

THE TROUSSEAU OF THE PRINCESS ELIZABETH

THE Princess Elizabeth (1596-1662) was the oldest daughter of James I of England. According to a contemporary she was known as the "Queen of Hearts" because of her "winning and princely comportment." The Princess, who was born in Scotland, was brought to court in 1608 and while she, in the vivacity of her youth and her temperament, took part in the masks and balls of a gay court life, her father, King James, was busy arranging a marriage for her. Negotiations for an alliance were begun with both Sweden and Spain but James finally decided on the young Frederick, Elector Palatine. The marriage, which turned out to be a love match, was celebrated when Frederick came to England in 1613. Their early married life in the Palatinate was happy and carried out on a lavish scale of expenditure which awed but did not offend their subjects. It was not until Frederick was chosen Emperor of Bohemia and crowned at Prague, after the death of the Emperor Mathias, that the troubles of Elizabeth and Frederick began. There the gay life they loved seriously offended the people and that fact coupled with political dissension caused them to leave Prague and seek refuge in Holland. Here Frederick died in 1632 after futile attempts to regain his power. Elizabeth lived on in Holland in the unfortunate position of an outcast princess and absorbed herself in her many children. Her urgent desire was, through the aid of her children, to return to England but this wish was not fulfilled for many years and when she did return to live at Combe Abbey where as a child she had grown up she died soon after.

The details of the life and character of the Princess Elizabeth can be found in Mrs. Green's "Lives of the English Princesses" and of her much can be known, for many of her letters to her husband and to her children still exist as well as documents relating to her and her time.



PORTRAIT OF THE PRINCESS ELIZABETH, DAUGHTER OF JAMES I
BY HONTHORST

Among the documents one of the most interesting, which is the subject of this article, is that regarding her trousseau ordered by James I. Not only does it reveal the extent and character of a Princess's marriage wardrobe, but it shows how the vast quantities of materials and trimmings down to the last button were specifically ordered by the King from the various merchants. The original document, which is printed in full in *Archaeologia*, Vol. XXVI, is in the form of a warrant issued by the King. For the purpose of this article, it has been divided into four parts, (1) the trousseau of the Princess, that is, the order for the dresses from the tailor, (2) the order for the materials and trimmings (lace, etc.) for making the dresses, (3) the gowns for the bridesmaids, (4) the furnishings for the bridal chamber and the gift to the bridegroom.

Before coming to the account of the gowns ordered for the Princess, it may be well to remind the reader of the style of costume of the period. Dresses were composed of two and often three parts—the petticoat or underskirt, the gown, with or without sleeves, which fell from the shoulders, open down the front revealing the petticoat, and the bodice. The gown was sometimes a combination bodice and gown and hence closed down to the waistline. Under the dress was worn the farthingale, a bell-shaped hoop skirt made of cloth and bands of wire. The ruff at this time was being supplanted by the whisk and a flat falling collar. This stiff style of costume had been set by Spain in the XVI century and was superseded by the fashions of the Cavalier period, familiar in portraits of the time of Charles I. The photograph from a painting of the Princess shows only the upper part of her costume (fig. 1), but the photograph of the full length equestrian portrait of the Elector Frederick and his wife shows Elizabeth wearing a riding gown of the same cut as she would have worn at the time of her marriage in 1613 (fig. 2).

THE TROUSSEAU

To JOHN SPENS, Tailor

1 Gown: Black satin,¹ embroidered with silver, trimmed with
 silver lace, cut with taffeta upon taffeta, with *tissue*

¹The XVII century spelling of obvious words like *satten*, *taphata*, *lase* has not been retained. Where the old spelling has been retained, the words appear in italics, accompanied, when the sense is obscure, by explanatory footnotes wherever possible.

Tissue usually meant cloth of gold or silver but the meaning of *tissued* (woven?) is not always clear.

- sleeves, with whalebone, canvas and stiffening and for cutting it single.
- 1 Gown: Cloth of tissue, wrought in borders with gold, silver and colored silks, lined with taffeta, trimmed with gold and silver lace with whalebone cutting, sizing canvas and stiffening.
- 1 Petticoat: Gold and silver tissue *tabine*, lined with plush with *six silver* about it and fringed, with buckram to it.
- 1 Petticoat: Green tissue satin, with flowers of gold, with six silver broad laces about, with fringes and buckram.
- 1 Gown: Black tissue satin, with gold flowers cut with taffeta and drawn out with taffeta sleeves, trimmed with gold bone lace.
- 1 Petticoat: *Tawnie* tissue satin with flowers of gold, silver and colored silks, lined with plush and fringed, with buckram.
- 2 pair Whalebone Bodies: *Carnaçon* satin bound with silver lace and stitched with silk.
- 1 Doublet: Cloth of tissue, in flowers with gold and silver and colored silk.
- 1 Petticoat: Cloth of tissue, tissue with gold silver and colored silks, lined with plush with six broad silver lace and buckram to it.
- 5 *Varthingalles*: Changeable taffeta.
- 1 Gown: Cloth of tissue, tissue in borders with flowers between, of gold, silver and colored silks, with rich tissue sleeves lined with taffeta trimmed with bone lace.
- 1 Gown: White cloth of silver, tissue in borders and flowers like prince feathers, with tissue sleeves, lined with taffeta, trimmed with spangled lace.

Tabine is the XVI century term for watered silk.

Six Silver possibly means with six bands of silver lace about it.

Tawnie—variously spelled, was a popular color of this time.

Carnaçon is an old form for carnation meaning flesh-color, pink.

Varthingalles are *Farthingales* and were of two kinds—the Spanish, already described, and the French *Verdingale* which had a bolster about the hips making the skirt drum-shaped.

- 1 Gown: Rich cloth of tissue, all over bordered with flowers of gold, silver and colored silks, with tissue sleeves, lined with taffeta, trimmed with lace.
- 1 Gown: Black silk *grograine*, with black satin sleeves lined with taffeta *sarcenet*.
- 1 Gown: Of tissue, tissue with gold flowers with rich cloth of tissue sleeves lined with taffeta, trimmed with lace.
- 1 Gown: Ash colored silk *grograine*, tissue with gold, silver and colored silks, with cloth of tissue sleeves in flowers cut and ravelled, lined with taffeta, trimmed with *myllen* bone lace.
- 1 Gown: Black satin, trimmed with black embroidered satin lace, cut and lined with taffeta.
- 2 *Mantles* (a) Silver *vellat*.
(b) Two pile tawny velvet, trimmed with lace and lined with French tawny *muffe*,
- 2 Cloaks: For them (the mantles), likewise lined and trimmed.
- 1 Gown: Grass green satin, tissue with gold and silver in flowers with tissue sleeves, lined and cut with taffeta, trimmed with gold and silver lace.
- 1 Collar: White cloth of silver, lined with taffeta and stitched with silk.
- 1 Gown: Tawny satin, tissue with gold in borders, with flowers between, with tissue sleeves, lined and cut with taffeta, trimmed with gold and silver lace and buttons.
- 1 Gown: Sea green tissue satin, with gold, silver and colored silks in borders and flowers between, cut and lined with taffeta, with rich tissue sleeves.

Grograine was in the XVI century a coarse fabric of silk and wool.

Sarcenet was a fine soft silk of either plain or twilled weave.

Myllen, according to the Oxford Dictionary, is an obsolete spelling of Milan.

Mantle is in this case a lap robe.

Vellat is an obsolete spelling of velvet.

Muffe is a material whose meaning is obscure.

- 1 Gown: Silver colored *grograine*, tissued with gold, silver and colored silks, with tissued sleeves, lined with taffeta, trimmed with silver and bone lace.
- 1 Gown: *Deare* colored satin, tissued in borders with flowers between with gold and silver lace, lined and cut with taffeta.
- 2 *Saufegardes*: (a) Green satin, tissued with gold, silver and colored silks.
(b) *Murrey* colored satin, tissued with gold, silver and green silk, both with great rich tissue sleeves of Spanish Fashion, and lined with taffeta, with buttons and loops.
- 1 Gown: Black satin, tissued in flowers of silver, trimmed with silver open spangled lace, lined with taffeta, canvas, buckram, whalebone and stiffening.
- 1 *Night Gown*: Rich tissue in flowers, lined with wrought satin and for stiffening, etc.
- 1 *Traine Gown*: Rich cloth of silver, embroidered all over with flowers in silver, *purle*, and *plate*, lined with taffeta, trimmed with rich purled lace with goldsmiths work.
- 1 Gown: White cloth of silver, with rich tissued sleeves lined with taffeta, trimmed with silver lace.
- 1 *Traine Gown*: Rich tawnie cloth of gold, embroidered very richly with gold, silver, purle, and plate, lined with taffeta, trimmed with lace and buttons.
- 1 Petticoat: *Murrey* satin, embroidered very richly in silver, lined with plush, fringed, with buckram.
- 1 Petticoat: *Carnaçon* satin, embroidered all over with gold and silver, fringed, lined with plush, with buckram.

Deare colored satin appears to refer to deer colored satin. Both spellings are found in XVI century literature.

Saufegarde was an extra skirt work as protection to the gown when riding.

A *Night Gown* was in all probability a dressing gown.

Purle was an edging of twisted loops of thread or metal wire.

Plate was flat gold wire.

Murrey, according to the Oxford Dictionary, is an obsolete form for Mulberry.

- 1 Petticoat: Green satin, embroidered all over with silver, *fringed*, lined with plush.
- 1 Gown: Black cloth of silver, embroidered all over, trimmed with gold and silver lace lined with taffeta, with tissued sleeves.
- 1 Gown: Purple cloth of gold, embroidered all over, trimmed with gold and silver lace, lined with taffeta.
- 1 Gown: Black satin, trimmed with *bugell* lace, cut with black taffeta, and lined with taffeta.
- 1 Gown: Black satin, trimmed with black embroidered satin lace, cut and lined with taffeta.
- 1 Gown: Cloth of tissue, tissued in flowers with gold, silver and colored silks with tissued sleeves, trimmed with gold and silver lace.
- 1 Petticoat: Silver *grograine*, tissued in borders with flowers of gold, lined with plush, with six gold and silver laces about it, fringed, with buckram to it.
- 1 Night Gown: Rich tissue in flowers of gold, lined with *carnaçon* wrought satin, for stiffening, etc.

TO ROBERT HENS

- 6 Farthingales: Of taffeta with *wyer* and silk to them.
- 6 Farthingales: Of damask with *wyer* and silk to them.

TO DENIS PEPPER

- 5 *Hattes*: Tawnie bever, with gold band and tawnie feathers to them.

If one adds up the number of gowns one finds there are in all twenty-six. The lavish character of the trousseau may be appreciated when one remembers that all these gowns were not only made of rich materials, but richly embroidered with gold, silver and colored silks, trimmed with lace and jewels. Of the twenty-six gowns, six are of black satin, ten of cloth of tissue (probably cloth of silver or gold) and the rest of various colored satins and *grograine* silks.

Bugell probably means lace trimmed with spangles.
Wyer is an old spelling of wire.

II

(a) Materials for the gowns ordered from silk merchants

To ROBERT GRIGGE, Mercer

- 74½ Yards. Very rich tissues in colors for three gowns with wearing sleeves and long sleeves for three other gowns.
- 24½ Yds. Rich cloth of tissue for one night gown and a petticoat.
- 8¼ Yds. Green tissue satin for a petticoat.
- 20¾ Yds. Rich ash colored silk *grograine* brocaded with gold and silver for a gown.
- 4 Yds. *Deare* color.
- 4 Yds. *Murrey* tissue satin for two *wastecoates*.
- 124¼ Yds. Several colored satins tissue with gold and silver and colored silks for six gowns.
- 48 Yds. Of like satins for two riding gowns.
- 252½ Yds. Rich plain cloth of silver and cloth of gold several colors.
- 180¾ Yds. Several colored taffetas employed upon linings of gowns.
- 8 Yds. Sea green tissue for double sleeves for two riding gowns.
- 8¼ Yds. White *grograine* tissue with gold, silver and colored silks for a petticoat.
- 24¾ Yds. Several colored satins for three petticoats.
- 38¼ Yds. *Carnaçon shage* to line five petticoats.
- 32 Yds. Wrought satin to line two night gowns.
- 12 Yds. *Carnaçon* satin to make four pairs of whalebone bodies.
- 12 Yds. (An ell wide) black silk *grograine* for a gown.
- 12 Yds. Black sarcenet to line it.
- 16 Yds. *Carnaçon* satin for a night gown.
- 24 Yds. Tawnie two pile velvet for a lap mantle and a cloak.
- 24 Yds. Rich French *muffe* to line the same mantle and cloak.

The yard measure in the XVI century was 36 inches.

The waistcoat was worn under the bodice when that garment or the sleeves were slashed.

Shage was, according to the Oxford Dictionary, a material usually of wool with a long nap.

(b) Trimmings and Laces

1 <i>pound</i> 4 ozs.	Fine Venice gold and spangles, delivered to William Cooksburye, by him to be employed upon eight plumes of feathers.
372 lbs. 9 ozs.	Broad and narrow gold lace.
28 doz.	Round gold <i>Myllen</i> buttons.
2½ Yds.	Round gold loop lace.
21 Yds.	Broad Venice <i>Reben</i> .
2 lbs. 3 ozs.	Stitching and sewing silk.
5 pr.	Very broad garters edged with gold edging lace and
5 pr.	Large <i>roases</i> edged with gold edging suitable for five pages.
3 pr.	Broad tawnie garters edged with gold edging lace <i>Showe String</i> suitable for footmen and coachmen.
11 doz.	Large <i>drumeworke</i> point.
240 Yds.	Broad rich black embroidered lace.
13 lbs. 5¾ ozs.	Broad and narrow black silk Naples lace.
8 lbs. 13½ ozs.	<i>Deare</i> and <i>color de Roi</i> in grain.
	Silk Naple lace, purled on both sides, broad and narrow.
3 gross 4 doz.	Silk <i>Myllen</i> buttons.
3 Yds.	Silk loop lace.
24 Yds.	Broad Venice ribbon.
4 doz.	<i>Drumeworke</i> point.
2 lbs.	Stitching and sewing silk.
11 doz.	Broad and rich black embroidered lace.
5¾ ozs.	Naples silk binding lace.
9 doz.	Black <i>parris</i> buttons.
6 Yds.	Black loop lace.
10 doz.	Black high buttons with <i>curle</i> and satin.
84 Yds.	Rich <i>carnaçon</i> gold and silver embroidered lace.

A pound in the XVI century was equal to 16 ounces.

Reben, although not included in the Oxford Dictionary, must be an old spelling for ribbon.

Roases are undoubtedly rosettes.

Drumeworke Point is unknown to me unless it was a name for some kind of pillow lace.

Parris is probably an old spelling of Paris.

Curle means twisted or coiled and probably refers to metal wire.

1 lb. 4 ozs.	Gold and silver binding lace.
10 doz.	Very rich gold and silver high sugar loaf buttons wrought with purple and <i>owes</i> .
2 doz.	<i>Myllen</i> silver buttons.
2 ozs.	Silver loop lace.
6 ozs.	Sewing silk.

All the foregoing to be delivered to sundry tailors to be employed upon our said daughters apparel and such as attended upon her.

TO CHRISTOPHER WEAVER, Silkman

1698 ozs.	Silver bone lace with spangles.
467 ozs.	Gold and silver binding lace.
38 ozs.	Gold and silver loop lace.
667 ozs.	Silver <i>Myllen</i> bone lace.
141 ozs.	Silver bone lace.
568 ozs.	Venice gold and silver.
136	Silver <i>compas</i> buttons and loops.
10 doz.	<i>Clyf</i> buttons of gold silver.
160 and 12 doz.	Great sugar loaf buttons of gold and silver.
10 doz.	Rich embroidered sugar loaf buttons.
42 doz.	Smaller sugar loaf buttons.
16 doz.	Buttons.
24 doz.	Small gold and silver <i>Myllen</i> buttons.
232 ozs.	Gold and silver fringe.
130 ozs.	Silk of several colors.
2 doz.	Silk neck lace.
3 ozs.	<i>Cheine</i> lace.
14 doz.	Black <i>bugell</i> lace.
25 ozs.	Black silk binding lace.
10 doz.	Black <i>bugell</i> buttons.
20 Yds.	Black loop lace.
4 doz.	Black buttons.
16 doz.	Black <i>parris</i> buttons.
2 ozs.	Twist.

Compas means circular.

Clyf is obscure. Clift, spelled often in XVI century *clyf*, is the original form of cleft.

Cheine is an obsolete spelling for chain.

10 doz.	Black embroidered lace.
58 ozs.	Yellow silk.
3 ozs.	<i>Murrey</i> ribbon for making ten dozen of buttons and loops.

All of which said parcels were delivered to sundry artificers to be employed upon our said daughter's apparel and sundry persons attending upon her.

III

THE BRIDESMAIDS' GOWNS

TO ROBERT GRIGGE, Mercer

One hundred and sixteen yards and three quarters of several colored tissues for four gowns, and for eleven *bryde maydens* sleeves, viz. each to have three yards.

One hundred and twenty yards of cloth of silver for six gowns for six bridesmaids. Four and thirty yards of rich white Florence cloth of silver to make one gown for a bride maiden and to form another.

Three hundred thirty eight pounds two ounces and a dram of broad and rich silver lace and loom lace, with spangles and plate, three gross two dozen of round silver buttons, six yards of silver loop lace, employed upon eleven *brydemaydes* gowns.

From this account we see that there must have been eleven bridesmaids for the Princess' wedding. Four of them must have worn gowns of "*colored tissues*,"¹ six, gowns of cloth of silver, and one, white Florence cloth of silver, probably an especially brilliant material. It is unfortunate that in the list of the bride's gowns, the one designed as her wedding dress is not indicated. Possibly the gown described as of white cloth of silver, tissue in borders and flowers like prince feathers, with tissue sleeves, lined with taffeta, trimmed with spangled lace was the one worn. "Prince feathers" probably refers to the arrangement of three ostrich plumes, the badge² of the Prince of Wales. The Princess' favorite brother was Henry, Prince of Wales, who died suddenly shortly before the wedding took place.

¹Probably colored silks shot through with metal wire in the weft.

²Possibly the Prince of Wales gave his sister the right to use his badge or perhaps it was done in compliment to the bridegroom whose badge it may also have been, for it was the badge of many German princes.

IV

FURNISHINGS FOR THE BRIDAL CHAMBER

To JOHN HULL, Mercer

Two hundred three score one yard three quarters and a half of black, crimson and colored taffeta, employed in the bride chamber.

Four hundred forty five yards and three quarters of *vellat*, employed in hangings, *sparuer* chairs, stools, screens, and cupboard clothes for the bride chamber.

One hundred fifty and eight yards of white cloth of silver, employed upon hangings and other furniture for the bride chamber.

To BENJAMIN HENSHAWE, Silkman

63 lbs. 11 ozs. Venice gold twist.

27 lbs. 3½ ozs. Gold edging lace and gold *cheine* lace, part with plate.

21 lbs. 10½ ozs. Colored Naples silk in grain, delivered to William Brothericke, our embroiderer, by him to be employed in the embroidery of hangings and other furniture for the bride chamber.

14 lbs. 6½ ozs. Deep gold fringe *cawleworke*.

34 lbs. 8¼ ozs. Deep and short gold fringe.

10 lbs. 4¼ ozs. Crimson in grain silk fringe.

6 lbs. 2¾ ozs. Gold lace.

8 Very fair and riche crimson in grain and gold tassels with garlands doubled fringed with gold.

30 Very rich gold Barbary buttons with divers hanging buttons and spangles at the ends.

4 lbs. 8½ ozs. Crimson Spanish silk ribbon.

2 lbs. 11 ozs. Crimson in grain and yellow Spanish silk *lyer*.

3 lbs. 2 ozs. Stitching and sewing silk.

All delivered to John Baker, our upholsterer, to be employed upon the furniture of the said bride chamber.

A *sparuer* appears to have been the tester or canopy of a bed.
Cawleworke was an ornamental network.

TO HENRY WALLER, Joiner

One frame for a canopy for a cushion cloth with ironwork to it, for the timberwork of one chair, two low stools, and two little tables; for a frame for a large *sparuer*; for the timberwork of two large necessary stools; for one folding table of walnut; for the timberwork of one screen with a lion carved to stand on the top; one dozen of bedstaves; for timberwork and board to make cases¹ to pack up the said chairs, stools and tables, to preserve them in carriage with nails and other necessaries to them, for his travel with his men in setting up of bedsteads and taking them down again.

TO WILLIAM FERRERS, Linen Draper

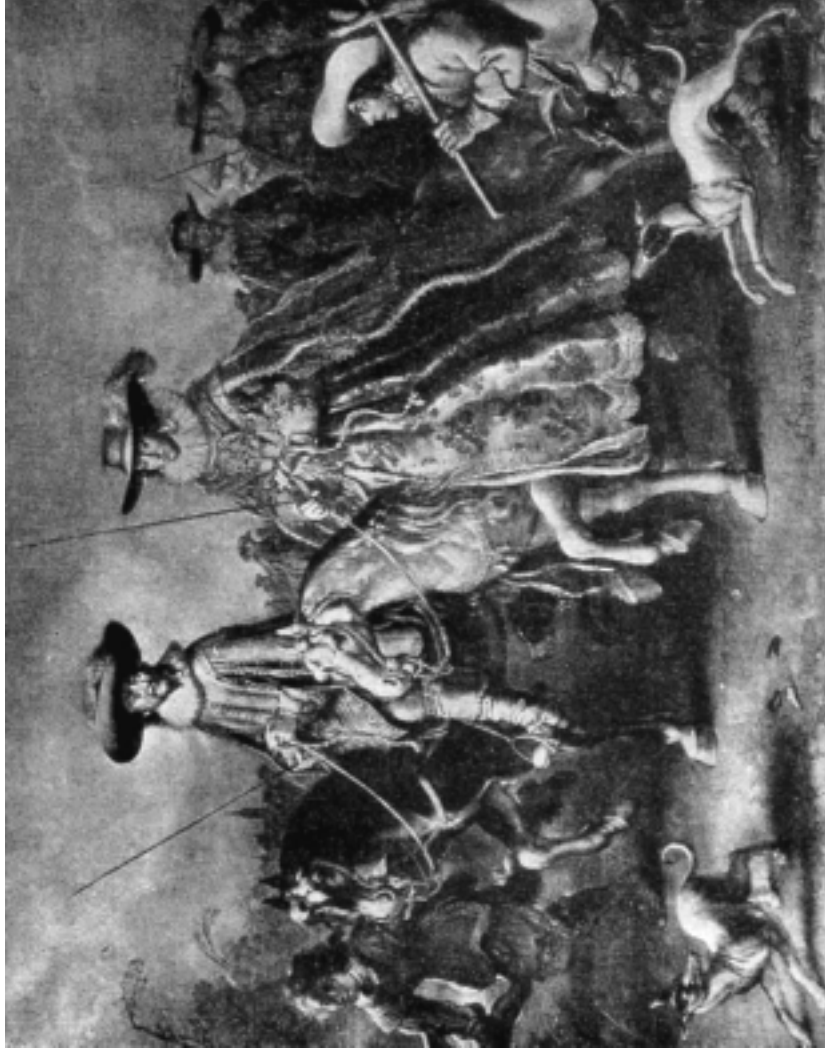
One hundred three score five ells (45 inches) of Holland Cloth to make twelve pair of bearing and trussing sheets; one hundred four score and eighteen ells of Holland Cloth to make three pair of back sheets.

TO JOHN ISACKE

One sword curiously carved and gilded sent to the said Prince Palatine.

So ends the wardrobe account for the marriage of the daughter of James I.

¹This furniture must have been taken with the young bride and groom to the Palace on the Rhine



PORTRAIT OF FREDERICK, THE ELECTOR PALATINE AND HIS WIFE ELIZABETH,
BY VAN VENNE DATED 1628