

# kostuum

2004



# Kostuum 2004

## Table of contents

Carin Schnitger

A special wedding dress from Brielle

Patricia Wardle

'The first international exhibition of modern lace in our country'

The 1912 exhibition at the Rotterdam Art Society

Gieneke Arnolli

Unusual 17th- and 18th-century jackets from the Northern Netherlands

Jacoba de Jonge

Marriage and christening in white

Marianne Stang

Chantilly lace

Greet van Duijn

Women's dress in Enkhuizen 1550-1650

Elda Gantner

Around the neck

The development of the collar between 1895 and World War I

## SUMMARIES

### **A special wedding dress from Brielle**

Carin Schnitger

In 1899 the Vereniging voor Verbetering van Vrouwenkleding (Dutch Society for Women's Dress Reform) was founded in the Netherlands. During the first decade of the 20th century this society was very actively advertising the new, improved style of dress through a monthly publication and brochures, as well as through organising exhibitions and lectures.

All this made reform dress a widely discussed topic around 1903. Many women refused to wear a corset any longer and replaced it with underwear made of materials with breathable qualities and a brassiere. A few artists, but to a much greater extent the women themselves, worked out models in the new style of dress.

In 1983-1984 the author researched this subject and a survey was made of the collections in Dutch museums. Amongst the surviving reform dresses are housedresses, an Art Nouveau dress, a dress by Marie Thierbach, clothes in the Liberty style which was very popular in the Netherlands too, an eastern model after Poiret, and dresses made at the Vakschool voor Verbetering van Vrouwen- en Kinderkleding (Vocational School for the Reform of Women's and Children's Clothes), founded in 1910.

To these examples a wedding dress can now be added, photographed when worn by Jannetje Rademaker on the occasion of her marriage with Arie van der Hoeven in Brielle, 1905. It is remarkable that reform dress was not only worn in big cities such as Rotterdam, The Hague and Amsterdam, but also in smaller communities like Brielle, a town in the Dutch province of Zeeland. Jannetje Rademaker came from a politically liberal and idiosyncratic family, which made her the kind of woman who would dare wear a dress in the new style for her wedding. In the first five years of the century the design of

reform dress had changed from very wide to a style that accentuated the waist to a certain extent. This made it possible for a bride to wear such a reform dress. A few years earlier the first very wide reform dresses might have engendered the suspicion of a pregnancy, which would have led to a great deal of scandal.

The bride probably made the dress herself to her own specifications, though using examples from the *Maandblad der Vereeniging voor Verbetering van Vrouwenkleeding* (Monthly Magazine of the Dutch Society for Women's Dress Reform), or from the very popular fashion magazine *De Gracieuse*, which from 1902 onwards also published examples of reform dress and even issued five Reform Fashion Albums between 1903 and 1912. An exact model cannot be found, because Jannetje combined different elements of fashionable and reform dress to her own taste.

The dress is dirty and shows wear and tear. At the back there is a difference in colour, as the train was sewn back for years, because Jannetje's daughter frequently wore her mother's wedding dress for amateur theatre performances.

### **'The first international exhibition of modern lace to take place in our country'**

The 1912 exhibition at the Rotterdam Art Society

Patricia Wardle

When the members of the committee of the Rotterdam Art Society decided to prepare an exhibition of contemporary handmade lace to be shown in December 1912, they could not have been entirely aware of the reams of correspondence, problems with customs officials and organizational difficulties this would involve. However, the surviving documentation now in the Rotterdam City Archives makes all this very clear and provides much valuable and often amusing material to supplement the rather bare bones of the exhibition catalogue.

The exhibition had originally been intended to include both old and new lace, but since two presentations of antique lace took place around the same time, it was decided to limit it to new work. It naturally included a large representation of pieces by lace schools and individuals in the Netherlands, but these have been discussed elsewhere.

Advice on who should be asked to participate was sought from museums, lace experts and consuls in various countries. Many more people and organizations were invited to contribute than actually did so, but the exhibition nevertheless offered a rounded picture of international lace production at the time. Some of the leading commercial firms, such as Lefébure (Paris) and Minne-Dansaert (Brussels) refused to participate, but contributions were sent in by Melville & Ziffer (Paris) as well as the Compagnie des Indes and the Manufacture de Dentelles Daimeries-Petitjean in Brussels. Arts and crafts associations were represented by Aemilia Ars in Bologna, Le Industrie Femmine Italiane in Rome and Les Arts de la Femme in Brussels. National umbrella organizations in Austria and Russia participated as did local industries in Devon and the East Midlands (UK) and Saba in the Netherlands Antilles. Representation of lace schools came from Italy, Germany and Sweden, while individual lace artists in France and Germany also sent contributions. Thus a wide coverage was achieved and this was made even more representative by loans of foreign work from private individuals in the Netherlands.

All the types of lace being made at that time were represented, from reproductions of antique lace to the most modern Art Nouveau lace and work by a budding artist like Leni Matthaei. Much of the lace drew heavily on the past in both technique and design, and it is virtually impossible now to identify the more modern elements represented, although a number of photographs and even actual pieces of lace have survived to give some idea.

Soon after this exhibition WW I would deal a death blow to large parts of the lace industry, so that this first international exhibition of modern lace in the Netherlands was also destined to be the last.

## **Unusual 17th- and 18th-century jackets from the Northern Netherlands**

Gieneke Arnolli

The beautifully embroidered women's jackets, made in England by professional embroiderers between 1610 and 1630, are well-known. In costume collections in the Northern Netherlands we also find embroidered jackets which can be dated between 1690 and 1730. Unfortunately there are no historical depictions known of these.

In the collection of the Fries Museum in Leeuwarden there are two very similar jackets embroidered in what might be called a naive manner. They were probably worn by city women at informal occasions and are undoubtedly made by a linen seamstress. Unfortunately there is very little documentation on what linen seamstresses in Friesland produced.

The jackets, one made of white cotton and the other of a mixed cotton and linen fabric, are cut in one with a peplum and have a slightly lowered, curved neckline. They have separately-cut three-quarter length sleeves, rounded at the elbow. The jackets are laced at the front and were probably worn instead of a corset.

The first jacket is embroidered in madder-red silk and was donated by a well-to-do Frisian family in 1936. The second jacket has a simple embroidered, curving border, accentuated by an edging of red silk ribbon. This jacket fastens with a bow at the neck and there are eyelets for laces lower down. It has to be a girl's jacket, because the cut is almost straight, without any indication of a waist or room for breasts or hips. Compared to fashionable jackets of the time the jackets described here are remarkably simple and almost modern in construction.

The Groninger Museum also possesses two embroidered jackets, one of which looks more expensive because it is made of yellow satin silk. The second one is entirely edged in red silk, and the peplum is divided into separate gored panels. Remarkable in this one is the special treatment of the linen: an A-relief effect has been worked into it by stitching zigzag lines at 1 cm intervals, in vertical bands of 5 cm width. This method needs a lot of material and so the jacket is remarkably heavy. On the relief background flowering plants, butterflies and birds are embroidered. We find similar embroidery in quilts.

Myrtle Campbell describes simple, embroidered sleeveless jackets in English collections of the same period. She distinguishes two types, the first boned, serving as an informal corset. The second is quilted, usually without boning, and served as an underjacket for warmth, or as informal dress. Both types are called 'jumps'.

Because there are no portraits of women in simple embroidered jackets, they may be classified as informal dress.

## **Marriage and christening in white**

Jacoba de Jonge

Traditions surrounding marriage and christening are always changing. For centuries, brides and grooms simply wore their costliest clothes, clothes which were not unique to that day and were preferably brightly coloured. In the Middle Ages, white did not yet symbolise virginity, but a silvery white symbolised divine light and purity. In the 15<sup>th</sup> century we first see royalty – both men and women – marrying in silver brocade.

During the 17th century princes followed fashion and wore black for festive occasions like weddings, while many royal brides remained faithful to silver brocade far into the 18th century. Great ladies emphasised their rank and wealth by wearing silvery white, for example in portraits.

In the Romantic era from c. 1790, the most fashionable dresses were white, and veils were sometimes worn in the hair; these types of dresses were also worn by brides. Ideas about marriage and

the role of women changed; white came to symbolise innocence and virginity, both in brides and small children.

White wedding dresses were sometimes worn with a matching pelerine for the church service. Around 1840 low necklines went out of style for daywear, and wedding dresses became high-necked day dresses too. Only princesses, following court ritual, continued to marry in low-cut dresses well into the 20th century.

In the mid-19<sup>th</sup>-century wedding dresses became an item in fashion magazines and department stores. They differed from afternoon dresses by the addition of trains and veils, and also through the use of special bridal fabrics. Marrying in white was a luxury; most brides chose a smart, coloured dress that could be worn for other occasions as well.

Up to ca. 1920 wedding dresses followed the fashion in day dresses. During the 1930s, under the influence of motion pictures and photographs of royal weddings, the trains of wedding dresses grew longer and longer, necessitating the use of bridesmaids for carrying them. The train could later be removed and the dress dyed to serve as an evening dress. As bridal gowns separated more and more from mainstream fashion, brides sometimes wore an altered gown of their mother's or grandmother's. Old lace and other elements were carefully reused in new dresses. After World War II, the white wedding dress gradually became available to all. At the same time pure fantasy took over: we saw fashionable brides in miniskirts and fairy tale brides in crinoline skirts.

Christening dresses show the same development. These too were first worn circa 1800, influenced by the fashion for white. During the whole of the 19th century, the cut of christening dresses closely followed women's fashion. Around 1900, proper children's fashion emerged, influencing christening dresses as well. While some families took to using old family dresses for the christening, others had new dresses made after individual designs. From the 1930s, the mother's own wedding gown was sometimes used for making a christening dress.

## Chantilly lace

Marianne Stang

The town of Chantilly is not only famous for its manufacture of china and its horse-racing, it also lends its name to a black bobbin lace made of silk. Technically, it is a lace with continuous threads and motifs in half-stitch surrounded by a thick silk thread. Large pieces such as shawls and deep flounces are made of strips of 7 to 13 cm, joined together by an invisible stitch called *point de raccroc*. Chantilly is executed in an extremely tightly twined silk, which gives the lace its characteristic dull appearance. Dyeing, especially the colour-proof dyeing of black fabrics, was a very complicated process under strict control of specialised guilds.

Little is known about the origin of lace-making in Chantilly. Early in the 17th century, the Duchess of Longueville established some schools on her property at Etrepagny. In the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, the production of Chantilly lace was highly organised by government authority. Black lace was very popular in Spain. The marriage of the French crown prince to the Spanish Infanta in 1745 gave a great boost to the production of black silk lace in France. The French Revolution dealt a heavy blow to lace-making, but Napoleon I liked lace. In order to support the industry, in 1804 he decreed that only needlepoint lace from Alençon and bobbin lace from Chantilly were allowed at his court.

Although white Chantilly lace was still being produced, black Chantilly came into fashion from about 1835 and remained the most popular kind until 1870. In 1829 Auguste Lefébure founded his famous manufacture of Chantilly-type lace in Bayeux in Normandy, an area with a long tradition in lace-making. Bayeux specialized in large pieces such as square and triangular shawls, deep flounces and entire dresses of lace, whereas Caen, also in Normandy, produced smaller accessories such as ties, bonnets, small veils and edgings. The quality of the products of Bayeux and Caen was held in high esteem, as is shown by the jury reports of various exhibitions.

Around 1840 Chantilly lace was introduced in the lace-making areas of Grammont (Geraardsbergen) and Enghien (Edingen) in Belgium. According to jury reports, Belgian Chantilly, which was cheaper, could not compete with the more expensive French variety. In truth, the Belgians could not afford to produce spectacular exhibition pieces such as Lefébure did. But high quality lace was produced in all centres, making it difficult to-day to attribute single pieces to one place of origin.

From the moment when the bobbin-net machine (invented by the Englishman John Heathcoat in 1809) produced a perfect imitation of hand-made ground, machine-made lace began to flood the European market. French producers of 'real' lace tried to compete by making their designs more inimitably intricate. In the end, machine-made lace was universally accepted, and even highly valued as a sign of progress. At the same time, there has always been a special appreciation of hand-made lace.

## **Women's dress in Enkhuizen 1550-1650**

Greet van Duijn

The aim of this article is to define women's dress between 1550 and 1650 in Enkhuizen, a port on the former Zuiderzee, as regional dress. Enkhuizen was a prosperous town at the time and fashionable dress was also worn there. The regional dress seems sober and simple, the wealth showing only in costly ornaments.

Which costume parts are distinctive for Enkhuizen, and which are common to the whole region? On 24 painted panels from circa 1550 women in regional dress from the Northern Netherlands are depicted. Some of them are unmarried women, virgins, others married women. The main difference is in the head coverings: the unmarried women wear their hair in braids, the married women wear a folded white headkerchief. The way the braids are wound around the head and the way the white kerchief is folded differ from place to place.

The most important elements distinguishing the Enkhuizen costume are the separate sleeves, the corset, and the ornaments. The corsets and the *kletjes* (a corruption of *collerette*, a neck and shoulder covering) of the married and the unmarried woman are very similar. Both have large button-like ornaments on their corsets on either side of the lacing. These ornaments have not survived and it is not clear whether they served a purpose in the lacing. In the 17th century we find many depictions of golden eyelets. The *kletje* is always made of a dark, heavy material, in 17th-century portraits it is made of fur and has a standing collar.

The way the headkerchief of the Enkhuizen woman was made up and pinned together did not change. During the 17th century the kerchief was pleated in ever finer pleats, which may be seen in the portraits of identified Enkhuizen women. These tell us that the kerchief in this shape was typical for Enkhuizen.

The unmarried women wore their hair in braids, with red ribbons. In the early portraits the braids are crossed on top of the head. In the 17th century the braids are wound around the back of the head, adorned by a wide red ribbon. It is remarkable that the shapes of the braided hairdo and the folded linen kerchief are very similar. From this we may deduce that the pinned-up braids were still worn under the kerchief of the married women.

On the whole the Enkhuizen women's dress is the same as in the rest of the Northern Netherlands. The corset has a remarkable lacing, the eyelets being close together. The Enkhuizen women in portraits, who all belonged to the well-to-do burgher class, wear skirts to the ground. The headkerchief is definitely a local shape. This is not so clear where the braided hair is concerned, because we have fewer surviving depictions of that. But all the girls in Enkhuizen portraits wear their braids with the red ribbons simply wound around the head, whereas on pictures from other towns we see more variation. More research into this will be needed.

## Around the neck

The development of the collar between 1895 and World War I

Elda Gantner

One tends to think that nowadays fashion changes quicker than it used to, but when glancing through fashion magazines from the late 18th century onwards one sees how quickly it changed even then. Small details like the collar changed each month. The design of the collar between 1895 and World War I is the subject of this article.

In 1895 the standing collar was a standard part of women's daily dress. It encircled the neck entirely and because of its extreme height it had to be made of a stiff material and supported with boning. Decorations included bows, frills and horizontal tucks and lace was a favourite material. There was a revival of the 17th-century pleated collar, be it in a miniaturised version; sometimes it was only a half collar at the back of the neck. Other remarkable aspects of fashion were the huge upper sleeves and the very tightly laced waist. Often it is hard to tell if one is seeing a one-piece dress or a combination of jacket, skirt and blouse. During colder seasons shoulder mantles and capes were worn, often fitted with a high standing collar too.

Soon after 1895 the sleeve started to collapse and women's bodies were forced into the fashionable S-bend: the *droit devant* line was born. These curving lines were continued in the standing collars, which were now often higher at the back than at the front. A plastron with a standing collar would be worn in the front opening of the bodice. The edges of lapels and collars were no longer cut straight, but in the sinuous curving lines so beloved of the Art Nouveau. Favourite decorations were passementerie, Luxeuil lace and Irish crochet ornaments, which were sewn onto net or other thin materials. The standing collar was often combined with small falling collars, cravats, fichus and rectangular boa-like shawls

The total effect of the fashion of the first decade of the 20th century is one of excess, getting lost in details. Showy laces such as heavy needle laces, Irish crochet, Luxeuil, Point d'Angleterre, Duchesse and Cluny were the most popular. In reaction there were attempts all over Europe to achieve a simple, tasteful and wearable fashion. The use of lace decreased and delicate embroidery became more popular.

Circa 1912 this trend became mainstream and the female silhouette went from voluminous to a more slender line. The skirt became narrower and the hemline began moving upwards. The standing collar did not match this new style, small flat collars were now preferred.

Due to World War I more women went out to work and the demands regarding clothes changed. Functionality and freedom of movement became important concepts in fashion.