



The Wife Of Bath

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Examples of what she might look like:



Appearance

- The Wife Of Bath was first seen just outside of Bath city.
(Line 455)
- She appears to be a very wealthy and successful in her business.
- She appears to be a noble woman.
- She was clothed in multi colored fine clothing.

Who was she?

- She makes fine cloth for a living and is quite successful
 - Chaucer then compliments her clothing, saying that they are finer than those of Ypres and Ghent.
- She has traveled to many different places for business
 - Notably, she had been to Rome, Boulogne, St. James of Compostella, Cologne and 3 times to Jerusalem.

Personal Life

- She has had five husbands.
 - With this and her nicer clothing would, at the time, suggest that she likes to “sleep around.”
- Since she has a successful business, we can assume that she is a widow, otherwise she would not be able to start a business and be consistent in it.

The Wife Stereotype

- The Wife of Bath represents a medieval stereotype of a wife.
 - She has had multiple husbands.
 - She is described as wrathful.
- Her description is anti-feminist in nature
 - Implies she is dependent on men with her five marriages
 - Makes fun of her though her clothing

The Wife of Bath as an attractive woman

- *“a worthy woman all her life”*
 - Chaucer is calling her worthy of being married to
 - Worthy in both beauty and personality
- *“In company she liked to laugh and chat”*
 - She is a great conversationalist

The Wife of Bath as a weaver

- *“In making cloth she showed so great a bent.”*
 - A bent is an affinity to do it, or skill
- *“She bettered those of Ypres and of Ghent.”*
 - Ypres and Ghent were famous for their fabrics

The Wife of Bath as a wanderer

- *“she had thrice been to Jerusalem”*
 - She has either done pilgrimages or been involved in the Crusades in some fashion.
 - In the lines following, Chaucer describes the many places she has been, from Rome to Cologne
- *“she was skilled in wandering”*
 - Good at going from place to place, but also from man to man