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Women and Property Rights in Medieval England



In medieval England, the status of _____ was closely tied to property rights. Most _____ was controlled by men, but there were exceptions where women could own land. When a _____ died, his widow might receive a portion of his estate, known as her _____. The law that governed this was designed to provide _____ for the widow.

Despite these rights, women often faced _____. For example, a woman's property could become her husband's upon _____. However, some women, especially those from wealthy families, managed to maintain _____ over their lands through legal arrangements like the _____, which guaranteed them a separate income.

In cases where there were no male _____, a woman could inherit property directly. This situation enabled some women to wield significant _____ power. A notable figure was Lady Margaret Beaufort, who managed extensive estates and played a crucial role in the political _____ of her time.

The church also provided opportunities for women to engage with property. Women who entered _____ could manage lands donated to the religious institution.

These women, known as _____, had considerable authority and independence compared to other women of their era.

Overall, while medieval society was predominantly _____, property rights did provide a pathway for some women to exercise a degree of _____ and influence. Their ability to navigate these rights varied greatly depending on social _____, family support, and the prevailing legal and cultural _____.

norms marriage control heirs convents dower patriarchal status security man
abbesses property jointure maneuvers restrictions women autonomy economic