

# Back to Flardinga

## Costume and kit guide

Guide for warriors, civilians and traders participating in the Back to Flardinga event (Vlaardingen, 14-15 June 2008).

### Contents

1. Introduction
2. General guidelines
3. Costume guide for female participants
4. Costume guide for male participants
5. Costume guide for clerics
6. Kit guide for warriors
7. Costume descriptions
8. Weapons and armour
9. Unacceptable items
10. Conclusion

## 1. Introduction

During the 'Back to Flardinga' event, about 200 re-enactors will set up an 11th century encampment with a market and they will re-enact the Battle of Vlaardingen from the year 1018. The re-enactors will attempt to depict military and civilian life in West-Frisia in the 11th century as authentically as possible.

Archaeological material from Vlaardingen itself is rare. In 2002, a large 11th century cemetery was excavated in the centre of Vlaardingen, with very interesting skeletal material but no clothing or other items. From the skeletal finds it has been concluded that the persons buried there had been living in prosperity. One of the coffins was made from the planks of a Viking ship. However, for clothing, jewellery, weapons, tents, etc. we must rely on pictorial evidence and archaeological finds from elsewhere.

Vlaardingen in the 11th century was a trading place, frequented by merchants from abroad. We know of contacts with England and Flanders, and we assume that other West-European places would be represented as well, and possible even more distant areas such as Russia. Thus, villagers and traders do not have to stick to the local fashion.

The battle was fought between warriors from West-Frisia on the one side, and a professional imperial army on the other side. The imperial soldiers came from Utrecht, present-day Belgium, and Germany. They probably resembled the Normans depicted at the Bayeux Tapestry. On the battle field, there would not have been any typical Viking-aspects such as berserkers dressed in wolf skins, or Rusvik outfits.

With this in mind, the present guidelines have been composed. The organisers realise that it is always difficult to comply with all authenticity requirements, and that you cannot expect re-enactors to make or buy a totally new outfit just for this one event. These guidelines are intended to help you, if necessary, to make a few additions or adjustments to your kit, to fit the theme of the event as best you can.

## 2. General guidelines

Dress must be consistent with the character being portrayed. The higher the rank, the better the quality of the garment and its decoration or ornamentation must be. Serious inconsistencies like 'Sword-but-no-shoes' or 'Low-rank-with-lots-of jewellery' must be avoided.

All participants must remember that the colour of the clothes worn gives a good indication of a person's rank and status. Low ranks would only have access to pale coloured or even undyed cloth, while the wealthy would be able to afford rich reds, blues and greens. Whatever rank is being portrayed, clothing dyed black, white or purple should be avoided.

All garments must be properly finished and hemmed.

## 3. Costume guide for female participants

Costume guide for women in the encampment and as water carriers on the battle field.

Compulsory: underdress  
linen or woollen overdress, ankle length  
leather turn shoes  
head dress (for adult women)

Optional: stockings  
embroidery or tablet braid  
jewellery  
woollen cloak

To avoid: fur.

## 4. Costume guide for male participants

Costume guide for non-clerical men in the encampment and as water carriers on the battle field.

Compulsory: undertunic  
either hose & breeches or trousers  
linen or woollen overtunic, knee length  
leather belt with strap end  
leather turn shoes

Optional: with trousers: stockings or leg winding  
hat  
embroidery or tablet braid  
jewellery  
woollen cloak

To avoid: fur.

## 5. Costume guide for clerics

Costume guide for men acting as clerics in the encampment and participating as non-combating clerics on the battlefield.

In the early 11th century, the only order of monks in existence were the Benedictines.

Compulsory: undertunic  
hose & breeches  
linen knee-length stockings  
black woollen habit and mantle  
a narrow black (40-45 cm) woollen scapular  
leather turn shoes  
shoulder bag

NOT: belt around the waist  
crucifix.

For more detailed information about 11th century clerics, contact Henk 't Jong [scapreel@tip.nl](mailto:scapreel@tip.nl) .

## 6. Kit guide for warriors

Kit guide for men and women acting as warriors on the battlefield.

### 6.1 All warriors

Costume: see costume guide for male participants, above  
all warriors (also female) on the battlefield must dress like men.

Compulsory: at least one weapon  
hand protection (robust gloves)  
head protection (leather or metal).

Recommended:leather armguards  
for female warriors: fencing cups.

For archers that do not engage in hand-to-hand combat, head protection is optional.

### 6.2 Frisian warriors

Non-professional warriors in the service of Count Dirk III.

Compulsory: a seax or axe or spear.

Optional: sword, longbow, javelins  
metal helmet  
shield (preferably round)  
gambeson  
mail (coif and/or hauberk).

### 6.3 Frisian guard

Elite warriors in the service of Count Dirk III.

Compulsory: sword and/or spear  
metal helmet  
shield (preferably kite)  
gambeson and mail hauberk.

Optional: seax, axe  
mail coif.

### 6.4 Imperial warriors

Professional warriors in the service of Emperor Henry II.

Compulsory: sword and/or spear

metal helmet  
shield (preferably kite)  
gambeson and/or mail hauberk.

Optional:      longbow, javelins  
                  seax, axe  
                  mail coif.

## 7. Costume descriptions

### Undertunic

The undertunic should be made of linen (cotton is an acceptable substitute) and must have long sleeves, tight fitting at the wrist but looser on the upper arm. It should be long enough to reach to the bottom edge of the knee. It may be either fully-skirted or split either side or front and rear at the bottom hem. It should either have a round neckline or a squarer one with a small front split. It may be edged in a contrasting colour around the wrists, cuffs, neck and around the splits.

### Overtunic

The overtunic was usually of wool and again had long sleeves, tight fitting at the wrist but looser on the upper arm. It must reach to just below the knee when belted. As with the undertunic, it may be either fully-skirted or split either side or split front and rear at the bottom hem. It should either have a round neckline or a squarer one with a small front split. It may be edged in a contrasting colour around the wrists, cuffs, neck and around the splits, or (at the same places) be decorated with tablet braid and/or inkle and/or embroidery.

### Habit and mantle

Benedictine monks wore a wide black woollen habit with not too wide sleeves and a sewn on, linen lined if possible, pointed hood. Furthermore a semi-circular black woollen mantle, fastened by sewing a length of ca 15 cm in front, with a wide enough neck opening.

The wool may be as black as possible, especially if you are from a wealthy abbey. Else charcoal, dark brown, dark grey and even a blueish dark grey may be worn in the habit, scapular and mantle.

### Trousers

Trousers should be straight legged down to the ankle.

Please try to avoid 'Rus' trousers.

Trousers are usually worn with either leg winding or socks (see below). However, if you are comfortable with bare feet in your shoes, that's OK.

### Leg winding

Leg winding or winnegas was worn by almost all Anglo-Saxon men and also appears in continental depictions. Thus, we assume that it was also common among Frisians.

Leg winding is made from a piece of woollen cloth about 5 cm wide and long enough to cover the whole lower leg from ankle to knee with some overlap.

Wealthy men may make their winnegas out of tablet woven braid, and instead of simply tying them at the end, they should be held in place by clothing hooks.

### Stockings

Stockings may be either woollen (made by naalbinding) or linen, and may be very short (below the ankle) to knee-length. Long stockings may be fastened with sewn-on woven linen bands.

Some early-medieval pictures show men wearing leg coverings that may be either winnegas or longs woollen stockings in alternating colours.

A not-truly-authentic (but cheap and acceptable) alternative is to buy a pair of thick woollen modern socks in a neutral colour.

### Hose

Hose (singular and plural) usually came as single leg garments and would have been worn with a pair of knee breeches. Burial evidence suggests that while the hose may have been tied to the waistband, they were also fixed at the thigh with small pins or brooches. This pinning may have been to a pair of

breeches, or may have connected the hose to the belt in a manner similar to modern suspenders. Some were open ended at the ankle and some had an integral foot.

### **Breeches**

Breeches (or braes or braies) are a pair of knee-length linen underpants. They were tied with a drawstring, no examples have been found with belt loops. Whilst they were usually worn with hose they appear to have been worn on their own as well.

Breeches may have embroidery round the lower hem of each leg.

### **Turnshoes**

The majority of shoes in N-W Europe during the early Middle Ages was of a type known as 'turnshoe' and had either a central upper seam, or a 'flap and toggle' arrangement.

In the Low Countries during the early Middle Ages, shoes of various heights were worn: low, ankle-height and up to about 30 cm high.

As an alternative to turnshoes, some re-enactors wear wooden shoes. The first archaeological and pictorial evidence for wooden shoes stems from the later Middle Ages, but it is assumed that they may have existed a few centuries earlier, especially among labourers in the land reclamations.

Do not combine wooden shoes with rich clothing.

### **Belts and strap ends**

A leather belt completes the basic costume for men and women (but not clerics). The belt must be between 1,5 and 3,5 cm wide and 15 to 30 cm longer than your waist and have both an authentic buckle and strap end.

Belts that are either too wide, too long or without strap, are not acceptable.

### **Pouch**

Acceptable pouches for our period are of the circular and semi-circular drawstring type or the soft leather 'kidney' pouch.

As a separate item you may also carry a small coin-pouch with a selection of reproduction coins. This may be highly elaborate and decorated or plain and simple. They appear to have been worn on a long drawstring around the neck, either over or under the tunic.

### **Shoulder bag**

You may find a shoulder bag (canvas or linen) more practical than a pouch. Shoulder bags are visible in period illustrations and can be carried on one shoulder, much like a modern item. Most useful of all, they are large enough to accommodate a range of items - even those which will not fit into a pouch.

### **Cloak**

Most adults had a cloak of some sort. It varied from a simple rectangular woollen blanket thrown over the shoulder, to a full-length, lined, fur-trimmed, embroidered garment that anyone would be proud to own. The most common shape was the half-round type, probably for the simple reason that it doesn't drag on the ground. Although differing in quality, all were fixed, normally at the shoulder, by brooch, pin or ties.

Frisian cloaks were famous by the end of the first millennium. In Charlemagne's era (two centuries before 'Flardingia'), there were white, grey, sapphire-blue, and even 'chequered' Frisian cloaks (and probably other colours as well). In the 11th century, woollen fabrics from England, dyed red with madder, had a good reputation in the Low Countries.

### **Jewellery**

Contrary to popular belief, our early medieval ancestors did not wear vast amounts of jewellery. You may wear a pendant of some sort around your neck, maybe with a couple of beads on the same string. Brooches, cloak pins and finger rings were quite common, and the richer the person, the larger the item.

### **Headwear**

In most contemporary illustrations, men are depicted bare headed. Exceptions are kings (with crowns) and warriors (with helmets or the occasional 'Phrygian cap').

Adult women are always depicted wearing a cloth around the head.

## 8. Weapons and armour

All weapons must have blunt edges and rounded tops.

### **Sword**

The 'brazil-nut' pommel, one-handed broadsword is typical of the 11th century. Other one-handed swords will be accepted, such as typical Viking swords with lobed pommels (although a bit 'old-fashioned' for the 11th century) and swords with round pommels (maybe a bit too modern).

Sheaths and scabbard may be authentically painted or decorated with colours.

### **Helmet**

In the 11th century, non-professional warriors probably did not wear helmets. However, for safety reasons, head wear is compulsory on the battle field for all ranks. This may be a leather cap or a helmet.

The authentic helmet for the 11th century is the quarter-braced conical helm with nasal guard as depicted in the Bayeux tapestry.

As an alternative, you can wear a semi-spherical, spun dome covering the head down to about the ears, and cover it with a fabric or leather cap.

Please try to avoid Gjermundbu 'spectacle' helmets and 'Rus' or 'Eastern' helmets with chimney pots or horse tails.

### **Spear**

Spears may be either plain or winged. The maximum length for spears is 2,5 m.

### **Javelin**

Javelins are not so often used in early medieval re-enactment. In the Battle of Vlaardingen, they cannot fail: the chronicles explicitly mention javelins being used by the Frisians against the imperial army, so bring as many as you can.

Javelins have simple heads and are shorter than spears: between 1,0 and 1,5 m.

### **Longbow**

It is assumed that archers participated in Vlaardingen in 1018.

Re-enactors with longbows are welcome to join the battle. Care should be taken that no arrows are shot in the direction of the public. Archers should operate as one unit, rather than as individuals scattered along the line.

Arrows must have blunt rubber heads.

### **Gambeson**

The gambeson is a padded garment worn either as an armour by itself, or under a ring-shirt.

### **Mail hauberk**

Mail hauberks or mail shirts are worn by professional warriors, usually over a gambeson. The length may vary from just below the groin to knee-length, and the sleeves may be either short, half, or full length.

For the early Middle Ages, the authenticity of butted mail (as opposed to riveted) is questionable. However, since most re-enactors have butted mail, and this is not an item that is easily or cheaply replaced, butted mail will be accepted.

## 9. Unacceptable items

The following is a list of items which will NOT be allowed onto the battle field:

Medieval 'great' helmets,  
Live-role-play type weapons,  
Plate armour of any sort,  
Knitted 'string' mail,  
Any weapon NOT in common use in NW Europe around the 11th century,  
Sharp weapons of any description,  
Furry jackets or any form of Berserker,  
Shields that are not round, oval or kite shaped.

Items which will NOT be allowed both on the battle field and in the encampment during public hours:

Non-authentic or modern footwear,  
Spectacles,  
Watches,  
Tents that are not replicas of early-medieval models.

Body piercings and modern jewellery must be removed.  
Tattoos must be covered by costume or masking make-up.

All modern stuff (bottles, plastic bags, sleeping bags, mobile telephones, etc. etc.) must be hidden from the public's view, either by covering it with a blanket or by keeping it in a closed tent..  
For smoking or using your mobile phone or a other things not in line with the 11th century character of the event, please withdraw to a place out of the public's view.

## 10. Conclusion

This guide was composed by Kees Nieuwenhuijsen in February 2008.  
It is based on the Hastings 2006 costume guides, written by The Vikings Authenticity Team.  
The guide, plus some contemporary illustrations, can be downloaded from [www.keesn.nl/1018](http://www.keesn.nl/1018).

Additional information and pictures relevant to the topic can be found at:

The Franco Flemish Contingent website	<a href="http://www.ffc1066.de/index.php?id=56">www.ffc1066.de/index.php?id=56</a>
10th and 11th Century Clothing in England	<a href="http://www.uvm.edu/~hag/rhuddlan/images/index.html">www.uvm.edu/~hag/rhuddlan/images/index.html</a>
The Bayeux Tapestry	<a href="http://www.hastings1066.com">www.hastings1066.com</a>
Vlaardingen Archaeological reports (in Dutch; numbers 15.2 and 15.3 are about the 11th century cemetery).	<a href="http://www.vlaardingen.nl/smartsite.html?id=35073">www.vlaardingen.nl/smartsite.html?id=35073</a>
The Battle of Vlaardingen	<a href="http://www.keesn.nl/vlaard">www.keesn.nl/vlaard</a>