

---

## ARTS AND SCIENCES CHAMPION – LADY MARGARETE CLARE ENGLEHARDTZ

---

Greetings to their Excellencies Giles and Maud, Baron and Baroness of St Florian de la Riviere.

As this year's A&S championship will be determined by items or skills of my persona, I wish to enter with a 16<sup>th</sup> Century German dress. My persona is a 16<sup>th</sup> Century German Lady by the name of Margarete Clare Engelhardt. I am wealthy and of high stature and I like to dress appropriately for every occasion. I am currently Lady in waiting for Baroness Maud. My heraldic charge is a natural seahorse and my heraldic colours are red and white. I have decided to construct my garment in these colours to better represent my persona.

### The inspiration

I based my garment on the Lucas Cranach portrait of Henry the Pious, Duke of Saxony and his wife, Katharina von Mecklenburg that was completed in 1514. Cranach was a German painter born in 1472 in Kronach. His paintings included portraits, religious subject matter and biblical nudes. Other portraits by Cranach such as "Judith with the head of Holofernes, 1530's" also show the German style with the breast band, hat and sleeves which I incorporated in my dress. One painter's account of a style can be deceiving and as such I looked for more examples from different painters. Baldung's "Portrait of a Lady, 1530's" illustrates the same German style as the Cranach portraits. I chose to recreate the portrait of Katharina von Mecklenburg because I liked the sleeves, the hat and the big guards. This portrait is also painted in the time period my persona would've lived. To suit my heraldic colours, I made my dress red and white instead of red and gold. I put some purple in the dress as I wanted to be recognized as being part of St Florian. It also helps if you're trying to blend in with the Baroness.



(Middle) Cranach -Judith with the head of Holofernes, 1530's

(Right) Baldung-Portrait of a Lady, 1530's

Cranach-Henry the Pious, Duke of Saxony, and his wife, Katharina von Mecklenburg, 1514

### The dress construction

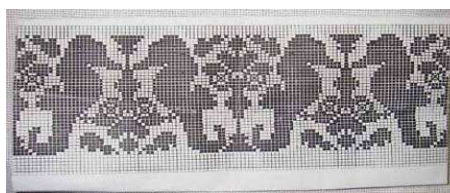
#### Bodice

There is no evidence to suggest how the German bodice was made in period, so I made it so it looks like the painting. The evidence suggests that the bands on the dresses were all the same colour and can be made of plain or decorated fabric, which was probably linen. Linen was also likely to be used as the lining as it breathes. In my dress I used red cotton velveteen for the main dress, off white cotton damask for the bands, and white cotton drill for the lining. I used denim as an interlining to stiffen the bodice. I didn't use linen because it is not as widely available as cotton.

#### Plastron or breast panel (aka: brustfleck)

The breast panel is normally ornately decorated with gold embroidery, pearls and many other beautiful accessories. For my German, I used cross stitch embroidery and a few pearls. In period, a style that looks similar to cross stitch was used but there is no evidence to suggest that it was used on a German breast panel. The reason I used cross stitch is because it seemed to be a good idea at the time. It was my second attempt at cross stitch and it took me about 3 months to complete. The pattern was based on a medieval pattern and was altered by Baroness Maud to include the seahorses which is the primary charge on my

device. The easiest way for me to keep the breast panel in place was to sew it to the fake chemise I inserted in the front of the gown. This is probably not period, but it is the easiest way to do it and still get the correct effect.



The pattern



The finished piece

### Sleeves and skirt

As I said previously, I chose the Cranach portrait of Katharina for the sleeves. They are relatively simple to construct compared to the Judith portrait. I created the slashing look in the sleeves by making tubes of red velveteen and attaching them to the top and bottom parts of the sleeve. Then I attached the sleeves to the dress. The sleeves are lined with red velveteen so I can roll the cuffs over my hand. To ensure that the skirt is as full as it could be, I used cartridge pleating to attach the skirt to the bodice. The bands on the skirt were a bit tricky, but I managed to figure it out eventually.

### Accessories



In a lot of the Cranach portraits, the ladies wear chokers and elaborate gold chains. The richer you were, the more chains you had. There are also many portraits with belts that were also heavily decorated and good for holding your pouch. I have a choker, though not as elaborate, a belt made from the same material as the guards and some gold chains. Hats were very big and feathery in all the portraits and though I really want one, I haven't had the time to make one yet. I will however go for a hat similar to the Katharina hat as it is so beautiful. I also noticed that most portraits have a ribbon snood underneath the hat.

Luckily, I have one of those already in purple.

### What I would do differently

If I were to make another German, I would definitely make the bodice a little looser. When I was patterned I didn't take into account that velveteen is thicker than calico. I would also wash the fabric before I work with it as I have noticed that the red rubs off on the white bands. I know I am supposed to wash the fabric anyway, but I was so excited to start making it that I didn't feel like washing it. Big mistake! As this was my first attempt at cartridge pleating, I missed some bits and I would definitely do this properly the next time round. I like the beading on the breast band of the portrait, and might make a beaded one next time.

Overall, I thought the project was quite successful, as it was my first German dress ever. I had lots of help from Baroness Maud and Viscountess Huguette and would like to thank them very much.

The finished dress.

