



Rouen, Hôtel de Bourgtheroulde, 1510. Surviving plaque commemorating the Drap d'Or event.

What the Tudor Women Really Wore

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<http://www.facebook.com/blackroseball>



What the Tudor Women Really Wore

The title is in answer to the clothing depicted in the Showtime cable series known as *The Tudors*. The clothing in that series most often does not represent the fashions actually worn during the Tudor period.

This class visual presentation will cover women's garments from 1500 to 1550, roughly in chronological order. There are additional images that help explain garment details.

The handout provided covers the various layers of a woman's complete outfit, as currently understood by the research of many as of this date. As always, research is ongoing.

Poetic Epistles of Anne of Brittany and Louis XII, Epistle 3

Illuminated by Bourdichon
early 1500s.

Note the distinctive shape of Anne's hood, which will evolve later into the well known French hood. The black hood portion is most likely made from a simple rectangle.

The gown is somewhat loose on the body. Her sleeves are loose, trumpet shaped, and do not fold back very far. She does have a split front skirt showing off the front of her kirtle. Her gown is lined. No Spanish farthingale is worn in France at this point, as her skirt folds are soft and natural.





Poetic Epistles of Anne of Brittany and Louis XII, Epistle 3
Illuminated by Bourdichon
early 1500s.

Anne of Brittany's ladies in waiting are dressed similarly to Anne.

Their skirts are not split. The necklines of the gown are square, but the black kirtle or partlet necklines might be square, round or in a V-shape. Their hoods have a color lining in red or white, and in this image have the gold or white crespin and jeweled billiments.

Joanna of Castile

Master of the life of St. Joseph
c. 1500

In this image, I wanted to note the definite overlap of the front of her gown. It may be closed with hook & eyes, as the very top appears undone. Also note that her sleeves are not folded back. Her hood is a variant of the draped hood seen in Flanders and Spain during this time.





Heroides, "Phyllis writing"
French 874, fol. 11v. Image #3 of 46.
Early 16th century.

Yes, the outfit of the woman in the forefront is striped, which is unusual. She might be wearing a court kirtle without a gown, or it might be a gown "in the Italian fashion".

Note the fullness of her smock sleeves, and that the kirtle sleeves are laced to each other and to the shoulders.

Ladies in the background are wearing normal Franco-Flemish gowns. Note that one lady, second from right, has a line down the middle front bodice indicating a closure, while others do not. The ladies are wearing the Anne of Brittany style of hood, untrimmed with any billiments.



Heroides, Briseis writing
Français 874, fol. 23v. Image #7 of 46.
Early 16th century.

This image shows the kirtling of the trained gown in back, where you can see the spotted grey fur. The red kirtle is slightly trained. On the sleeve, the furs are of two different types. Grey fur is placed like a cuff on top of sleeve, while the underside opening of those sleeves are white. The hood appears to be progressing towards the French hood style.

Heroides, Danaides killing their husbands
Français 874, fol. 170v. Image #37 of 46
Early 16th century.

A rare image showing both men and women in their underwear,
mainly shirts and smocks.

Note the women's smocks are
square necked, and only knee
length. Also note how full near the
wrists the sleeves are, which may
be how the kirtle foresleeves were
initially puffed.





Catherine of Aragon
By Michael Sittow
1502

Note that the front of the gown is actually laced closed. The shell decorations actually dip down in front, and goes behind the placard that covers the rest of the front closure.

Catherine appears to be wearing a possible Anne of Brittany style of hood, or a similar Flemish style.

Triptych with the Nativity
Gerard David
c.1505-15

This is one of the donors being depicted by the Flemish artist.

Note her short gown sleeves, edged with black band of fabric.

The kirtle sleeves in red are very full, and is similar to what I've seen in Spanish images.

The woman also appears to be wearing some sort of coronet on top of her hood.



The Virgin among the Virgins
Gerard David, 1509

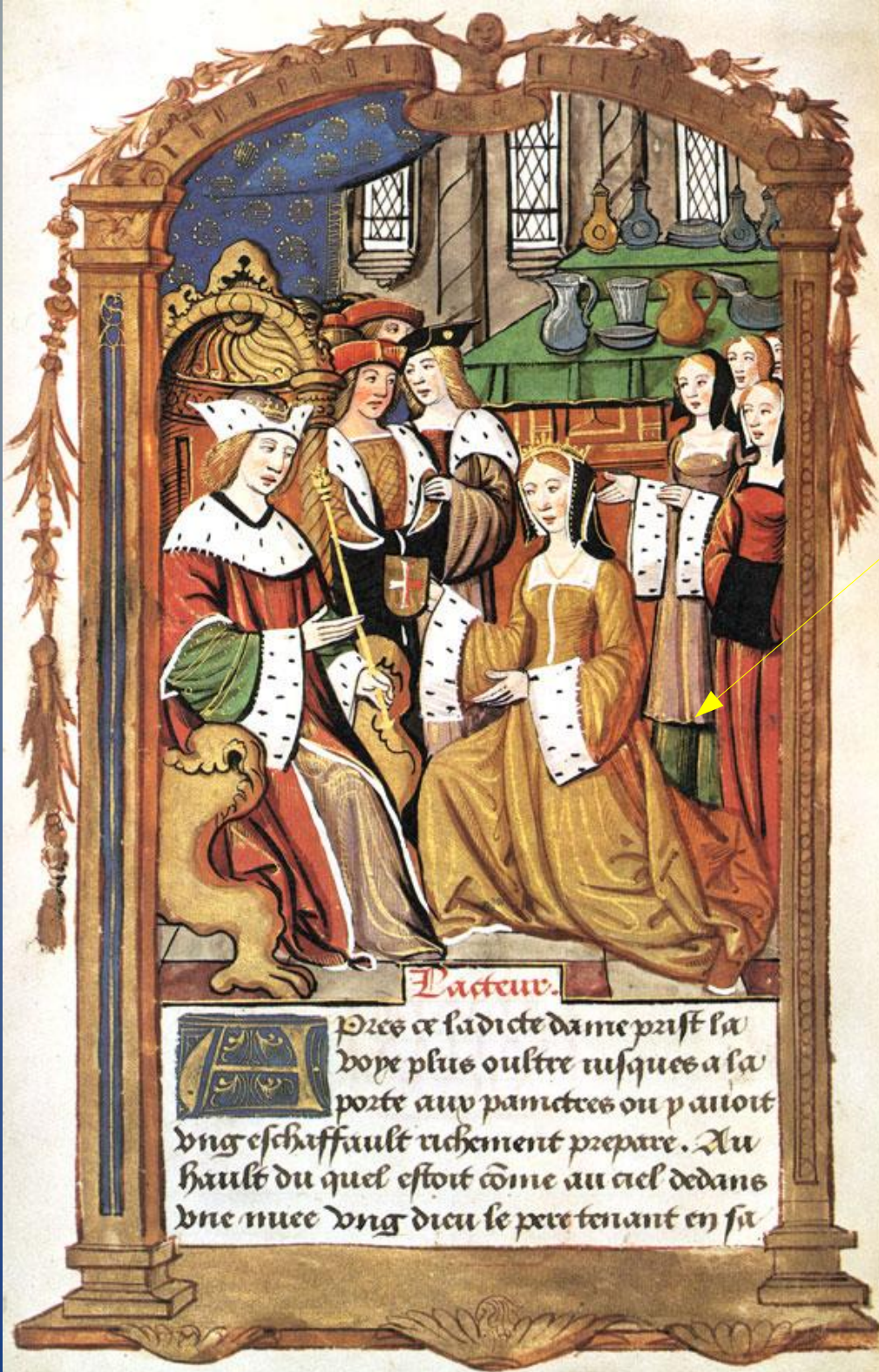
Note the various styles in the gowns.

The lady in the center is wearing a style similar to the page before, with her gown sleeve short over long kirtle sleeves.

The lady in red is wearing a typical Franco-Flemish style, with overlapping front closure to her gown, and full trumpet sleeves.

Also note the various styles of headwear.





King Louis XII of France and
Queen Mary Tudor
illuminated by unknown artist
c. 1514

Note short over long among lady
in the background – a short tan
gown over a green kirtle.

Note the gown front openings on
Mary, as indicated by a white line
down the front. Her ladies don't
have any indicators of where their
garment opens.

The sleeves again have that short
turnback or cuff, but are full in
arm.

Not sure what is going on with the
women's headwear.



Book of Hours
David and Bathsheba
Artist Unknown
c.1515-1520

I wanted to point out the line along the back of the forewoman's gown. Is it where this gown closes?

A poem traced to early 16th c. sheds some light.

*'Of women kynde,
lased be hynde,
so lyke the fende'*

Her gown sleeves are very full, with only a small turnback or cuff.

She is wearing a French hood.

Mary Tudor and Charles Brandon
Widowed Queen of France and the
Duke of Suffolk.
Artist unknown
Date unknown (c. 1515-1516)

First confirmed instance of French hood worn by an English woman, many years before Anne Boleyn, who made it popular.

Her turnback sleeves are heavily beaded with pearls and turned back fairly high on the arm. It is unusual at this point for English women to be so greatly decorated.



Catherine of Aragon
miniature by Lucas Hornebolte
1525-26

The typical English fashion during the 1520s, especially as noted by the English hood, with its gable peak.

Note the length of the hood frontlet, the part trimmed in pearls, which ends several inches below the chin.

One of the veils is flipped up in back on the left side.

Also note that the center front panel of the gown is double trimmed in pearls. It may be that the placard here had its own line of pearls along the top.





Anne Cresacre

Sketch by Hans Holbein the Younger
c. 1527

Note the gable shape of this hood. Possibly a variant of a French hood.

The fabric of her gown appears to be a watered silk by the wavy lines.

Lady Mary Guildford
by Hans Holbein Younger
1527

I want to show the style of the fore-sleeves, part of which is untucked. At this point, the smock sleeves might actually be what is seen puffed along the bottom of the fore-sleeve, which is fairly close to the arm.

The English hood length is also below the chin.

Lady Mary is a plump woman (comparatively), which shows the ideal in England appears to be a lack of chestiness, as there is a soft mounding of the upper chest area, but no cleavage of any sort.





Study for the Family Portrait of Sir Thomas More

Hans Holbein the Younger, c.1527

The original painting was destroyed, and later images are copies with variations from this sketch.

These two women from the More family show what a well to do gentry ladies were wearing c.1527.

The sleeves on the lady at left is turned back in a square shaped sleeve.

There does not appear to be any sort of farthingale, and the skirts are floor length. There might be a padded petticoat.

The lady on the left appears to be pregnant, and her front opening gown is laced partly closed. There might be a decorative placard behind the opening.

Both are wearing English style hoods.

2 Views of Unknown English Lady
Hans Holbein the Younger
c.1526-8 or c.1532-5

This sketch of a woman (two women?) is a rare back view during this time frame.

The skirts are full but obviously not distended by any sort of farthingale. The sleeves are a square turn back with pleated fore-sleeves. The shoes peak out under her skirt.





Concert of Women
by Master of Female Half-length, a
Dutch painter
1530-40

The seated lady may be in a kirtle only, or open front gown, which is laced across the front. I am not sure. The style of her sleeves are seen in other images beneath full gown sleeves.

The lady on the left is wearing her French hood in a bongrace fashion over her head.

Saint Catherine
by Master of Female Half-length,
a Dutch painter
1530-40

Yes, this is a saint. But she is wearing appropriate fashion of the time period.

Note the upper chest area, where a warm black partlet is visible. This covers the square-necked opening and in this case is worn under the gown.

Her foresleeves are seen in men's and women's fashions of the time.

Her waistline is at the natural waist, and follows it.

Her hair is wrapped in fabric and twisted up. She also has a sheer veil over her hair. Not sure if this is what is worn under hoods, or a style worn when at home.





A Young Englishwoman
by Hans Holbein
1526–8 or about 1532–5

This woman has her longer than floor length skirts kirtled up and supported by some sort of holder in white. The pale yellow hanging in front is a sash with tassled ends.

She has on a red petticoat, a light grey kirtle, and a medium grey gown trimmed in black fabric, possibly velvet. The front appears to be overlapping. She has on a linen partlet over her upper chest but worn under the gown.

Her headdress is in a gable shape, but unique among my images. The veiling is sheer and white.

Her shoe shape is clearly seen.

Bathsheba

Simon Bening
mid 1530s

This image clearly shows how flat the French hood is on the top. The coif is red, and there is a white turned back portion to the black veil, with gold billiments on the black edge. It also clearly shows the length of that veil.

The foresleeve that can be seen is similar to the image of St. Catherine seen earlier.

The edge of the kirtle at the neckline is black, not the same as the color of the kirtle skirt which is blue. I am not sure what this indicates.

The gown skirt is caught up at the side to show off the blue kirtle underneath.

The gown sleeves are folded back very high, nearly to the shoulders, and is lined in a blue (silk?) fabric instead of a fur, appropriate for the summer setting of the garden. Written records note that furs were removed during the warmer seasons, and added back in the colder months.





Margaret Wyatt, Lady Lee
Copy after Hans Holbein the Younger, c. 1540
possible style date to mid 1530s

Her puffy sleeves of gown is not trumpet shaped. It is slashed with matching colored puff held with metal aglet pairs.

She wears a partlet of fabric that matches her gown, as a line can be seen across her chest at the level of the flower. This does not appear to be a new doublet style as postulated by Ms. Hayward. It appears to be a continuation of the square necked bodice covered by a partlet (as in the St. Catherine image), in this case a matching one.

Princess Elizabeth
by Guillim Scrots
c. 1545-6 (12-13 years old.)

First noted image that shows a spanish farthingale among an English subject. A Spanish farthingale is recorded for the first time in the tailors accounts in 1545 for Princess Elizabeth.

With the wider shape of the skirt, the foresleeves and gown sleeves also become larger. The slash & puff on the foresleeves now appear to be faked and applied directly on the garment, rather than a smock sleeve pulled through.

The bodice front is also clearly pointed down the center. The upper sleeves are tighter, and appear ready to fall off her shoulders.





Queen Mary Tudor of England
by Anthonis Mor Van Dashorst (aka
Antonio Mor)
1554

Not much changed from the style seen with Princess Elizabeth in 1545, nearly a decade prior. Sleeves still large, upper arms tight, puffs faked, bodice pointed.

This partlet (yes, the line across the chest is very clear in this image) now has a high standup collar. Mikhaila calls it a grown on collar.

Her French hood is also shaped a bit flatter on the head, which is easily done with a wired hood. Mary is also wearing a shadow over the front of the French hood.



Field of Cloth of Gold. Artist unknown. C1540-50?

A detail view of the common working class folks, enjoying one of the fountains of wine.

This image was painted a few decades after the actual event, and the garments of the gentry and nobility are of a later style, Most noticeably that of King Henry VIII.

c.1540 Cranmer's Bible Title Page
Printed by Richard Grafton, 1540.

The detail shows a woman of some fashion, especially compared to the few other women in the woodcut. Notice that the upper gown sleeve is out of the way, which is showing us that the kirtle sleeve matches her foresleeve, as seen in the crosshatched decorations. It appears the elbow is puffed, probably from her smock, as are parts of the sleeves away from the body. What is unclear is how the sleeves are attached to the bodice at the shoulder.

This seems to match up with the early 1500 French images, and is why I believe the kirtle comes with upper & lower sleeves.





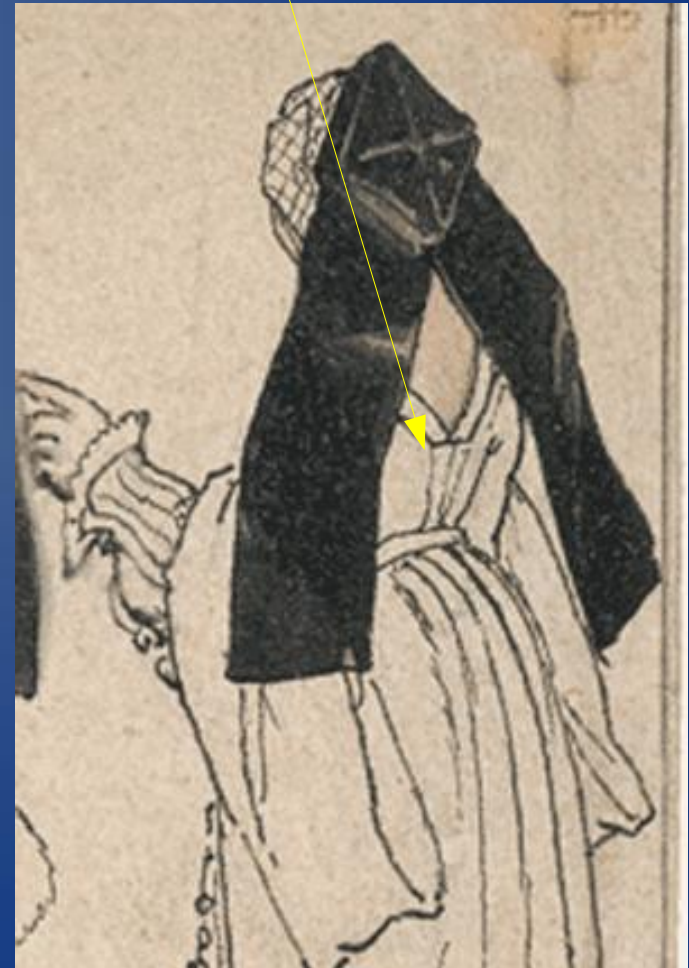
June (folio 3v) from the Hours of Henry VIII, by Jean Poyet, c. 1500.

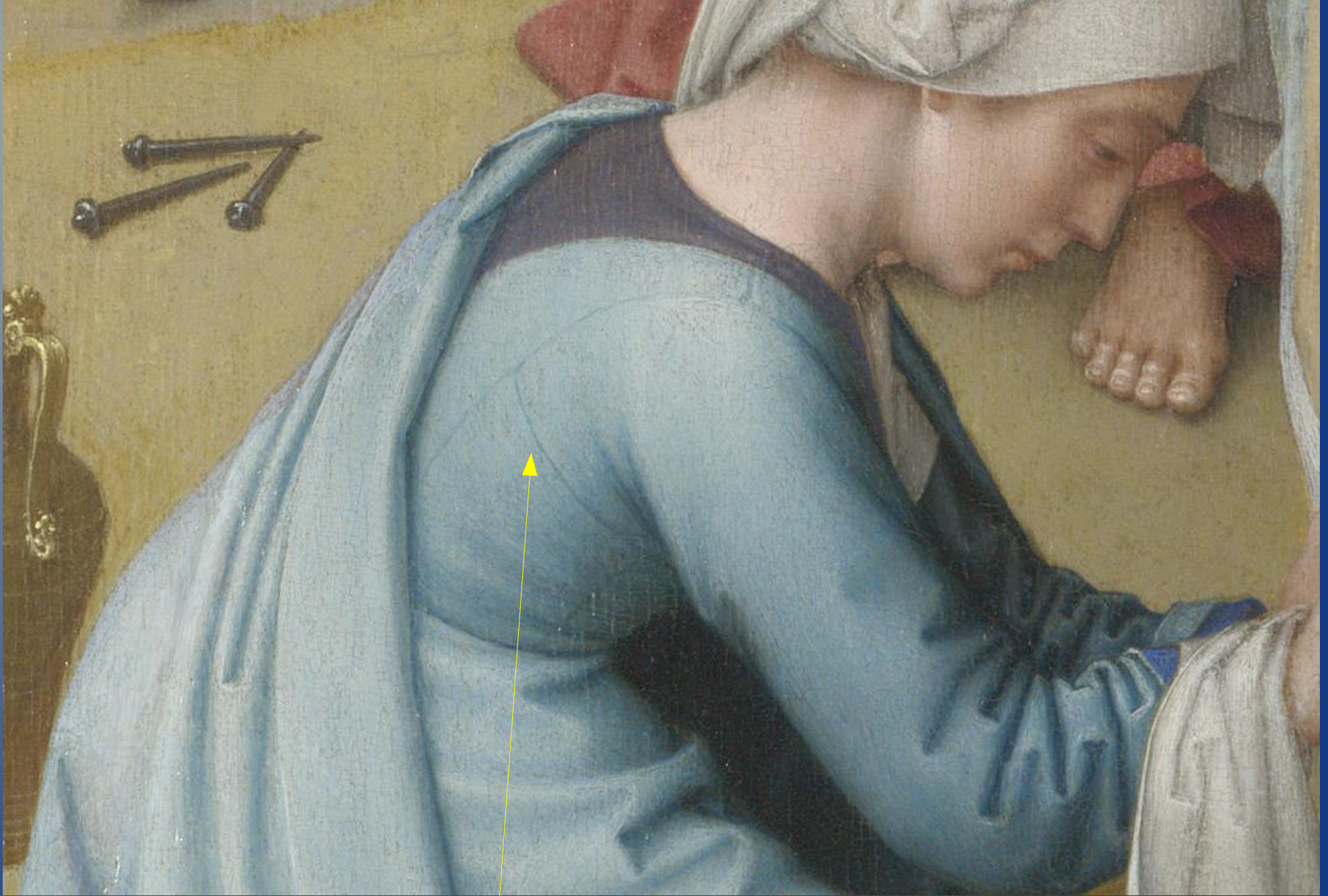
These two women working the field are noted for how they are laced up, one in front, the other in back. Is this back laced area what is filled in later by an unusual shaped piece?

Also note that their skirts are at a working length above their ankles.

Dance of the Bride Outdoor 1566
Pieter Bruegel the Elder.

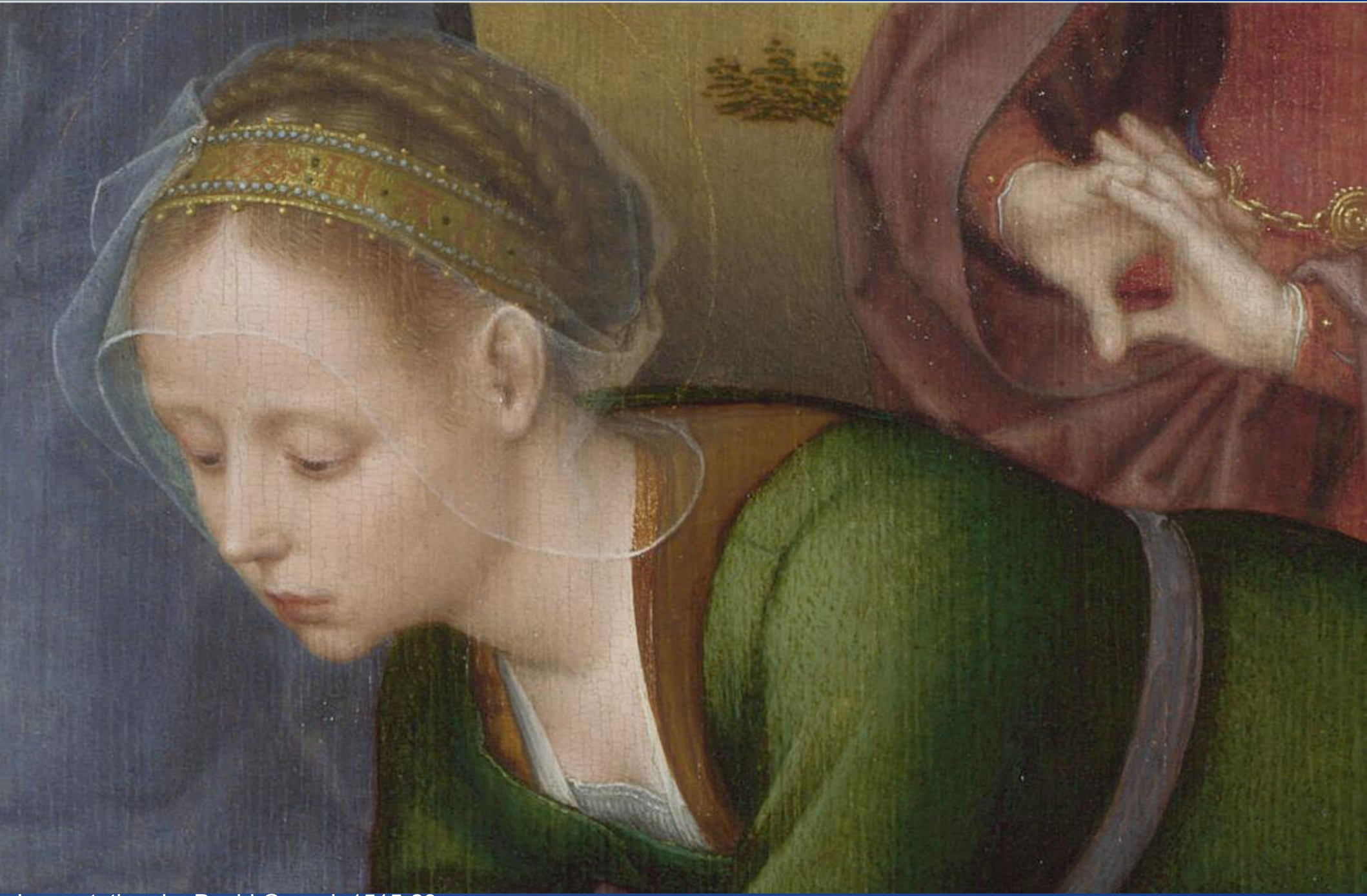
This image shows a detail of the back of the woman's gown. While painted a few decades later, it nearly matches the shape of the center back panel as drawn by Hans Holbein in 1530 (below).





Lamentation, by David Gerard. 1515-23.

This detail from the painting shows a detail of the sleeve backside normally hidden in images. Notice that the sleeve is not curved, but remains rectangular at the cap, to act like a large gusset & allow for greater movement. Also note the deep V-shape of the back.



Lamentation, by David Gerard. 1515-23.

This detail shows that the deep V-shape of the back is filled by the partlet underneath the gown layer. Also note the crossed hair braids. It is believed that this is how the hair is worn underneath the hoods, especially the French hood.

This concludes my slideshow style presentation of the women's Franco/Flemish fashions of the early 16th century.

If you are interested in further information on this era, please look at my web site of images available at:

<http://www.kimiko1.com/research-16th/TudorWomen/>

With further info on French hoods at

<http://www.kimiko1.com/research-16th/FrenchHood/>

The End!

See you at the Black Rose Ball!

<http://www.facebook.com/blackroseball>

