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THIS BEGINS THE OFFICIAL ST. IVES COSTUME GUIDELINES (PENDING BOARD APPROVAL)

I. St. Ives' Purpose

From the St. Ives Bylaws: "The primary objectives and purposes of this corporation shall be to provide **historical** education for individuals, schools, civic groups and public events, to promote historical and cultural awareness and understanding through the use of **theatre, music, storytelling, craftsmanship and dance**, and for any other lawful purpose pursuant to California and/or United States law pertaining to Public Benefit or Not-for-Profit Corporations."

Generally, in St. Ives we portray skilled craftspeople, business owners, servants, and merchants: the group we call the Middle Class today.

II. Factors in St. Ives' Costuming

A. ELIZABETHAN RE-ENACTMENT: OUR HISTORIC "CHAPTER"

Shakespeare, the Spanish Armada: a Golden Age. The English Renaissance came to its height during the reign of **Elizabeth I, from 1558-1603**. During this time, England prospered in countless areas: the economy, literature, music, politics, and in terms of the happiness and well-being of Elizabeth's subjects. Because of this, many Renaissance faires, schools, and other venues have chosen this period as their focus. While our representations cover this entire period (such as including Shakespeare, whose work began to be noticed in the 1590's), **our "look" is based on Elizabeth's early reign, from about 1560-1580**.

During this time, fashion became a visual statement of wealth, status, profession, and religious leanings. English fashion followed the fashions of Continental Europe, particularly Spain, France, and the Low Countries. The few portraits and woodcuts, together with the thousands of documents that have been studied, indicate that most of the English middle class looked most like the people portrayed by artists like Breughel and Hofnagel. As people gained wealth, they would have been more influenced by fashions from France, while those of a conservative or religious bent would have worn the serious dark colors of Spain.

B. THEATRICAL CONTEXT & COHERENCE: VARIETY, BALANCE, AND VISUAL IMPACT

Most of the environments we perform in contain many groups besides our own, from the royal court, to the puritans, to the military, to the simple country folk. It is important that we fit into this context **visually**, so that the audience can immediately "read" our characters; therefore, we must first have some **consistency** of appearance within St. Ives (such as sleeves). At the same time, there is much **variety** among our characters, so we must also have a variety of styles, colors, and embellishments to reflect this. Finally, to please and delight the eye, we must have a **balance** of looks so that we don't all wear the same colors, or trim, or hat style.

C. PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

- **1. Safety and health:** These will always be of primary importance. Many of our costume requirements were designed to promote these considerations.
- 2. Comfort: Our performance days are long and busy, and it is important that your costume is designed and constructed to allow for this. The Elizabethans lived in their clothes, and ours can be just as correct and just as practical.
- 3. Personal budget: This is a hobby. It can be an expensive hobby, just like any other. Expect to invest in your costume. In planning your character, take into consideration the costume you can afford to make or to buy. Even the simplest lower middle class costume, including shoes and hat, will cost at least as much as a nice modern outfit. Most people start out simple, then, over the years, bring their character and their costume up in status at the same time. Whichever character you play, your costume should be of excellent quality, fit, and representation of the character. Plan accordingly!

D. FAIRE TRADITIONS AND PERSONAL TASTE

The Original Renaissance Pleasure Faire came into being more than 50 years ago. Our faire family has a **rich tradition**, one of the reasons that so many of us continue to put our hearts, souls, and muscles into this labor of love every year. In the course of the past 50 years, there have also been changes - some good, and some not so much - and this too is the reality of our hobby. As time and our knowledge evolve, St. Ives will choose to keep some traditions, and fondly (or laughingly) lay others aside.

Similarly, we are volunteers and MUST receive **gratification** from the time, resources, and effort we put into this. You have chosen to be a member of St. Ives and enact the world described above **because you love it!** And for our part, we will strive to help you **create a costume and character that will add to your pleasure**.

E. TIMEFRAME OF EXPECTATIONS

First year vs. veterans

- We understand that folk new to re-enacting, as well as experienced folk who are changing guilds or roles, may need a little time to get all of their costume together. Start simple and small and with a character that you can achieve quickly. The petticoat, kirtle, coif and partlet of a serving girl this year can become the foundation of next year's goodwife, with the addition of an overdress and hat. The following year, a silk kirtle, a ruff, and fancier trim on the overdress can take the character to a still higher level.
- Veterans, you are expected to understand the guidelines and adhere to them. If you have an issue, please discuss it (as quickly and professionally as possible) with the St. Ives Costume Director and the St. Ives Guildmaster to resolve it. Leave the drama onstage.

Notification of issue and resolution of issue:

 If you are getting designs, fabrics, or costumes approved, make sure that you get the resolution of the issue officially approved before moving forward.

- If you find yourself without some necessary piece of your costume (see Minimum Costuming Requirements), before you go "onstage," check with the St. Ives Costume Director to see if the missing piece can be temporarily supplied through our loaner stock.
- If you are advised by the St. Ives Costume Director, the St. Ives
 Guildmaster, or your Head of Household that there is an issue with your
 costume, please address it as quickly as possible. If there is a
 disagreement, please request a meeting with the guildmaster to resolve it as
 quickly and happily as possible.
- Most importantly, if, during the costume approval process, the St. Ives Costume Director informs you that your costume needs changes by the next year, please make a note of it and start planning and getting approvals for the changes right away. Notes and pictures will be kept by the Costume Director, so if the issue has not been resolved by the next approval, don't be surprised or hurt if you are not approved to go onstage until it is.

F. RULES OF THUMB

- The quality of materials and workmanship at this time was high. Fabric, stitching, and decoration was generally of good quality. Buy good quality fabric and trim, and any externally visible handwork and stitching should be well-done.
- ❖ Do not ever knowingly "teach" bad history if you have a choice. In other words, as much fun as it may be, choose NOT to wear the modern or anachronistic thing.
- If your costume choice only makes sense if you have to explain it (e.g. the Chinese pirate who is secretly Elizabeth's sister) - don't make that choice.
- While a few members will look different for specific theatrical reasons, a rule must be obvious for there to be exceptions. So, even if you see something on another guild member, it may not be appropriate for your character. Most of us will be the rule, not the exception.

Remember...

The costume is the character and the character is the costume!

III. Minimum Costuming Requirements

A. THE 10 COMMANDMENTS OF ST. IVES COSTUMING:

- 1. THE MOST IMPORTANT. You must ask for and receive **approval** of the costume director **BEFORE** purchasing patterns, fabric, trim, etc. Have some knowledge of the character you plan to play, and the activities the character will be doing, BEFORE you plan your costume or ask for approval 1.
- Do NOT assume that because a costume has been approved in the past, or for someone else, it will be approved again. Take the costume director's decisions in a mature and professional way.
- 3. Keep your **head covered** at all times. Remember that your head covering is a great indicator of your status and character.
- 4. Only show the **skin** of your neck and upper chest, and your hands. Your sleeves may be rolled up **if** your current work requires it. **Tattoos** were uncommon for our group during period; cover them as appropriate. Visible **piercings** should be limited to ears, one per earlobe.
- 5. **Body linens** (shirts, smock/chemises, head linens) should be white or natural. Avoid the color white in outer garments, however, as it gets filthy and these are harder to clean.
- 6. St. Ives characters always have **sleeves** on our bodices or doublets, as that raises the character's apparent status. These may be pinned back or removed in extreme heat, or for occupational reasons, but remember that by doing so you are lowering your apparent status.
- 7. Always wear an outer garment on the upper body, whether **doublet** or **jerkin** or **bodice**. You would be considered naked without it. Women, only front-lace a bodice if you are playing a lower middle or servant character; otherwise, back-lace, side-lace, or use invisible hooks and eyes.
- 8. Women, wear **two skirts** of at least moderate fullness. One or both may be part of a dress, which could be called a kirtle (under) or gown (over). Only wear **hoops** if you are an upper middle character, and even then, they are not required. Another option is a corded petticoat if you want fullness. If you **do** wear hoops, the circumference should be 90-115" maximum, and a petticoat should be worn over the hoops to reduce rib/bones show-through.
- 9. Men's breeches: wear either **venetians** that end just below the knee and close with a regular button fly, or wear **trunkhose** that are paned or unpaned, and end at the mid thigh, which may be closed with a regular button fly (not the large triangle flap) or a codpiece. Remember, men's fashions were worn at the natural waist at this time, not the hips.
- 10. Women, wear **bloomers/drawers**. Remember Frieda's motto: *Semper Ubi Sub Ubi* (always wear underwear). Although Elizabethan women mostly did not, **we do**.

B. ENTRY LEVEL ST. IVES COSTUMING - "QUICK START GUIDE"

To perform onstage with St. Ives, this is the MINIMUM costuming required. These are NON-NEGOTIABLE, no matter WHAT character you are playing.

→ SEE <u>SECTION VI</u> FOR COLORS, FABRICS, AND NOTES ABOUT COSTUME PIECES!

REQUIRED FOR EVERYONE, INCLUDING FIRST-YEAR		
Women	Men	
white or off-white chemise/shirt (except bawds who may have color)	white or off-white shirt	
bloomers		
under-skirt or kirtle	trunkhose (slops, pumpkin pants, venetians, etc.)	
overskirt + bodice, or gown (overdress)	jerkin or doublet, may add scholar's robe	
sleeves (may be tied in back)	sleeves (may be tied in back)	
stockings (at least knee-high)	stockings (at least knee-high) or tights	
sturdy shoes	sturdy shoes	
haircovering (includes wigs for bawds and floral wreaths on particular occasions)	headcovering	

<u>NOT</u> ALLOWED FOR <u>ANYONE</u> ONSTAGE		
bare feet, open-toed, or soft-soled shoes	under-bust bodice	
bare legs or knees	unnaturally colored hair showing	
uncovered head	print fabrics, uncovered metal grommets	
exposed shoulders	bloomerless women	
non-period tattoos or piercings showing	wristwatches, sunglasses, bluetooths, etc.	

NOTE: If you have a particular **health issue** that affects your costuming, consult with the St. Ives costume director about how this can be accommodated.

IV. The "No" List

A. HEALTH AND FUNCTIONALITY:

Note: If you have a particular health issue that affects your costuming, consult with the St. Ives costume director about how this can be accommodated.

- 1. Avoid garments in man-made fibers like polyester. Not only can they look incorrect, they also retain heat and can be miserable in warm weather. Anyone working with fire MUST be dressed in natural fibers, as plastic melts and burns.
- 2. Eyeglasses should be as inconspicuous as possible. Avoid sunglasses. Avoid plastic frames. Avoid bifocals. If you must wear glasses, wire frames are best.
- 3. No bare feet or open-toed shoes at any time. Fair sites are often riddled with screws, nails, broken glass, etc. Soft soles are also not recommended.

B. THEATRICAL DECISIONS (e.g. all black, metallic trim, variety, sleeves, bawds)

- 1. One major costuming tradition we have in St. Ives is that ALL characters must have sleeves. They visually bring our level up above the "peasants." Depending on weather, the work at hand, and other factors, they may be removed or worn attached to the back at certain times. However, EVERYONE must have them.
- 2. While black was a popular color for clothing during this period, it was generally a brownish/greenish cheap black. As a reflection of the price of true black, as well as to distinguish us from Court and the Puritans, we do not generally wear garments that are largely black. The exceptions are hats, shoes, stockings, some trim, and outerpartlets, as well as a few professions (like clergy).
- We do not use certain fabric types as they "read" too modern: corduroy, blue denim, prints (even hand-painted ones). Knit fabric would not have been produced in our period (generally it was round, stretchy items like caps and stockings that would be knitted).
- 4. We do not use metallics in fabric or trims. Actual metal (pewter, silver, copper, brass) is permissible in buttons, limited jewelry, etc, according to the status and wealth of the character. Any metal grommets (which would not have been used on fabric in our period) must be completely covered with thread... at which point you might as well have done without the grommet and made a proper eyelet instead.
- 5. Even though shades of purple and red were worn by many during our period, we generally reserve purple for royalty and red garments for the Queen's Guard.
- 6. And the cardinal rule of theatricality: If your costume choice involves a verbal explanation (I was kidnapped by pirates, my mother was Chinese, I was given this garment by the Queen) don't do it... 99% of the patrons will never hear your story; your costume must speak for itself.

C GENERAL:

Do not buy or make anything without getting approval of the costume director. Be prepared to show swatches of fabric, sketches, trim samples, etc! If you do not receive

definite approval, BE PREPARED that your costume may not be approved, no matter how much time and money you have spent on it.

D. **SPECIFIC TO SOUTHERN/REP:** Here is a link to the information on the Original Renaissance Pleasure Faire website. Please keep in mind that they have not been updated for several years, and **in many cases our guidelines are stricter than theirs**. REP guidelines, general

V. Intermediate Costuming: Tailoring to the Character

Remember...

The costume is the character and the character is the costume.

A. COSTUMING BY SOCIAL CLASS AND WEALTH

The Elizabethans were much more aware of both **social class** and **wealth**, and there was a definite **difference** between the two! Many in this time were rich commoners, and many were poor aristocrats. Most of us, though, are regular folks who are taking advantage of the relative stability of Elizabeth's reign to "better our conditions." Your **costume should most definitely visually reflect your status and wealth!** See the <u>Class structure in Early Modern England</u> section for how the Elizabethans saw this.

So think about the following:

- Am I a man or a woman?
- ❖ How old am I?
- ❖ Am I married?
- What will I be doing?
- Do I have a particular uniform or livery?
- Are there any safety considerations my costume should accommodate?
- ♦ How well off am I?
- How can I dress the clothing up, or down, for different occasions?
- How will I need to care for each garment?
- How will each garment stand up to wear? sun? rain? dust?

When you have thought about these things, you will have a better idea of how to plan your costume.

The charts on the next two pages give a general idea of how to do this. See also these sections (<u>COSTUME PIECES - WOMEN</u> and <u>COSTUME PIECES - MEN</u>) for information about particular elements of clothing.

Lower-middle Women	Middle-middle Women	Upper-middle Women
Semi-skilled labor, lower servants, apprentices, etc.	Skilled labor, upper servants, goodwives, widows	Wives or Widows of business owners, merchants, landowners
Practical, practical, practical. Little or no time to make decorative stuff and not one spare farthing for frippery.	Practical, but with nicer clothes for church/holidays; few free hours; may have accessories that advertise trade, or one nice gift.	Observes sumptuary laws, but upwardly mobile, and show off right up to the limit. If merchants, nice accessories related to business.
Unmatched bodices/skirts; kirtles and simple partlets	Matched bodices/skirts + overskirts; or kirtles + nice partlets or overgowns	Matched bodices/skirts + overskirts; decorated foreparts; nice kirtles + very nice partlets or overgowns
Bodice front-laced or hooked	Bodice front-laced, side-laced, back-laced or front-hooked	Bodice side-laced, back-laced or front-hooked
Clothing may be worn, somewhat faded, but clean and unstained	Clothing should not look worn or faded, no patches or visible repairs	Clothing should be of finest fabric and immaculately kept
Outer fabric: plain wool, linen or wool- look solids; coarser weaves; mid tones	Outer fabric: plain or textured wool, linen, or wool-look solids; fine weaves; richer tones	Outer fabric: fine plain or textured wool, silk, or similar solids; fine weaves; deep and rich tones
Chemise/shirt: off-white plain linen (not colored or black, not bright white)	Chemise/shirt: light white plain linen; may have very simple threadwork or blackwork	Chemise/shirt: very white (not optic white) linen; well-decorated with threadwork, blackwork or needle-lace
No hoops. Skirts down.	No hoops. Corded petticoat OK.	Hoops okay. Corded petticoat OK.
Little trim or fabric trim; no embroidery or fancy trim. Aprons.	Some simple trim; small borders of blackwork. Nice aprons.	Lots of trim, blackwork, etc.; (no metallic trim)
Buttons self-fabric or wood	Buttons self-fabric, pewter or thread-wrapped	Buttons self-fabric, pewter, thread- wrapped or other metal
Accessories plain: wood, leather, pottery; little metal; simple belt	Accessories more decorated: wood, leather, pewter; nicer belt	Costlier accessories: pewter, glass (careful), soft leather,
No ruffs or lace	Small ruff, no lace	Small to medium ruff, narrow edgings
Minimal, plain jewelry	Some simple jewelry, maybe one nicer piece (semiprecious)	More jewelry, nicer stones. Follow sumptuary laws.
Haircoverings: plain linen headwraps, coifs, biggins, "muffin caps"	Whiter linen, starched and possibly decorated with drawn threadwork or small amounts of blackwork	Netted or fancy coifs, very nice white linen headwear or veils, starched and decorated
Hats (over headcoverings): Linen, cotton or wool Italian bonnets, straw hats, shaped felted hats.	Nicer fabric Italian bonnets, finer straw hats, shaped felted hats.	Fine wool or velvet Italian bonnets, tall hats, very nice straw hats, shaped felted hats.

Lower-middle Men	Middle-middle Men	Upper-middle Men
Semi-skilled labor, lower servants, apprentices, etc.	Skilled craftsmen, upper servants, journeymen/masters	Business owners, merchants, landowners, knights
Practical, practical, practical. Little or no time to make decorative stuff and not one spare farthing for frippery.	Practical but with nicer clothes for church/holidays; few free hours; may have accessories that advertise trade, or one nice gift.	Observes sumptuary laws, but upwardly mobile, and show off right up to the limit. If merchants, nice accessories related to business.
Unmatched jerkin/unpaned venetians or trunkhose; very plain doublet or robe	Matched, doublet/venetians or trunkhose (may be paned); scholars/doctors may have robe	Matched, very nice doublet/ venetians or paned trunkhose. May layer robe or nice jerkin.
clothing may be worn, skillfully patched, somewhat faded, but will be clean and unstained unless used in manual labor	Clothing should not look worn or faded, no patches or visible repairs	Clothing should be of finest fabric and immaculately kept
outer fabric: wool, linen or wool-look solids; coarser weaves; mid tones	Outer fabric: plain or textured wool, linen, or wool-look solids; fine weaves; richer tones	Outer fabric: fine plain or textured wool, silk, or similar solids; fine weaves; deep and rich tones
shirt: off-white plain linen (not colored or black, not bright white)	Shirt: light white (not colored or black, not bright white) plain linen; may have very simple threadwork or blackwork	Shirt: very white (not optic white) linen; may be well-decorated with threadwork or blackwork or narrow needle-lace
little trim/fabric trim; no embroidery or fancy trim. Work aprons.	Some simple trim; small borders of blackwork	Lots of trim, blackwork, etc.; (no metallic trim)
buttons self-fabric or wood	Buttons self-fabric, pewter or thread-wrapped	Buttons self-fabric, pewter, thread- wrapped or other metal
accessories plain; wood, leather, pottery; little metal; simple belt	Accessories more decorated: wood, leather, pewter; nicer belt	Costlier accessories: pewter, glass (careful), soft leather,
No ruffs or lace	Small ruff, no lace	Small to medium ruff, narrow lace
Minimal, plain jewelry	Some simple jewelry, maybe one nicer piece (semiprecious)	More jewelry, nicer stones. Follow sumptuary laws.
Optional for men: biggins, skullcaps	Optional for men: biggins, skullcaps: Whiter linen, or may be black linen for scholar/doctor	Optional for men: biggins, skullcaps: Whiter linen, or may be black linen for scholar/doctor
Hats (over headcoverings): Linen, cotton, or wool flat caps, straw hats, shaped felted hats (brims not too wide)	Nicer fabric flat caps, finer straw hats, shaped felted hats.	Fine wool or velvet flat caps, tall hats, very nice straw hats, shaped felted hats.

B. SPECIAL COSTUMING: OCCUPATION

Certain occupations require special costuming. Examples include people working with fire (the forge, the cookyard), with very messy/wet items, or the Bawds of the Bell. If you are playing one of these characters, see below.

General Safety:

➤ Wear comfortable, leather shoes with real soles. Fair sites are often riddled with screws, nails, broken glass, etc.

Occupational hazards

- ➤ The Bawds: The bawds of the Bell have special costuming guidelines due to their special safety considerations and theatrical situation. Remember, the townspeople are only tolerating them as long as they behave (and pay taxes).
 - The color palette is more vivid and varied than what is allowed for other characters. Colored chemises are allowed for this group only.
 - Headcoverings/hats are not required, as decorated wigs are part of the costume.
 - Makeup: the "whiteface"/geisha look our bawds use is an exaggeration of period makeup. It is required as part of the costume.
 - Special care must be taken by members of this household to observe our requirements of proper coverage, as these characters are particularly vulnerable to inappropriate audience behavior. Skirts may not be raised above the ankles except when on the porch.

➤ The Forge:

- Leather aprons for forge.
- Natural fibers (esp. linen and wool) for folk working near fire. Manmade fibers can catch fire quickly, and melt and stick to skin.
- Jerkins and doublets, and outer sleeves are not required while wearing a leather apron. Bodices are. Shirt sleeves may be rolled up. Avoid full sleeves.
- Regular costuming rules (eg sleeves) apply when outside of the forgeyard for more than a few moments.

➤ The Kitchen

- Natural fibers (esp. linen and wool) for folk working near fire. Manmade fibers can catch fire guickly, and melt and stick to skin.
- Outer sleeves are not required when in the Kitchen. Shirt/chemise sleeves may be rolled up. Avoid overly-full sleeves.
- Kitchen women work in their kirtles. Overgowns and sleeves are reserved for going out in Town.
- Likewise, men might keep their jerkins on, but would save the sleeved doublet for outside of the Kitchen. Men might have one jerkin for working in the Kitchen and a nicer jerkin for going out in Town.
- Regular costuming rules (eg sleeves) apply when outside of the Kitchen for more than a few moments.

- Aprons in the Kitchen are a must. Aprons should be wide enough to protect the front of your clothes without wrapping around. A Kitchen apron is a rectangle attached to a waistband, with the top corners left loose from the waistband, allowing the apron's bottom corners to be tied to the top corners for an impromptu carry-all. Another apron style is a longer, slightly narrower rectangle with the top corners pinned to one's chest. This also has a waistband. You might want a working apron for kitchen work and a clean, white apron for marketing. Sturdy linen is good for aprons.
- In the Kitchen, over-partlets are another way to protect women's clothing. See <u>partlets</u>. A kitchen over-partlet can be wool or linen, but expect to be able to wash it.
- While fine sleeves aren't worn in the Kitchen, forearm protectors can be.

 Think of them as an apron for the arms protecting clothes but taken off before going to market. Fabric should disguise dirt and stand up to heavy washing. Aprons would not be made of canvas, but forearm protectors would be.
- There are many Kitchen activities that don't involve fire. However, If you are working with fire, LEAVE YOUR STRAW HAT ON A HOOK.
- Messy Artisan and Servant situations
 - Outer sleeves are not required when doing messy work or a messy gig.
 Shirt/chemise sleeves may be rolled up.
 - Regular costuming rules (e.g. sleeves) apply when not involved with messy work or as soon as the messy gig is over.

VI. Materials & Costume Pieces: glossary, descriptions, & notes

A. FABRICS AND COLORS

Fabrics: (See the St. Ives Swatch Books for samples!)

- Note: Always have fabric swatches approved by the costume director BEFORE purchasing!
 - Linen this is the go-to material for shirts, smocks, coifs, and other "body linens." Durable and comfortable, linen is noted for its ability to keep the skin cooler than cotton. It is a bit more expensive, but between sales and coupons, can be quite reasonable. It is a joy to work with, and evenweave linen can be purchased for needlework. It makes great linings for outer garments (guess where the word "lining" came from? Also linens and lingerie). Colored linen, if a sturdy variety and appropriately interlined, can make warm-climate kirtles, underskirts, and even doublets and overskirts.
 - Wool in Elizabethan England, most garments were made of wool. Wool fabric
 can be found in a variety of weights, from a thick coat-weight melton to a fine
 worsted tropical weight. Wool breathes and can be quite comfortable, even in
 warm weather. It is a dream to cut and sew, but do keep it secure from moths!
 - Silk A popular fabric in period for wealthier folk. This fabric would be of high quality and not have the slubs of a dupioni. A light, sheer white silk works for inner partlets and pull-outs, while a heavy silk satin, silk brocade, or silk taffeta could make a lovely gown or doublet, or an interesting turn-back on a wool garment. Remember that silk will need careful care to stay nice. Period appropriate silks are getting harder to find, so make sure to get yours approved before you spend your hard-earned money. Note: silk does retain heat.
 - Cotton While an uncommon fiber in period, <u>some</u> cottons are near enough in appearance to wool, silk, or linen that they can be used for garments. Look for textured solids.
 - Hemp Harder to find than linen but can be used in any way you use linen.
 - Leather very period, when in natural colors and from animals that were common in England (cow, deer, goat, sheep). Avoid reptile leathers and unnatural colors.
 - Polyester and other man-made fabrics Avoid these for fabrics. They look wrong and will be hot and not breathe. They are also a burn hazard, and simply not worth it. Be careful with trims made of these fibers; they can look okay or not. Always get swatches approved!

Colors (See the St. Ives Swatch Book for samples!):

- The pigments available in period were made from natural, not man-made, pigments.
- Some (eg the deepest blacks and certain tones of purple) were very expensive and generally out of our league.
- Keep colors a little muted in tone; the very brightest colors we can get today are made with modern techniques and pigments that were not available to the Elizabethan of our income.
- Be aware that some fibers, like linen, don't hold pigment well and will fade and look old within a few years.
- ❖ Below is an image that shows the palette that was available during our period. The bottom row is what would have been readily available in England; the top three rows would have been available, but expensive. Keep in mind that some colors may be present that we do not use, as a theatrical decision.



Photo by Marion McNealy

- Earth tones and neutrals- browns, rusts, gold (color, not metallic), greens, greys. Many of the period pigments were made from earth (dirt and mineral) sources. These make good garments for working class folks.
- Mid-range and dark-range colors blues, tonal greens, wines, tonal reds
- **Note**: We generally **don't** wear large areas of the lighter **pastel** shades of these colors, even though they may be period, as they can look washed-out and get dirty easily.
- **Note**: We generally **don't** use large areas of **black**, as this is the theatrical look of the Court and of the Puritan groups.
- Generally, the deeper the color the more expensive it would have been, so think
 about who your character is when planning your colors; also, consider using the "richer"
 colors for trim and accents.
- See the St. Ives Swatch Books for more color ideas, and always show a sample of all fabrics and trims to the Costume director BEFORE you spend money and time on your clothing.

B. TRIM AND OTHER DECORATION

Trim and other decorative work: Decoration is an important part of your costume; the amount and quality of the decoration you use is a reflection of the position and wealth of your character. Note: The decoration of your costume is just as much subject to the approval process as any other aspect of the garment. What is approved for one character may not be approved for another.

❖ APPLIED TRIM: Get approval of swatch, placement, and design BEFORE making or purchasing.

- Contrasting fabric "guards": narrow, bias cut strips of fabric, effective in 1 to 3 rows at the bottom of skirts. Wide, contrasting guards at the bottom of skirts are less accurate and therefore less likely to be approved for new garments.
- Ribbon: Grosgrain ribbon is approvable if not too synthetic-looking, but satin ribbon is not. Plain grosgrain ribbon makes a good background for other types of braid.
- Braid: This can include manufactured braid, soutache, gimp, inkle/rigid heddle braid, twist, fingerloop braid, etc. These can be used as edgings/borders, in amounts and materials suitable to the character's position and wealth. Metallic braid is limited to the nobility.

All types of needle embroidery: Get approval of swatch, placement, and design BEFORE making or purchasing.

- Blackwork: linens only (shirts, chemise/smocks, collars, wrists, aprons, and ruffs).
 The majority of this type of embroidery is black thread on white fabric. Any variation on this (e.g. redwork) must be specially approved beforehand.
- Other embroidery: Embroidery on other garments must be simple, of a period design, of a period technique, of a supplemental nature (e.g. a border or edging), and is limited to the wealthier characters in our group, or someone who is presenting this as their occupation.
- Smocking: This may be approvable for small areas of linens or sleeves.
- Lace and drawn threadwork: small amounts of this can edge linens (shirts, chemise/smocks, collars, wrists, aprons, and ruffs) for upper-middle class characters.
- Seam inserts: Many linens such as shirts and smocks have decorative open threadwork (like needle lace) connecting the edges at seams for upper-middle class characters.

Other fabric manipulations: Get approval of swatch, placement, and design BEFORE manipulating fabric.

 Pinkes, Cuttes, and Slashes: these techniques would have been inexpensive and are quite suitable for jerkins, doublets, and sleeves in our class. However, these treatments may significantly weaken your fabric, make your garment prone to snagging, or shorten the life of your garment. Please consider carefully the construction of your garments and placement of your pinkes, cuttes and slashes before attempting these techniques. Always **test your fabrics for suitability** to these techniques as well; even one piece of taffeta to another will behave differently when pinked or slashed.

- Pinking: small (under 1/4") holes cut into fabric (especially leather), creating a symmetrical, geometric pattern.
- Cuttes: small slices cut in regular intervals into fabric (especially leather, wool, and tightly woven silks), creating a symmetrical, geometric pattern.
- Slashes: longer slices (about 2" or longer) cut in regular intervals into fabric (especially leather, wool, and tightly woven silks), with either false puffs of white linen, or the underlying shirt itself, showing through. (This is a signature look of the early Tudor period and might be seen as a bit old-fashioned by our time, for any but the Germans.)
- Seam and edge treatments: Welts (un-corded piping) make a nice decoration inserted into seams or layered on the surface to edge braid. Welts can also be slashed to create interest. These can either be a contrasting color, or can be the same color as the main fabric.
- Heat stamping and fabric painting: These are techniques most suitable to silks and velvets, and are thus not customary for our class.

C. COSTUME **PIECES - WOMEN**

- **Smock/chemise**: This, or a men's-type <u>shirt</u>, will be worn next to the skin. The neck can be square, round, or a v-slit. Some people use a drawstring or elastic around the neckline; however, this design, while easier to make and fit, does not reflect historical practice. Nonetheless, if your sewing skills are not advanced enough to do a fitted neckline, or it is for a "loaner" garment, an inconspicuous drawstring or elastic neckline may be approved. Current scholarship show this to be a more fitted garment, not the volumes of fabric we have often used in the past at faires. It will also be more comfortable with less fabric.
- Underpinnings: drawers, stays, farthingale, petticoats
 - Drawers/bloomers are required for all participants (lower thigh covered at least). White/off-white linen or cotton is the best. We do not have evidence these were worn in the Elizabethan period, however this has always been our policy, to spare the patrons from seeing more than they are prepared for, and for your comfort. Semper Ubi Sub Ubi.
 - Stays/Corset: The Elizabethan line is one of straight rather than curved lines. In the Elizabethan period, lower-middle and middle-middle class women generally had upper-body stiffening built into their bodices. Elizabethan corsets, when used, are inverted-cone-shaped (like a "V"), completely covered by the bodice of the outergarment, and tightened only so much as needed to create the flat, cone-like shape. (This will also hold the breasts to the body and provide some back support for heavy skirts.) The top of the corset would come to about the center of the nipple. Undercut corsets and bodices (that end below the breasts) are unhistorical, uncomfortable, look sloppy, and are not approvable. Pushed-up breasts and excess exposed cleavage is also not part of our historical or theatrical "look," even for the Bawds.
 - Spanish Farthingale/Hoops: Just as the Elizabethan corset creates a straight conic "V" going up from the waist, the Spanish farthingale creates a straight conic "V" going down from the waist for upper levels of society. The farthingale, as a conspicuously impractical garment, was only (but not always) worn by wealthy women, so consider your character before you make this choice. Also, consider your height when planning a farthingale. About 90 to 110 inches in diameter for the bottom hoop is plenty.
 - Petticoat: This basically is a skirt worn under your outer skirt(s) to add fullness, especially for a middle-middle to upper-middleclass gown. You might consider a petticoat stiffened with several tiers of cording around the bottom as an alternative to the farthingale.
- Skirts/Kirtle: Our practice is to always wear two skirts, of contrasting colors.
 (This is especially important if wearing a farthingale, so that the stiff "stays" or "bones" don't show through.) The skirts can be separate or attached to a bodice

- (which we will refer to in this document as a kirtle), and the outer skirt can be part of an overgown.
- Bodice/Doublet: This is the upperbody overgarment for a woman. (This function can also be served by the top of a kirtle). Most women wore a bodice with a square or round neck. The bodice can be laced through eyelets or loops, or fastened with hooks and eyes. Generally, front-lacing implies that you have no servants, and are thus at the lower end of our class. If you are playing a character of middle-middle or upper-middle, choose side-lacing, side-back lacing, back-lacing, or front hooks-and-eyes. All eyelets or grommets should be covered in thread; no metal should show. A doublet bodice is a more formal (and thus higher-level) look, that could close with hooks-and-eyes or buttons. Stomachers (a separate section in the front) are not generally seen until later in our period. Your sleeves may be attached to your bodice by being sewn on, with hooks and eyes, pinned on, or with ties. Doublet bodices would have sewn-on sleeves.
- Overgown: You may choose to have your outermost garment be a single gown, either fitted or loose, with or without a belt. If you make this choice, your underskirt should be a kirtle so that you have proper support and don't show an excess of chemise at the neckline. Overgowns would have sewn-on sleeves.
- Hose/stockings: colored socks or stockings at least knee-high. You may want to tie them below the knee with twill braid, inkle braid, or some other garter for greater security. Acceptable colors are the same as for other non-body-linen garments.
- Shoes: Leather, flat or low heel, tied, slip-on, or buckled. Black, brown, or similar color. See <u>resources</u> for ideas. Comfort and safety are also supremely important for these.
- Headcoverings and Hats: One of the most important parts of your costume in creating an individual, memorable character, also provides protection from dust and sun, as well as covering up modern hairstyles and colors.
 - Headcoverings:
 - White linen **coifs** and bigginses are easy to make, tidy, washable, starchable, blackworkable, and **very very** historically accurate. See the Patterns section for sites that offer free instructions for various types.
 - For higher level women, a netted or fancy silk coif might also be worn. These would be worn over braided, pinned-up hair and would fit closely to the hair. The long droopy "snoods" that have been traditional to our faire do not have a historical basis prior to the mid-19th century.
 - Veils: White linen veils are also worn by women in our class, usually over some sort of coif. These can be folded and pinned in very complex ways.
 The more sheer the fabric, the more expensive it was.
 - Hats: A narrow-brimmed Italian bonnet, tall hat, straw hat, or other brimmed hat can add personality and protect from the sun. See the <u>Error! Reference</u> <u>source not found.</u> section for ideas.

Partlets, Ruffs, and other accourrements

- Partlets: White linen or silk under partlets, like a modern dickie, create a high neck, generally end below the bust, and are considered an inner bodylinen garment. They can be heavily embroidered (i.e. with blackwork), and the neck can bear a box-pleated ruffle or a small ruff to add status to the wearer. An outer partlet may also be worn; these were lined, add warmth and modesty, and were generally made of white or black linen or wool (or even velvet for the wealthiest). They would be connected or tied under the arms.
- Ruffs: Neck and wrist ruffs were common for both middle and upper classes, except for the lowest levels. The size, material, and decoration of the ruff should be consistent with the character played.
- Jewelry for all middle class characters should be fairly minimal. Keep it low-key and avoid gems; semiprecious stones are better for most of us.
 Remember, materials were expensive, labor was cheap. Also, while favors are fun, please limit them to just a few, and keep them discreet and blending in with our "look" so we aren't confused with the patrons.
- Belts: natural (brown or black), with plain buckles. Avoid the "tooled" western look or ornate buckles. Elizabethan belts were fairly narrow. As a health aide, we encourage you to keep a drinking cup on your belt (or in your basket). However, most people, and especially higher-level characters, would not have a lot of items dangling from their belts. Please use discretion in this.
- Aprons for women may be functional and suitable to the work for lower middle classes, or more fancy and decorative for goodwives. Linen aprons may be green or blue linen, or a white shade. The dressiest aprons would be the whitest. Any bib would be pinned to the bodice at the top and could be dropped if not needed. Some aprons from this period consist of a square, of which only the center half is attached to the waist tie, leaving the upper corners free.

D. COSTUME PIECES - MEN

Shirt: white or off-white linen or cotton. Avoid yoked shirts and full "poet" shirts, as they are from a later period. Collar may close with ties, buttons, or hooks.
 Small ruffles or pleats are optional at collar and/or wrists. Blackwork and neck ruffs show status and wealth.

Breeches, trunkhose, venetians:

- Trunkhose (slops) will here refer to any men's clothing worn from the waist to above the knees, (i.e. the trunk). These will be full, and the waistband will sit at the natural waist while the legs end at mid-thigh. The fanciest version of these is called "paned trunkhose." These may have a codpiece, although codpieces are starting to go out of style by our period.
- Venetians are a new fashion development in our period. They may be less full than the earlier trunkhose, taper to just below the knee, and do not have a codpiece. Venetians generally closed with a regular fly opening, which may be covered on the inside with an underlapping flap. Buttons or hooks and bars may be used for greater security at the fly (not zippers or Velcro); however, the large triangular flap sometimes seen on costumes has no basis in historical evidence and will not be approved on new costumes.
- For all types of breeches, suspenders may be useful in keeping them up, but should never be visible, as they are anachronistic. Points (ties) are the historical solution to the problem (tying the breeches to the doublet through eyelet holes at the doublet waist).
- Hose: These will cover any part of your leg not covered by your trunkhose or venetians and are completely opaque. Men who wear the higher trunkhose usually wear theatrical tights underneath, while long (over the knee) stockings are adequate for venetians. Hose can be many different colors, but we usually avoid white due to dirt showing. (Historically, most hose would have been sewn from woolen, silk, or linen cloth - woven, not knitted - knitting was still rare for regular clothing).
- Doublet/Jerkin: This is the close-fitting upper body covering for men. Wings are optional, skirting is optional. Shoulder wings and peplum/skirting should not be excessive in size or out of proportion; no more than 4". Sleeves were historically sewn in on a doublet, but we will allow tied- or hooked-in sleeves as long as the attachments aren't obvious. Layering over doublets (jerkins, gowns, capes) make a nice period statement. Doublets or jerkins were made of a single color of fabric (i.e. did not have contrasting wings, skirting, or yoke).
- Shoes/boots: Shoes are simple, slip-on or latchet, and tan, brown or black leather. Round toes, leather sole if possible. High boots indicate possession of a riding horse and thus, wealth.

• **Headcoverings**: a white or black linen biggins coif, and/or scholar's cap, tall hat, Italian bonnet, flat cap: choose a hat that develops your character. Hats may have a little trim and/or a modest feather.

Ruffs and other accoutrements

- Ruffs: Neck and wrist ruffs were common for both middle and upper classes, except for the lowest levels. The size, material, and decoration of the ruff should be consistent with the character played.
- Jewelry for all middle class characters should be fairly minimal. Keep it low-key and avoid large gems. Remember, materials were expensive, labor was cheap. Also, while favors are fun, please limit them to just a few, and keep them discreet and blending in with our "look" so we aren't confused with the patrons.
- Belts: natural (brown or black), with plain buckles. Avoid the "tooled" western look or ornate buckles. Elizabethan belts were fairly narrow. As a health aide, we encourage you to keep a drinking cup on your belt. However, most people, and especially higher-level characters, would not have a lot of items dangling from their belts. Please use discretion in this.
- Aprons for men should be entirely functional and suitable to their work.
 Linen aprons with a bib would have the bib pinned up at the top to the shirt.

THIS ENDS THE OFFICIAL ST. IVES COSTUME GUIDELINES
(PENDING BOARD APPROVAL)