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**An Inventory of the Goods of John White of Brystowe  
Taken in 1559**

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AN INVENTORY OF THE GOODS OF JOHN  
WHITE OF BRYSTOWE TAKEN IN 1559.

Transcribed by LEWIS J. UPTON WAY, F.S.A.,  
F.R.G.S.

A DOCUMENT from the Ashton Court archives forms the subject of this paper. It is an inventory of all the household goods and personal effects of a Bristol merchant who died in 1559, the second year of the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

To judge from the quantity and variety of his belongings he must have been a man of considerable wealth and therefore of some importance locally in his day, yet I have been unable to find his name in any history of Bristol or list of civic officials. The inventory is in two parts, taken by two different sets of persons. We gather from it that his goods were in different houses, the major part of them in his town-house and place of business in one of the narrow streets of old Bristol, and a smaller part in what must have been his country-house or cottage, where he had comparatively little furniture and not more than one change of clothes. There is no clue as to its locality; it may have stood on the breezy heights of Saint Michael's Hill, amidst the sheep pastures of Kingsdown, in the rustic village of Redland or even as far afield as Westbury or Cote.

We shall meet with a good many extraordinary sounding words which have quite a simple meaning. We shall note the entire absence of china, glass and crockery-ware and find a large quantity of silver, pewter, brass and iron instead. We shall wonder why a peace-loving merchant should have had so many weapons and pieces of armour;

and we shall note the very uninteresting and dry assortment of books that formed his library.

Extracted from the Royal Perogative Court of Canterbury :—

The Inventory of all and synguler The goods, Cattels, plate, Jewells and Debts that late were John White's of Brystowe wch. hetherunto are come to the hands and possession of Roger Jones one of the Executors of the Testament of the saide John Whyte pryed by Mr. Davye Harrys of Brystowe Alderman Martyn Grave and Sampson Annersley of the same Mrchaunts praysors in that behalf indifferently elected and chosen.

In the Chamber over the Parlor

Imprimis, one shorte old table and cloath		
of Canvas .. .. .		viiids.
Item, a longe table cloath of Canvas ..		xxds.
Item, a longe table cloath of Canvas ..		xiids.
Item, a longe table Cloath of Dowles ..	2s.	
Item, a longe table Cloath of Dowlesse	2s.	viiid.
Item, a table Cloath of Dowlesse ..	3s.	iiid.
Item, a table Cloath of Dowlesse ..	3s.	
Item, a Dyaper Towell .. .. .		xxd.
Item ditto .. .. .	2s.	vid.
Item a fyne dyaper towell .. .. .	2s.	viiid.
Item a Dyaper Towell .. .. .	2s.	
Item a dyaper table Cloath .. .. .	2s.	viiid.
Item a longe Dyaper table cloath ..	xs.	
Item one old dyaper table cloath ..	iiis.	
Item a fyne Dyaper table Cloath ..	viiis.	
Item a doble Towell of Dyaper .. ..	viiis.	ivd.
Item a fyne Dyaper table Cloath of 2 yards broade .. .. .	xxvis.	viiid.
Item a paire of Shorte Sheets of Dowles	iiis.	
Item a paire of Dowles Sheets .. ..	vs.	
Item ditto good and stronge .. ..	vis.	viiid.
Item a paire of Dowles sheets .. ..	vis.	viiid.
Item ditto .. .. .	iiis.	
Item a paire of Course Canvas Sheets ..	2s.	viiid.
Item a lyttle table Cloath .. .. .		viiid.
Item 2 table Cloaths of the same sorte		xiid.
Item 2 Towells of Dowles Clouded ..	2s.	vid.
Item ditto .. .. .	2s.	vid.
Item 2 old towells of Dowles Clouded ..		xviiid.

Item iiiii shorte Dyaper table Cloathes for a square table . . . . .	ivs.	
Item ii Pillowberes of fyne Callecowe ..	iis.	vid.
Item ii Pillowbeers of Holland .. ..	iis.	
Item ii Pillowberes of fyne holland ..	iiis.	ivd.
Item one Pillowe of Holland .. . . .		xxd.
Item vii Pillowbeeres of Dowles ..	iiiiis.	
Item one paire of old Sheetes of holland	iis.	
Item one paire of holland sheetes ..	viiis.	
Item an old Sheet of Holland .. . . .		xiid.
Item a paire of Sheets of cowrse Holland	iiiiis.	
Item a paire of Sheets of Callycowe ..	xiiis.	
Item one old Canvas Sheete in the botome of the Cheste .. . . .		xiid.
Item a Dowlesse Sheet .. . . .		xvid.
Item a Red Cheste that all this lynnyn lyeth in .. . . .	viiis.	
Item vi old Napkinns of Canvas and vi of Dowles .. . . .	iis.	vid.
Item ii dozen of Dowles Napkins Clowded	vis.	viiid.
Item iiiii dozen of Dowles Napkins Clowded and iii .. . . .	xiiiiis.	iiid.
Item viii Dowles Napkins at .. . . .	iis.	
Item a brode Napkyn wth. red woorke	xs.	
Item a cupboord cloath wrought wth. the Grocers Arms .. . . .	vs.	
Item another Cupboord cloath of the same	iis.	vid.
Item one old Towell of holland .. . . .		xiid.
Item a broad Napkyn of Holland .. . . .	iiiiis.	
Item another of the same older .. . . .	iis.	
Item one great Napkynn and iii small wth. pushe woorcke and Clowded..	vis.	
Item x diaper Napkinns very short unwrought .. . . .	vs.	
Item xx diaper Napkins clouded .. . . .	xxs.	
Item a broad Dyaper Napkyn .. . . .	iis.	viiid.
Item a paire of fyne holland Slevs for a woman of white worcke .. . . .	vis.	viiid.
Item ii peces of Cotton iis. . . . .	iis.	
Item a raile of Callycowe Cloath .. . . .		xiid.
Item a kerchiff and a Nekerchiffe .. . . .		xxd.
Item a Hed Kerchefe of holland .. . . .		xvid.
Item a Rayle of Holland .. . . .		xiid.

Item one olde Nekerchife of Callycowe		vid.
Item one other of the same sorte ..		viiid.
Item one old Holland Kerchiffe ..		iiid.
Item a Kerchiffe of Holland .. ..		viiid.
Item one old Kerchiffe of Holland ..		iiid.
Item a Kerchiffe of Callycowe .. ..		xvid.
Item a Kerchiffe of Callycoo .. ..		xiiid.
Item iii Kerchiffes of Callycowe ..	iiis.	iiid.
Item a longe Cofer of the Islands of Sur- rys .. .. .	xs.	
Item a Towell wrought .. .. .	vis.	
Item ii pillowbeers .. .. .	iiis.	
Item a breade Napkyn .. .. .	iis.	
Item a table Cloath and towell and a dozen of Napkins to the same of Dyaper .. .. .	liiis.	iiid.
Item a Table cloath and a Towell of Dyaper .. .. .	xxvis.	viiid.
Item a Sewerpanne .. .. .	xxs.	
Summa .. .. .	xxdlbs.	xs.
		iiid

## In the same Chamber over the Parlor

Item a Saint John's headd of grene Daumaske .. .. .	xxs	
Item ii Curtenies and the frengs of Sarcenett .. .. .	xls.	
Item a Dublet of black taffata .. ..	xiiis.	iiid.
Item a lookinge glasse .. .. .	iiis.	
Item a Gowne furred wth. Martens ..	vilbs.	
Item a Spruce Cheste .. .. .	iiilbs.	
Item a gowne wth. a broad gard of velvet furred .. .. .	xls.	
Item an old Satten Coate .. .. .	xs.	
Item one old Damaske Coate .. .. .	iiis.	iiid.
Item one old cloath Coate edged wth. velvett .. .. .	xiiis.	iiid.
Item a paire of velvet breches .. ..	xiiis.	iiid.
Item a frese Coate of Black cotten ..	iis.	viiid.
Item a Coate of black freese .. .. .	vs.	
Item a black Satten Coate .. .. .	xxs.	
Item one old Jerkyn of black Damaske	iis.	
Item a Red peticoat edged with gold lace	iis.	
Item one old rydinge Cloak black ..	liiis.	

Item a gowne furred wth. Martens tayles	xls.	
Item a night Gowne furred wth. Conye	xiiis.	iiid.
Item a velvet Hat styched .. ..	vs.	
Item a Cypres Cheste that all lyeth in	liis.	iiid.
Item a lytle purse ymbrodered wth. latten Rings .. ..	xxs.	
Item a Clock .. ..	xxs.	
Item a french Hood of velvet wth. a Cor- nett and bylliment .. ..	xiiis.	iiid.
Item a Jerkyn of velvet stitched and full of small buttons ... ..	xxxiiis.	iiid.
Item a box of Estridge feathers wth. the Box .. ..	iiis.	iiid.
Item a Dagge wth. his chargs .. ..	xiiis.	iiid.
Item iii gilt Cusshins of leather.. ..	iis.	
Item a Cypres Chest .. ..	xxs.	
Item xviii peces of old grene Sayes ..	iiis.	
Item vii greter peces of old grene Sayse all worne .. ..	xviiis.	iiid.
Item iiid great peces of red and grene Sayes and ii small peces .. ..	xxiiis.	ivd.
Item one old Testerne of Dornix wth. frenge of Redd blewe and grene ..	iiis.	
Item one other tester of Dornix with frenge .. ..	vs.	
Item one other Tester of dornix wth. frenge, red blewe and yellowe and lyned .. ..	vis.	viiid.
Item a Carpett for a square boord lyned	iiis.	iiid.
Item a Cote for a Standerd bearer of Tuke lyned wth. buckeram .. ..	iiis.	
Item ii sollyers Coats of Satten abrydgs	vs.	
Item a Coaffor that all lyeth in of Cypres	xxxvs.	
Item a lytle fyne Cypres chest of a yard longe .. ..	xxs.	
Item a featherbed wth. a pece in the myddle .. ..	xvs.	
Item a featherbed .. ..	xls.	
Item a featherbed .. ..	liis.	iiid.
Item a lytle featherbed .. ..	xxvs.	
Item one old featherbed wth. a patch	xiiis.	iiid.
Item a flock bed.. ..	xs.	
Item ii feather bolsters .. ..	xs.	

Ite one flock bolster .. .. .	iis.	
Item iiii feather Pillowes .. ..		viiid.
Item a Cusshen stuffed wth. flock ..		viiid.
Item a pillowbeare of ffustian old wth. mosse.. .. .. .		xiid.
Item iii blanketts .. .. .	vis.	
Item a Coverlet for a bed .. ..	xxxiiis.	iiid.
Item one old Coverlet for a bed ..	xiiis.	iiid.
Item a ffolding table with a frame of the Islands .. .. .	iis.	vid.
Item a presse to put Rayment yn ..	xxs.	
Item iii old Curtaines of Red and grene Saye .. .. .	vis.	viiid.
Item a Cupboord wrought .. ..	liis.	iiid.
Sum. .. .. . liii lbs.	xiiis.	iid.

## In the Chamber afore the Streete

Item a Carpet of fflowres .. ..	liis.	iiid.
Item a Carpet for a square boord wrought wth. flowers .. .. .	viiis.	
Item a Coverlet of flowers wth. byrds	xxiiis.	iiid.
Item a Carpet for a square table of flowers	xs.	
Item one old Carpet of flowers and Antyk	xxiiis.	iiid.
Item a Tester for a bed of Red and grene Saye wth. ffrens .. .. .	viiis.	
Item vi great Cusshiums wth. Red Roases flowers and braunches ..	xxs.	
Item v Cusshiums wth. white Roases and flowers .. .. .	iiis.	iiid.
Item vi Cusshenns wth. Harts Headds	xviiis.	
Item viii old Silk Cusshens .. ..	xxvs.	
Item the Cheste that all this lyeth in two lockes .. .. .	xxvis.	viiid.
Item a Cheste of wainscott that certaine wrytings lyeth yn .. .. .	xs.	
Item a Cheste of waynscott that boxes of wrytings lyeth in .. .. .	xs.	
Item a bedsted corded wth. ii Curteins of red and grene Saye wth. iii cur- tein rodds of yron .. .. .	xxxiiis.	viiid.
Item a lytle Round table .. ..	iis.	
Item the Hangings of painted Cloathes iiiii small peces .. .. .	iis.	

Item a litle small fflaunders Cheste ..				xviid.
Item one Silk Cusshen and one lytle ould Crewell Cusshen .. .. .			xs.	
Sum. .. .. .	xiiilbs.	xiiis.		viiid.

Pewter Vessells

Item i quarterne and vilbs. of pewter cont. x Chargers and a bason xviii broad brymmed platters vi plates, a bason brode brymmed at vd. half penny the lb. .. .. .				
Item one quarterne and xvilbs. cont. xxiiii xii pottingers xxx Sawcers at vpence halfpenny the lb. .. .. .				
Item one quarterne and xvilbs. cont. xxiiii brode brymmed porringers and xi narrowe brymmed disshes and so in all after the rate aforsaide amounteth to .. .. .	viiilbs.	xviis.		viiid.
Item halfe a hundreth and xxlbs. cont. old fflower potts present potts a bottle, wth. basons, water potts for the Chambers, old basons platters and pottingers at iiiid. the pownd		xxvs.		iiid.
Item a pottle pott and a quarter pott had of Mr. Butler .. .. .		iis.		viiid.
Sum. .. .. .	ixlbs.	vs.		viiid.

Kytchinn Stuffe

Item a kettle wth. ii eares at iiid. the pownde .. .. .		xxxiiis.		iiid.
Item a great Crocke cont. xxxiiilbs. at iiid. the lb. .. .. .		viiis.		iiid.
Item one old broken Crock a Posuet and half a Chafer broken cont. xxvilbs. at iiid. the lb. .. .. .		iiis.		iiid.
Item a greate Crocke wayenge lvilbs. at iiid. the lb. and ii small broches wch. was at Mr. Butlor's howse .. .. .		xvs.		iiid.
Item half a hundred cont. vi panss of brasse ii Cawdrons ii latten laidlse and a broken Skymmer at iiid. the lb. .. .. .		xxviis.		

Item xixlbs. of brasse cont. a panne a latten bason a litle Chaffroner and Hollye watter bucket at iiid. the pownd .. .. .	iiiis.	ixd.
Item ii Chaffing dishes and ii feet to the same .. .. .	viiiis.	
Item a paire of bell Candlesticks ..	iiiis.	
Item one other paire of lesser and iiiid old Candlesticks .. .. .	vis.	
Item a paire of brasse Anndirons ..	xls.	
Sum. .... viiilbs.	xis.	id.

## Iron work of the Kytchinns

Item one great Rack and ii small, yron fyre pickes Tongs pott hookes Doggs a fyre slyce wth. other old yrons wrought, i hundredweight and a half at iiid. halfpenny the pownd ..	xiiiis.	
Item one other great Racke cont. half a hundred weight at id. halfpenny the lb. .. .. .	viis.	
Item ii Gredyrans fyve broches ii old fryenge panns, one dryppinge pann of yron wth. other wrought yron as fleashe hooks and pott hooks cont. all iii quarters and ii lbs. at iii half pence the pownd .. .. .	viis.	iiid.
Item one paire of Aundirons cont. ihundredweight at id. the pownde ..	xixs.	xd.
Sum. ....	xlviis.	id.

## In the Shoppe

Item a Standinge bedsteade .. ..	xxxxs.	
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## In the Clock lofte afore the Streate

Item iiiid paire of Almaine Rivetts ii Sallets a Skull wth. certaine old peces of harnes .. .. .	xxxxs.	
Item x great panns .. .. .	xls.	
Item xviii Cases of leather for Cusshens	viiiis.	
Item a plaine bedsteade .. .. .	xvis.	
Item a lowe framed bedsteade .. ..	vis.	viiid.
Item a great Cheste .. .. .	ixs.	

Item iii lardge great peces of Sayes ..	liiis.	iiid.
Sum. .. .. viilbs.	viiis.	iiid.

In the Cowntinge Howse

Item fifty greate bookes of Scripture and the lawe and xx small bookes englishe and latten of dyverse sorts	vilbs.	
Item a byble. a Testament a booke of St. Austyne .. ..	xiiis.	iiid.
Item a Rapier and a Buckler .. ..	xis.	viiid.
Item a Dagge .. ..	xiiis.	iiid.
Item iii Skymmres .. ..		xiiid.
Item a Chaffing dishe .. ..	iis.	viiid.
Sum. .. .. viiiilbs.	iis.	

Plate

Item iii gilt Gobletts wth. a Cover weinge lxxv ounces and a half at vs. vid. an ounce .. ..	xxlbs.	xvs.	iiid.
Item iii gilt gobletts wth. a cover weinge lxxvoz. and a half at vs. vid. the oz.	xxlbs.	xvs.	iiid.
Item ii Saltes gilt wth. a Cover weinge <sup>1</sup> iiiiix xviiioz. at vis. the oz.	xxxixlbs.	iis.	
Item ii Nutts gilt wth. a Cover wth. black Shells weighing <sup>2</sup> iiiiix iioz. at vis. viiid. the ounce and so they amount to xxiiilbs. xiiis. iiid. whereof is to be abated viiiioz. for the Shells of the saide Nutts which is liiis. iiid. and soe for the Nutts ..	xxiiilbs.		
Item ii Spice dishes gilt weinge xxvi ounces at vis. viiid. the ounce	viiilbs.	xiiis.	iiid.
Item ii lowe Saltes gilt wth. a Cover wainge xxxoz. at vs. iiid. an oz.	viiilbs.		
Item iii gilt Ale potts wth. a Cover weinge xxxviiioz. and a half at vs. iiid. the oz. .. ..	xlbs.		
Item iii gilt ale potts wth. a Cover weinge xxxivoz. and a half at vs. iiid. the oz. .. ..	ixlbs.	iiis.	

<sup>1</sup> 97 ounces. In the original the xx are placed above the iii.

<sup>2</sup> 82 ounces.

Item ii gilt Ale potts wthout a Cover weinge xxiii <sup>oz.</sup> at vs. iiiid. the ounce	vilbs.	iis.	viii <sup>d.</sup>
Item a Square Salt gilt wth. antick hedds weinge xx <sup>oz.</sup> and a half at vis. viiid. the ounce .. .. .	vilbs.	xvis.	viii <sup>d.</sup>
Item one Trencher Salt wth. a Cover gilt weinge ii oz. iii quarters at vs. iiiid. the ounce .. .. .		xiiiis.	viii <sup>d.</sup>
Item a Peper box gilt wainge iioz. and a quarter at vs. iiiid. the ounce ..		xiiis.	
Item one norege Strayner gilt weinge ii ounces iii quarters at vs. viiid. the oz. .. .. .		xvs.	viid.
Item a bason and Ewre parcell gilt weinge lxxixoz. and a half at vs. iid and ounce.. .. .	xxlbs.	xs.	ixd.
Item xv Spoones of thapostles weinge xxixoz. iiiqrs. at vs. iid. the oz. ..	viiilbs.	xiiiis.	iiiid.
Item a great flatt pece parcell gilt weinge xxioz. at vs. iid. the oz. .. ..	vlbs.	viiiis.	viid
Item xii Spoones wth. K and H weinge xvi ounces at vs. iid. the ounce ..			
Sum. .. ..	xxciiiilbs.	viis	=
	£180	7s.	

## Jewells

Item a Brooch of Gould enamyled ..		liiis.	iii <sup>d.</sup>
Item a Ringe wth. Dyamond .. ..		liiis.	iiiid.
Item a Ringe wth. a Turkes .. ..		xxvis.	viii <sup>d.</sup>
Item a Ringe wth. a Camayen .. ..		xiiiis.	iiiid.
Item a Ringe wth. a death's hedd ..		vis.	viii <sup>d.</sup>
Item ii braceletts a Chaine and a byllment all of gold weinge together viioz. and a quarter at liiis. and iiiid. the ounce.. .. .	..xixlbs.		
Item a lytle Chaine weinge one ounce and a half quarter at liiis. iiiid, the oz. .. .. .	iiilbs.		
Item Aggletts of golds for a Cloak and a brooch of gold and xxxiii paire of small Agletts of gold all wainge ii oz. at iiilbs. the oz. = vilbs. .. ..	vilbs.		
Sum. .. ..	xxxv <sup>l</sup> bs.	xiiiis.	iiiid.

## In debts receyved

Item receyved in debts .. .. xiiilbs.

Summa totalis of all and singular the saide goodes, apparell Naperye Plate Juells and other things afore Specified amounteth to iiiclvilbs. xxds. by me Roger Jones=£356 rs. 8d.

This is the Inventarye of all and syngular soch goods as were John White's of Brystowe whiles he lyved, wch. sythence his death hath come to the hands and possession of Gyles White one of his Executors pryed the iiiith. daye of Aprill anno domini 1559, by George Snygge and Robert Shewerd.

Imprimis a table Cloathe of Dyaper ..	xs.	
Item a doble Towell of Dyaper .. ..	vs.	
Item x Napkinns of the same Dyaper	viiis.	
Item a Table cloath of diaper .. ..	viiis.	
Item a doble Towell of the same .. ..	iiis.	
Item a table Cloath of holland .. ..	vs.	
Item a Towell of Dowlas wth. a lytle Clowd .. .. .	iis.	
Item vi towells of Dowlas Clouded ..	vis.	
Item ii Pillowberes of Canvas wth. bone woorck .. .. .	iis.	
Item a Course bread napkyn of Dowlasse		vd.
Item a holland table cloath .. ..	vs.	
Item a towell of Dowlas .. ..	iis.	
Item a Cusshuin of Silck .. ..	xxs.	
Item a garnish of pewter vessels weinge ciilbs. at v $\frac{1}{2}$ d. the lb. .. ..	xlvis.	viiid.
Item iii small Cusshins Carwell and Silck .. .. .		xviid.
Item ii bell Candlesticks weing x $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. ..		iiid.
Item a pottle pot of pewter .. ..		xvid.
Item ii plates for pyes .. ..		viiid.
Item one old byble .. ..	iis.	vid.
Item one Herball. . . . .		xiid.
Item a velvet hatt .. ..		xiid.
Item a woodknief .. ..	iis.	vid.
Item a booke of St. Augustines worcks. .		xvid.
Item a Cronacle of ffabians makinge ..		xiid.
Item a debt of Mr. Needesprest ..	xxiiis.	iiid.
Item a paire of black velvett breches ..	xxs.	
Item a black Satten Dublet .. ..	xxxis.	viiid.
Item a Cloak garded with velvet ..	xxxiiis.	iiid.

Item a Shirte of Maylle .. .. .	xls.
Item a Coveringe for a bedd .. ..	ls.
Item ii Cawdronns iii Panns one Chaffer a Chaffing dishe weinge half a hundred all the whole at iiiid. the pownd .. .. .	xviiiis. viiid.
Item a Chaferne weinge viilbs. at iiid. the pownd .. .. .	xxids.
Summa totalis hujus Inventarii xviiilbs. xixs. viiid. per me Georgium Harrison	

List of old English words with their meanings found in this Inventory :—

Agglett, the tag of a lace.

Byllment or billiment, applied to any jewelled ornament.

Carwell or carvel work, overlapping.

Camayeu, a sort of onyx.

Dagge, a kind of heavy pistol or hand-gun.

Dornix, a fabric used for hangings, carpets or vestments from the  
Flemish name for the town of Tournay.

Dowlas, a coarse linen named from the town of Doulas in Brittany.

Latten, a brass-like metal.

Pillow beres, pillow-cases.

Pottinger, the same thing as porringer, *i.e.* a small basin.

Sallet, a light globular headpiece without a crest.

Skull, a close-fitting headpiece.

Sarcenec, a very fine soft silk material.

Bone work, a kind of lace.

Saye, a cloth of fine texture resembling serge.

Taffets, a silken cloth.

Tuke, canvas, but also applied to a finer fabric.

Cornet, a kind of head-dress worn by ladies.

Satten abyrdges, satin of Bruges which has its warp of silk, its  
Woof of thread.

The name of John White does not appear in the Kalendar of the Mayors of Bristol—apparently he never aspired to civic honours.

Giles White was Sheriff in 1554-5 when John Smyth the purchaser of the Long Ashton estate was Mayor.

David Harris Sheriff 1538-9 and Mayor in 1550-1.

Roger Jones Sheriff 1544-5 and Mayor in 1559-60.

George Snygge Sheriffe 1556-7 and Mayor in 1574-5.