

## ON THE ANCIENT PROCESSIONAL VESTMENTS-

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In a former paper I had the honor of reading before the Society, I briefly and with considerable imperfection described the "Ancient Eucharistick Vestments" used in this country; in the present instance I would, in a few words, attempt to do the same in regard to those worn of old in processions: consisting of the Surplice, Hood, Amess, and Cope.

The surplice, *superpellicium*, is known to all: a loose flowing garment of linen, reaching to the feet, with expanding sleeves, worn by ecclesiastics of all ranks. It was, doubtless, an amplification of the albe, (which was far the most ancient vestment), and, according to Lynwode, was not known in England for the first thousand years of Christianity. His words are: — *De qua tamen veste non memini me legisse in toto corpore juris canonici vel civilis, nec etiam in sacra scriptura: fit tamen de ea mentio infra.* — Provinciale, p. 53, ll. c. There is considerable difficulty in determining the shape of the old English surplice, from the simple fact that not one example — either whole or imperfect — is known to exist. It is true we can gather much from illuminated works and memorial brasses, and descriptions of it render us much service in determining its shape. I should imagine that it did not differ very materially from the ordinary surplice in use amongst us now, except in this respect, and it certainly is an important one — that it was never open in front. Nothing can be more unseemly, especially when no cassock is worn, to see the opening surplice reveal the details of modern full-dress. It was always circular, and without a large opening, until the time of full-bottomed wigs, when some cleric, (whose name escapes my memory just now) particularly renowned for dandyism, so ruffled the appearance of this last-named ornament in putting on the surplice, without a large opening in front, that in a pet he tore down the narrow slit, and since that period his new, and

most undeniable fashion has, unfortunately, been generally followed — a taste certainly to be regretted.

But to return: every person directly engaged in the service of God's House was, by the Sarum rite, compelled to be vested at least in a surplice — oftentimes a cassock also was required, and not unfrequently an alb, especially with those who minister about the altar.

It is to be here remarked, that the singing-men of Lincoln and Lichfield cathedrals wear surplices of a very uncommon shape, being particularly scanty in the body and narrow in the sleeves. It has been the custom to do so, I learnt on a visit there, at both these places from time immemorial; probably they are a sort of albe or *rochetta*.

The next vestment is the hood, *caputium*. Strutt's *Sports and Pastimes* gives some admirable illustrations of the mediaeval shape of the ordinary — which differed little from the Ecclesiastical hood — as will also many illuminated MSS. Some of our modern gowns retain many of the old characteristics, but, in most cases, they are very much altered, and having become merely badges of academical position, have no distinctive shape whatsoever. The Cambridge hoods appear to have been less mutilated than those of the sister university. The B.A. and the B.D. of the former are very like those worn of old. The mediaeval form of this vestment was very similar to a cardinal's cape. It may be seen represented in the portrait of Pole, in *Lodge's Portraits*, engraved from the picture in the Hall of St. Mary Magdalen College, at Oxford; falling over the shoulders all round, buttoned together in front from the breast to the chin, to which was attached behind a hood, a covering for the head, which really might be and was made use of as a protection against the cold. In some cases, the Bachelor of Arts for instance, it was lined with fur: in others, the Master of Arts and Doctor of Divinity for example, with silk. Attached to this hood was a long strip of additional material, which hung down to the small of the back, known as the *liripium*. This may still be seen in the Oxford B.D. hood, though curtailed in length and size; and is still affixed behind to the gown of the Proctors and of the University Preacher, just while he is delivering his sermon.

Anciently, the *caputium* was worn over the albe or surplice in quire, during the recitation of the Divine offices. It

may be seen so represented on memorial brasses in Merton and Magdalen Colleges, Oxford, and appears to have partaken somewhat of the character of the almess, *almutium*, which is the next vestment that comes under consideration. This *almutium* was a tippet of fur worn by canons and other dignitaries; in the first instance, no doubt, simply as a protection from the cold, during the singing of Nocturnus, but afterwards as a mark of rank and distinction. It may be seen figured at Upper Winchendon Church, Bucks, on the brass of Sir John Stodeley, which, altogether, is well worth inspecting, being one of the most unique and perfect examples existing in any part of England. It is often taken for the stole, having two pendant stripes hanging down in front, which slightly taper towards the end; but a careful comparison of the two vestments will easily prevent their being confounded one with the other. Abroad, the amess is seldom worn at all, but merely carried on the left arm at certain special functions by the Canonicus, Praeporitus, or Decanus.

As the chasuble was the distinctive Eucharistick vestment, so the cope, *cappa*, was the peculiar robe for processions. It was a sort of cloak shaped like an exact semicircle, and was, doubtless, intended in the first instance only as a protection against the weather. A hood that might be used was, of old, attached to the back of it; but in later times this, with the border or orphrey was only retained, in order that the embroiderer might show his skill in embellishing this dress with tabernacle niches of saints and devices, heraldic and symbolical. An admirable specimen of a brass of a priest in surplice, almess and cope, may be seen in the south of the quire of St Mary's, Quainton, Bucks. The cope was not, however, confined to use in processions. At solemn Vespers the priests wore it. At high Mass the assistants and rulers of the choir were required by the Salisbury Use to be vested in copes, and on several other occasions. In the Reformed Church of England its use is still kept up. Independent of the rubric still in force at the beginning of the *Book of Common Prayer*, which states that "such ornaments of the Church and of the Minister thereof," &c., "shall be retained and be in use," &c., the xxiv. canon, A.S., 1603, and enjoins that at the administration of the Holy Communion, "the principal minister," i. e. the priest, "shall use a decent cope, being assisted with the gospeller and epistoler," &c.;

and this practice was kept up till within the last few years at Durham Cathedral, where five ancient and beautifully embroidered copes exist in the library; and in some few other collegiate and cathedral churches. At a coronation, the archbishop who performs the act, is vested in a cope, as may be seen in Hayter's well-known picture; and the Sub-Dean of Westminster wears one also, as do also the bishops who sing the Litany. It is to be much desired that greater dignity was imparted to our services by the restoration and use of these authorized vestments. It may be well to remark, in conclusion, that two copes are preserved at St. George's Chapel, Windsor, amongst other rich and embroidered vestments. Several still exist at the Abbey Church of Westminster. One ferial cope of green velvet, powdered with conventional flowers, may be seen at Ely Cathedral. There are two belonging to the Earl of Shrewsbury, at Alton Towers, and one to Sir Robert Throgmorton, at Buckland, in Berkshire, besides fragments at Forest Hill, Oxon, Campden, Gloucestershire, and numerous other places. To those who would enter more fully into the subject, especially the practical part of it, Sir. Fuller Russell's *Hierurgia Anglicana* can be strongly recommended, as supplying an immense amount of valuable information on this interesting subject in a small compass.

I trust at some future time, to have the opportunity of describing briefly the remaining ancient vestments, and so, in a measure, complete my remarks on the subject.