

Lansquenet Colours

by Preben Kannik, 1962

Introduction

The 1) Colours of the lansquenet age can be divided into two large main groups. The so-called older type is characterized by being sewn from different colored silk cloth in geometric patterns that can often be quite complicated, but usually the fan cloth simply consists of horizontal stripes in alternating colours.

The younger type of lansquenet Colours usually has a single-coloured tablecloth, on which are painted symbols of various kinds as well as election languages and mottos.

Banners of the serf types were not only used by enlisted regiments. The fashions and types formed are also first met by departments of a national nature. Marks are often found on both the older and the younger type, which characterize a certain affiliation to a warlord, a federation or the like.

As far as Denmark is concerned, Christian IV decided in 1626 that all troops under his command should carry the Dannebrog in their banners. It was usually placed in the upper corner by the pole. This provision of Christian IV was probably not always followed, but it is known that the king was quite scrupulous about it; thus he required some Scottish regiments in his service to add the Dannebrog Cross to their banners. The Scots, however, thought that the St. Andrew's Cross was enough for them, but when they complained to their king, this Christian IV agreed, and the Scots had to bite the sour apple and put the Dannebrog mark on their banners.

Sources

Information of the older lansquenet type Colours is of course scarce. From old accounts, it sometimes appears how many cubits of different colored silk were given to the regiments. However, since the order of the colors and the width of the stripes are not known, it can only be guessed from this information. Finally, it may be that the tabs were not striped, but that the regimental commander chose to have them sewn in a different pattern.

Among the Swedish army's trophies in Stockholm, there are a number of colours of the older country serf type, which bear the dannebrog mark or Christian the IV's name and can therefore be safely said to be Danish.

In addition to the interest these flags have in their specific information about the width of the stripes and the distribution of the colors, most of them also have interest in that they represent a transitional form between the older and the younger lansquenet type, as the striped cloths are provided with symbols and electoral language .

In this connection, it can be mentioned that fans of the younger lansquenet type are rare in Denmark. Christian the IV's regulatory intervention meant that in this country you quickly got banners of the so-called regal type. That is, banners in which the symbols reflect the power and sovereignty of the sovereign.

On which occasions the flags that are in Sweden have fallen into the hands of the enemy has not yet been clarified, but the researchers are inclined to the view that most were lost during the conquest of Fredericia in 1657, where they were either stored in the clothes house or as an emergency measure has been handed over to some of the hastily scraped together departments that were in the fortress. Unfortunately, until now it has not been possible to determine which regiments the flags were originally intended for, but knowledge of the appearance of some of our oldest flags must always be of interest.

In the original document, the tab images were produced as black and white line drawings with a code marking that showed the color of the individual field. For publication on the web, these drawings are electronically coloured, to give a better visual representation.

However, it should be noted that the shades in the individual colors are not necessarily quite correct. Partly I have never seen the tabs, partly the age of the fabric will mean that the colors that can be seen today may even be very far from the original ones.

Kaare Myltoft

Image tabs

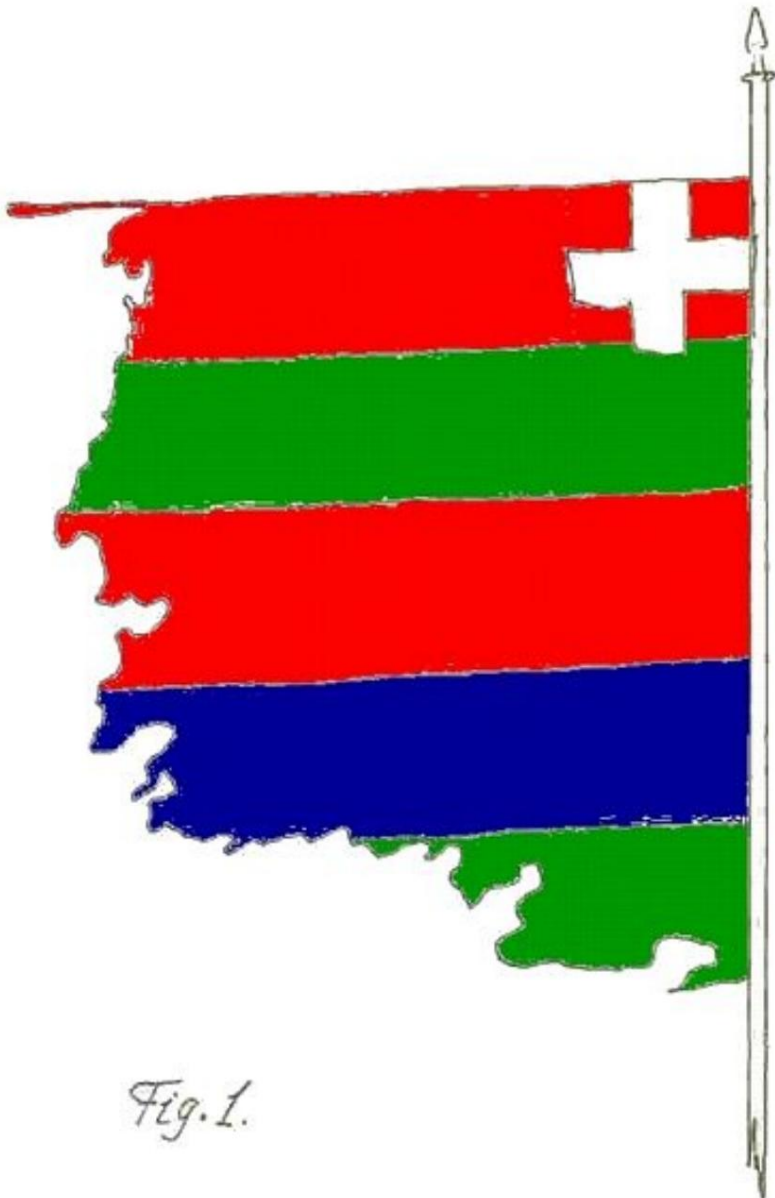


Fig. 1. The tablecloth is 168 cm high and consists of stripes in the following colours: Red, green, red, blue and green

There are five other tabs of the same type with the following color composition. The order of the colors counted from the top.

Tab height unknown - red, grey-green, red, grey-green, blue.

Fan 175 cm high - red, blue, yellow, blue, red.

Fan 188 cm high - red, blue, black blue, (red?).

Fan 170 cm high - red, blue, red, yellow, green.

Banner height unknown - red, yellow, blue, green, red.

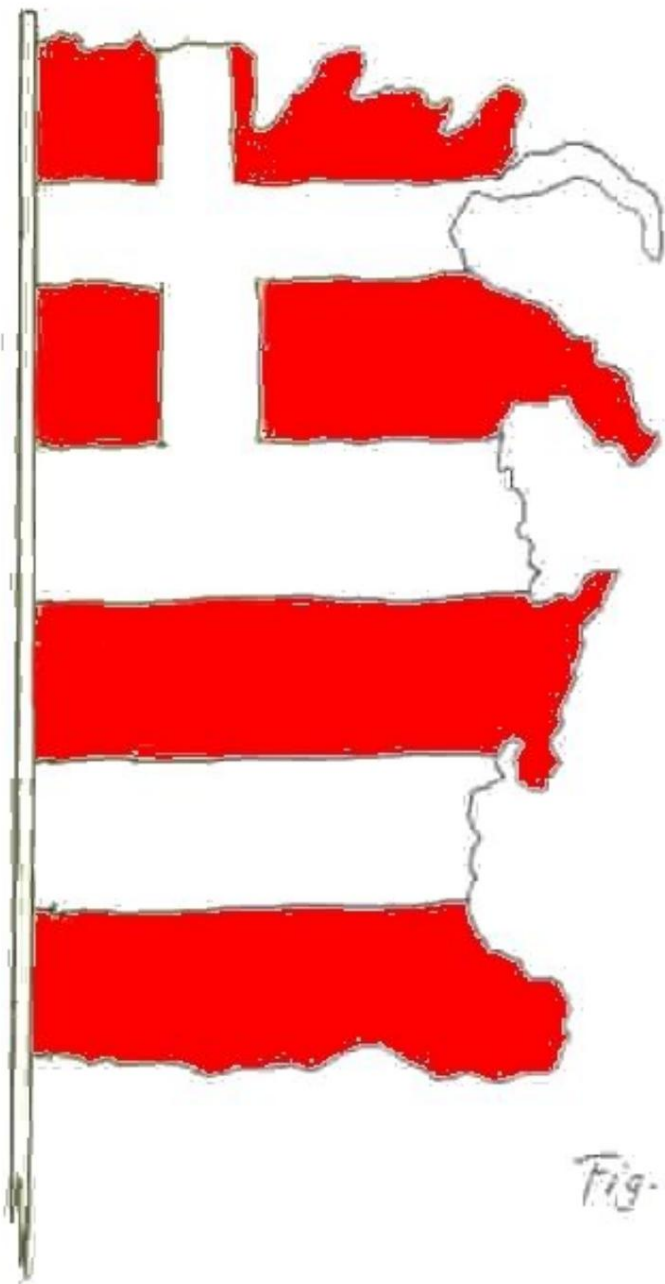


Fig. 2. The height of the tablecloth is unknown. The stripes are alternating red and white. The Dannebrog field is formed by sewing a vertical beam over the top white stripe.

There is also a two-colour 200 cm high tablecloth consisting of three red stripes alternating with three yellow ones. In the upper red stripe, a white cross is sewn to the pole.

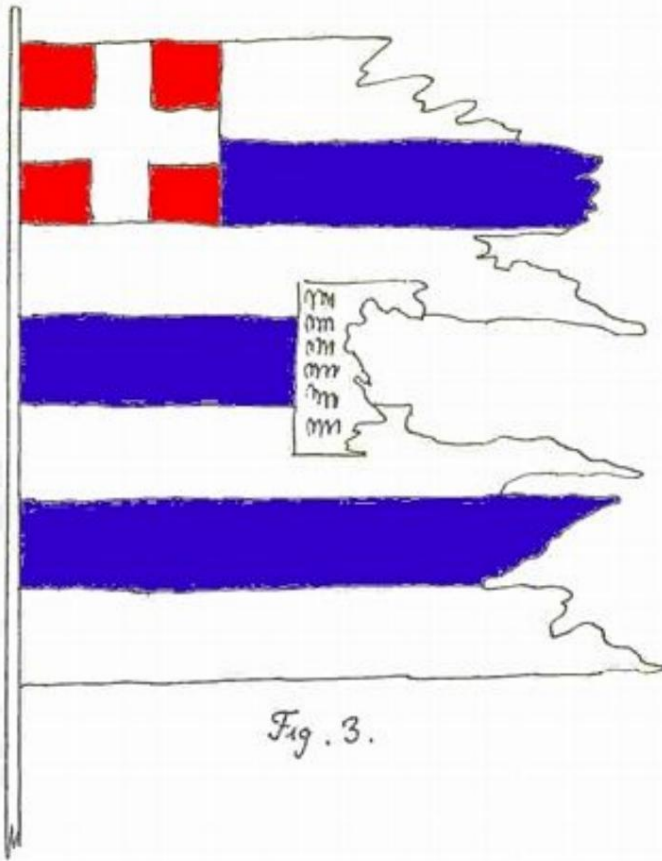


Fig. 3.

Fig. 3. The tablecloth 220 cm high consisting of four white and three blue stripes. Dannebrog's field red with white cross. In the middle has been a white field with a now indefinable embroidery.

Remains of a tablecloth of the same type have been preserved, which was 236 cm high and striped in green, blue and white.

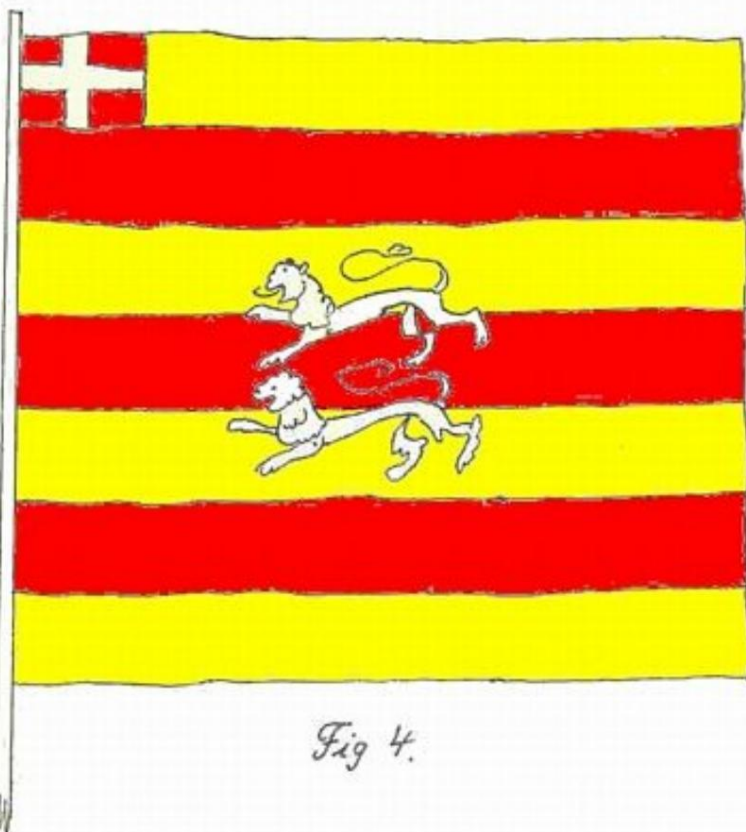


Fig 4.

Fig. 4. The tablecloth is 210 cm high and consists of four yellow and three red stripes. Dannebrog's field red with white cross. The lions on the center of the tablecloth are white.

Four pieces of this type have been preserved, which may have been led by a Schleswig regiment.



Fig. 5. The tablecloth is 228 cm high and 330 cm long with four blue and three white stripes. Dannebrog's field red with white cross. The sun or halo in the center white. All inscription black. The number in the upper stripe means that the banner has been flown by the 10th company of a regiment.

Of this type, two banners from the same regiment's 6th and 8th companies with the respective numbers in the upper stripe and the following electoral language have also been preserved:

6th comp.: MEIN BVRGR *

8th comp.: AVFF * VERLASSE ICR MICH.

The kind of rebus-like inscriptions, where e.g. where God is written in Hebrew letters, was very favored by Christian IV.

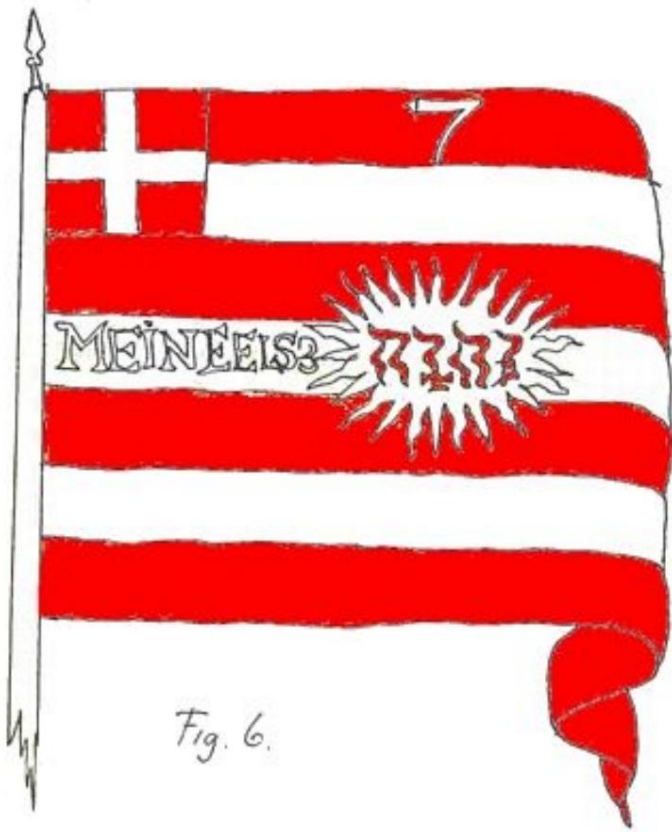


Fig. 6. The tablecloth is 230 cm high - consists of four red and three white stripes. Dannebrog's field red with white cross. The sun is white with red outlines. The inscriptions are black.

The inscription is slightly misunderstood, should be: "MEIN FELSS *".

Has been led by the 7th comp. in a different regiment than the previous ones.



Fig. 7.

Fig. 7. The tablecloth is 290 cm high. The stripes are red, blue, yellow, white yellow, red blue. The field in the middle is red with a crowned name and wreath of gold. The rod painted red and white. 2 pcs. of this kind is preserved. Although these tabs are not provided against dannebrog's field, they do not have to be from before the determination of 1626. There are several examples of the provision not being followed.



Fig. 8.

Fig. 8. The height of the tablecloth is not known. The continuous cross is white. The stripes in each field are respectively

yellow, red, yellow, red. Inscription, name tag and gold crown.

The banner is certainly from the time of Christian IV and must have been provided with Frederik the III's name on a later occasion.

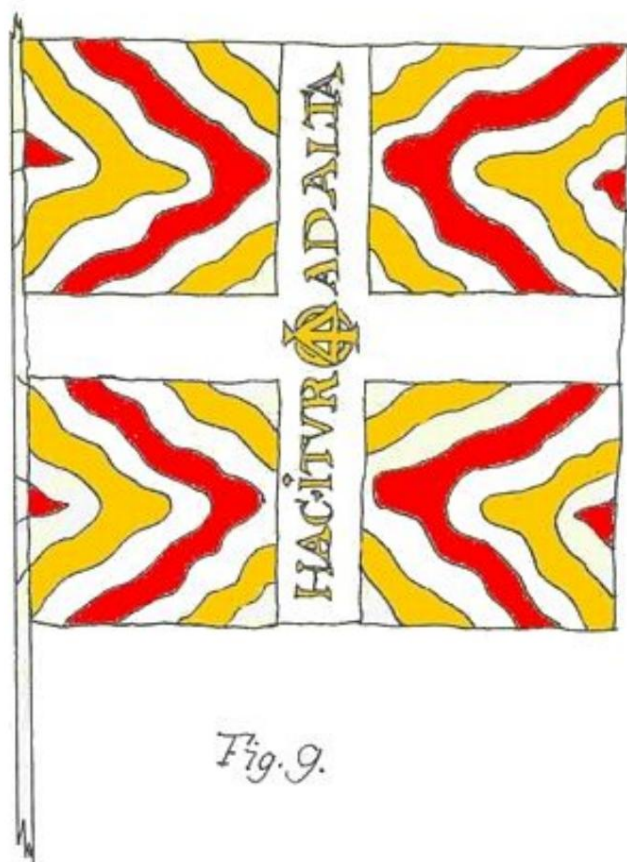


Fig. 9. The tablecloth is 197 cm high. The continuous cross is white. The wavy lines in the fields are alternating orange-yellow, white and red. The inscriptions are gold. The sign in the center of the cross is a kind of double monogram Christian IV sometimes used.

The last two tabs belong in type to the older land servant tabs. Whether, due to the continuous cross, they should belong to a model older than 1626 has not yet been decided, but something could indicate that.

Finally, there is the possibility that when the panels were made, the provision was misunderstood and the tablecloth was given the large continuous cross instead of the small cross field.

Written sources

Not much has been written in Danish about Danish military flags.

The best (and only) book about it is Helge Bruhn: Dannebrog, 1947, Kbh.

About other Danish fans from approx. 1590 see P. Kannik in Weapons History Yearbook.

1) The land serf period is the period from approx. 1530 to the introduction of absolute power around 1660.