



THE MILITIA

Style Guide No. 2

- *Interim Edition* -



Perky Pirates, Posh Ladies, Naughty Wenches & Nice Polite Girls Of The Middling Sort

In The Age Of Piracy

1689 - 1720

*Brought to you by those famous nautical trollops, Anne Bonny
and Mary Read, more commonly known as The Gokettes*



HOW TO LOOK RIGHT SAUCY

... In The Early 18th Century



Ahoy there, Lovely Ladies!

When Andy “Gok” Smith asked us to produce this interim Style Guide for the saucy dames of The Militia, we jumped at the chance – but not before we marooned him on the Isle of Innuendo, and stole his ship. (He was asking for it, he tried to weigh our anchors, so he did!)

You would not believe the things we found in his hold! Suffice to say, his collection of stripy sailor tops and tight white jeans (including an outfit once worn by his hero, Jimmy Somerville) was just the tip of the iceberg.

For those of you who have never come across us before, we’re Anne Bonny and Mary Read. We were crewmen aboard Calico Jack’s ship when he was captured in 1720. We “were both profligate, cursing and swearing much, and very ready and willing to do anything on board” – just Gok’s type we’re sure you’ll agree!

The following guide is to help The Militia ladies decide on the best outfit for pirates events. We’ll take you through the main looks of the day and give you some pointers on kit and style. This is just an interim Style Guide and a proper one will be published at a later date – in the meantime though we’re sure this will answer most of your questions – but if you have any more please just ask ... themilitia.1815@yahoo.com

Right, we’re off to throw jellyfish at Gok!

Bottoms up girls!

Love from

The Gokettes
X

PIRATE OUTFITS

There are a few options here for the lady wishing to be a pirate. There's the historically accurate(ish) option, like *Bonny & Read*; there's the smarter option, like Keira Knightley in that film; and there's the right saucy option, which is historical cobbles (but worth bending the rules for, just this once!).

Bonny & Read – The Lady-Disguised-As-A-Man Look



Anne Bonny wears: battered felt or wool hat (may once have been a tricorn); neckerchief; short coat worn open (a civil war soldier's coat will do the job); baggy sailor's trousers (slops); a big shirt; a baldric and a belt and loads of weapons; basic soldier shoes.

You'll notice that Anne has rather a lot of her bosom exposed, this is most likely the illustrator's way of making the point that she was a woman (both Read and Bonny actually managed to keep their true identities secret for some time) – nevertheless, it is a good look and Gok says that a corset beneath that open necked shirt would look just handsome!!

This outfit is essentially the standard sailor kit with a few adjustments. For more information on sailors' kit and suppliers, see Style Guide No 1.

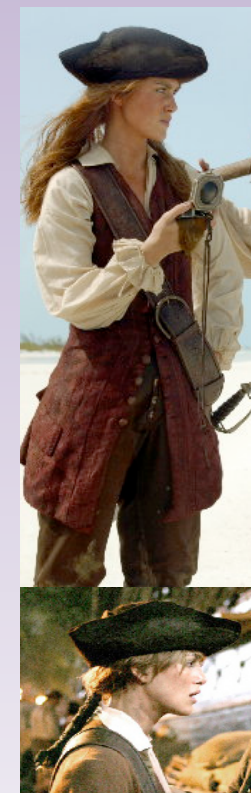


The Knightley Girl In That Film – The Lady-Dressed-As-A-Man Look

The Knightley outfit consists of: a tricorn; long waistcoat; open necked shirt; no stock; a long coat, or *just au corps*; knee breeches, bucket top boots; a baldric and a sword.

Unlike many of the costumes in those films, this one is actually quite close to the age of piracy. The long waistcoat was a firm feature of late 17th and early 18th century men's fashion. The *just au corps* is of late 17th century cut (later styles had pleating in the skirt on either side, but this one is very similar to the First Foot Guards redcoat pattern); the braid around the buttons is fairly typical of the period; the pockets are a bit high for our period and would probably have been more at arms length than on the hip; big turnbacks at the cuffs would be more accurate; note that waistcoat and coat are both collarless. The breeches are fairly tight with a vertical opening (the drop front didn't become fashionable until the second half of the 18th century).

Knightley had her hair tied back in a queue (bottom right). Queues were a slightly later development than our period. But it looks right with the hat!

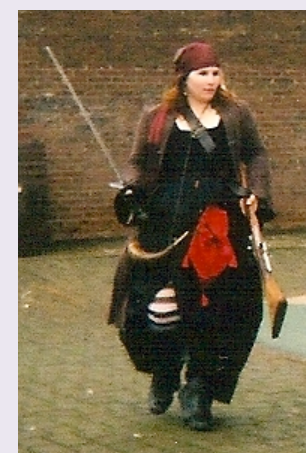


Feisty Fighting Wenches – The Lady-Dressed-As-A-Lady Look

This look is the one adopted by many of the ladies who attended previous pirate events and fought for the pirates.

Whilst there's very little historical evidence for women running around in skirts shooting folk and interfering with shipping, it's not wholly beyond the realms of possibility, and anyway it's a damn saucy get up that's sure to keep Jolly Roger on his toes!

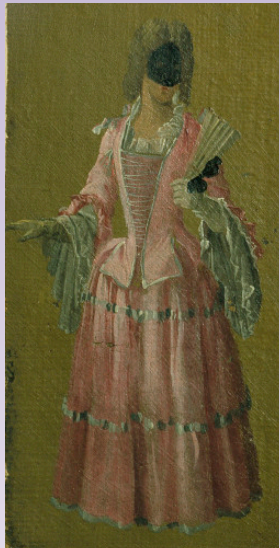
It is based firmly on the day to day 17th century ladies' kit. The main differences are: suitably piratical headwear, a head scarf and/or tricorn; skirts tucked up at the front; a glimpse of stockinged leg; a baldric and a belt and as many weapons as you can lay your hands on; bucket top boots are always a winner, but soldiers' shoes are fine; the addition of a period overcoat, Dutch coat, cloak or *just au corps* really finishes it off.



LADY OUTFITS

Let's get one thing straight from the off! Only naughty ladies and the desperately poor would ever have been seen in public with their corset on display. Right, that's that sorted. There are lots of looks that can be achieved with some additions, or minor changes, to mid 17th century ladies' kit.

Posh Totty – The Height Of Fashion



These pictures show typical outfits worn by the more well-to-do lady of the early 18th century.

When compared with mid-17th century ladies' fashion, the key differences at the turn of the 18th century are: a longer body shape (achieved with a different shaped corset and longer, narrower stomachers); a smaller waist with an exaggerated hip width (in the late 1600s it was supported by extra petticoats or bum rolls, by the early 1700s the whalebone hooped underskirt, or pannier, had begun to take over); the main development from earlier styles was the *mantua*, a sort of long fitted gown worn open at the front and tied up at the sides, to reveal a fancy underskirt or pannier beneath, the *mantua* had roughly elbow length wide cuffed sleeves, the sleeves of the shift beneath were always longer and often decorated.

Long gloves and fans were popular accessories. Hair was worn piled on top of the head, with a pretty lacey cap worn on the back of the head, extending up into a fancy arrangement (often wired) up over the forehead. Evening dresses were off the shoulder numbers and day dresses were on the shoulder.



Pretty Maids, Nice Girls, Serving Wenches – Street Style!



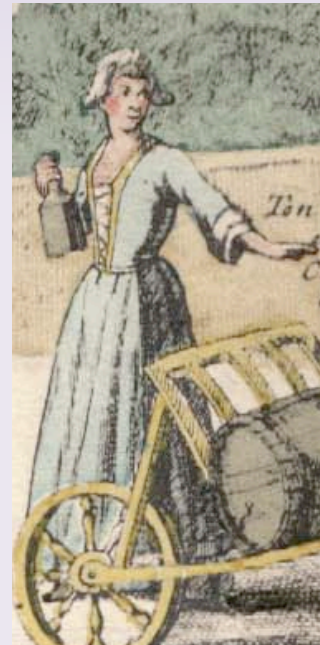
Not that much had changed for girls of more modest means.

The bodice commonly had sleeves attached, the slightly better off probably adopted the posh ladies' wide cuff.

The coif has grown long tabs (at least it had in France where these pictures are from!) and could be worn under a tricorne or other brimmed hat.

Skirts were tucked out of the way as necessary.

Those with a bit more cash would have aspired to the hairdos and accessories of the fashionable set.



Naughty Ladies – The Depths Of Depravity



Strumpets! Where there's sailors and soldiers there's got to be strumpets. Stands to reason!

Any selection of ladies' attire will do for a dockside hourie - it's not the dress, it's the attitude!

Sauce it up big time: stockings on display; a bit more bosom than is decent; beauty patches to cover the pox; a liberal sprinkle of rum; and far too much sauce. That'll do the trick!