of further purposes due to their content.

Purpose Number One, the maintenance of class distinctions, was the classification assigned whenever the laws made exceptions that indicated a differentiation of social rank, or conferred a mark of honor by the permission to wear a forbidden article. It is possible that maintenance of class distinction was intended, but not stated in some laws, but for continuity and consistency, only the laws which so stated this purpose were classified under Purpose Number One.

Purpose Number Two, protection of morals, was the classification assigned whenever it was indicated that extravagance or novelty was a concern underlying the law. This reflection of paternalistic concern for the individual was indicated by references to pride and vanity in dress, and on the basis of such references Purpose Number Two was the classification used.

Purpose Number Three, protection of home industries, was the classification assigned whenever the sumptuary laws forbade the importation of foreign articles, or, encouraged the use of national



products. The prohibition against the wearing of foreign styles was included in this classification.

Purpose Number Four, retaining revenue for the state, and Purpose Number Five, reduction of government expenses, were the classifications assigned whenever it was indicated that the objective of the law involved money for government use. The duo-classification of Purpose Number Four and Purpose Number Five included instances of prohibitions against expensive and costly goods which carried the implication of unnecessary expense on the part of the wearer.

It was difficult to differentiate between these two purposes, which, although different in thought, were designed to achieve the same result. Their common objective was to obtain money for government use-- either by collecting it, or, by limiting individual expenditures. For this reason Purpose Number Four and Purpose Number Five paralleled each other throughout the study but have been retained as two distinct purposes.

Purpose Number Six, emergency measures or war acts, was the classification assigned whenever it was indicated that the law was promulgated for public protection during national emergencies or in periods of war. The literature used for this study suggests that existing or impending states of war were influential in the motivation of certain sumptuary laws.<sup>1</sup>

Purpose Number Seven, consumer protection, was the classification used whenever it was clearly indicated that the law intended to protect

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<sup>1</sup>Baldwin, op. cit., p. 165.

the public against fraud, either of quality or price. In some cases, fair-pricing practices were designed to be a protection for the manufacturer rather than the consumer. However, standards of quality and stability of prices still served to protect the consumer.

Purpose Number Eight, protection of health, does not appear in regard to clothing at any time in the materials available for study of the sumptuary laws from the fourteenth through the seventeenth centuries. It has been left in the classification because this purpose was considered a reflection of a paternalistic attitude and a factor in the motivation of sumptuary laws. It occurred frequently in regard to food items, and would be a consideration in a study of sumptuary regulations related to control of foodstuffs.

## II. EVIDENCE SUPPORTING THE HYPOTHESES

### Hypothesis A

Hypothesis A states that sumptuary regulations were short-lived in the English Colonies in America because their decline had begun in Continental Europe and England before America was colonized. Table I supports this hypothesis and the number of sumptuary laws gathered for this study reflects the decline in the use of such laws.

In Continental Europe the last sumptuary laws which appear in the sample occurred before 1650, although the literature for this study indicates that such laws continued until almost 1800, outlasting even those of England.<sup>2</sup> It is presumed that if all the laws of Continental

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<sup>2</sup>Vincent, op. cit., p. 133.

TABLE I

## FREQUENCY OF OCCURRENCE OF SUMPTUARY LAWS

BY TWENTY-FIVE YEAR SPANS

Year	Italy	Germany	Switz- erland	France	England	Colonies	All Countries
1675-1700					2	2	4
1650-1674					3	19	22
1625-1649			37	10	4	23	74
1600-1624			4		7	6	17
1575-1599					38		38
1550-1574	4		4	19	10		37
1525-1549	3		3	20	34		60
1500-1524	4				37		41
1475-1499		13	5		16		34
1450-1474	3		7		28		38
1425-1449					1		1
1400-1424	1				23		24
1375-1399	3		14		1		18
1350-1374	1	21			27		49
1325-1349	7				2		9
1300-1324	6						6
TOTALS	32	34	74	49	233	50	472

Europe could be assembled they would evidence patterns of decline similar to those of England and the English Colonies in North America.

About 1600, the sumptuary laws of England entered into a period of decline that continued through the seventeenth century. In 1604, James I, who was Elizabeth's successor, dealt a death blow to English sumptuary laws by his repeal of the Statutes of Apparel.

In North America, colonization by England began with the founding of Jamestown in 1607. Sumptuary laws began here with directives written to the colonists from the London Company, sponsor of the Colony of Virginia. Sumptuary legislation reached a peak in the North American Colonies in the years from 1625 to 1649, then declined and disappeared by 1700.

The English Colonies in America were English in thought and structure. Seventeenth century colonial life in the four colonies considered in this study--Massachusetts, Connecticut, Virginia, and North Carolina--were distinctly English in spirit. Many other nations shared in the settlement and development of North America but they soon merged with the English.<sup>3</sup>

English settlements in North America were, in the main, originated in the interests of private business enterprises, although a variety of motives--economic, religious, and political--contributed to the founding of these colonies. They were chartered by the King of England and were subject to the existing laws of England.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>"United States of America, History", Encyclopaedia Britannica, (25th ed.), XXII, p. 773.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

English leadership failed, however, to define what the rights and liberties of the British Colonists were to be as English subjects. Also, the remoteness of the colonies made communication difficult, and the English did not understand their colonial problems. The colonists, therefore, were thrown on their own resources for establishing laws of government.<sup>5</sup> In the wilderness of a new country it was logical that they would use the kinds of laws with which they were familiar and that maintained their conception of English life.

The earliest recorded laws of the colonies that are sumptuary in character are known to us as the Blue Laws. Prior to the issuance of the Blue Laws, the General Court of the New Haven Colony and the Colony of Connecticut had issued handwritten laws which were delivered to the constables in various jurisdictions. The constables, in turn, delivered them orally to the people on lecture days and at any other times that the people might gather together.<sup>6</sup> This method was used until it became unwieldy due to the large number of laws necessary to govern the growing settlements. About 1650, a code of laws was officially adopted by the General Court and sent to England to be printed since there were no printing presses in the colonies. They became known as the Blue Laws because they were delivered in blue envelopes.<sup>7</sup> Many other laws remained unwritten because they were to

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>The Blue Laws of New Haven Colony; Usually Called The Blue Laws of Connecticut (Compiled by an Antiquarian; Hartford: Case, Tiffany and Co., 1838).

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.



be made so familiar to the people that recording them was considered unnecessary.<sup>8</sup>

Smucker made some observations about the character and the quality of the men who contrived, enforced, and obeyed the enactments called the Blue Laws. His comments led to the belief that these laws were counterparts of the existing laws of England. He observed that the men who framed these laws were familiar with the principles of the common and the statute laws of England, and seemed to be familiar with municipal laws as well. Table II presents a comparison of the laws of England and the Massachusetts-Connecticut Colonies that indicates the similarity of the laws of the seventeenth century, and lends support to the belief that these early laws of the colonies in New England were English in origin and concept.

Further substantiation of this point was found in the comments written at an unknown date by an unknown author on the early laws of Virginia:

The Blue Laws were identical in the nature of the crimes and punishments of the Blue Laws of England of the same period--i.e. during the reign of James I--they were not peculiar to Puritan legislation in New England.<sup>9</sup>

One interesting aspect of these laws was the use of quotations of scripture that were cited in all cases upon which the laws were founded. It appeared that scripture was the standard by which any

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

<sup>9</sup>The Articles, Laws, and Orders, Divine Politiques and Martial For the Colony of Virginia (n.p.: n.n., n.d.) p. 437.

TABLE II

## SEVENTEENTH CENTURY LAWS COMPARED

PROHIBITED	COLONIES	ENGLAND
Excesses in clothes	1621	
Gold in clothes	1621	1616
Silk in clothes	1621	
Short sleeves	1630	
Great sleeves	1630	
Great breeches	1630	
Knots of ribbons	1630	
Silk roses	1630	
Double ruffs or collars	1630	
Long hair	1630	
Lace trim	1634	
Silver, gold, or silk thread trim	1634	
Slashed garments	1634	
Caps; bands; rayles of enbroidery, cutwork or needlework	1634	
Immoderate great sleeves	1634	
Slashes in garments	1634	
Immoderate great rayles	1634	
Longewings	1634	
Excesses in apparel	1636	
Clothes ornamented with lace	1639	
Gold lace	1651	1643
Silver lace	1651	1643
Great boots	1651	
Gold lace	1660	1643
Bone lace of silk	1660	1643
Ribbons made with gold or silver	1660	1643
Gold or silver lace	1662	1643
Gold or silver buttons	1662	1643
Silk ribbons or scarves	1662	1643
Costly superfluous trimming	1662	
Bone lace	1662	1643
Visors	1671	
Disguises	1671	
Strange apparel	1671	

case was decided in the New England Colonies.<sup>10</sup> The Puritan movement was usually credited with the religious character of the early laws of America.

Smucker, in this explanation of the Blue Laws, recorded the deep religious influence of the Puritan movement. His description of these early laws was similar in statement and feeling to those descriptions of sumptuary legislation that were found throughout the literature that dealt with the subject:

The term Blue Law...is an epithet which has long been applied by way of derision to those rigorous judicial regulations and proceedings which form a part of the early history of the colony of Connecticut; and which illustrate, in rather a peculiar and forcible manner, the primitive morals and legislation of the Puritans. These laws exceed, in the minuteness of their details and in the severity of their penalties, the enactments which were adopted by the rest of the American colonies.

...Hence they enjoy a kind of pre-eminence in regard to quaintness, bluntness, particularity, and antiquated excess of penalty, which have gained for them the equivocal epithet by which they have generally been designated for several generations.

...Wherever the Anglo-Saxon race exists, moulding the laws, religious and social conditions of communities and nations, there the traditions of the quaint peculiarities and austere virtues of the Puritans will be found, asserting their power as 'facile princip~~es~~' among the controlling influences which give character to the institutions around them.

...Hence the Blue Laws of Connecticut possess a serious importance, and not merely a risible and comical interest.<sup>11</sup>

The Puritans were not seriously interested in making laws, but they did influence the laws which were made by the secular ruling groups in the Massachusetts and Connecticut Colonies. Baldwin pointed

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<sup>10</sup>Samuel M. Smucker, The Blue Laws of Connecticut (Phila.: Duane Rulison, 1861).

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 4.

out that the Puritans attacked the extravagant and extraordinary dress of the sixteenth century on moral grounds because they considered such dress offensive to God and a cause of sin in man.<sup>12</sup> The following observation by Baldwin makes it apparent that Puritanism was not interpreted through sumptuary laws:

...It would naturally be supposed that when once the Puritans had gotten the upper-hand, they, who were so fond of regulating every detail in other people's lives in accordance with their own peculiarly strict moral code, would have regarded some sort of sumptuary legislation as absolutely indispensable. On the contrary, however, not a single law of this sort seems to have been passed in the interregnum between the death of Charles I and the restoration of his son.<sup>13</sup>

Two examples of sumptuary laws of the seventeenth century of North America are included in this thesis. These were selected as representative of the type of controls which were attempted in the Colony of Connecticut and which were common to the other New England settlements.<sup>14</sup>

In the Colony of Virginia, which was settled solely as a business venture of the London Company, the Puritans failed to secure a foothold. They remained a small group without influence among the Virginians who gave an exaggerated importance to the few indulgences within reach of the people.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>Baldwin, op. cit., p. 194.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 264.

<sup>14</sup>Blue Laws of New Haven Colony, Usually Called the Blue Laws of Connecticut, op. cit., p. 116, and Old Time Blue Laws From the Records of Mass., Conn., New York, Virginia, and Maryland (Springfield, Mass.: The Dwight Print, 1887).

<sup>15</sup>Phillips Bruce Alexander, Institutional History of Virginia in the Seventeenth Century (New York: Knickerbocker Press, 1910), p. 10.

OLD TIME BLUE LAW OF 1634

The Court, taking into consideration the greate, superfluous and unnecessary expences occasioned by the reason of some newe and immodiest fashions, as also the ordinary weareing of silver, gold, and silk laces, girdles, hatbands, etc., hath therefore ordered that noe person, either man or woman, shall hereafter make or buy any apparell, either woollen, silke or lynnem, with any lace on it, silver, gold, silke or threed, under the penalty of the forfecture of such cloathes.

Also that no person, either man or woman, shall make or buy any slashed cloathes, other than one slashe in each sleeve and another in the backe, also all cuttworks, embroidered or needlework capps, bands, and rayles, are forbidden to be made and worn, under the aforesaid penalty.

Moreover, it is agreed, if any man shall judge the weareing of any of the forenamed particulars, newe fashions, or long haire, or anything of the like nature to be uncomely, or prejudiciall to the common good, and the party offending reforme not the same upon notice given him, that then the next assistant, being informed thereof shall have power to bind the party so offending to answer it at the next Courte, if the case so requires.

Provided, and it is the meaning of this courte that men and women shall have the liberty to weare out such apparell as they are nowe provided of, (except immoderate greate sleeves, slashed apparell, immoderate greate rayles, longewings, etc.).

...Old Time Blue Laws, from the Records of Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, Virginia, and Maryland; and other curious old colony orders and penalties. 1887

CONNECTICUT COURT OF ELECTION  
Hartford, May 11, 1676

Whereas an excess of apparel amongst us is unbecoming a wilderness condition and the profession of the gospel, whereby the rising generation is in danger to be corrupted, which practices are testified against in God's holy word, it is therefore ordered by this court and authority thereof, that what person so ever shall wear gold or silver lace, or gold or silver buttons, silk ribbons, or other costly superfluous trimming, or any bone lace above three shillings per yard, or silk scarfes, the Listmakers of the respective townes are hereby required to assess such persons offending (or their husbands, parents, or masters under whose government they are) in the list of Estates at 150 pounds Estate; and that they are to pay their rates according to that proportion, as such men use to pay, to whom such apparell allowed as suitable to their rank, provided this law shall not extend to any magistrate, or a like publique officer of this colony, their wives or children, who are left to their discretion in wearing of apparell, or any settled military commission officer, or such whose quality and Estate have been above the ordinary degree, though now decayed.

It is further ordered that all such persons as shall for the future make, or weave, or buy any apparell exceeding the quality and condition of their persons and Estates, or that is apparently beyond the necessary end of apparell for covering or comeliness, either of these to be judged by the Grand Jury and County Court where such presentments are made, shall forfeit for every such offence ten shillings; and if any Taylor shall fashion any garment for any child or servant contrary to the mind of the Parent or Master of such a child or servant, he shall forfeit for every such offence ten shillings.

...Blue Laws of New Haven Colony Usually  
Called The Blue Laws of Connecticut,  
1838, p. 116.



The religious motive was, however, very strong here as well as in the New England Colonies, principally because it was a religious age. The surviving records of the seventeenth century contain numerous proofs of the strong religious feeling which shaped the opinions and influenced the conduct of the Virginians from the time of the earliest settlements in this country.<sup>16</sup>

Chumbley stated that the settlement of the Virginia Colony followed closely the religious reformation in England and that:

...although religious intolerance may have been less marked in Virginia than in some of the other colonies, the fact that such feeling did most seriously affect the Virginia colonial laws and their application can in no wise be ignored and should in no measure be minimized.<sup>17</sup>

Three factors were influential in the development of the courts and legislation of Colonial Virginia: religious feeling, class distinctions, and commercial activities.<sup>18</sup> Sumptuary laws as such, however, never gained much importance in Virginia. A letter of instruction from the London Company dated July 24, 1621 and to Governor Wyatt, contained one sumptuary law and directed the colonists:

...to be industrious and suppress drunkenness, gaming, and excess in cloathes, not to permit any but the council and the heads of hundreds to wear gold in their cloathes, or to wear silk until they make it themselves.<sup>19</sup>

The colonists' reaction was recorded in a reply to the Lords of Trade in London to the effect that:

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

<sup>17</sup>George Lewis Chumbley, Colonial Justice in Virginia (Richmond: The Dietz Press, 1938), p. 13.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 19.

...they knew of no excess of apparel except the price of it; and had it not come from them, the Lords of Trade in London, they should have thought it a flout upon the Colony for their poverty and nakedness.<sup>20</sup>

Evidently, the early settlers of Virginia did not hesitate to express their opinions and were confident that they could successfully ignore such a law from London.<sup>21</sup> There was, however, little indication of wealth or show of affluence during the seventeenth century. It was at the beginning of the eighteenth century that the higher classes exhibited sophistication in Virginia. This pivotal point was marked by the establishment of the colonial capital of Williamsburg in 1722.

In North Carolina, the same general type of development occurred during the early period of settlement and growth, but there are fewer records available for study than found for Virginia. North Carolina remained a rural and extended agricultural area without the commercial activities which characterized Virginia. Actual court records for this colony can be traced to 1754, though history indicates that legislatures met as early as 1665.<sup>22</sup> There are a few directives to the colonists by letter from England, dated 1663, to encourage the production of wine, oil, reasons,<sup>23</sup> currants, rice, and silk. These letters also discouraged the raising of ginger, cotton, indicoe,<sup>24</sup> and tobacco.<sup>25</sup> These

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<sup>20</sup>Ibid.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

<sup>22</sup>William L. Saunders, The Colonial Records of North Carolina (Raleigh: P.M. Hale, 1886), Vol. I, 1662-1712, p. 1.

<sup>23</sup>The author has interpreted reasons as raisins.

<sup>24</sup>The author has interpreted indicoe as indigo.

<sup>25</sup>Saunders, op. cit., p. 70.

suggested limitations were in the interests of trade which would bring more revenue to England rather than being of a sumptuary nature.

It is apparent, therefore, that the sumptuary laws existing in the English Colonies in North America were counterparts of the existing laws of England and their use was abandoned by the year 1700. As the colonies moved toward independence, gained in maturity, and became active participants in commercial activities, they adopted the economic policies of England. English economic policies contributed to the decline of sumptuary laws because such laws did not support a favorable balance of trade. The decline of sumptuary laws in the colonies was, therefore, brought about by changing economic policies and the political forces which were developing in North America.

Puritan influences cannot be ignored, and, it is notable that in the area of the country where the Puritans settled in strength we find the greatest number of sumptuary laws. Although the Puritan influence did not seem to be as influential as it is usually credited in the formation of the early laws of North America, the Puritan influence must be considered in light of the generally strong religious feeling of the times. Therefore, the dispersal and absorption of the Puritan movement is considered to be a factor in the decline of sumptuary legislation in this country.

Sumptuary legislation lasted only one century, 1600 to 1700, in the English Colonies in North America. This early decline following such a short period of use paralleled the decline that had begun in Continental Europe and England about 1600 before America was colonized. Gradually the use of sumptuary laws in the English Colonies of North

America, counterparts of existing English laws, were forgotten and never revived.

Hypothesis A<sub>1</sub>

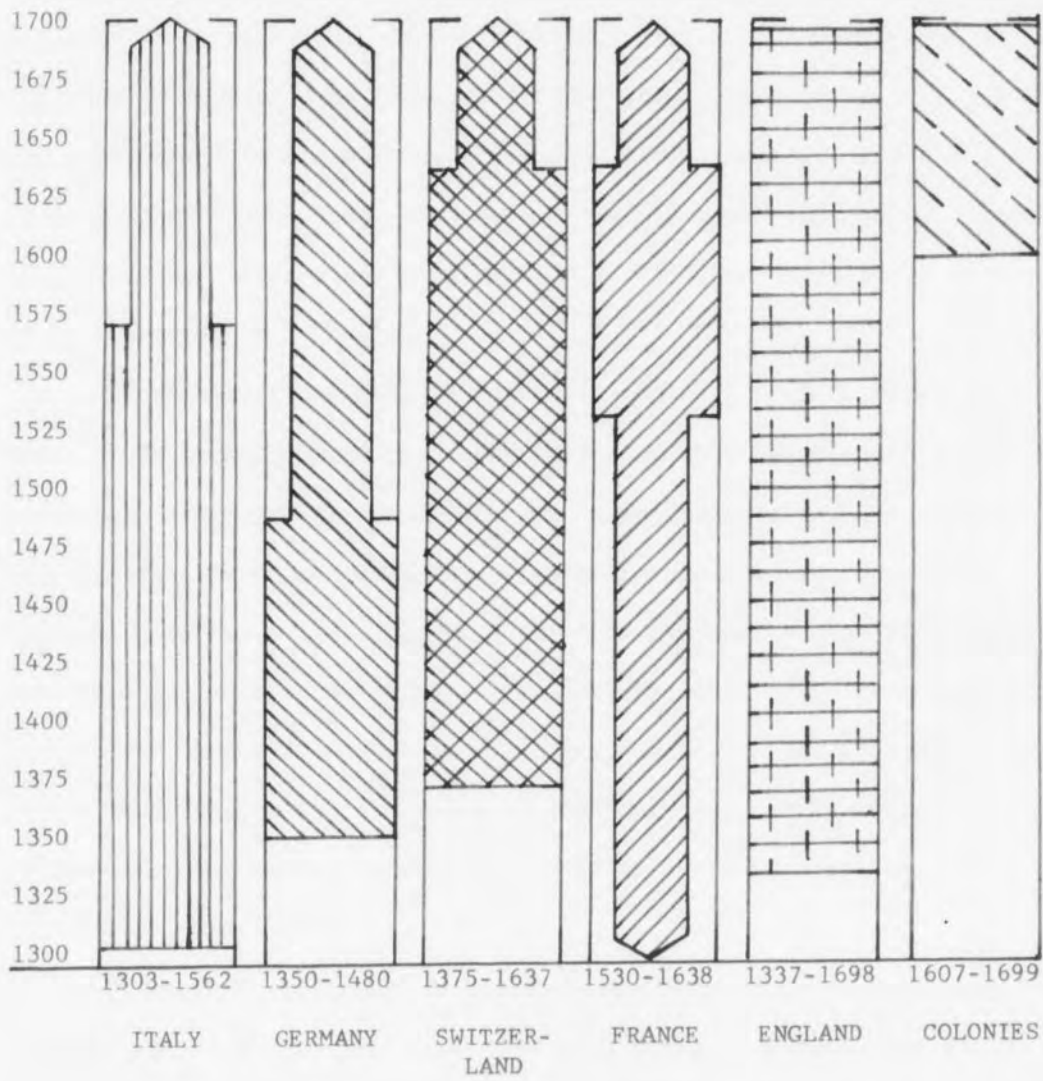
Hypothesis A<sub>1</sub> states that the sumptuary laws spread from Italy northwestward through Europe, to England, and to the English Colonies in America. Evidence of this westward spread of sumptuary laws is presented in Figure 1. The enclosed areas of the vertical bars in this figure represent the span of laws that were available for this study and which appear in Table IV in the appendix. The narrower arrow-like extensions of the bars designate the additional span of laws that were indicated, but not recorded, in the literature. Although the span of this study ended at 1700, it is evidenced in literature that the sumptuary laws of Middle Europe extended into the eighteenth century, outlasting those of England.<sup>26</sup>

In Italy, the recorded sumptuary laws of this study extend from 1303 to 1562 but it is known that sumptuary laws were in existence after this date. Italy appears to have led Europe in the use of sumptuary laws, just as she led Europe by almost one hundred years in the development of civilization. Because of her geographical position in the Mediterranean Sea, the ancient trade routes had brought goods from the Far East to Italian cities. From Italy, this flow of goods dispersed through Europe by overland routes to Northern and Western Europe.<sup>27</sup> Costly fabrics were used for horse trappings, interior

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<sup>26</sup>Vincent, *op. cit.*, p. 133.

<sup>27</sup>"Crusades," *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (25th ed.), VI, 793.



SPAN OF SUMPTUARY LAWS

FIGURE 1

decorations, and for costumes for both men and women. This growing market for merchandise from the East, for use by people of both taste and wealth but not always of noble birth, spurred the development of commerce in Europe. The use of sumptuary laws increased in Italy as the demand for luxurious goods increased, trade expanded, and a new moneyed class was created. The slow spread of commercial goods delayed the beginnings of sumptuary legislation in Northern and Western Europe as is evidenced in Figure 1.

In France, there are evidences of sumptuary laws as early as 1292.<sup>28</sup> The existence of some laws of a sumptuary nature before the thirteenth century does not negate the theory of a westward spread of such legislation since these laws seem to be sporadic and scattered throughout Europe. There appeared to be no evidence in the literature available for this study of any continuous thread of sumptuary laws in France until the sixteenth century. It is possible that in France, as in all other countries, the earliest sumptuary laws have remained untranslated, while others may have been lost, or, were possibly not recorded originally.<sup>29</sup>

In England, according to Baldwin, the beginnings of sumptuary laws are rooted in the practices of fixing prices. Prices were established by the Guilds as a means of protecting the consumer and controlling the trade rather than in the desire to put an end to extravagance. Baldwin states:

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<sup>28</sup>Laver, op. cit., p. 13

<sup>29</sup>Greenfield, op. cit., p. 133.  
Vincent, op. cit., p. 101, 111.



...Like the people of other nations living in the same period, the English of the Middle Ages were accustomed to the public regulation of many matters pertaining to private, everyday life... Tabulated tariffs and official regulations of everything from beer to labor filled the old English law books.<sup>30</sup> The aim of such legislation was, however, not to put an end to extravagance in one form or another, but to protect the consumer against the possible greed and dishonesty of the producer. First the guilds and then the towns issued regulations for the conduct of markets and the fixing of prices... Eventually the central government, also, turned its attention to this direction and assumed many duties formerly belonging to cities, among others that of regulating the sale of various articles.<sup>31</sup>

There are evidences of sumptuary laws which fix prices as early as 1221, but the earliest recorded legislation of England appears to have been enacted by Parliament during the reign of Edward III which began in 1327. Although some earlier laws were directed toward the manufacture and the sale of products, they were not strictly sumptuary in character as interpreted in this classification. They may, however, be classed as attempts at personal regulation.<sup>32</sup> Laws of a sumptuary nature existed in England until 1700. After this date sumptuary laws no longer appear in the legislation of England.

In the colonies, sumptuary laws were in effect by 1607, a date that marks the founding of the first English Colony in America. The idea of such controls was English in conception and practice. It is accepted as logical that such policies of government would move westward with the first settlers who were to be governed by England. The

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<sup>30</sup>Baldwin, op. cit., p. 12, citing Edwin R. Seligman, "Two Chapters on the Medieval Guilds of England," in the Publications of the American Economics Association, Vol. 11, p. 454.

<sup>31</sup>Baldwin, loc. cit.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid.

last attempts at controlling individual expenditure was made in 1675 in the Massachusetts and Connecticut Colonies by a decree issued with threats and denunciations against the prevailing manner of dress.

The northwestward spread of the sumptuary laws from Italy through England and finally to the English Colonies in North America, as evidenced by Figure 1, should not be misinterpreted to establish rigid limits for the beginning and end of sumptuary legislation. Such limits are impossible to set. Nevertheless, the discontinuance of sumptuary laws can be estimated to occur about 1700. The date may be set as an approximate date, after which the sumptuary laws changed in character from personal regulations to laws for public health protection.

#### Hypothesis A<sub>2</sub>

Hypothesis A<sub>2</sub> states that the spread of sumptuary legislation paralleled the rise of middle class economic control in Continental Europe and England. Sumptuary legislation is involved with medieval economic thought and the development of sumptuary regulations reflected the changes that occurred in the economic theories of the late Medieval Age. Therefore, to understand the rise of the middle class which paralleled the course of sumptuary legislation, it is necessary to consider the development of economic thought in Western Europe from 1300 to 1700.

Medieval economic thought was moralistic in concept and was interpreted by and for the Monks during a time when Monastic life was considered an ideal and worldly interests were frowned upon. The

dominant social organization of the age was the Church, and salvation in the life after death was the most serious concern of man.<sup>33</sup>

...For this world, the accepted ideal was a static or customary society and civilization, every man working out his lot in the situation to which he had been called. Trade was frowned upon, beyond limited routine exchanges at "fair"--meaning customary--prices, corresponding with a customary standard of living for each social class, and interest taking was condemned outright.<sup>34</sup>

The rise of middle class economic control was accompanied by changes in social, moral, and intellectual attitudes which, even though they took place in different countries at different times and at different rates of speed, were common to all of Europe. Several factors coalesced from the thirteenth to the sixteenth century to give to the average man the opportunity for personal and financial improvement. The breakdown of the feudal system, the growth of towns, and the rise of the Guilds were the three major social factors which influenced this rise.

From the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries there were forces at work which brought about the decay of feudalism. The noble class had been weakened through loss of military supremacy and wealth, the Kings had regained strength, and centralized forms of governments were developing.<sup>35</sup> Also, there was arising from the peasantry a vigorous, independent, mercantile and professional class capable of functioning without the aid of a lord.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>33</sup>"Economics," Encyclopaedia Britannica (25th ed.), VII, 926.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid.

<sup>35</sup>"Feudalism," Encyclopaedia Britannica (25th ed.), IX, 205.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid.

Town growth gained strength when the fighting noblemen borrowed great sums of money from the town-dwelling mercantile class in order to support the crusades. In return for such loans, the towns were sometimes granted freedom from taxes and rights which made them autonomous. These grants opened the way for the development of the large commercial cities of modern Europe.<sup>37</sup> Contributing to the growth of towns and commerce was the flow of goods from the East stimulated by the Crusades. By the fifteenth century, vestiges of feudalism remained in the form of titles, class distinctions, certain exemptions from taxation, and special landholding privileges, but the feudal system, as such, had come to an end.<sup>38</sup>

Guilds had been established and had grown in strength during this time also. Merchant Guilds, usually including the wealthiest merchants, had acquired considerable political influence as well as power over industry and trade. Craft Guilds, of craftsmen united for purposes of mutual benefit, established controls over various segments of the craft manufacturing of the towns and cities.<sup>39</sup>

Commercial fairs, sponsored by the Guilds, became so important to commercial life that they were established as annual events throughout Europe. These institutions of industry and trade included merchant guilds, craft guilds, and fairs that aided the economic development of Europe and helped in the creation of an influential middle class. By

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<sup>37</sup>"Crusades," Encyclopaedia Britannica (25th ed.), VI, 771.

<sup>38</sup>"Feudalism," loc. cit.

<sup>39</sup>"Guilds," Encyclopaedia Britannica (25th ed.), X, 966.

the sixteenth century the Guilds had declined in power and prestige, primarily due to the rise of capitalism.<sup>40</sup>

Capitalism, the newly developing economic system, stressed private enterprise, large-scale production, competition for markets, and wide distribution of goods. Inasmuch as the Guilds were opposed to these principles, the capitalist generally set up his shop in localities where no Craft Guilds existed. The Guilds, unable to produce goods even for their own local markets as quickly or as cheaply as did the capitalistic enterprises were, little by little, forced out of existence.<sup>41</sup> Capitalism also introduced the wage system into the industrial scheme, placing the worker in the role of both wage earner and consumer.

The volume of sumptuary laws increased as the middle class grew more powerful and the wealth of nations became concentrated in their hands. This wealth made it possible for the middle class to encroach upon the privileges of the upper classes, and resulted in the enactment of more frequent and more detailed sumptuary laws with which to support the crumbling framework of medieval society.

Vincent established the peak of sumptuary legislation in Switzerland as occurring in the seventeenth century.<sup>42</sup> Greenfield considered the peak of sumptuary laws in Germany as occurring in the sixteenth century.<sup>43</sup> Baldwin termed the sixteenth century as the

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<sup>40</sup>Ibid.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., p. 967.

<sup>42</sup>Vincent, op. cit., p. 93.

<sup>43</sup>Greenfield, op. cit., p. 132.

golden age of sumptuary legislation in England.<sup>44</sup> These authorities, as well as others used in this study, agreed that the increase in frequency and detail of the laws was the result, in part, of activities in trade which led to more wealth and leisure among the people and resulted in the rise of the middle class to a position of economic importance.

#### Hypothesis A<sub>3</sub>

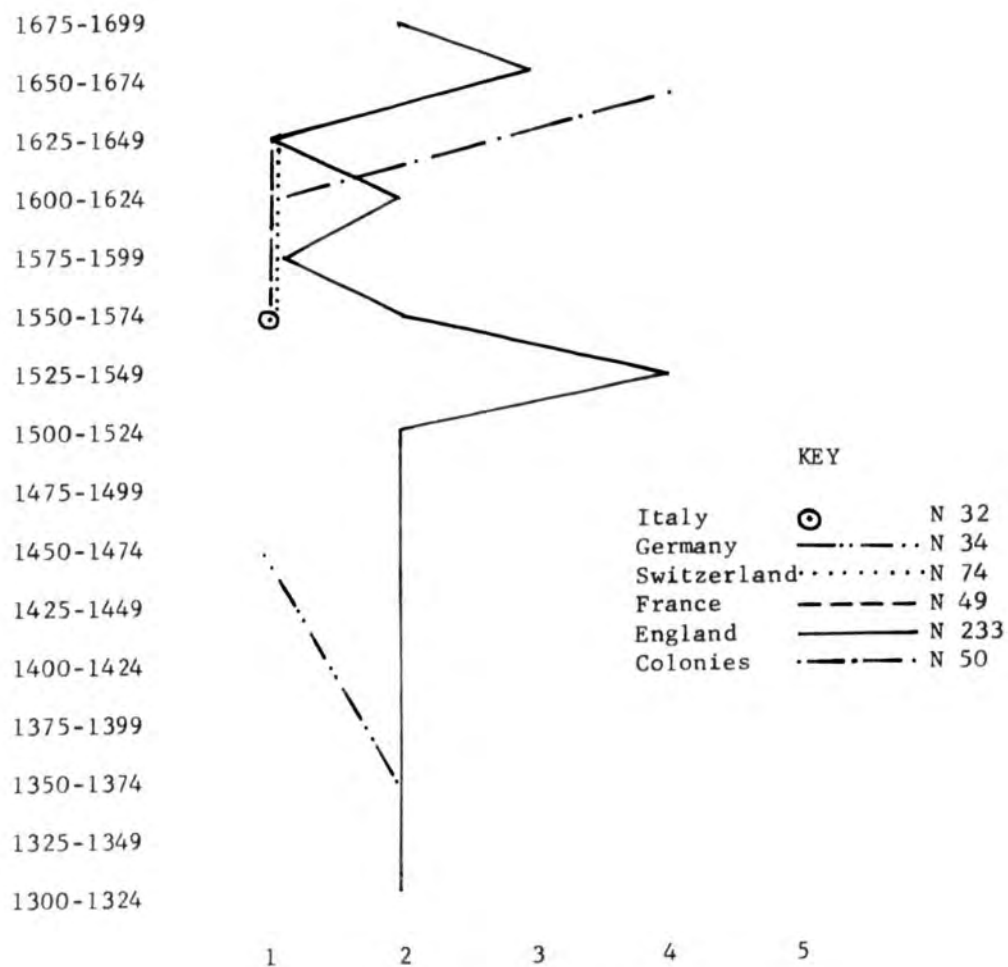
Hypothesis A<sub>3</sub> states that early sumptuary laws were used primarily for the purpose of maintaining class distinctions, but as socio-economic conditions changed, sumptuary laws became primarily a means of economic control. The economic motive has been classified in this study as protection of home industries (Purpose Number Three). This motive was the primary motive underlying many of the sumptuary laws which intended to support national products and national industries. This type of governmental support was felt to be influential in guiding national economics in a favorable direction. Figure 2 indicates that the economic purpose, protection of home industries, was present in the laws of Germany (1350-1480) and threaded through the entire existence of the sumptuary laws of England. Also, Figure 2 indicates that the protection of home industries was not a concern until after 1500 in Italy, Switzerland, France, and English Colonies in North America.

The occurrence of protection of home industries in the early laws of Germany would, in all probability, continue if it were possible to locate and trace the laws which were written after 1475. Neverthe-

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<sup>44</sup>Baldwin, op. cit., p. 248.





FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF PURPOSE NUMBER THREE  
BY TWENTY-FIVE YEAR SPANS

FIGURE 2

less, because of the limited information regarding the sumptuary laws of Germany, it is impossible to determine why the protection of home industries appears so early in German law, how important it was, and whether or not it continued after 1475. By contrast, it was possible to study the socio-economic history of England where economic motives were constant.

The reason for the low incidence of laws for the protection of home industries in this study has not been determined. It has been established, however, that the protection of home industries as an additional motivating factor of sumptuary laws appeared in Europe about 1500, with the exception of Germany and England. One century later, when the sumptuary laws had spread from England to the English Colonies in North America, the protection of home industries had become an increasingly strong force underlying the sumptuary laws. Just as the economic motivation of sumptuary laws was beginning to develop strength, it has been noted that the laws began their decline.

The decline in sumptuary laws motivated by the protection of home industries paralleled new trends of action and thinking that were becoming apparent during the seventeenth century. During this century governments began to realize that the protection of home industries by means of sumptuary legislation was not effective. The economists of the day presented the most logical explanation for the trend away from sumptuary legislation. Baldwin cited three well-known economists of the seventeenth century, Thomas Mun, Sir Josiah Childs, and Sir William Petty, who disapproved of the sumptuary laws in regard to mere restraint

of luxury. Primarily, they disapproved because such laws were a deterrent to maintaining a favorable balance of trade.<sup>45</sup>

Until this new attitude toward sumptuary laws became fully developed, sumptuary laws had been and were continued in use as a means of economic control. When it became evident that sumptuary legislation was not conducive to balancing a system of free trade and did not encourage the free circulation of the wealth of individual citizens, the means was abandoned. Both Baldwin and Vincent pointed out that the economic reason for sumptuary laws appeared among early laws.<sup>46</sup> Sometimes the protection of home industries was stated in the laws, but the economic motive was so interwoven with social motives that it is difficult to separate them.<sup>47</sup> Foreign commerce did exist before the seventeenth century, but it was largely an exchange of products of hand crafts, rather than of factories.<sup>48</sup> As the volume of industry and commerce increased, the economic problem of maintaining a balance of trade became paramount and the use of sumptuary legislation began to decline as a form of control by the government.

In considering this hypothesis and its supporting evidence, it was found that while the sumptuary laws developed strength as a means of economic control, they did not become a primary means of economic control.

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<sup>45</sup>Ibid., p. 267.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., p. 246, and Vincent, op. cit., p. 132.

<sup>47</sup>Vincent, loc. cit.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid.

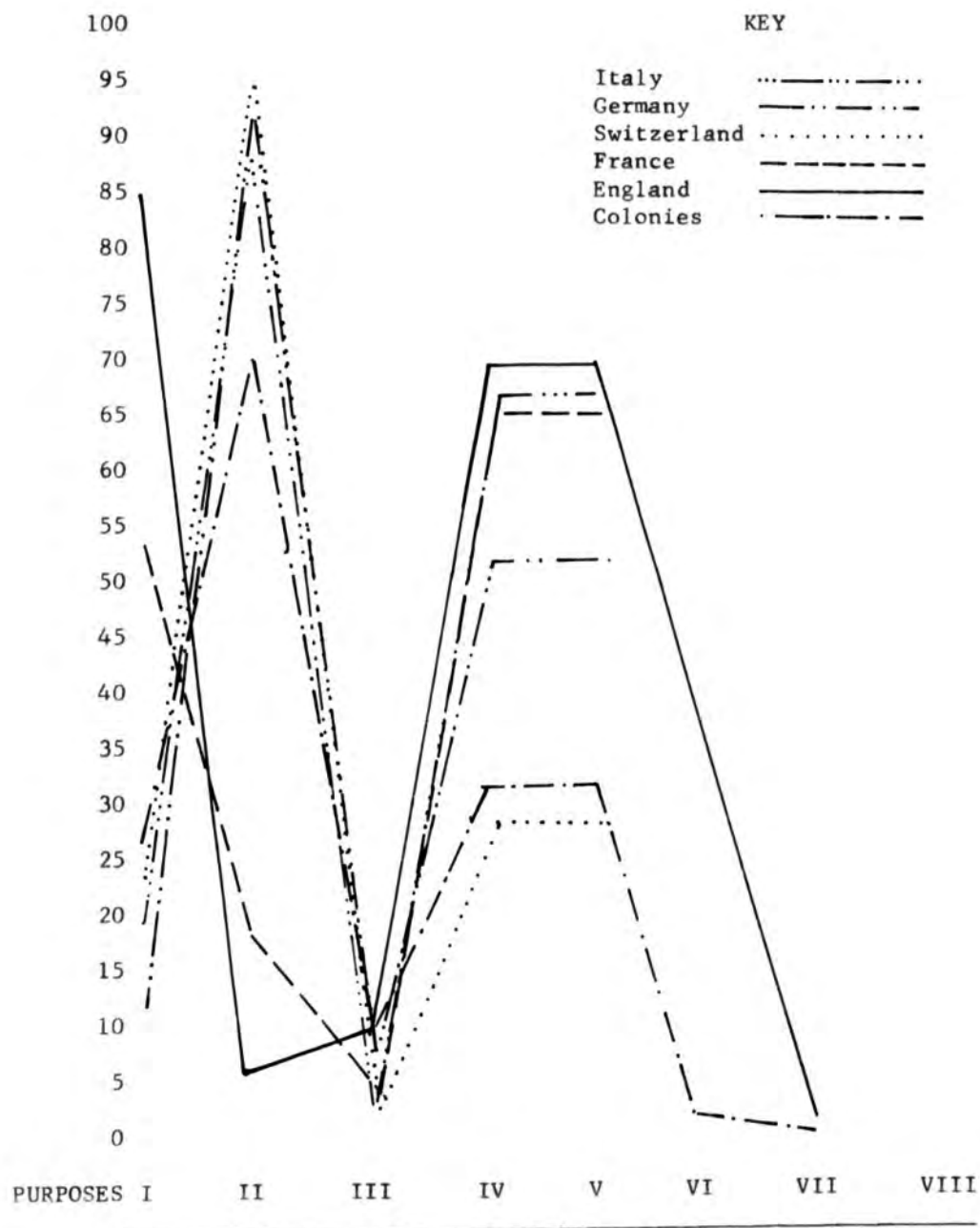
Hypothesis A<sub>4</sub>

Hypothesis A<sub>4</sub> states that the sumptuary laws of England developed differently than those of the Continent due to certain historic factors that were peculiar to England. Figure 3 presents the distribution of the sumptuary laws of England, classified according to purposes, as considerably different than those of the countries of Central and Southern Europe.

England had the highest incidence (85 per cent) of laws motivated by the maintenance of class distinctions, the lowest incidence (6 per cent) of laws motivated by the protection of morals, the highest incidence (70 per cent) of laws motivated by retaining revenue for the state and reduction of government expenses. Between the two countries which had laws motivated by consumer protection, England had the highest incidence (3 per cent) of occurrence. England also maintained, with the colonies, the same incidence (10 per cent) of laws motivated by the protection of home industries.

The reasons for the differences which England exhibits in the patterns of sumptuary laws were found in the historical development of England. Superficially, England followed the same development during the Middle Ages as Continental Europe, but some differences helped to mold this nation that was to play a role of leadership under the rule of Elizabeth in the sixteenth century.

During the thirteenth to the fifteenth century, towns were growing, trade was expanding, and Guilds were developing strength in England as well as in Europe. In England, however, the aristocracy united with the urban middle class to develop the instrument of



PURPOSES OF LAWS FOR EACH COUNTRY BY PERCENTAGE OF  
TOTAL LAWS

FIGURE 3

parliamentary government. The result of this cooperation was the early end of absolute monarchism in England and the establishment of a representative government which set an example that all of Europe and America were to follow. By the middle of the fourteenth century, the House of Lords and the House of Commons had evolved, giving the people a strong voice in the government and a measure of control over the King.<sup>49</sup>

Elsewhere in Western Europe, the nobles chose to struggle against the King without the help of the common people. The King, therefore, allied himself with the people to overcome eventually the feudal rulers. On the Continent, and in contrast to English representative government, this union of King and common people resulted in the rule of absolute monarchs.<sup>50</sup>

In the fifteenth century, England was developing rapidly in the field of finance and trade.<sup>51</sup> Woolen cloth manufacturing was increasing, and the King was interested in trade activities and in their support. Trading organizations, built upon the Guilds, were strong and flourishing.<sup>52</sup>

At the beginning of the sixteenth century, commercial activities were increasing all over Europe and new discoveries were opening up the entire world for trade and profit. Religious unrest was rampant.

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<sup>49</sup>"English History," Encyclopaedia Britannica (25th ed.), VIII, 490.

<sup>50</sup>Will Durant, The Reformation (Vol. IV of The Story of Civilization), (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1957), pp. 26-160.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., p. 109

<sup>52</sup>Ibid.



England, a late arrival on the Renaissance scene, was becoming a leader in Europe due to her policy of preserving a balance of power.<sup>53</sup> The middle class population of England and Europe had attained a definite form, with some strength. The golden age of England had begun.<sup>54</sup> The golden ages of sumptuary laws began about 1500 also. It was in the sixteenth century that fifty per cent of all sumptuary regulations occurred in England.

England's middle class structure was further strengthened by the adoption of a policy of religious tolerance not found on the Continent. Sensitive to the religious unrest in Europe, families left the Continent and settled in England. These people contributed labor strength and industrial knowledge, thus aiding the development of English industry.

By the seventeenth century England had established a strong national government and had a large, vigorous middle class population. From the Guild system a more progressive economic system composed of capitalistic enterprises had been built.

A brief consideration of the purposes of the sumptuary regulations of England will reveal great contrasts to those of Europe and will establish the causes of the unique and singular development of sumptuary laws in England. Table III presents the entire range, by number and by percentage, of purpose distribution among the countries considered in this study.

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<sup>53</sup>"English History," loc. cit.

<sup>54</sup>Baldwin, op. cit., p. 192, 193.

TABLE III  
FREQUENCY OF OCCURRENCE BY PURPOSE

	<u>Italy</u>	<u>Germany</u>	<u>Switz.</u>	<u>France</u>	<u>Eng.</u>	<u>Colonies</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Total Laws	32	34	74	49	233	50	472
Purpose I	6	4	17	26	199	13	265
Purpose II	28	32	70	9	13	35	187
Purpose III	1	3	2	2	23	5	36
Purpose IV	21	18	21	32	163	16	271
Purpose V	21	18	21	32	163	16	271
Purpose VI	-	-	-	-	-	2	2
Purpose VII	-	-	-	-	8	1	9
Purpose VIII	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Number	77	75	131	101	569	88	1041
Purpose I	19%	12%	23%	53%	85%	26%	218%
Purpose II	88%	91%	95%	18%	6%	70%	368%
Purpose III	3%	9%	3%	4%	10%	10%	39%
Purpose IV	66%	53%	28%	65%	70%	32%	314%
Purpose V	66%	53%	28%	65%	70%	32%	314%
Purpose VI	-	-	-	-	-	4%	4%
Purpose VII	-	-	-	-	3%	2%	5%
Purpose VIII	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Percent*	242	218	177	205	244	176	1262

\*The percentages of the laws are more than one-hundred percent due to the fact that many sumptuary laws were motivated by several purposes, and were not limited to one purpose for each law.

### Maintenance of Class Distinctions

Durant reminds us that class distinctions were sharper in England than on the Continent; a social factor that remains constant through the seventeenth century.<sup>55</sup> This, in part, explains the high incidence (85 per cent) of English sumptuary laws for the purpose of maintaining class distinctions. Another factor underlying the sumptuary laws which were intended to maintain class lines was the early existence of a strong centralized government connected with an intricate royal court. Sumptuary laws were necessary to a court life in which appropriate stations and ranks were supported by the government. The towns of Europe did not have as many laws motivated by the maintenance of class distinctions because retaining proper class distinctions among the populace did not require a large number of such laws.

A third factor was the development of middle class wealth created by England's activities in trade and industry. This resulted in a middle class able to dress and live in imitation of the nobles. Even though the aristocracy had joined with the middle classes in the interest of limiting the powers of the King, they held special claim upon the social privileges of their class.

### Protection of Morals

England's lack of concern for morals is made apparent by the observation that the other countries of this study, with the exception of France, had about ninety per cent of their sumptuary laws based on

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<sup>55</sup>Durant, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

the protection of morals. France was second to England with only eighteen per cent of her laws motivated by moral concerns.

Baldwin has noted that the laws of England differed from those of Continental Europe with the explanation that the laws were decrees which were national in scope rather than the products of local governments.<sup>56</sup> Both Greenfield and Vincent cited that the ruling bodies of the countries of Central Europe were largely aristocratic family groups, or patriciates, who watched over their cities or towns in a paternalistic fashion.<sup>57</sup> A government that issued decrees which were national in scope could not regulate the personal conduct of its citizens in the same minute and intimate detail which characterized the laws issued by governing bodies of small European towns. Baldwin stated:

...The cities of the Rhine country assumed all the functions of government, and ruled their citizens in a more strict and intimate fashion than the King of England was able to do in his wider dominions. Their records contain materials which are not found in English towns.<sup>58</sup>

The materials which are not found in the sumptuary legislation of the towns of England and which were found in Continental European legislation, were concerned largely with the intimate details of daily life. These were reflections of the paternalistic attitude of the patriciate groups who ruled the communities of Continental Europe. This paternalistic attitude was lacking in the concept of the sumptuary laws of England.

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<sup>56</sup>Baldwin, op. cit., p. 11.

<sup>57</sup>Vincent, op. cit., p. 2, and Greenfield, op. cit., p. 17.

<sup>58</sup>Baldwin, op. cit., p. 11.

The second factor in the explanation of the low incidence of moral concern in the sumptuary laws of England was the development of a system of personal regulations which were based on the price-fixing practices of the Guilds. This type of legislation was gradually taken over by the towns, and eventually by the central government. The sumptuary laws of England were influenced by the foundations laid by the Guild practices toward laws which were motivated by economic concerns rather than moral concerns.

#### Protection of Home Industries

England maintained the highest incidence (10 per cent) of laws designed for economic purposes, although it was not a great deal higher than the other countries considered in this study. The economic motive, however, was present throughout the entire history of sumptuary legislation of England since sumptuary laws grew out of the rules and regulations established by the Guilds. About 1500 there was an increase in commercial activities throughout Europe, which paralleled and appeared to have stimulated the appearance of sumptuary laws motivated by the protection of home industries, and which increased the number of such laws in England.

#### Retaining Revenue for the State Reduction of Government Expenses

England ranked highest (70 per cent) in laws which were designed for augmenting the national income through sumptuary laws. The most important factor in determining why England had more concern for retaining revenue for the State and reducing government expenses was found in the point which Baldwin, Vincent and Greenfield have made

regarding the infinite detail and minute concern for the aspects of daily life which characterized the lawmaking groups that governed the small towns of Europe. By contrast, the entire operation of English government was concerned with the larger problems of a national government. The concern and control by a national government of the finances of England would logically have resulted in more legislation aimed at retaining revenue for national expenses.

#### Consumer Protection

England had the highest incidence (3 per cent) of laws designed to protect the consumer. Only two countries had any laws of this design, England and the English Colonies in North America. This purpose did not appear as a motivating factor underlying any of the laws of Italy, Germany, Switzerland, or France.

The system of sumptuary regulations in England grew out of the Guild policies of setting fair prices and maintaining standards of quality. These aims were upheld and perpetuated by the sumptuary laws of England and were carried to the New World by the English colonists.

#### Conclusions

It appeared, therefore, that the sumptuary laws of England developed differently than those of the Continent due primarily to three factors in the history of England. One: the early establishment of a centralized, representative government which issued decrees and statutes that were national in scope and made possible the direction and control of the economic activities of the country in an organized way. Two: the early manifestation of a strong middle class population



which encroached upon the social privileges of the upper classes when the expanding middle class became both powerful and wealthy. Three: the foundations of the Guild system which were used in the formation of the sumptuary laws and which established price-fixing practices, but kept the direction of economic interests in the hands of the people rather than in the hands of an absolute monarch.

These same three factors in the historical development of England account for:

1. The extremely high incidence of laws which maintained class distinctions.
2. The extremely low incidence of laws which protected morals.
3. The average incidence of laws for the protection of home industries, retaining revenue for the state, and reduction of government expenses.
4. The appearance of laws for consumer protection.

The course of the sumptuary laws of France paralleled the patterns which were evidenced for England. It is, however, difficult to construct the course of sumptuary laws in France for lack of evidence by which to trace the development of the laws of that country. Even though the sumptuary laws of France, as recorded for this study, do not begin until after 1500 and are few in number, France emerges with:

1. The second lowest percentage (18 per cent) of laws classified under the protection of morals.
2. The second highest percentage (53 per cent) of laws motivated by the maintenance of class distinctions.

Further conclusions regarding economic motivations, retaining revenue for the state, reduction of government expenses, emergency

measures or war acts, and consumer protection cannot be made for lack of research material.

### Hypothesis B

Hypothesis B states that wars had no significant influence on sumptuary legislation during the fourteenth to eighteenth centuries. There was no evidence in the content of the sumptuary laws charted for this study that an impending or existing state of war affected the flow of sumptuary legislation. Research revealed no recorded laws which stated purposes of economy or national protection during existing or impending states of war with two exceptions: a law of Connecticut issued in 1642 and a law of New Haven Colony issued in 1643. These laws stated:

...It is ordered that there shall be 90 coats provided within these plantations within ten days basted with cotton wool, and made defensive against Indian arrows, i.e. Hartford 40, Windsor 30, Weathersfield 20.<sup>59</sup>

...every family within this plantation shall have a coat of cotton wool, well and substantially made; so as it may be fit for service...(to be proof against Indian arrows).<sup>60</sup>

These two laws are obviously designed for the single purpose of bodily protection during Indian attacks.

Baldwin refers to an act of 1511 in England which she calls "obviously a war measure which does not furnish a standard for normal times of peace". This was a royal proclamation issued during the reign

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Smucker, op. cit., p. 104.

James Hammond Trumbull, The True Blue Laws of Connecticut and New Haven and the False Blue Laws Invented by the Rev. Samuel Peters (Hartford: American Publishing Co., 1876), p. 151.

of Henry VIII and was the first of the English proclamations which supplemented the acts passed by Parliament relating to dress. In regard to this proclamation Baldwin stated:

...The text of this order has not been found, but we know that it was directed against excess in apparel. A Venetian merchant, Lorenzo Pasqualigo, writing to his brother, Francesco, from London, on November 12, mentioned the proclamation which, he said, forbade all Englishmen, except Lords and Knights to wear silk. It is also ordered that doublets should not be made of any material except camlet. It was to go into effect at Christmas. Certain penalties for its infraction were ordained. In order to set a good example to the lower classes, so Pasqualigo declared, the King and whole House of Lords had dressed themselves in long, grey cloth gowns. This was done in order that the gentry might save up their money and purchase arms and horses, in preparation for the war with France.<sup>61</sup>

There was no direct recorded evidence that this was a war measure, since this law has not been found, and it is assumed to be a war measure on the basis of Pasqualigo's letter.

Due to the lack of any further evidence in the literature used in research for this study of laws which were directed toward war time emergencies, the classification did not materialize. Sumptuary laws are, however, considered to be reflections of the current of human affairs and, as such, were affected by wars but were not considered in this study to be directly affected by impending or existing states of war.

#### Hypothesis C

Hypothesis C states that the concept of fashion, or changes in styles of clothing, had no direct or important influence on sumptuary legislation. Sumptuary laws were, in many instances, directed against

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<sup>61</sup>Baldwin, *op. cit.*, p. 163.

specific fashions or styles that had been adopted by the people. There is no evidence, however, in the literature used in this study that the course of changing styles had any effect on the growth, spread, or decline of sumptuary legislation.

This does not mean that there was not an intimate connection between fashion and the sumptuary laws. Greenfield implied this connection when he said:

...Apparel was everywhere a prominent subject of sumptuary legislation...The reason for this prominence of clothing in sumptuary laws is obvious. If the authorities were seeking extravagance, they were sure to find it in dress. The tempting chance for display offered by the necessity of wearing clothes has always been too much for frail humanity; hence the rare and expensive fabrics, the costly finery, the fantastic cuts and colors, the changes of fashion, involving needless expense and unsettling the customary, were matters which almost continually exercised these early city fathers, to whom these things appeared to threaten that moral balance and decent composure of life which they felt called upon to maintain.<sup>62</sup>

Vincent also implies this connection between fashions and the sumptuary laws and indicated the persistence of fashion changes in spite of the vigorousness of the prohibiting laws by his statement:

...the laws seem to maintain a persistent animosity against changes in fashion. In addition to motives of economy there is a desire to maintain a strictly national costume against the invasion of foreign materials and foreign fashions, the patriotic emotion being frequently called in to strengthen the laws.<sup>63</sup>

...In following these laws through some three centuries, and noting that at various times a most vigorous onslaught is made upon existing fashions, we have to realize that in spite of everything fashions did change. Compared to the present day,

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<sup>62</sup>Greenfield, op. cit., p. 106.

<sup>63</sup>Vincent, op. cit., p. 42.

patterns of dress were slow in changing, but transformations did take place.<sup>64</sup>

The medieval legislators did not understand the phenomenon of fashion changes or changing styles. It was, as Vincent and Greenfield pointed out, the aim of much of the sumptuary regulations concerned with dress, to force fashions into a static position. The lawmakers did not know that they were dealing with a force which was characterized by constant change. Fashion is, according to Bell, a phenomenon of comparatively recent origin:

...Its beginnings were so gradual that it is impossible to say at what point the machine starts into motion, but the process can hardly be said to have been at work in the time of Charlemagne and was definitely active by the beginning of the thirteenth century; from then onwards the rate of change increases until in our own times it has become prodigious. Simultaneous with the increase in pace goes an increase in scope; first the nobility, then the burghers, then the craftsmen are involved, until finally, in industrialized societies, such as Britain and the United States, fashion dominates the entire population almost without exception.<sup>65</sup>

Fashion changes began to be observed about the fourteenth century which Vincent established as a general beginning of the ordinances directed at costume and personal decoration in Switzerland.<sup>66</sup> As the movement of fashion gained in momentum, the sumptuary laws increased in number and detail in an effort to keep up with the changes. Vincent has called this increase in personal regulations a contest between the lawmakers and the dressmakers.<sup>67</sup> Bell clarified this contest when he stated:

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<sup>64</sup>Ibid., p. 43.

<sup>65</sup>Bell, op. cit., p. 41.

<sup>66</sup>Vincent, op. cit. p. 42.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid., p. 43.

...The spectacle presented by the history of dress in Europe is therefore one of conflict between two inimical forces existing not only within the same societies but within the same persons (the legislators were frequently the worst offenders).<sup>68</sup>

The actions of the legislators in this contest were, for the most part, directed toward offenses which had already become apparent. Existing fashions were always under attack but no attempt was made, on the part of the lawmakers, to direct fashions into more acceptable styles. Such an attitude resulted in sumptuary laws which were almost all negative in nature and prohibitive in character until the advent of economic motivations. Most laws, prior to the appearance of economic motives, instructed the people only in what they could not wear.<sup>69</sup>

Veblen was one of the few economists who considered the problem of dress sufficiently important to be explored as an aspect of economics. He attempted to explain the nature of dress and the powerful effects it had on economics. While the struggle between the lawmakers and the dressmakers was in progress and the laws were increasing in number as the fashion changes were increasing in speed, another kind of increase was taking place: the increase in wealth and leisure among the middle and upper classes throughout Europe.<sup>70</sup>

This accumulation of wealth and leisure was the basis of Veblen's approach to the problem of clothing and display and is the foundation

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<sup>68</sup>Bell, op. cit., p. 19.

<sup>69</sup>Baldwin, op. cit., p. 212.

<sup>70</sup>Vincent, loc. cit.



for his theory that dress is an expression of a money culture.<sup>71</sup>

Veblen chose clothing as an illustration of how economic principles apply to everyday life because:

...Other methods of putting one's pecuniary standing in evidence serve their end effectually, and other methods are in vogue always and everywhere; but expenditure on dress has this advantage over most other methods, that our apparel is always in evidence and affords an indication of our pecuniary standing to all observers at the first glance. It is also true that admitted expenditure for display is more obviously present, and, perhaps more universally practised in the matter of dress than in any other line of consumption.<sup>72</sup>

Veblen's theory that clothing is an expression of a pecuniary culture was the foundation for understanding the interrelatedness of fashion changes and sumptuary laws. It was through the medium of clothing that the lower classes could most effectively be identified with the upper classes. His theory contributes, also, to the explanation of why the maintenance of class distinctions was the most often used motive underlying sumptuary laws as classified in this study.

There were no tools of measurement to aid in determining the actual strength of the sumptuary laws regarding dress. Literature on the subject repeatedly referred to the ineffectiveness of the laws, but also revealed that the laws persisted for centuries. During these centuries clothing styles did change and it is possible to note fashion changes by reading the restrictions on offending styles. There was, however, no noticeable change in the objectives of the laws, in the way they were written, in the use of the laws for the eight purposes

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<sup>71</sup>Veblen, *op. cit.*, p. 187.

<sup>72</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 167.

presented in this thesis, or in their entire course of development due to changes in fashions. In the absence of concrete evidence or the appearance of any patterns of fashion changes in the laws charted for this study, it is only possible to conclude that changing styles in clothing had no direct effect on sumptuary laws from 1300 to 1700.

CHAPTER IV  
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This is a study of sumptuary legislation and other regulations pertaining to personal appearance, particularly in regard to clothing, in the seventeenth century. It indicates the patterns of growth, change, and decline of sumptuary regulations through the years 1300 to 1700. It was desirable that the study span four centuries in order to establish a background for understanding the sumptuary legislation of the seventeenth century.

Through research in the sources that were available 472 sumptuary regulations were found recorded in literature. Digests of these regulations were arranged chronologically, by countries and appear in the appendix of this thesis as the "Sample of Sumptuary Regulations".

A study of the laws indicated eight classifications of stated or implied purposes for the laws within each country. The classification of purposes into eight groups arose from the suggested reasons found in the literature that dealt with sumptuary laws. The laws themselves were suggestive of further purposes due to their content.

The purposes which occurred most frequently were:

1. Maintenance of class distinctions, which appeared as the most frequently used purpose in the total number of laws.
2. Protection of morals, which appeared as the most frequent concern in Italy, Germany, Switzerland, and the Colonies, but of little concern in France and England.

3. Retaining revenue for the state and the reduction of government expenses, which appeared as the second most frequently used purpose in each country.

Seven hypotheses were formulated preliminary to investigation of certain correlates that were believed to exist between sumptuary legislation and the course of history. These consisted of a major and four supporting hypotheses, as well as two minor hypotheses. An analysis was attempted with the support of the literature which was available and the use of the tools developed for classifying the information on the laws. Six hypotheses were substantiated by the supporting data, and one hypothesis required modification. Also, the analysis indicated the following conclusions in regard to sumptuary regulations which were recorded between 1300 and 1700:

1. As fashion changes increased in frequency there was an increase in the number of sumptuary laws but the phenomenon of fashion had no direct influence on the purposes, spread, and decline of sumptuary laws.
2. The sumptuary laws spread westward as they developed in use and frequency in Europe.
3. The existence of other laws that have not been translated, or that have not been located, introduce possibilities of alterations in the patterns of development and spread of sumptuary laws.
4. It is considered probable that the trends of development and spread evidenced by the sample used for this study would continue constant if it were possible to locate all the sumptuary laws that existed from 1300 to 1700.
5. Sumptuary laws increased in frequency as a financially strong middle class grew out of the development of commerce in Continental Europe and England.
6. The rise in the status of the individual, the shift in the position of the individual to one of wage earner, and the accompanying increase in wealth and leisure brought about by commercial activities were influential in the increase of sumptuary laws from 1300 to 1700.

7. The maintenance of class distinctions appeared as a purpose in the fourteenth century laws of Italy when wealth began to increase, and appeared during the fifteenth century in Middle Europe.
8. The economic motive gained strength in sumptuary laws about 1500 when governments sought additional protection for home industries.
9. It was noted that the sumptuary laws entered into a period of decline in frequency of occurrence just as the economic motive appeared to be developing a marked degree of strength.
10. The sumptuary laws of England developed differently than those of Continental Europe due to certain political, social, and economic differences in history.
11. The early formation of a centralized and representative government in England was an influence that was reflected in the early appearance of sumptuary laws, their increase in frequency and number, and their eventual decline.
12. Although the sumptuary laws of England begin at approximately the same date as those of Italy, the conclusion that the laws spread in a westward direction is maintained in this thesis because the use of sumptuary laws as a type of governmental control increased as European civilization spread westward.
13. Impending or existing states of war affected sumptuary laws indirectly, but caused no significant changes in their growth, spread, and decline.
14. Sumptuary regulations were short-lived in the English Colonies in North America because a decline in frequency of occurrence had begun in Continental Europe and England about 1600 and resulted in a change in character and a virtual disappearance of such laws by 1700.
15. Sumptuary legislation survived in America only one century because the economic trends of the times did not encourage its continuance.
16. Economic policies of the fourteenth century were instrumental in the development of an economic system which was dependent upon a favorable balance of trade and which incorporated the practices of private enterprise, free trade, wide distribution of goods, and competition for markets.
17. The economic trends of the seventeenth century were so well established and had gained such momentum that no effort

could save the use of sumptuary laws from declining before the forces of free trade, democratic rule, and individual self assertion.

18. The concentration of sumptuary laws in the Colonies of Massachusetts and Connecticut indicated that the Puritan movement had a measure of influence in their use.
19. The religious feeling of the age was responsible, in part, for the strength which sumptuary laws exhibited in the English Colonies in North America during the years 1625 to 1675.
20. In the Colonies of Virginia and North Carolina, in most instances, the instructions of a sumptuary nature were sent to the colonists directly from London.
21. Sumptuary laws were legislative acts designed to control personal expenditure and habits but they reflected social and economic forces and changes that characterize the four centuries of this study.
22. After 1700, sumptuary laws change in character from a concept of personal regulation by legislative groups to one of protection of public welfare.

#### SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

1. Research on penalties. There is very little material available regarding the penalties invoked for disobeying sumptuary laws. Research on actual court cases and records would offer new information on the ineffectiveness of the laws and provide deeper insight into the significance of sumptuary laws.
2. Sumptuary legislation of the Far East. Sumptuary laws are not entirely Western in concept and use, although literature indicates that this is primarily the case. Research in the use of sumptuary laws in the Far East and the Orient would supplement the present knowledge of sumptuary laws, their origins, and history.
3. Modern sumptuary regulations of Turkey. A study of the emergence of Turkey as a modern nation of the Far East would contribute to the scope of knowledge of sumptuary legislation. Attaturk appears to have been successful in enacting and enforcing sumptuary laws since 1925 in the program of modernization for Turkey.
4. Modern regulations of clothing. Clothing laws for the stage, motion pictures, and various regulations of certain urban areas would be a valuable study for a student of clothing.



5. The religious aspect of sumptuary legislation. A study of sumptuary legislation devoted to developing the role which the Church played in the history of personal regulations would be valuable.
6. Research for additional recorded sumptuary laws. There is an obvious need for the location and translation of recorded laws wherever they may exist. Research in this area would provide necessary information for completing the history of personal regulations and understanding the significance of sumptuary laws.

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APPENDIX

PROCLAMATIONS AND ORDINANCES

- I. A Proclamation for the Redress of Inordinate Apparel,  
England, 1559.
- II. A Proclamation by the Lord Mayor and Common Council of London,  
England, 1582.
- III. An Extract From the Ordinance on Ostentation, Zurich, 1628.
- IV. Extracts From a Clothing Ordinance, Nuremburg, 1693.

## PROCLAMATIONS AND ORDINANCES

### I. A Proclamation for the Redress of Inordinate Apparel, England, 1559.

This proclamation was issued by Queen Elizabeth and declared that although the Queen might levy great sums of money by executing sundry laws upon great numbers of her subjects for wearing excessive and inordinate apparel, but in her goodness had decided to give further warning to her subjects on matters of dress. The proclamation charged all mayors, sheriffs, and justices of the peace in counties, governing officials of cities and corporate town, and all noblemen of the state of Barons, as well as all heads of societies and companies to take measures for the execution of the statutes referred to within twelve days after their publication.

To this proclamation was appended a schedule, giving in brief, outline form the content of the statute. This is the earliest document of its kind on record in England, according to Baldwin, and is reproduced in her book in full.

The proclamation is followed by the following statement:

These be the briefe contentes but of certayne partes of the lawes nowe remaynyng in force, to the observation whereof, her Majestie thinketh best to induce her subjects by this shorte memoriall, and yet neverthelesse wyseth that all of inferior estates should not neglect the rest of the same lawes, lest if they shalbe found to contemne these oders here mencioned, they may feele the payne of the rest.

There be certayne other exceptions in the statues: as for such as have licence by the Quenes Majestie, or such as shall runne in any Justes or shall serve in warre, or shall have apparel given them to be worne by her Majestie, and such lyke. All which are well to be considered by them that wyll clayme any privilege thereby, and that at theyr peryll.

And where there is mention made of values of yerely lyvelodes and goodes, the best accompt therof is to be made by the taxations of this last subsidie, so as if any will be excused by pretence of his livelode or substance, to offende, it is as meete that he aunswere to the Prince in subseyde for that value, as seeke defence to breake any good lawe, whereof her Majestie geveth to all men admonition.<sup>1</sup>

Anno M. D. LIX

Mense Octobris

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<sup>1</sup>Baldwin, op. cit., pp. 216-219.

PROCLAMATIONS AND ORDINANCES CONT'D

II. A Proclamation by the Lord Mayor and Common Council of

London, England, 1582.<sup>2</sup>

In 1582, the luxury of the times "having greatly prevailed among people of all degrees in their apparel," particularly apprentices, "the Lord Mayor and common-council of London enacted that no apprentice whatsoever should presume to wear:

1. Any clothing except what he received from his master.
2. A hat, or anything except a woolen cap without any silk in or about it.
3. Ruffles, cuffs, loose collars, or anything except a ruff around his neck, and that must not be more than a yard and a half long.
4. Anything except canvas, fustian, sackcloth, English leather, or woolen doublets, without any silver or silk trimming.
5. Anything but white, blue, or russet kersey or cloth in his hose or stockings.
6. Breeches made of any other materials than those of which the doublet was made, or stitched, laced, or bordered.
7. Upper coats made of anything except plain cloth or leather, without pinking, stitching, edging or silk trimming.
8. Any surtouts except cloth gowns or cloaks, lined or faced with cloth, cotton or baize, with fixed, round collars, without stitching, guarding, lace or silk.
9. Pumps, slippers or shoes not made of English leather, or pinked, edged or stitched, and girdles and garters made of anything except untrimmed crewel, wool, thread or leather.
10. Swords, daggers, or other weapons, except knives, rings, jewels of gold nor silver, or silk in any of his apparel.

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<sup>2</sup>Baldwin, op. cit., p. 231-232



## Penalty:

First offence; Punishment at the discretion of his master.

Second offence; Public whipping.

Third offence; Apprentice to serve six months longer than the  
specified indenture.

Note: Apprentices are also forbidden to attend dancing, fencing,  
or musical schools.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Baldwin, op. cit., p. 231-232.

PROCLAMATIONS AND ORDINANCES CONT'D.

III. An Extract From the Ordinance on Ostentation, Zurich, 1628.

Ostentation

And since ostentation in clothing on all sides is taking more and more the upper hand and is becoming so much in vogue both among high and low classes of men and women that no one is dressed according to his rank, and many are suffering in household and business while wife and child are spending so much on superfluity and costliness in clothing and often in furniture, trumpery and bed-clothing, therefore we warn everybody, man or woman, most earnestly and publicly, that they avoid all costliness and superfluity especially in ostentatious clothing, and in particular that they abstain from all foreign fashions, and in future set no more gold or silver cords on their clothing, but let everyone apply and use the common, honorable clothing customary in our country, suitable to every class and more becoming to us, since through such frivolous and foreign dress the frivolous heart and mind will be perceived.

Therefore we warn and command most earnestly all parents, women or men, not to permit their children or servants to show such ostentation, costliness and new fashions, otherwise where it occurs, we shall hold the parents or fathers of family responsible who allow such conduct by their children or servants.

Inasmuch as we have ordered that everyone in city and country hold to honorable dress suitable to his rank we shall maintain anew a diligent oversight of these things, and especially shall at once give warning not only to persons who are clothed contrary to their class and to the previous ordinances, but also to the workers who make these things and to the merchants who bring new forms into the country, or demand from those who do not take advice the established fines and thus prevent the beginnings in time.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Vincent, op. cit., p. 139.

PROCLAMATIONS AND ORDINANCES CONT'D.

IV. Extracts From a Clothing Ordinance, Nurembrug, 1693.

Introduction

Since the Most Noble, Foresighted and Mostwise Council of the City of Nuremberg of the Holy Roman Empire with displeasure is obliged to observe and learn by experience to what extent the salutary clothing ordinance renewed in the year 1657 is almost frivolously and contemptuously forgotten by the majority of citizens, and in these troublesome times with the lack of food are addicted to excessive costly display, to the no small vexation of virtue loving persons, so that one can hardly distinguish one class from another, whereby observing foreigners of high or low degree in travelling through are often annoyed, not to mention that GOD the Almighty Creator and Preserver of mankind for these and their other sins often threatens to plunge whole cities and lands into ruin, wherefore they have made a better clothing ordinance which shall go into effect at the coming Easter.

The First Rank

First for all men belonging to the first rank it is allowed to wear hat cords of solid and spun gold, but these must not exceed 20 to 25 gulden in value. On the other hand for them to wear hat-cords set with costly precious stone is of course forbidden. Further they may wear caps of velvet with trimmings of marten fur. Wigs shall not exceed 8 to 10 thaler in value. Their collars and facings, or in their place scarfs together with the Handtatzlein, with or without lace, sewed or worked shall not exceed 12 to 15 thaler in worth. Also they are allowed to wear jackets as well as mantles made of any kind of silk goods, as brocade, flowered satin, except smooth velvet, and the lined jackets and mantles at the most shall be lined with back-fur of marten or velvet.

Persons of the first rank may wear breeches, waistcoats and coats of velvet, satin and other garments made of silk, such as taffeta, or brocade, and also may use stockings, wholly of silk. But they must avoid all other costly raiment, especially camisoles of gold and silver material, or made of gold and silver pieces (the value of which may run to 20 thaler) embroidered borders, long costly silk laces and excessive borders on clothing. They may wear on their waistcoats and coats silver and gilded buttons, likewise on a leather or woolen suit two silver or gold galoons, the lace and borders of which weigh one loth, two ounces per ell. Seven ells for the border of a mantle is allowed. On the other hand they are earnestly forbidden to wear any excess of gold and silver, especially gold and silver embroidered sword-hangings worth more than 12 to 15 thaler, as well as too large gold and silver fringes on the gloves.

Furthermore they are allowed to have gilded, silvered or damascened arms, such as pommel, cross and sheath point, but no excess of this kind may be carried.

Doctors, advocates and others will so regulate their dress according to their class that they do not conflict with the city laws and ordinances. And even though the old noble families eligible to the Council have had the privilege from old times down, yet no one else is allowed to have gold chains, gold hatbands, not silver-gilt buttons on their waistcoats, jackets and coats. On the other hand none of these (except members of the Council) shall have the right to wear any gold chains which exceed 120 Rheingulden in weight or value.

Further it is allowed and permitted for them to have horse outfits of leather with only gilded and silvered rings and buckles, saddles of leather with woolen or velvet seats, a woolen blanket not excessive in length, ornamented somewhat with fringes, gold lace, or cords, pistol holsters with velvet covers. Long embroidered saddle covers and similar pistol holsters as well as solid silver horse outfits are entirely forbidden. They may also have one or more colored brushes or pompons on the head-gear of their coach horses but in hanging on dollen cloth flaps or similar ornaments they must go to no excess. Dollen of whole or half silk are forbidden.

[There follows a section directing the decoration of horses and coaches, chaises, and caleches]

Whoever acts contrary to the points included above shall be liable to ten gulden penalty for each offense.

#### Women and Young Women of the Old Noble Families

The women and young women of the First Rank may wear velvet hoods but not too large, trimmed with sable or marten fur, which they may ornament only for honor occasions [weddings] or feast days with gold roses or buckles and somewhat with pearls, but no diamonds. Such ornamentation must not exceed 70 to 75 crowns in gold. Likewise they are allowed to wear all gold hair-caps but without pearls, worth not over 30 to 40 gulden in coin. On the other hand it is forbidden to them to set diamonds in their hat-cords (if these come into use again) or in their hair-caps, but gold and other precious stones are allowed. Young women will be permitted to wear pearl hair-ribbons, or in place of them a head dress with gold ribbons as a coife.

And since great display and excess has hitherto been displayed in over long collars the women of this class are reminded that in future they must refrain from wearing such superfluously long and thick collars, and likewise the facings and specially the costly laces on them.

For bosom pieces they may use good velvet, satin, damask, as well as silk goods worked in with silver and gold, and even may trim these articles with all-gold laces or galoons. On the other hand they must totally abstain from goods worked only with gold and gold flowers. Further they are permitted to use figured or unfigured velvet, satin, damask or other silk goods for their coats and apron trimmings, but they are not entitled to have the coats bordered with excessive gold.

They may make their small mantles of satin, rosat, damask budesoy, tabby, and place on them marten or other equally costly velvet trimmings. Also line them with marten fur, either one-sixth of an ell wide with the same goods turned over, or when one-fourth of an ell wide trim them with silk borders or laces. On the other hand it is entirely forbidden to wear mantellets of velvet, or any with sable, velvet, satin, or other costly linings, or with embroidered borders.

Women and young women of the highest rank may wear dresses of satin, damask, double taffeta and other silk goods, whether flowered or not flowered and it is permitted them to border or fasten on the dress or apron gold or silver galoons or similar laces of which the ell is not over two ounces in weight. On the other hand dress or aprons of gold or silver goods, or made of velvet trimmed with embroidered edges are strictly forbidden.

It is further permitted to this class to have a long gold chain worn not more than double with a seemly jewel or network, likewise, as has been their custom from old times, a gold neck-band and fastening, also gold neck-chains, although except for a jewel or pendant thereon no precious stone may be attached. They may also have neck ornaments of so-called "health-stones," also gold bracelets, although not more than one pair may be worn at a time, or in place of these small gold chains. Likewise they must avoid shoes and slippers bordered or embroidered with gold and silver under the penalty established below.

The wives of doctors and advocates may also wear clothing, ornaments, chains, gold rings and other things appropriate to their rank, provided that therewith they do not overstep the clothing ordinance and thereby exhibit their honor and birth with more than excessive display.

As often as anyone in the first rank offends against one or more of the points included above that person shall be obliged to pay ten gulden penalty for every offence, and more according to circumstances.



[There then followed instructions for The Second Rank  
and instructions for the Dress of Wives and Daughters of  
Merchants of Second Rank]

Third Rank

Costume of tradesmen and merchant people considered qualified for the Grand Council, having their own business but not so prominent and important, with or without agents, including also artisans eligible to the Small Council.

They are forbidden to wear gold, good or bad, or anything that looks like it. They may wear hat cords of silver costing not more than three or four gulden. Their hats may be of fur or figured velvet; their collars, with or without lace must not exceed ten gulden in value. Coats and mantles must be of woolen cloth or of "ferrentum" or other half-silk material and lined with inferior fur. Facings, collars and cuffs can be of figured velvet, damask or taffeta, but linings of marten fur or smooth velvet plush are forbidden. Breeches and jackets may be of damask and inferior silk material, but satin, good figured velvet, cut or uncut, are totally forbidden under penalty of ten gulden.

To keep coaches, horses, chaises and caleches is strictly prohibited. If anyone needs to drive he may keep a coach by paying fifty thaler a year, but the vehicle must have no painting or carving on it and be lined with gray cloth. The horses are not to wear harnesses with silver or bright metal fixtures, while coachmen and servants cannot wear livery but be dressed in dark coats of plain gray without cords or borders.

Wives and Daughters of the Third Rank

These, including the wives of foreign clergy and schoolmasters, and daughters who live with their parents may wear hoods of cut or uncut velvet with borders of dyed fur of marten, otter or jennet, and head-dresses set with silver not exceeding ten gulden in price. Summer hats with silver hat-cords costing three to four gulden and silk headdresses with silver or mother of pearl bangles may be worn. Gloves may have silver lace on them but there must be no gold or anything that looks like it in hat-bands or headdresses. The latter are to be fastened with a silver galoon not too wide. Collars with or without lace and reverses up to six or eight gulden, or heavy collars worth ten or twelve gulden may be worn but must not be too high or too wide.

Brides of this class may wear black, green or nail-colored cloaks of camelot with velvet borders one ell wide. Gowns may be made of damask or other silk material but not satin or velvet, nor must they be adorned



with "unnecessary frizzled lace".

Skirts and aprons of Turkish scarlet or half-silk material, smooth without flowers, with silk lace three fingers wide may be worn, but Venetian and English scarlet are forbidden. Mantles of unwatered camelot, or smooth camelshair may have facings of damask or other inferior goods, with lace not too wide, or a border of velvet or silk one-sixth of an ell wide.

Chains over the dress and pendants of real stones are forbidden but a small chain about the neck of this width



weighing twelve to fourteen crowns and worth thirty to thirty-six gulden may be worn without a pendant. Permitted also is a necklace of Elendsklauen poverty claws or other single colored but not costly stones, as jasper, cornelian, etc., worth twenty-eight to thirty gulden. A silver belt (Leiboder Tanzgurtel) costing eleven or twelve gulden is allowed, but unnecessary costly rings are forbidden and a fine of ten gulden is the penalty for breaking any of these rules.

#### Fourth Rank

Clothing and fashions of mercantile people who began business within a few years, and those having few overseers and not yet included in the foregoing ranks, as also the shopkeepers and craftsmen who are in the aforesaid class, and all merchant clerks.

These persons are forbidden to have all the things denied to members of the first three classes. They may wear caps of figured mock-velvet with rims and linings of fur but not of marten. In case of mourning they may not wear crepe veils which are too long on their hats. These must not be more than four ells in length. They may wear collars and reverses of lace not exceeding three or four gulden in value. They may have woolen mantles with velvet collars, while breeches, coat, waistcoat and jacket may be of light silk.

The fine for wearing velvet, satin, etc. unlawfully is six gulden for each piece each time worn.

Included in this class also are imperial notaries, procurators and other secretaries of this kind.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Vincent, op. cit., pp. 144-151.

TABLE IV

SAMPLE OF SUMPTUARY REGULATIONS

1300-1700

TABLE IV

## SUMPTUARY LAWS OF ITALY

Date	To Whom Directed	Restrictions	Permissions - Exceptions Directions For Wearing	Penalties	Miscellaneous
1303	All	Long trains Expensive embroidery Veils of goldlace Costly headdresses Long trains			In Venice
1327	All	Long trains			In Modena: Instrument for measuring the length of trains installed on the Piazza Grande
1324	All	Decrees against luxuries			In Florence
1330	All Men	Striped or velvet dresses Trains more than two yards long Short doublets			In Florence
1340	All	Pointed toed shoes			In Milan
1342	All	Velvet clothing of more than two colors			In Perugia
1344	All	More anti-luxury laws			In Florence
1355	All	More anti-luxury laws			In Florence
1396	All	Velvet cloth Purple cloth Gold cloth	Knights Physicians Jurors		In Milan
1400	All	Number of silk dresses per individual restricted			In Bologna Dresses tagged with seals to check
1453	All	Long trains		Excommunication	In Bologna

## SUMPTUARY LAWS OF ITALY

Date	To Whom Directed	Restrictions	Permissions - Exceptions Directions For Wearing	Penalties	Miscellaneous
1455	All	Long trains		Excommunication	In Pisa, Lucca, Modena, Ancona and Venice
1464	Cardinals of the Church				Pope Paul II; fixes clothing to be worn by Cardinals
1472	All	Lowcut dresses			Unknown A campaign
1504	All	German-style dresses			In Venice
1512	All	Lowcut dresses			In Genoa & Milan A campaign
1514	All	Anti-luxury laws			In Venice; Office of the Comptrol- ler founded
1520	All	Extravagances			In Rome & Milan campaigns
1529	All	More than five pearls on one glove			In Pistoja
1547	Country Women	Velvet girdles			In Padua
	All	Gloves; embroidered or sable lined			In Cremona
1562	All	Foreign-made silk and velvet			In Florence
		Excessive yardage in garments			
	Young girls Courtseans	Silk velvet Demask			

## SUMPTUARY LAWS OF GERMANY

Date	To Whom Directed	Restrictions	Permissions - Exceptions Directions For Wearing	Penalties	Miscellaneous
1350	All	Roman jackets		In all cases: A confiscation of the article, with some re- imbursement at a set standard rate. If the cost exceeded one rate it was regarded as an elastic fine.	In Nurnberg
		Silver Italian knives			
		Silver girdles (that cost more than one-half mark)			
		Silver cloth from Venice			
		Fine pearls			
		Slashed shoes			
		Slashed coats			
		Pater Nosters worth more than twelve heller	To be worn as of old, not in new, curious styles		
		Rings, clasps, or buttons on sleeves higher than one elbow		One pound heller a day	
		Furs of Ermine		Ten pounds heller	
		Coats of spalt			
	Women	New Reisin	Reisin as of old is to be worn except: Maidens		
		Expensive goods			Women classed as: Maidens, married women, matrons
		Veils piled on head			

## SUMPTUARY LAWS OF GERMANY

Date	To Whom Directed	Restrictions	Permissions - Exceptions Directions For Wearing	Penalties	Miscellaneous
1350 Cont'd.	Women	More than two garments of fur			
	Men	Red Buckram	Except: Men under fifty years		
		Hair unparted	To be worn in tufts as of old		
		Furs of ermine, sable, and weasel			
		Cloth of gold or silver			
		Gold lace			
		Pearls			
c1480	All	Long pointed toes, or shoes		Three guldens	
	Cobblers		Are not to make long toed shoes		
	All	Foreign styles			
	Women	Garments made of gold, velvet, silver, satin, silk, and taffeta			
		Coats of camel's hair			
		Expensive borders	Limit one-half ell of goods		
		Expensive styles limited to certain cost: Headdresses, cloaks and mantles, fur linings, chains of gold, gilded chains, Pater Nosters, rosaries			
		Garments of "scharlach"			



TABLE IV CONT'D  
 SUMPTUARY LAWS OF GERMANY

Date	To Whom Directed	Restrictions	Permissions - Exceptions Directions For Wearing	Penalties	Miscellaneous
c1480 Cont'd	Women	Garments cut "too low" in neck	Limit: One finger's breadth below throat		
		Coats wholly open	Must be clasped at waist or wholly closed		
		Garments too short			
	Men	Plaited shirts or "breast cloths"			
		Fabrics with gold in them	Except: Doctors of law, knights, honorable citizens		
		Trim or decorations	Except: Doctors of law, knights, honorable citizens		

SUMPTUARY LAWS OF ENGLAND

Date	To Whom Directed	Restrictions	Permissions - Exceptions Directions For Wearing	Penalties	Miscellaneous
1337	All	Cloth or furs of foreign make	Except: King, Queen, their children, people of the Holy Church, knights, ladies	Forfeiture of the cloth Punishment at the King's will	
	Merchants	Cannot import foreign cloth			
1355	Disreputable women		To wear: Garments inside out, striped hoods of different colors		
1363	All	Ermine	Except: Knights, ladies and above with incomes of four hundred to one thousand pounds per year		
		Mantles or gowns furred with miniver or sleeved with ermine	Except: Knights or above with incomes of two hundred pounds per year		
		Any apparel embroidered with precious stones or anything else			
		Cloth worth more than six marks for the whole piece			
		Silk, ribbons, girdles or apparel (except head- dresses) trimmed with precious stones	Except: Esquires below the rank of knights, and all ranks above, possessing land or rents to the value of two hundred pounds per year		
		Miniver fur or cloth worth five marks for the whole piece	Except: Persons who own pro- perty worth one thousand pounds		
		Cloth of gold, silver, or silk Gold or silver jewelry Any precious stones or pearls Any fur of any kind Any trimmings on edges of garments Cloth worth more than four and one-half marks for the whole piece	Except: Esquires below the rank of knights, or above, possessing land or rents to the value of one hundred pounds per year Merchants, citizens, and burgesses possessing goods worth five hundred pounds		

## SUMPTUARY LAWS OF ENGLAND

Date	To Whom Directed	Restrictions	Permissions - Exceptions Directions For Wearing	Penalties	Miscellaneous
1363 Cont'd.	Yeomen and Hand- icraftsmen	Girdles, knives, buttons, rings, brooches, chains of gold or silver			
		Whole cloth that exceeds forty shillings for the whole piece			
		Embroidered cloth			
		Any fur except lamb, coney, cat, or fox			
	Grooms and Ser- vants of Lords	Anything made of silver or gold			
		Cloth that exceeds two marks for the whole piece			
		Anything embroidered or enamelled			
		Any silk			
	All	Long robes	Except: Lawyers, doctors, traders, and monarchs		
	The lowest classes (carters, plough- men, ox-herders, cow-herders, shepherds, swine- herders, dairy- men)	Blanket cloth and russett costing more than twelve pence per yard			
		Girdles of linen			
	All	Pointed shoes longer than an established length			
	Manufacturers	Ordered to manufacture cloth which would sell at the various prices set			
	Drapers	To sell at the stated prices			

TABLE IV CONT'D  
SUMPTUARY LAWS OF ENGLAND

Date	To Whom Directed	Restrictions	Permissions - Exceptions Directions For Wearing	Penalties	Miscellaneous
1388					Regulated apparel suitable to everyman's rank and quality
1402	All	Cloth of gold Velvet Crimson color Velvet "motely" Great hanging sleeves Long gowns which touched the floor Ermine, marten, letuse, or miniver furs	Except: Knight Bannerets, ladies, above that rank	Forfeiture of the offending article One hundred shillings fine (half to go to the King, half to go to the person bring- ing the charge)	
	Yeomen	Lamb, coney, or otter furs Daggers Horns Harnesses of silver	Unless possessing rents or lands to the value of twenty pounds per year, or goods and chattels at two hundred pounds value		
	Soldiers (when in fighting array)		May wear what they please		
1406	Justices of the Bench and Ser- geants of the King				Shall use their hoods as best to honor the King
	All	Expensive furs Precious stones Pearls Ouches Beads Harnesses of gold or gilded	Except: Those above the rank of apprentices of law Clerks of the people Squires	Same as 1402 law with this addit- ion: All offend- ers in these mat- ters were to be excommunicated from the Church	

## SUMPTUARY LAWS OF ENGLAND

Date	To Whom Directed	Restrictions	Permissions - Exceptions Directions For Wearing	Penalties	Miscellaneous
1406 Cont'd.	All	Trimmings cut into the shapes of trefoils, roses, or similar devices		Same as 1402 law with this addi- tion: All offend- ers in these mat- ters were to be excommunicated from the Church	
	Tailors	Forbidden to make the outlawed trimming shapes		Subject to punish- ment at the King's will	
1420	All	Shall not gild on sheaths or metal	Except: On apparel of Barons, spurs of knights, ornaments of the Holy Church	Fine of ten times the value of the article Imprisonment for one year	
1430	Common Strumpets		To wear: Striped hoods		
1463	All	Jackets too short Shoes split at sides Shoes with peaks before and behind Cloth of gold Cloth with gold threads Any sable fur	Except: Lords and above		
		Figured velvet, silk, or satin Ermine Damask Satin	Except: Lords and their families Servants of the King's household	Fine of ten marks	
		Cloth of velvet upon velvet	Except: Knights of the Garter	Fine of twenty marks	
		Purple silk	Except: Knights of the Garter	Fine of ten pounds	

## TABLE IV CONT'D.

## SUMPTUARY LAWS OF ENGLAND

Date	To Whom Directed	Restrictions	Permissions - Exceptions Directions For Wearing	Penalties	Miscellaneous
1463 Cont'd.	All	Miniver, letuse, or other costly fur Girdles of gold or silver gilt Silk of foreign make	Except: Those with incomes of forty pounds or more per year Servants of such households		
		Fustian from Naples Bustian Scarlet cloth Fur, except black or white lamb	Except: Those with incomes of forty shillings or more per year		
1465	All	Any padding or bolsters except a lining in their doublets	Except: Those above the rank of yeoman	Fine of six shil- lings, eight pence	
		Jackets shorter than hip length	Except: Knights above lords	Fine of twenty shillings	
		Shoes with points more than two inches long	Except: Knights above lords		
1463	Peasants and Laborers	Cloth costing more than two shillings "the broad yard" Fabric for hose costing more than fourteen pence a yard Girdles trimmed with silver Kerchiefs costing more than twelve pence the plite	Except while performing duties: Clergy Soldiers Judges of various courts Some court officials Scholars at the Universities Heralds Messengers Ministers		
1465	Cobblers, within a radius of three miles of London	Forbidden to make any shoes, galoches, or huseas with pikes more than two inches long		Fine of twenty shillings	
1467	All	Long points on shoes		Fine of twenty shillings Curse of the clergy	



## SUMPTUARY LAWS OF ENGLAND

Date	To Whom Directed	Restrictions	Permissions - Exceptions Directions For Wearing	Penalties	Miscellaneous
1477	All	Camelet, silk, or woollen made outside of England Trimmings of satin, camelet, scarpenet, or tarteron	Except: Those with more than twenty pounds income per year	Paid in fines (one-half to go to the person bringing charge)	
		Frontlets of velvet or silk	Except: Wives of those with incomes of more than ten pounds per year	Paid in fines (one-half to go to the person bringing charge)	
1483	All	Cloth of gold Cloth of purple silk	Except: Royalty	Fine of twenty pounds	
		Plain cloth of gold	Except: Lords and above	Fine of twenty marks	
		Foreign-made woolens	Except: Lords and above	Fine of ten pounds	
		Sable fur	Except: Lords and above		
		Cloth of gold tissue	Except: Dukes and above	Fine of ten marks	
		Velvet in doublets	Except: Knights and above		
		Demask or satin in gowns	Except: Knights and above	Fine of forty shillings	
		Cloth that exceeds two shillings a broad yard Kerchiefs that exceed twenty pence the broad plite			
1487	Hatters and Cappers	Not to sell any hat above the price of twenty pence, the best Not to sell any cap above the price of two shillings eight pence, the best		Forty shillings per hat or cap sold above the stated prices	
1490					Maximum price for cloth fine and coarse, set

## SUMPTUARY LAWS OF ENGLAND

Date	To Whom Directed	Restrictions	Permissions - Exceptions Directions For Wearing	Penalties	Miscellaneous
1510	All	Cloth of gold Cloth of purple color Silk of purple	Except: Royalty		
		Cloth of gold tissue for horse trappings	Except: Dukes and above		
		Sables	Except: Earls and above		
		Cloth of silver Satin shot with silver or gold Silk or any cloth mixed with silver or gold Cloth bordered with silver or gold	Except: Barons and above	Forfeiture of the article Fine of from ten to twenty marks	
		Foreign-made wool	Except: Lords and above	Forfeiture Fine of forty shillings	
		Crimson or blue velvet in any garments Gowns or riding coats trimmed with velvet or martin Pleated or guarded shirts Furs imported from abroad Garments with more than: Four yards per gown; Three yards per riding coat; Two and one-half yards per coat	Except: Knights of the Garter Knights and above People who possessed land, etc., of more than three hundred pounds value King's servants City and court officials		
		Doublets or gowns of/or trimmed with velvet, satin, or damask	Except: Those possessing goods equivalent to one hundred pounds per year		

## SUMPTUARY LAWS OF ENGLAND

Date	To Whom Directed	Restrictions	Permissions - Exceptions Directions For Wearing	Penalties	Miscellaneous
1510	All	Satin Damask Silk Camlet	Except: People with incomes of more than twenty pounds per year Lawyers University graduates		
	Peasants and Laborers	Cloth that exceeds two shillings a yard Fabric for hose that exceeds ten pence a yard	Except: Those with incomes of more than ten pounds per year	Imprisonment in the stocks for three days	
1511	All	Silk	Except: Lords Knights		
					Doublets are to be made only of camlet
1514	All	Cloth trimmed or embroidered with gold, silver, or silk	Except: Lords and above		
		Cloth of gold Cloth of silver	Except: Dukes and above Sons of Dukes Marquis Earls		
		Sable Black genet	Except: Earls and above		
		Gold or gilt jewelry of any kind	Except: Knights and above		
		Silken or ornamented points	Except: Gentlemen and above		
	Servants		To wear: Lamb's wool		
1515	All	Velvet, satin, or damask of black, russet, or tawny color in doublets, jackets, or coats Damask or camlet in gowns Chains of gold	Except: Members of the King's Queen's, and Princes' house- holds Treasurer Clerk of King's Court Controller Gentlemen's Ushers		

## TABLE IV CONT'D.

## SUMPTUARY LAWS OF ENGLAND

Date	To Whom Directed	Restrictions	Permissions - Exceptions Directions For Wearing	Penalties	Miscellaneous
1515 Cont'd.	Servants		May wear: Gold jewelry, if they are badges of their lords and masters		
	Servants of Husbandry	Cloth that exceeds two shillings four pence per yard			
1533	All	Cloth of gold tissue that exceeds five pounds per yard in doublets and sleeveless coats	Except: Dukes and above	Forfeiture of the article Fine of three shillings four pence	
		Purple mantles	Except: Knights of the Garter		
		"Collar of S"	Except: Knights		
		Cloth of gold, cloth of silver, or tinsel in sleeveless coats and doublets	Except: Viscounts Barons Prior of St. John's of Jerusalem		
		Wool of foreign make Crimson, scarlet, or blue velvet	Except: Lords and above Marquis Children of Marquis Dukes Earls		
		Chains, bracelets, or ornaments of gold	Except: Knights Barons Sons of Barons Those possessing rents or lands worth two hundred pounds per year		

## SUMPTUARY LAWS OF ENGLAND

Date	To Whom Directed	Restrictions	Permissions - Exceptions Directions For Wearing	Penalties	Miscellaneous
1533 Cont'd.	All	Any outer garments of camlet, silk, satin, damask, taffeta, sarcenet Silk in doublets Sarcenet, camlet, taffeta in the linings of gowns Velvet in sleeveless coats and jerkins	Except: Sons and heirs apparent of knights Sons of those with incomes of three hundred pounds per year Those with personal incomes of forty pounds per year		
		Satin, damask, silk, or camlet in gowns, coats with sleeves, or other outer garments Velvet, except in sleeveless jackets, doublets, or purses Foreign fur except genet or bugey	Except: Those with incomes of one hundred pounds per year		
		Two colored hose Any fabric that exceeds three shillings four pence per yard Any furs except coney, or black or white lamb Embroidery or trimming of silk, gold, or silver on shirts, coifs, bonnets, hats, etc.	Except: Those above the rank of servants and yeomen Those with incomes of forty shillings per year		
		Fabric for hose that exceeds two shillings per yard Fabric for gowns that exceeds four shillings a yard Fabric for coats and jackets that exceeds two shillings eight pence per yard	Except: Those above the rank of small farmer		
			May wear any foreign bonnet		

TABLE IV CONT'D.  
 SUMPTUARY LAWS OF ENGLAND

Date	To Whom Directed	Restrictions	Permissions - Exceptions Directions For Wearing	Penalties	Miscellaneous
1533	All	Fabric for hose that exceeds sixteen pence per yard Cloth for any other garments that exceeds two shillings eight pence Doublets made of bustian, canvas, leather, or coarse woolen cloth	Except: Those above the rank of servants of husbandry, journeymen, and handicraft workers		
	Those below Yeomen and Servants		May wear as ornaments in their bonnets: Silken ribbons Badges of their lords Prizes won at wrestling		
	Sailors		May wear silver whistles on silver chains around their necks		
	The Lord Chancellor and the Lord Treasurer		May wear velvet, satin, and silk of any color except purple Any fur except black genet		
	Any Englishman		May wear linen of foreign make		
	Any Gentleman		May wear shirts embroidered with thread of silk, so long as it is bought in England		
1534					Against excess in apparel



TABLE IV CONT'D.  
SUMPTUARY LAWS OF ENGLAND

Date	To Whom Directed	Restrictions	Permissions - Exceptions Directions For Wearing	Penalties	Miscellaneous
1554	All	Silk on hats, bonnets, nightcaps, girdles, hose, shoes, scabbards, or spur leathers	Except: Knights Mayors Bailiffs Aldermen Other city officers The wives and children of the above Those who spend twenty pounds per year Those who possess goods worth two hundred pounds	Ten pounds per day for everyday the forbidden article is worn Three months im- prisonment	Servants' clothing is to be observed and noted in writing by their lords and mas- ters
1559					"A Proclamation for the Redress of Inordinate Apparel"
1562					"Articles for the Due Execution of the Statute of Apparel and for the Reformation of the Outrageous Excesses Thereof Grown of Late Time Within the Realm"
1563					Similar proclamation to the above issued

## SUMPTUARY LAWS OF ENGLAND

Date	To Whom Directed	Restrictions	Permissions - Exceptions Directions For Wearing	Penalties	Miscellaneous
1565					Proclamation issued directed against hose and hosiers
1566	All	Hats or upper cap of velvet or covered with velvet	Except: Knights and above Lords' sons		
1571	Every person over six years			Three shillings four pence for every day not worn	To wear on Sundays and Holy days a cap of wool knit, made wholly and only in England, and finished by the members of the trade of Cap-pers.
1572					An order issued directed toward hats and caps
1574					A relisting in which men's and women's clothing was listed separately and in greater detail
1577					Similar to 1574 proclamation
1580					A renewal of 1577 proclamation with additions
1589					A repeat of the earlier provisions
1597	All	Cloth of gold Silver tissued Silk of purple color	Except: Earls and above Knights of the Garter in their purple mantles		

## SUMPTUARY LAWS OF ENGLAND

Date	To Whom Directed	Restrictions	Permissions - Exceptions Directions For Wearing	Penalties	Miscellaneous
1597	All	Cloth of gold Cloth of silver Tinselled satin Silk or cloth mixed or embroidered with gold or silver Foreign woolen cloth	Except: Barons and above Knights of the Garter Privy Councillors		
Cont'd.		Lace of gold or silver, mixed with gold or silver or silk Spurs, swords, rapiers, daggers, buckles, studs of girdles, etc. gilded or damasked with gold or silver	Except: Barons' sons and above Gentlemen attending the Queen in house or chamber Men who have been employed in embassies Men with net incomes of five hundred marks per year for life Knights Captains		
		Velvet in gowns, cloaks, coats, or upper garments Embroidery with silk Netherstocks of silk	Except: Knights and above Their heirs apparent Men with net incomes of two hundred pounds All excepted in the preceeding article		
		Velvet in jerkins, hose, or doublets Satin, damask, taffeta, or grograin in gowns, cloaks, coats, etc.	Except: Knights' eldest sons and above Men with net incomes of one hundred pounds Those excepted above		
		Velvet gilding, silvering, etc. in saddles, bridles, stirrups or any furniture of the horse Studs, buckles, or other garniture gilt silvered, etc.	Except: Barons' sons and above Knights Men with incomes of five hundred marks or more Those excepted above		

## TABLE IV CONT'D.

## SUMPTUARY LAWS OF ENGLAND

Date	To Whom Directed	Restrictions	Permissions - Exceptions Directions For Wearing	Penalties	Miscellaneous
1597 Cont'd.	All	Cloth of gold Cloth of silver Tissued purple silk	Except: Countesses and above		
	Viscountesses	Cannot wear cloth of gold or silver tissued except in their kirtles			
	All	Silk Cloth mixed or embroidered with pearl, gold, or silver	Except: Baronesses and above		
		Cloth of gold or silver except in linings of garments	Except: Wives of Barons' eld- est sons and above Barons' daughters		
		Cloth of silver except in kirtles	Except: Knights' wives and above		
		Embroideries of gold or silver Lace of gold or silver, or mixed with gold, silver, or silk Headdresses trimmed with pearls	Except: Wives of Barons' eldest sons and above Barons' daughters Wives of knights of the Garter or Privy Councillors Maids of Honor Ladies of the Privy Chamber Women with incomes of five hundred marks per year		
		Velvet in upper garments Embroidery with silk Netherstocks of silk	Except: Knights' wives and above Women with incomes of two hundred pounds Those excepted in the preceeding article		
		Velvet in kirtles, petticoats, gowns, cloaks, or other outer garments Satin	Except: Wives of knights' eld- est sons and above Gentlewomen attendant upon countesses, viscountesses, etc. Women with incomes of one hundred pounds		

## SUMPTUARY LAWS OF ENGLAND

Date	To Whom Directed	Restrictions	Permissions - Exceptions Directions For Wearing	Penalties	Miscellaneous
1597 Cont'd.	All	Satin in kirtles Damask, tufted taffeta, plain taffeta, or grograin in gowns	Except: Wives of gentlemen bearing arms and above that rank		
1604					An act to do away with existing laws that were evil, in which is included one statute of apparel
1616	All	Outer garments of: Cloth of gold Cloth of silver Velvet, satin, taffeta  Mourning gowns of other than English broadcloth	Except on Sundays, Holy days and festivals	Nobility: To be censured Others: To be punished accord- ing to various assizes	
1620	All	Broad brimmed hats Painted doublets Short hair Poinards			Church asked to inveigh ve- hemently in their sermons against these items
1622	All		To wear cloths and stuffs of wool made in England		Proclamation
1624		Mantles Trousers Longskeines	Not to wear in public		A statute
1626	All				Lost statute

## SUMPTUARY LAWS OF ENGLAND

Date	To Whom Directed	Restrictions	Permissions - Exceptions Directions For Wearing	Penalties	Miscellaneous
1636	All	On the use of buying or selling of counterfeit jewels			Proclamation
1643	All	Lace, riband, buttons Embroidery Fringe, clasps or loops of gold or silver or mixed gold and silver	Knights of the Garter excepted		
		Cloth of gold	Knights of the Garter excepted		
		Bone lace of silk or linen thread on horse trappings or garments	Knights of the Garter excepted		
1660	All	To be buried in shirts, shifts, or sheets made only of wool			
	Coffin Makers		To line coffins only with flax, silk, hemp or hair		
1662	All Importers	Bone lace, cut work, fringe, buttons of thread			
1692	All Importers	Foreign hair buttons			
1698	All	On setting on, making, selling or wearing garments with buttons made of serge, cloth, drugget, frieze, camlet, or wood or other stuffs			



## SUMPTUARY LAWS OF SWITZERLAND

Date	To Whom Directed	Restrictions	Permissions - Exceptions Directions For Wearing	Penalties	Miscellaneous
1375	Women (Zurich)	Over ornamentation			
		Embroidery on:			
		Any cloth			
		Veil			
		Silk			
		Linen			
		Headdresses decorated with gold, silk, or precious stones	Except: Those of young girls and women		
		Neck openings too wide	Limit: Not more than two inches on shoulders		
		Buttons and lacings on dresses			
		Length of tails on hoods	Hoods can reach around Tails of hood to be no longer than one ell		
		Dresses of more than one color			
		Expensive girdles or belts	Limit: Five pounds in cost		
		Pointed toes on shoes			
		Lacing string on shoes			
	Men	Short outer garments	Must reach knees		
		Long tails on hoods	To be same length as jacket		
		Slashed garments			
		Striped trouser legs	To be of one color		
1464	Women (Bern)	Extravagances			Exhortations

## SUMPTUARY LAWS OF SWITZERLAND

Date	To Whom Directed	Restrictions	Permissions - Exceptions Directions For Wearing	Penalties	Miscellaneous
1464	Women	Long dress trains	Limit: One hand span in length		
Cont'd. (Bern)					
	All	Short coats and mantles			
		Long shoe points	Limit: Length of one finger	Ten shilling fine Banishment for one month	
1470	All	Long trains	Except: Noble ladies		
(Bern)		Jewelry of gold or precious stones	Except: Noble ladies		
	Ordinary Women	Furs: Marten Ermine Parti-colored			
1488	All	Costly clothing			Complaints against
(Zurich)		Silver or gold plated rings, pins, buckles	Except: Public prostitutes		
		Silk in garments or trimmings	Except: Public prostitutes Aristocrats who are members of the guilds		
		Metal mountings on belts that cost more than twelve gulden	Except: Public prostitutes Wives of men with incomes of 1,000 gulden a year		
		Hooks or buttons on garments	Except: Public prostitutes		
1530	All	Slashed or cut garments			
(Bern)					
1537	All	Slashed or cut garments	Citizens allowed one week to sew up slashes		Announced from pulpit

## SUMPTUARY LAWS OF SWITZERLAND

Date	To Whom Directed	Restrictions	Permissions - Exceptions Directions For Wearing	Penalties	Miscellaneous
1541	All	Slashed garments	Denouncement of slashed garments		Announcement from Church
1573	All	Slashes forbidden			"The Great Ordinance"
		Foreign clothes forbidden			
		Immodest clothing forbidden			
		Extravagant clothing forbidden			
1610	All (Zurich)	Great built up breeches			
		Silk mantles			
		Gold or silver cords			
		Great ruffs doubled, trebled, or too long		Five marks in silver	
1628	All (Bern)	Multitudes of cords lying close together on their clothing			
	Common Men	Velvet, satin, silk and similar fabrics			
	All	Fabric unsuited to class in waistcoats, breeches and sleeves			
	Men	Wide, low breeches which hang below the knee			
		No narrow trousers adorned with lace			

## SUMPTUARY LAWS OF SWITZERLAND

Date	To Whom Directed	Restrictions	Permissions - Exceptions Directions For Wearing	Penalties	Miscellaneous
1628	Men	New waistcoats with Spanish lace or broad thick shoulders			
Cont'd (Bern)		Silk bands or ribbons on sleeves or back			
		Wide mantle collars	No wider than one quarter ell		
		Indecent ornaments			
		Little mantles with gold cords, silver cords, passementerie, stripes			
		Wide trimmings on arms	No wider than three fingers		
	Servants	No trimmings on arms			
	Men	Lace trimmings			
		New hair styles	Hair not to be worn superfluous, great thick or curled, but in tufts as of old		
	All	Great excessive ruffs			
	Servants	Ruffs	One ruff only		
	All	Excessively slashed garments	Slashed garments if cut simple, without excess of insolent pride		
	Women	Slashes, perforations or decorations of ribbon			
		Superfluous wide trim on dresses			

## SUMPTUARY LAWS OF SWITZERLAND

Date	To Whom Directed	Restrictions	Permissions - Exceptions Directions For Wearing	Penalties	Miscellaneous
1628	Women	Fur			
Cont'd		Extra wide shoulders			
(Bern)		Long laces or braids on sleeves			
		Strange new trimmings coming in			
1637	All	Gold or half-gold embroidery on hat bands			
(Basel)		Passementerie trim of cords, laces, or embroidery			
		Gold, silver, pearls, or precious stones on clothing			
		Gold chains, necklaces or brace- lets			
		Openwork or trim on linen			
		Velvet, silk, satin or damask			
		No foreign styles			
		Trimmings or decorations of any kind			
		Wide cuffs or collars	Limit one-third ell wide		
		Too short clothing			
		Too wide, open bosoms			
		Too small neck scarves or mantles			
		Fur, fur linings or trim	Except: Those qualified by birth or condition		
		Fringe trimmings	Except: Those qualified by birth or condition		

TABLE IV CONT'D.  
SUMPTUARY LAWS OF FRANCE

Date	To Whom Directed	Restrictions	Permissions - Exceptions Directions For Wearing	Penalties	Miscellaneous
1530	All	Hoops (vertugadin)			Edicts
	All	Foreign styles and products	To dress according to rank		
1547	All	Costumes entirely of crimson	Except: Princesses		
		Underdresses partly or wholly of crimson	Except: Wives of gentlemen who may wear crimson on one part of underdress		
		Velvet gowns	Except: Princesses of one blood Maids of honor to one queen, who may wear them except in crimson color		
		Velvet gowns	Except: Attendants to other princesses, who may wear them in black or tenne'		
	Working Women	Whole dresses of silk	May Wear: Silk borders Silk linings False sleeves of silk		
	All	Bands of gold	May be worn: On head, in gold braid bordering, for dresses of ceremony, and in necklaces and belts		
1549	All	Gold and silver stuffs	Except: Princes and princesses		
		Braid	Except: Princes and princesses		
		Embroidery	Except: Princes and princesses		



TABLE IV CONT'D  
SUMPTUARY LAWS OF FRANCE

Date	To Whom Directed	Restrictions	Permissions - Exceptions Directions For Wearing	Penalties	Miscellaneous
1549 Cont'd.	All	Borderings	Except: Princes Princesses		
		Goldsmiths' works			
		Cords			
		Cannetules			
		Velvets			
		Satins or silks, striped with gold or silver			
	Plebian's Wives	Coats like ladies	May wear: Dark colors		
		Velvet headdresses	Common materials		
1561	All	Bands of embroidery (silk or otherwise)			Edict of April 22 Charles IX
		Stitching or piping of silk			
		Gimp on any part of a garment			
			May wear: Borders of velvet or silk the width of a finger		
			May wear: At the most two borders, chain stitching, or back stitching at edge of garment		
	Ladies of birth		May wear: Gowns of silk of any color but without decor- ation, if they reside out of town		

TABLE IV CONT'D  
SUMPTUARY LAWS OF FRANCE

Date	To Whom Directed	Restrictions	Permissions - Exceptions Directions For Wearing	Penalties	Miscellaneous
1561 Cont'd	Royal Princesses and ladies		May wear in the king's suite only: Any clothes they have of silk, decorated in any way		
	Widows	Serge, silk, camlet, taffety, damask, satin, and plain velvet	May wear: All other silken stuffs		
	Those of birth living in the country	Decorations on garments except that which is put to fasten the stitches			
	All	Gold on their heads	Except during the first year of marriage		
1563	All	Vertugadins	Must be less than one and one- half yards wide		Edict of January 17 and 18 Charles IX
		Gold chains			
		Gold work, with or without enamel			
		Placques and all other ornaments for head- dresses			
1565	Women of Toulouse		May wear vertugales		
1567	All	Silk	Except: Princesses and duchesses		Regulated dress of all classes
		Velvet	Except: Princesses and duchesses		
	Bourgeoisie		Pearls and gold in bracelets and rosaries		

## SUMPTUARY LAWS OF FRANCE

Date	To Whom Directed	Restrictions	Permissions - Exceptions Directions For Wearing	Penalties	Miscellaneous
c1640	All women		All women married or single, to cover their bosoms and arms down to the wrist with non-transparent materials	Excommunication	A Bull by Innocent XI
	All	Venetian and Florentine lace			May not be imported
	Bourgeoisie	Lace			
1629	All	Clothing decorated with precious stones and gold embroidery			
		Caps, shirts, collars , cuffs or other linen embroidered with gold, silver, cord, lace, either real or imitation			
1633	All				Law renewed
1638	All	All elegances of fashion Gold lace Fringe Lace enriched with gold or silver			Edicts of Richelieu

## SUMPTUARY LAWS OF ENGLISH COLONIES IN AMERICA

Date	To Whom Directed	Restrictions	Permissions - Exceptions Directions For Wearing	Penalties	Miscellaneous
1600	All Colonists in Virginia				Instructions from England that the Colonists were to be governed by the existing laws of England
1621	All Colonists in Virginia	Excesses in Clothes  Gold in clothing  Silk	Except: Council members		Instructions from England
16??	Quakers in Massachusetts Connecticut		Quakers caught three times in the jurisdiction shall be branded with "R" on their left shoulder		Undated
16??	Ladies in Connecticut		Dresses are to cover their shoe buckles		Undated
1630 or 1632	All in Connecticut	Short sleeves  Gowns shorter than shoe buckles  Great sleeves  Great breeches of immoderate size  Knots of ribbons  Silk roses  Double ruffs and collars  Men  Long hair	Not to be more than one- half ell wide		

## SUMPTUARY LAWS OF ENGLISH COLONIES IN AMERICA

Date	To Whom Directed	Restrictions	Permissions - Exceptions Directions For Wearing	Penalties	Miscellaneous
16??	Tanners in Connecticut Massachusetts		To put seals only on leather which has been properly tanned		
1634	All in Massachusetts Connecticut	Garments with lace trim			
		Garments with silver, gold, or silk thread as trim		Forfeiture	
		Slashed garments	Other than one slash per sleeve and one in back		
		Any cutwork, embroidery or needlework caps, bands, or rayles			
1636	All in Massachusetts		No one to make or sell any bone lace, or other lace to be worn on any garment or linen	Five shillings per yard	
	Tailors in Massachusetts		No tailor shall set on any lace	Ten shillings for each offence	
	All in Massachusetts		Small bindings of lace may be used on garments		
1634	All in Massachusetts Connecticut	No garments with immoderate great sleeves Slashes Immoderate great rayles Longewings	Those who have garments with lace on them may wear them except for those prohibited		
1639	All in Massachusetts Connecticut	Clothes ornamented with lace	No one to make, buy, or sell any manner of lace		

TABLE IV CONT'D.

## SUMPTUARY LAWS OF ENGLISH COLONIES IN AMERICA

Date	To Whom Directed	Restrictions	Permissions - Exceptions Directions For Wearing	Penalties	Miscellaneous
1636	All in Massachusetts Connecticut	Excesses in apparel	No one to dress out of rank		
1641	All in Massachusetts Connecticut	Excesses in apparel			
1642	All in Massachusetts		Within ten days ninety coats to be made which are defensive against Indian arrows		
1643	All in Connecticut		Every family within the plantation shall have a coat of cotton wool to be proof against Indian arrows		
1651	All in Massachusetts	Gold or silver lace	Those with estates of two hundred pounds or over		
		Gold or silver buttons			
		Great boots	Those with estates of two hundred pounds or over		
1660	Colonists in Massachusetts Connecticut		To import no silk except for scarves and hose		
		Gold lace			
		Bone lace of silk			
		Ribbons with gold or silver in them			



## TABLE IV CONT'D.

## SUMPTUARY LAWS OF ENGLISH COLONIES IN AMERICA

Date	To Whom Directed	Restrictions	Permissions - Exceptions Directions For Wearing	Penalties	Miscellaneous
1662	All in Massachusetts	Gold or silver lace Gold or silver buttons Silk ribbons or scarves Costly, superfluous trimmings Bone lace costing more than three shillings per yard	Except: Those with estates of one hundred fifty pounds or over Public officers Magistrates, their wives and children Settled military commissioned officers Those whose quality has been above the ordinary, though now decayed	Offenders are to be listed on the one hundred fifty pounds estate list for tax purposes	
1662	Colonists in Massachusetts Connecticut		No one in the future to make, buy, or weave any apparel exceeding the quality and condition of their persons and estate	Ten shillings fine	
1663	Colonists in North Carolina		Are not to raise cotton or indicoe  Are to raise silk		
1671	Adulterers in Massachusetts Connecticut		To wear the letters "A.D." sewn on sleeve or back	For failure to wear letters: public whipping	
1671	All in Massachusetts Connecticut	Visors  Disguises  Strange apparel	To receive their apparel out of the common stocks and goods of the colony		

## TABLE IV CONT'D.

## SUMPTUARY LAWS OF ENGLISH COLONIES IN AMERICA

Date	To Whom Directed	Restrictions	Permissions - Exceptions Directions For Wearing	Penalties	Miscellaneous
1675	In Massachusetts Connecticut				A fulmination that ended sumptuary legislation in Massachusetts and Connecticut
1699	Runaway Slaves in Virginia		To be branded	First offence: Branding on cheek Second offence: Branding on shoulder	

GLOSSARY TO THE APPENDIX

GLOSSARY TO THE APPENDIX

- Aiglets, aglets..... Properly aiguillettes. The tags or metal sheathings of the points (ties) used to secure clothing.
- Baize..... 16th C., A woolen textile resembling a thin serge, introduced in England by Walloon refugees in 1561.
- Blanket cloth..... Medieval to 17th C. A white woolen cloth used by the humbler classes.
- Bolsters..... Padding in a garment, a stuffing or heavy lining. 15th to 17th C.
- Breast cloths..... Probably similar to 'breast-kerchief'. Used in the late 15th to mid 16th C. by both men and women. A kerchief wrapped about the shoulders and folded across the breast for warmth. Worn under the doublet or gown.
- Broad plite..... A fold or square of fabric, every one of which was a complete handkerchief.
- Broad yard..... Refers to the width of the loom.
- Budesoy..... Could not be located.
- Buckram..... 16th C., a material, probably of linen or cotton, similar to lockeram; used for hose and women's gowns.
- Buckram canvas..... 16th C., buckram stiffened with gum and used for linings.
- Camlet..... A beautiful, costly, Oriental fabric made of camel's hair and silk
- Cannetules..... Originally a string provided with knots, pebbles, beads, or the like and used for counting repetitions of the Lord's Prayer; later a rosary as a string of beads.
- Cloth of gold..... Medieval; A rich fabric woven of flat threads of gold.

- Cloth of silver..... A rich fabric as cloth of gold, but using threads made of silver.
- Cloth of tinsel..... Tinsel, tylsent, tilson, 16th C., A rich, sparkling fabric of silk interwoven with gold or silver threads.
- Collar of 'S'..... The livery collar of the House of Lancaster (c. 1360) instituted by John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster. Originally a leather collar with gold 'S' sewn on it. Later an ornamental chain made of a row of 'S'; not a badge of personal dignity, but an insignia of livery attached to certain offices in England, to be worn as long as the person retained the office.
- Coney..... A European rabbit.
- Crewel..... Slackly twisted yarn used for tapestry or embroidery. A kind of embroidery worked on unbleached cotton or linen.
- Doublet..... A padded, close-fitting, low necked garment, usually with long tight sleeves. Used in France in the 14th C., but not generally worn in England for civilian wear until the 15th C.
- Drugget..... A wool, or a cotton and wool mixed fabric.
- Ell..... A measure for cloth. Varies in length, English ell=45"; Dutch or Flemish ell=27".
- Ferrentum..... Could not be located.
- Frieze..... Medieval, a napped woolen cloth, originally Irish. A coarse kind of cloth manufactured in Wales, 1662.
- Frontlets..... Frontel, Frontayl. 15th, 16th, and early 17th centuries. Worn by women; 1) a decorative band worn across the forehead; in medieval period usually under a veil, i.e. cover chief. In

16th and early 17th centuries with a bonnet, caul, or coif. Sometimes called a fruntlet. 2) It is seen sometimes as a small loop on lady's foreheads, and was a part of a kind of cap made of wire netting which passed over the head and allowed a small loop to appear over the forehead. Its purpose was to take the strain and discomfort off the head of the wearer of the tall headdresses which were not worn up right but lying backwards at an angle.

- Fulmination..... An announcement presented with denunciations and censure, with violence and threats.
- Fustian..... A coarse fabric of a twill weave with a linen warp and cotton fill, cut on one side to form a short pile.
- Galoches..... A kind of overshoe or half boot, sometimes called buskins; used from the 14th C. on.
- Galoon..... A trimming woven in ribbon-like bands.
- Genet, jenet..... Medieval; The fur of a species of civet cat, gray or black.
- German style dresses..... This style, often referred to as German-Swiss, was favored all over Europe in the 15th C. The garments were slashed and puffs of the undershirts were pulled through the slashes, so that the garment appeared to be 'blistered'.
- Gimp..... A narrow braided trim, often with wire running through it.
- Girdle..... A cord or band, tied or buckled, encircling the waist or hips, and worn by both men and women in the Medieval period. Used primarily to confine flowing garments at the waist, or for suspending various objects, sometimes purely decorative. "And by here girdle



heng a purs of lether, Tasseled  
with grene and perled with lateun"  
(c. 1391, Chaucer, Miller's Tale.)

- Gold tissue..... Medieval; A fabric of twisted metal threads. Also to any woven stuff especially cloth of gold, or silver, or of a colored silk. "Eight yerde of sea greene tyssue for double slevis for ridinge gownes." (1612-13, Part of the trousseau of the Princess Elizabeth.)
- Gulden..... A unit of money. Also 'guilder', originally meaning golden.
- Haller..... Coins of fractional value, but adaptable use, worth less than guldens. Used primarily in Germany. Originally haller was a measure by weight and gradually became a standard of value, which accounts for the terms 'pounds haller, or 'pound of pennies'.
- Huseas..... Similar to galoches, half boots, buskins.
- Kersey..... A coarse woolen fabric of various qualities and patterns.
- Kirtle..... An inner tunic, or under tunic with long tight sleeves, usually buttoned from elbow to wrist.
- Knight banneret..... A knight who could lead vassels into battle under his own banner. Ranking above the other knights and next to a Baron.
- Leet..... A kind of manor court of England, may also refer to its jurisdiction.
- Letuse..... May be the plural of 'lettice'; medieval; a white fur resembling miniver, possibly the fur of the ferret or polecat.
- Longeskeines..... Long knives or daggers.

- Miniver..... A much disputed term, usually agreed to be a choice fur, varigated or banded.
- Netherstocks..... Worn by men, c. 1515 to 1600. The lower or stocking portion of hose, resembling tights, the upper portion being variously called the 'breech', 'upper stocks' and, later, 'trunk hose'. The term was sometimes used for women's stockings at the end of the 16th C.; After 1550, the leg portion of trunk-hose; the seat portion being known as the 'upper' or 'overstocks'.
- Ouches..... A socket or bezel holding a precious stone; a jeweled ornament.
- Parti-colored fur..... Possibly a style of combining two furs of different shades into one garment, as the parti-colored clothing of men popular in the 13th C., a two-color scheme.
- Passementerie..... Silk or metal lace, often spangled, used for trimming.
- Paternoster..... May refer to a rosary which were probably commonly worn by everyone in the Medieval period.
- Pepadore..... A silken fabric.
- Pikes..... Shoe points, or long toed shoes.
- Plaited shirts..... Pleated shirts.
- Poinards..... Small daggers.
- Points..... Ties decorated at the ends with pointed aiglets, used widely instead of buttons for securing garments.
- Rayles..... Rail, rayles. Late 15th to late 17th C. A neckerchief worn by women, fold and worn shawlwise around the neck.
- Reisin..... A fabric of a cheap woven grade, usually used for headdresses.

- Riband..... A ribbon used for decoration.
- Roman jackets..... Could not be located.
- Rosat..... Could not be located.
- Russett..... 15th to 16th C., a coarse cloth, or homespun, sometimes brown, but sometimes gray, worn by the poorer classes. (Prior to 1800) In Medieval period russet was a dark brown color. Now classed as an obsolete color name.
- Scarlet..... Originally a fabric, not a color; a fine elastic wool particularly suitable for making tights. It was dyed in many colors, of which red was the most successful and common.
- Scarcenet..... A thin silken fabric used especially for linings.
- Scharlach..... A costly fabric, originally from the Orient, dyed red, brown, and blue.
- Skeines..... Knives or daggers.
- Spalt..... A fur used for coats.
- Surtout..... A man's overcoat, long and close fitting.
- Tabby..... Plain weave silk.
- Taffety..... Old name for taffeta.
- Tarteron..... A thin silken fabric, similar to scarcenet.
- Tanne..... An ordinary red color, not crimson.
- Tinselled satin..... Satin fabric of silk shot with metallic wires.
- Tippets..... A long, hanging part of a garment, such as on a sleeve or hood.

- Trefoils..... Decorative metal cutouts attached to hemlines of garments or other parts of the garment.
- Tufted taffeta..... Taffeta with tufts of looped or cut pile.
- Velvet motely..... A woolen fabric of mixed colors made in England (14th to 17th C.) Occasionally made in velvet.
- Vertugadin, vertugales..... Hooped petticoats.