

Period Costume for Stage & Screen

Patterns for Women's Dress 1500-1800



JEAN HUNNISETT

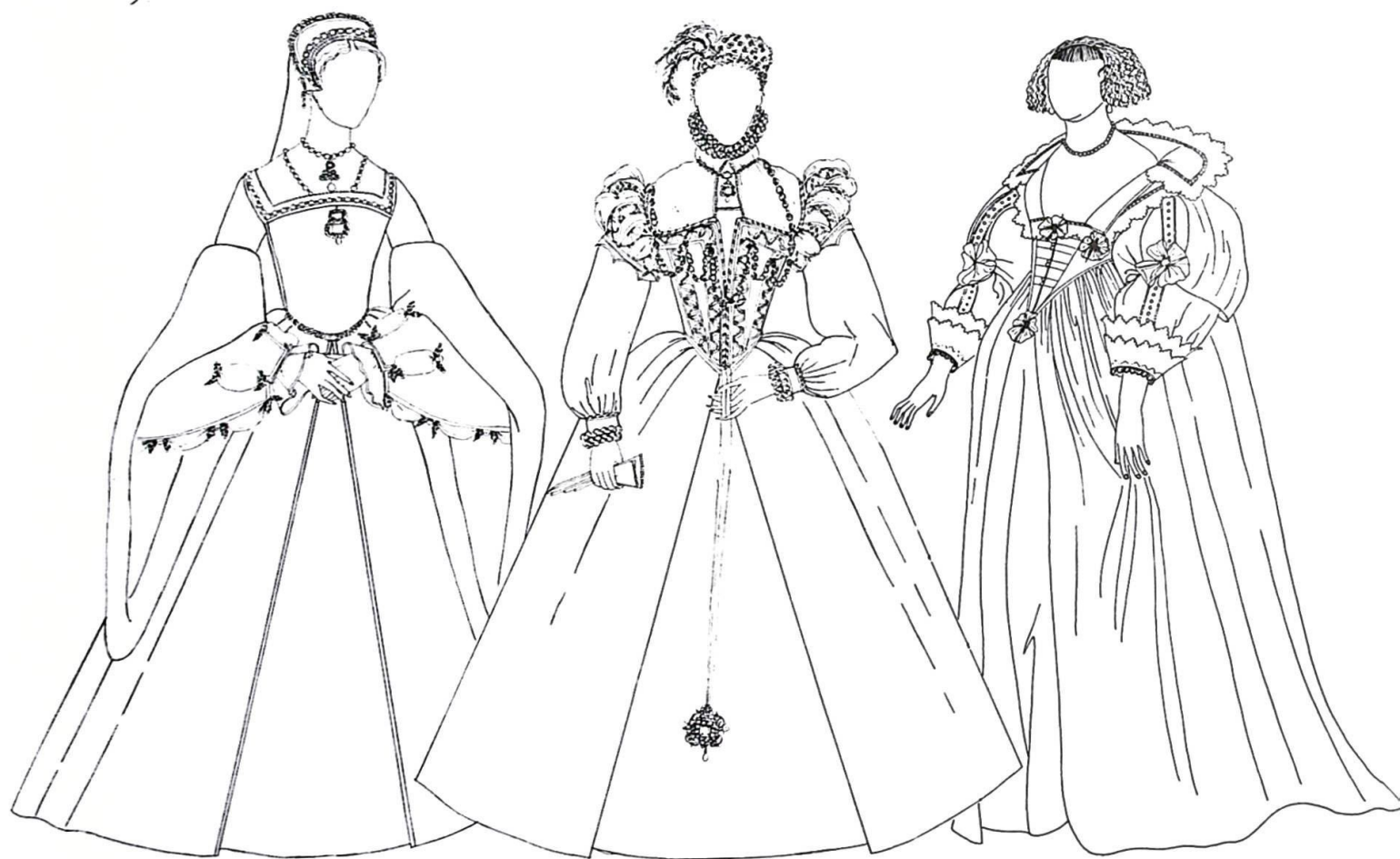


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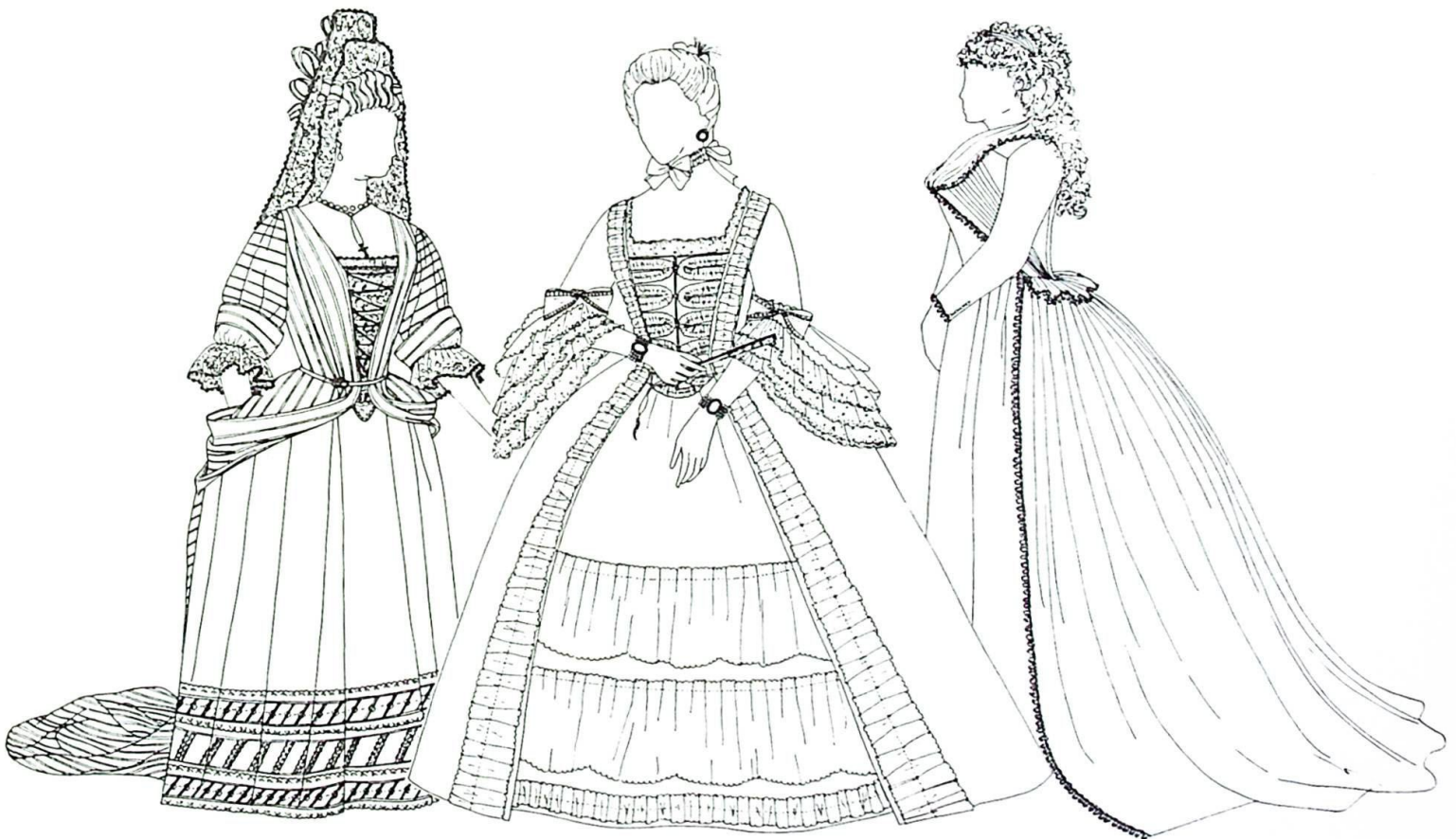


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for Stage & Screen

Patterns for Women's Dress 1500–1800

ILLUSTRATIONS BY JANETTE HASLAM



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INTRODUCTION

THIS book has been put together from my own experience of 25 years of making costumes for theatre, film and television — from opera choruses and television extras to the grand, and not so grand, actresses and singers of the entertainment industry.

It is not a history of costume as that subject is covered by other people who are far more learned than I. The dating is not precise but is accurate enough for general use in the theatre. Anyone making re-creations should consult other forms of reference, original sources or museum textile departments.

Many people fall into wardrobe work because they can sew and then find themselves faced with a production of *A Man for all Seasons* requiring the reproduction of Holbein's paintings and drawings. The art of the costume maker now comes into its own, and can either make or mar the production.

Whatever medium you are working in — theatre, film or television, the problems you face will be the same. You need pictorial reference to widen your understanding of the period; ideas of colour, quality and types of fabric that would be ideal; a good set of measurements; some idea of the shape of the pattern pieces you are going to cut out, and a knowledge of how to make a well constructed garment.

There are two ways to cut patterns. One is to use flat pattern drafting and the other is to drape on the stand to produce a toile. It is the second method that I use, and once the art has been mastered it is a very quick and reliable way to work. The patterns in this book have all been achieved in this way.

They are cut to be worn over the appropriate corsets and skirt supports of the period, based on

original garments in museums or worked out from books, paintings and contemporary sources — most of them have been made and worn successfully, for productions in theatre, film or television.

I hope that this book will help all those endeavouring to make costume — be it for professional or amateur use — to achieve higher standards of cut, construction and the period-feel of the finished garment. Your success, however, will depend on the amount of time you are willing to devote to your chosen hobby or profession, and the skill that you achieve with scissors and needle.

PART ONE:

Techniques of the Costume Maker



1. INTERPRETING THE DESIGN

BEFORE embarking on making a costume, you must first learn to look at and analyse the design. When designers start work on a production they do research, gathering information on the period and the development of style within their brief. Designs of period costumes are nearly always based on paintings, costumes, fashion plates or any other source which is applicable for the chosen period. Most designers are only too pleased to reveal the source of their inspiration which will help you to do a better job when turning their drawings into a moving, three dimensional garment.

If you do not have a design, find a selection of fashion plates, photographs or paintings of the period being considered. It is a good idea to collect postcards and pictures from any source, and put them into chronological order to use as reference. There are many books on costume, paintings and old photograph collections, which are invaluable as reference (see bibliography).

In the 18th century and Victorian periods, especially, there are many trimmings which are easy to copy and which add authenticity. If your local museum has a costume collection of the period you are working on, it may be worth a visit.

As you become familiar with sources and research material, you will find that the shape of each period will begin to fall into place, and the transition between one style and the next will become more understandable.

Dress for any sort of entertainment falls into two categories — clothes and costume. If you are dealing with real people going about their everyday lives their clothes must reflect this. For example, if

you are making clothes for *The Barretts of Wimpole Street* the cut should be as near as possible to the original cut. The closer the resemblance, the better the clothes will look.

Another play demanding accurate representations is *Crown Matrimonial*. When Dame Wendy Hiller appeared as Queen Mary in the Codron production at the Haymarket Theatre in London she wore the clothes everyone associates with Queen Mary. Such dress has to be accurate because the action of the play takes place within living memory. If you get it wrong, someone in the audience will be sure to tell you.

On the other hand, should you be making for Mozart's *The Magic Flute* or for plays where the characters are larger than life, you are making costumes. Your designer may be tempted, as was John Bloomfield in his production of Gogol's *The Government Inspector* for the opening of the Sherman Theatre in Cardiff, to make the costumes a marvellous pastiche of the early 1830s. The 'daffodil' dress of Mother, worn by Mary Wimbush in Act II, is a larger than life design — the skirt is wider, the sleeve bigger, the belt deeper, and the decoration is over done. But put together with care and attention to period detail, and with reference to the designer's wishes, it was a very successful costume for this particular production. It would not work for a Jane Austen character of the same date.

Finally, do not be too eager to put the scissors into the fabric until you understand what you are trying to achieve, and have studied the design carefully. This may seem indulgent advice, but from bitter experience I can assure you that time taken at this stage pays dividends later.



Costumes for Crown Matrimonial and The Government Inspector.

2. TAKING MEASUREMENTS

MEASURING the actress for whom you are about to make is the first, and one of the most important, jobs in the process of making a costume, whatever the period or design.

Whether you work in metric or imperial is immaterial, above all you must be accurate. Always try to take the measurements yourself, over bra and pants, with your actress wearing no shoes. Don't use an old worn tape as they are apt to stretch.

It is important to realize that when you take measurements you are looking at two things:

- a. the structure,
- b. the shape of the body.

The most foolproof method of taking correct measurements is to use certain obvious bones in the skeleton.

When taking measurements you must look for problems, such as protruding shoulder blades; round, dropped or uneven shoulders; or the way the neck sits on the shoulders. If the muscle from the neck to the shoulder is very prominent creating a sloping neck, you will have problems fitting a high collar. If your actress has low or very flat hips, you will have difficulty making paddings, and skirt supports create the correct silhouette, and may need small pads to bolster it up. Look out for the long body and short legs, or a short body on a very tall person. Take note of these problems during the measurement stage and when you come to use them you will have confidence that the shape you are creating on your stand is the correct one.

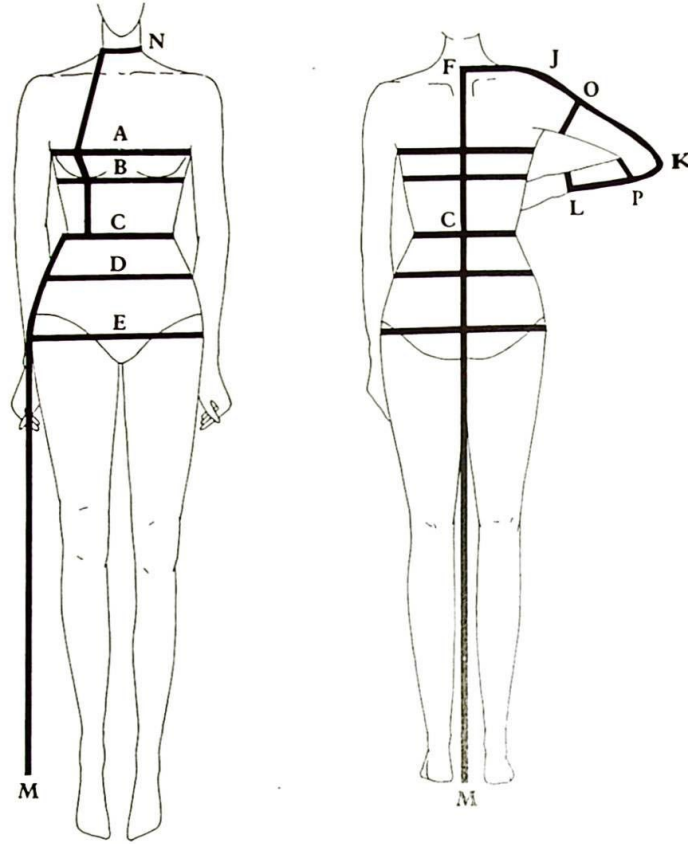
I have used the following list of measurements successfully for many years, but with experience you will add to them or formulate your own system.

Bust

Take this over the fullest part of the bust, keeping the tape well up at the back. Make a mental note if the back muscles are developed — this is now quite common with actresses who keep in trim by using weights.

Under Bust

This should be taken over the diaphragm or, if the garment is to be high-waisted, wherever the design or period of the costume dictates the waist should be. For singers and dancers you must also take a second measurement with the chest expanded.



A typical measurements chart:

Name: A.N. Other
Production

Date

		mm	in
A	Bust	89	35
B	Under bust	76	30
C	Waist	66	26
E	Hip	91.5	36
D	High hip	87.5	34½
F-C	Nape — waist-back	40.5	16
F-A	— bust-point	34	13½
A-B	— under bust	40	16
B-C	— waist	54.5	21½
F-J	— shoulder	19	7½
J-K	— elbow	50.5	20
K-L	— wrist	76	30
C-M	Waist — ground (no shoes)	104	41
F-M	Nape — ground	144.5	57
N	Neck	34	13½
O	Arm — upper	26.5	10½
P	— fore	24	9½
L	— wrist	16.5	6½

Waist

Make sure this is right by asking your artiste if the measurement feels as they wish — some people like tight waists and others loose.

Hips

Take this over the fattest part of the hip, keeping two fingers inside the tape measure to provide the right amount of ease. Note how far down from the waist you take the measurement.

High Hip

Take this at the top of the hip bone. This measurement is not necessary if you are making a full skirt of any period.

Nape to Waist Back (N-W-B)

From the bone at the nape of the neck to the waist. If you have difficulty in finding the waist, put a tape round the waist and measure to that.

Nape to Waist Front (N-W-F)

From the bone at the nape of the neck to bust point to waist. If the period of dress falls between approximately 1500-1800 the bust point will be pushed up. The amount will depend on the size of the breasts and the period shape of the corset. If the waist is raised, take a measurement to that spot. If not, measure to under the bust and then down to the natural waist.

This measurement will give you the bulk shape of the breast and the nape to bust point will tell you if the person you are making for is high or low slung.

Always ensure that you take the measurements from the nape and not from the shoulder, as so often happens. If the measurements are then passed onto another maker or left on a file it is very difficult to determine from which part of the shoulder the measurement was taken.

Nape to Shoulder to Elbow to Wrist (N-SH-E-WRT)

This is taken with the arm bent and raised to just below shoulder level. Start at the bone in the nape of the neck, measure to the bone at the outer edge of the shoulder, then to the elbow bone and finally to the wrist bone. At this point find out where your artiste likes her sleeve to end.

Waist to Ground (W-G)

Taken at side front, from waist to ground with no

shoes. If the costume has a skirt support, measure over this at the widest point.

If you have difficulty finding the waist, use the tape trick again, and if the costume is to be off the ground try to determine the height from the ground.

Nape to Ground (N-G)

Using the same bone at the back of the neck, measure to the ground — the end of the tape should just brush the floor.

Compare the N-G with the N-W-B added to the W-G to make sure there is not too much discrepancy — 2.5cm (1in) shorter is about right. If N-G measures more or less than this difference you are dealing with either round shoulders or a hollow back, or you have made a mistake.

Neck

Measure round the base of the neck. If your design has a high collar measure again where you expect the top of the collar to be.

Upper Arm/Fore Arm

Measure round the thickest part.

Wrist

Measure just below the wrist bone or wherever your artiste or designer wishes the sleeve end to reach.

These measurements are for use when making a pattern by means of a toile, and are quite sufficient for most period costumes. The skeletal measurements will give you the structure, and the round measurements the shape. With experience you will be able to visualize the shape and size of a person from a set of measurements.

I try to measure over a corset and skirt support of the period I am about to make. It does not matter if they fit badly but it gives a good idea of any problems, such as not enough hip to support the skirt support, and where the top of the corset will be. You will also be able to see whether your artiste corsets well or not.

If you are dealing with dancers you will need leg measurements together with the **Girth** (shoulder, under crotch to shoulder) and **Waist Front to Waist Back under Crotch**.

If you draft flat patterns you will need to use another system which will not be covered in this book.

3. CHOOSING AND MOUNTING FABRICS

COSTUME worn for any sort of performance has to be strong, able to withstand hard wear and the dry cleaners. It is not always possible to buy the ideal fabric for the design you are making, but by choosing the right mounting material you will at least be able to support the fabric to make the costume strong. In a professional workroom most costumes are mounted throughout, and the mounting fabric will vary with the likes and dislikes of the costume cutter. I can only give you my preference and reasons for the choice of various fabrics.

With very few exceptions, I mount bodices onto white cotton drill. Sheeting and calico are apt to be unyielding and calico also contains a lot of dressing. Drill, however, has a little stretch, is usually pre-shrunk, cleans well, and is pleasant to wear. It will also give a fine fabric, such as cotton or pure silk paper taffeta, body and keep it smooth, and will help a stretchy wool to keep its shape without becoming ridged.

If jersey is used for its colour and you want a solid bodice, drill will be suitable — this also applies to panne velvets with a jersey knit. If the design uses the stretchy qualities of jersey you should mount it onto another jersey of the appropriate weight.

Mounting sleeves will depend on the type of sleeve you are making. Straight sleeves, if of fine fabric, can be put onto fine sheeting, cambric or poul taffeta. Puff sleeves need a fabric that is going to make them stand up on their own. I use net of which there are various weights ranging from tulle, on which to mount delicate chiffons, to ballet net for a more aggressive effect. Pure silk organza can also be used for puffs, as it has the stiffness of net, but is quite hard wearing and pleasant for the wearer. Large Elizabethan sleeves usually need mounting onto wadding or domette. I line coat sleeves in a tailored garment in the normal way, slipping the lining in by hand. If your artiste has a quick change, always use a material with a slippery finish, like poul, which will enable the arm to slide into the sleeve easily.

Mounting for skirts is not just a matter of supporting the main fabric, but helping it to fall in the most effective way. Each period has its look and the way the skirt hangs will contribute greatly to the final effect.

The skirts of the Tudor and Elizabethan periods are, in the main, stiff and will probably need mounting. Many of the most suitable fabrics for this period are furnishing velvets and brocades and, depending on the quality, need to be mounted onto sheeting, medium calico or lawn.

In the 17th century, softer plain satins are needed. Acetate shot taffetas or slub silks work well and need to be mounted onto lawn. Cotton furnishing satin is also good and can be used without mounting. Man-made satins do not seem to produce fabric of the right sheen and hang, and silk satin is impossible to find and prohibitively expensive. If you use either, however, they will need to be mounted on cotton lawn or an acetate taffeta lining. Both will need support if they are to survive the rigours of many performances.

Towards the end of the 17th century the effect needed is a slightly stiff but draped look. Taffetas, brocades and wool challis are all quite good, and, depending on the design, can be mounted onto lawn, bra net, organdie or organza. The Mantua skirt at the turn of the century was mainly unlined and the reverse of the fabric is often seen when the skirt is pulled back and draped up over the petticoat. When reproducing this fashion, though, the skirt often needs net or stiffening in the centre back **(CB)**.

In the 18th century the fabric becomes lighter. Silk paper taffetas are ideal but there are various man-made taffetas and poults which will do as well. If a soft fabric is used it will need mounting to make it appear stiff but it must be kept light. The fine brocades and taffetas of the 18th century need to fall in graceful folds. It may seem extravagant to use either dress or furnishing silk (or a good mixture) to emulate these, but in the long run it is more economical because silk will clean well and the folds stay rounded. Once man-made fibres crease or flatten there is very little that can be done to rejuvenate them. Silks for this period are better left unlined, and put over a good petticoat for support. If the skirt has to be lined, then cotton lawn is the best thing.

By the end of the 18th century fine wools, cottons, voiles, muslins and soft silks work well and as a rule do not need to be mounted. They are, however, best over a good petticoat.

Skirts can create problems because period costumes are apt to be heavy. Try to line a skirt with a slippery fabric if worn over a calico petticoat so that it will move easily. Alternatively make a slippery petticoat if the skirt is lined with cotton. When using man-made fabrics make sure the top skirt does not 'creep' on the underskirt.

With experience you will know the best effects that can be achieved by mounting. You will also learn how to make unsuitable fabrics behave as they should for the period you are making, and how delicate fabrics will stand up to the wear a costume gets when being worn in a production.

All mounting fabrics must be pre-shrunk or washed before use.

TO MOUNT

1. Lay the fabric right side down onto a clean table. Place the lining fabric with its trace line on top so that you can see the lines. Pin into seam allowance all round the piece — never pin into the centre of the fabric.
2. Flat tack using a pale thread (bright and dark colours may leave coloured spots when removed) and with even stitches. Put a knot on the cotton and stitch just onto the seam allowance side of the trace line. Do not back stitch at the end. Keep both pieces very flat — do not pick up — and slide the needle between the cloth and the table.
3. As each piece is finished take out the pins, turn the piece and smooth it both up and across to make sure there are no wrinkles whatsoever.

4. DRAPING THE TOILE

FROM Medieval times until the late 1670s, it was forbidden for women to cut by the law of the Trade Guilds. They were, however, employed as sempstresses. This is reflected in the shape of women's clothes, especially in the 16th century, for the cut follows a similar line to that of men's dress.

There are pattern books for earlier periods which are not in any way specific in size. But they provide a guide to the lay of the pattern on the cloth and the shape of the pattern pieces when draped and fitted on a stand or, more likely, on the body itself.

Drafting systems were a 19th-century solution to the problem of making clothes fit the body — sized paper patterns did not come into use until after 1860. Among those working on the development of paper patterns for sale to the public were James McCall, who started work in Glasgow and then registered in New York by 1870, and Ebenezer Butterick, also in New York. It was Butterick who, in 1868, developed the first system of graded patterns, made in 15 sizes from 70-106cm (28-42in).

For work in the theatre or television the old method of draping to make a pattern is still the best way to cut many of the costumes worn over the flat-

fronted corset of approximately 1500-1800. I think it would be extremely difficult to draft patterns for pre-1840 costumes by modern methods. Before this date it is the grain and the lay of the fabric over the body that makes the wrinkle-free bodice. Until the end of the 18th century there is no bust point measurement as we think of it today, and as used when making a modern block.

Although the patterns in this book can be put directly onto squared paper, it is, as with early pattern books, the shape of the pattern pieces and the grain of the fabric that is important. Use the patterns by cutting the shape of the pieces out of a suitable fabric on the correct grain lines shown in the pattern and drape the pieces onto a stand that is padded to the correct size. To pad the stand you will need various shapes of bust pads and some wadding or quilting to wrap around it.

The stand is one of the most important items of equipment you will buy. I use a Siegel and Stockman stand, model 50406. This has a well proportioned body and is also very sturdy, standing up to continual use over many years. Adjustable stands with gaps in the CF and CB are of little use because the gaps are in the very places that you need to pin into.

I use three sizes when making a toile:

	Bust	Waist
Size 38	82cm (32in)	53cm (21in)
42	88cm (34½in)	60cm (24in)
46	96cm (38in)	68cm (27in)

— the medium size is the most useful. If you make a lot of opera costume you will probably need a larger size; for ballet costume you will need a very small stand.

For most of the costumes in this book you will need a flat front, corseted shape. It is preferable to choose a stand that is smaller in the bust and waist than the size you need. Wrap wadding around the stand keeping it squashy, making it just a little larger than the required measurement. Mark the correct N-W-B measurement on the stand and set the waist of the corset onto this line, pulling it in to the right size. Check the bust size and pull up if necessary, remembering that the corset will flatten and push up the bust. Measure across the back to find out your armhole position and mark this on the stand with either chalk or tape. The neck edge can usually be taken from the seam on the neck of the stand. If the costume is cut through from N-G ensure the stand is at the correct height. If not cut through, work with the stand at the most comfortable level. Should the bodice be cut below the waist, it will be necessary to put the pad or skirt support on the stand.

Before beginning to cut, study the design together with any reference material you may have for the period. Look carefully, and if the designer has copied a painting, note whether or not he has understood the construction of the dress. Many designers do, but many do not — that is your job.

Medium weight calico is the best fabric for making toiles, as the grain is usually easy to see. The grain of the fabric is of paramount importance, especially when making a bodice, since it ensures that the costumes fits well with few or no wrinkles. It is the grain that takes the strain and supports the body, moulding it into shape. The CF and CB are usually on the straight of grain.

Start with a piece of calico that is nearly the right size. Cut off the bulk of the surplus as you progress, leaving enough to adjust the line of the seams. You need to be able to see the shape of the garment as it grows.

If there is no suitable pattern for the design, try to find pictorial references that will help with the position of the straight of grain, such as embroidery or the pattern on the fabric.

All the patterns in this book are for a figure of approximately:

Bust: 86-91cm (34-36in)

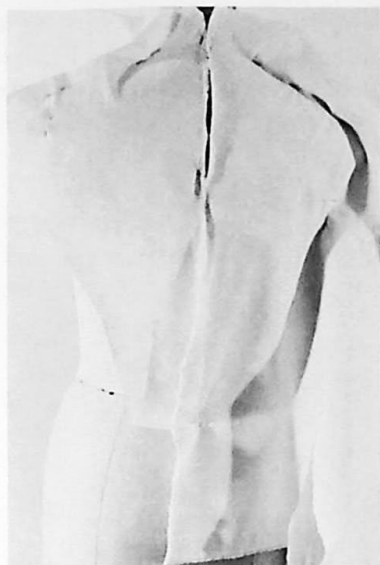
Waist: 63-68cm (25-27in)

N-W-B: 38-40cm (15-16in)

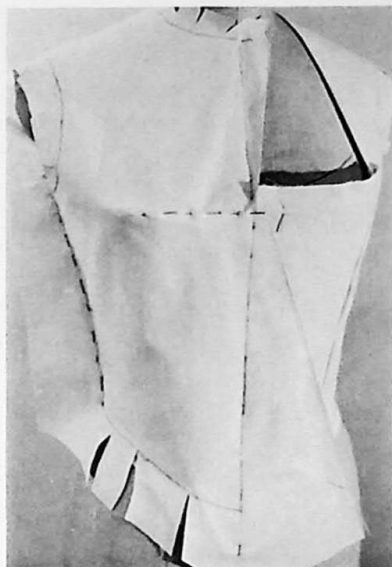
and the scales are shown on each separate pattern.

CLOSED BODICE

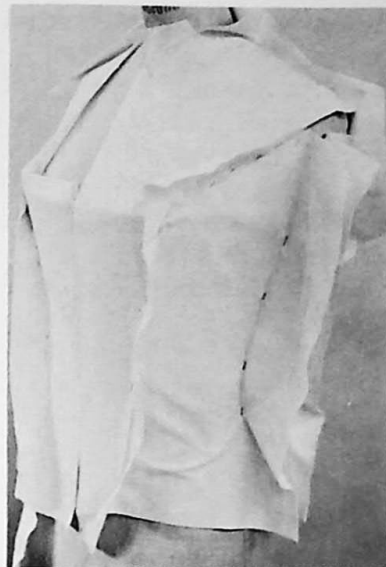
1. Begin by placing the straight edge of the fabric on the CB line of the stand. Smooth across towards the armhole and pin in.
2. Continue smoothing the calico round the stand until you get to the position of the side back seam.
3. The Front. Leave about 10cm (4in) spare at the shoulder. A dart or curved seam will be needed to shape the front, unless you are dealing with a flat chested person. If there is a dart at the top of the corset the side front piece may not be necessary. Pin the calico to the top of the corset and decide if the shaping needs to be at the neck edge or the waist — in some cases you will need both. Swing the fabric across slightly at the top or bottom creating a curved front seam and pin in a dart.
4. Smooth calico over the shoulder and pin to the back piece, or
5. Smooth towards bust point and armhole position. Pin in.
6. Pin the side front to the stand from a mid-armhole point to the waist, smoothing the grain forward. Pin in. Smooth out towards the front panel and pin from the armhole down, keeping the pins straight, and in a smooth curve from armhole to waist.
7. Smooth and pin the side back as for the front. Join side seams, cutting off surplus fabric to 5cm (2in). Clip the neck and armhole curves. As you trim and cut away, this releases the tension round the curves and you will be able to nip in the seams a little more.
8. Check that all seams are in the right places,



Place straight on edge of CB line.



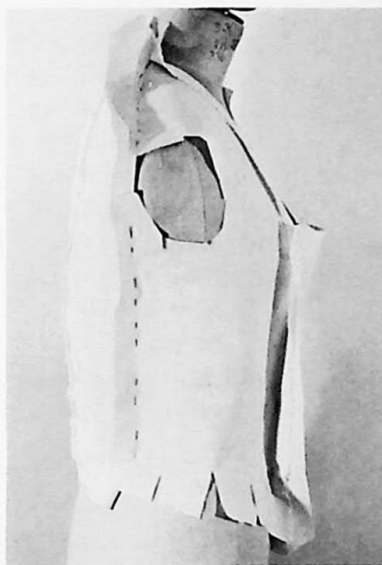
Swing fabric across.



Bodice with side panel.



Use straight of grain.



Smooth down side front.

and are like the design. Once you are satisfied that the bodice is as smooth as possible, mark neck, armholes and waist and trim down all seams to 1cm ($\frac{1}{2}$ in). Put all the CB pins in a straight line, and take out all other pins that are holding it to the stand.

9. Turn the toile over onto the other side of the stand. All the seams will now be inside, and you will be able to see if any of them need adjusting.
10. Now you are ready to make the toile into a pattern.

Watch point

Do not pull the fabric too tight. When finished, a toile should be easy on the stand.

OPEN BODICE

Based on the Ditchley — painting of Elizabeth I

1. Cut back as for closed bodice.
2. Front stomacher. Lay the selvedge down the CF and pin into corset. Use a piece of calico about 35cm (14in) long by 20cm (8in) wide, and smooth across using the shape of the centre piece of the corset as a guide.



Mark neck, armholes and waist.



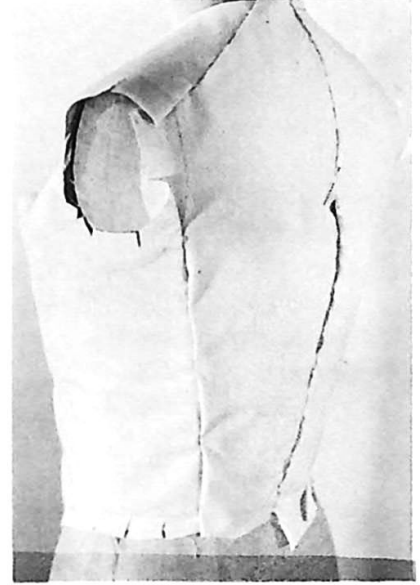
Front — edges and seams trimmed.



Front — reversed toile.



Back — edges and seams trimmed.



Back — reversed toile.

3. Using the straight of the grain and leaving 10cm (4in) spare at the top, lay the fabric from the shoulder to a point level with the top of the corset at the side of the bust. Continue down to the waist and pin to the stomacher. You will have to clip the calico at the armhole level to enable you to get a smooth line.
4. Smooth the side front piece round under the arm — the side seam is better if it is placed towards the back — and join it to the back piece at the shoulder and side back seams.
5. Mark and trim neck edge, armhole and waist, and shape the point of the stomacher.

6. Now you are ready to make the toile into a pattern.

SLEEVES

1. Decide which sleeve shape you need for the design. From the pattern work it out in paper as a flat pattern.
2. Cut it in calico, and pin up the seam.
3. Hang from the armhole, making sure it is not too small in the head and that it is the correct shape for the design.

SKIRT

A skirt pattern is made by using the same principle

as for a petticoat, and can be cut in fabric without making a toile. This is especially so if the skirt is the same shape as the petticoat, which is usual. Always check the skirt length over which ever is the longest — the pad or the skirt support at its widest point.

Watch points

The skirt should always be wider than the petticoat.

If you are making more than one dress or intend to keep your patterns, keep the 'negative' you cut off the top of the petticoat and this will act as a rough guide for the top of the skirt. Remember, however, that fabrics and skirt shapes will always differ slightly.

Most of the skirts covered by this book are straight strips joined along the selvages and where they are shaped a pattern is provided.

5. MAKING A BASIC BODICE

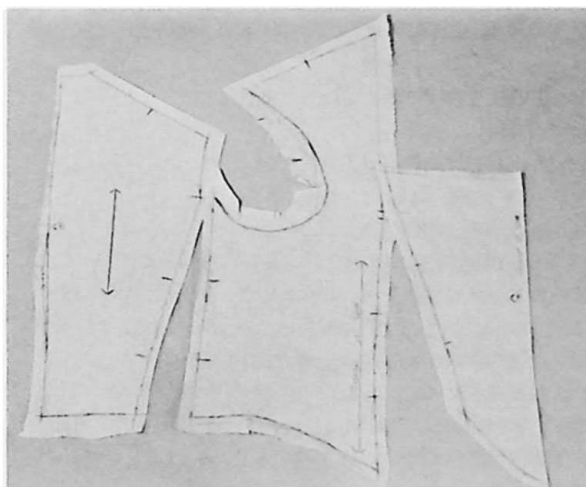
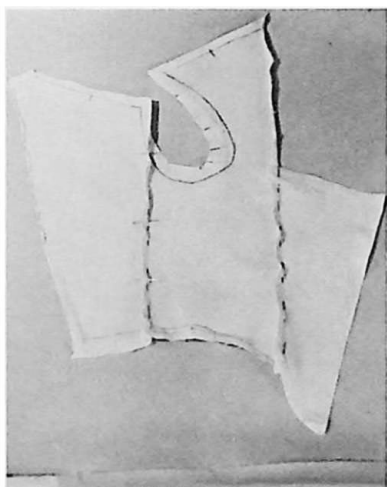
WHEN you have finished your toile, the next step is to make it into a pattern.

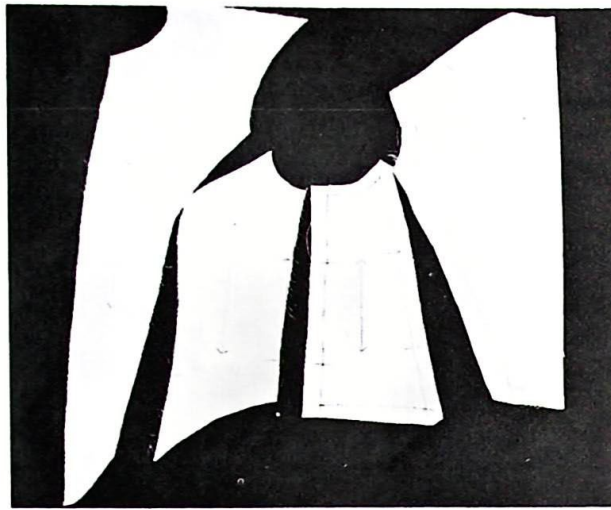
1. Take the calico bodice off the stand and mark across the line of pins on the shoulder seam. You may find that your pin line is erratic, so straighten it out now. Put in balance marks and lines where the neck, sleeve and waistlines are. Take out the pins on the shoulder and lay the bodice flat. Continue marking all seams in the same way.
2. Un-pin all seams and lay the toile out flat. Check the shape of the pieces against the shapes of the standard pattern pieces for the period.

Watch point

As no two people are exactly the same, your pattern will vary slightly from the original, but it should always be on the same grain, and resemble the standard pattern in shape.

3. Check your bust and waist measurements. Mark in waistline, neckline and armhole. Any discrepancy should be corrected through the armhole or waist using the balance marks as control points.
4. Cut off all turnings and lay the calico onto paper. Draw round the pattern, remembering to put in grain lines and balance marks. You now have a paper pattern.





CUT AND CONSTRUCTION

Watch points

Make sure all pieces are on the right grain.

If there is a pattern on the fabric, ensure that the pieces are well placed and exactly the same on both sides.

Get into the habit of pinning into the turnings only, so that when working on pale or plain fabrics you will not get pin holes in the body of the fabric by accident.

BODICE AND SLEEVES

1. Lay the paper pattern onto the mounting fabric and pin out.
2. Cut out the mounting fabric leaving 5cm (2in) at the sides and CB and 2cm ($\frac{3}{4}$ in) round neck, armholes, waist and any other seams.
3. Trace round the pattern remembering balance marks.
4. Lay the mounting onto the main fabric and cut out.
5. Flat pin the lining onto the fabric and flat tack together, slightly outside the trace line.
6. Pin bodice pieces together, matching balance marks.
7. Either hand tack very firmly, or machine tack in a big stitch. The method used will depend on type of fabric.
8. Make up sleeve in the same way.

SKIRT

9. Make up skirt seams, leaving the appropriate seam open for the placket.

10. Tack up 5cm (2in) hem.

11. Adjust the stand to the correct W-G measurement and put on the skirt support and petticoat.

12. Put a petersham waistband on the waist of the stand over the support and petticoat waistbands. Put the skirt over the top of the petersham and pleat onto it — while pleating keep the hem level with the floor. The type and the way it is pleated will depend on what period you are doing.

13. Machine or tack the skirt onto the petersham and put in the placket at the appropriate place.

14. Tack a small trouser hook and bar or two no. 3 hooks and bars onto the waistband to the correct measurement, allowing for the thickness of the waistbands on the skirt support and petticoat.

You are now ready to fit.

Watch points

The opening is not always at the back so beware — it depends which period you are working in. It is sometimes better to wait until after the fitting before putting in the placket. Again this depends on the period.

The skirt may not need mounting. This depends on the type of fabric used and is discussed in Chapter 3.

6. MAKING A BONED BODICE

It is not worth a using a corset in the theatre with costumes dating from 1625, when the waist starts to rise, unless you have many changes of costume. Many other period costumes are also better if the bodices are boned. Artistes are apt to leave off the corset if there is no one to chivvy them into wearing it and if the bodice is unboned it is then apt to look a wrinkled mess. In television most artistes expect to wear corsets and the designer is usually around during the recording to make sure his designs look their best.

The type of boning will, of course, depend on the period of the bodice and the size of the person. If the bodice has to look stiff put in canvas as for the corset and the bones can be approximately 1.25cm (½in) apart.

When in doubt as to the direction and number of the bones do a little research. By looking at corsets or corset patterns and relating these to the shape you require, you will be able to work out which way the bones should lie. Try to fit the bodice before putting on the top fabric, as it is easier to do any alteration at this stage.

Making up

1. Bone the inner lining as for a corset.

2. After the fitting take the boned lining apart marking in the alterations and balance marks. Cut a calico or domette layer to be mounted between the boning and the top fabric. This will stop the pattern of the boning showing on the right side.
3. When you have cut the top fabric, mount the three layers together being very careful that the top layer is smooth and not too tight.
4. Continue as for the basic bodice.

Watch points

The bones must stop 3mm (¼in) from both the top and bottom to allow the piping or binding room to turn over without showing a ridge where the boning ends. The seams in the side front and side back section of both lining and top bodice fabric do not need to be in the same position. These sections can be made up independently and then put together at the centres front and back and side seams only.

Nylon boning (rigilene) is the easiest thing to use, putting in steels down the centres front and back where necessary.

7. FITTING AND FINISHING

FITTING is an art as well as a craft acquired over many years. As every fitting is different — which is why costume making is such a fascinating job or hobby — I can only give you guidelines to follow.

PREPARATIONS

If you have taken good measurements, if your stand is padded and marked to the right size, and if during the cutting and putting together of the garment you have checked to make sure all is right, you should have no problems.

Check that the measurements round bust and hips are comfortable and neck and wrist fittings are

about 0.5cm (¼in) bigger than the actual measurement. Also check that the N-W and W-G are correct. If you checked with the artiste when you took the waist measurement that it was comfortable, then it should fit.

Find time to tack up the hem and tack hooks and bars onto the waistbands of the skirt and petticoat. This is time well spent as when you step into the fitting room and put the costume onto the artiste it will look as if it fits. You will then immediately have the confidence of the actress and designer, both of whom are probably just as nervous as you are at a first fitting.

While the artiste and designer chat on about



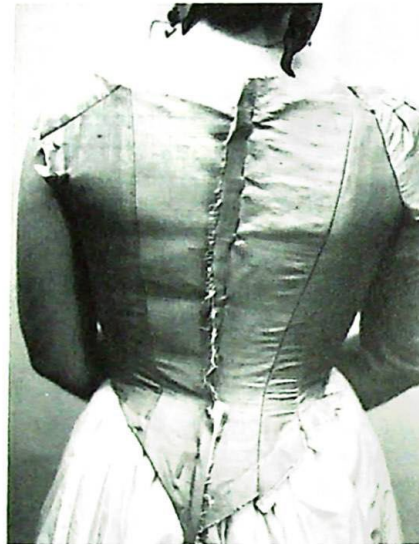
Front — before fitting.



Clipped.



Fitted.



Fitted back bodice and sleeves.

shoes, hats or the weather, you can get on with the important business of making the costume fit perfectly. But do not over fit and make it too tight. Remember that many of your seams will only be tacked and will therefore give when the bodice is pulled tight. This tends to make the finished garment too small.

Put on the petticoat and check the length. It will probably need a tuck to shorten it by about 2½cm (1in). The tuck will also add stiffness and help the shape. Put on the corset and lace from the waist upwards. (This sequence applies only to the periods in this book.)

FIRST FITTINGS

Here is a check list that you must go through at every fitting. Only fit one side — I usually do the right.

1. When first pinning the bodice together try to keep it on the original CB or CF tack mark. If this is not possible, rip the side seam and adjust it so that you can.
2. Check the N-W and if it is too long decide whether you should alter it through the waist or the shoulder. If the skirt and bodice are cut in one, leave the waist and alter it through the shoulder.

3. The front and back will probably need to be realigned. To do this, rip the shoulder seam. At the same time, notice if the back width is right. If not, correct it before pinning the shoulder seam together again.
4. Look at the front below the armhole level and make sure there are no wrinkles. If there are and they lie diagonally from side waist to bust point, you will have to rip the side seam and lift or drop the bodice at the side seam until the wrinkles disappear. If they lie from the under arm to the CF at the waist, you need to drop it at the same place.
5. Mark the armholes, neck and waistline. When you are sure they are right, clip to within 0.5cm (1/4in) of the mark. You will now find that having released the tension you will be able to nip in the waist and shoulders a little more. You may need to clip in the neck and armhole before this, but be careful.
6. I do not tack sleeves in for first fittings, as the armhole rarely fits first time. Slip the sleeve up the arm and hang it straight from the shoulder. When the bodice is off the body you may find the sleeve lies slightly forward. It must never lie backwards.

Pin the sleeve onto your line, which you may find you have to readjust. The sleeve should pivot from the muscle at the base of the sleeve head — tailors call this the scye, but I like to think of it as a hinge. For theatre clothes the under arm must be kept high otherwise you will need a gusset. Check the length of the sleeve and the wrist fitting. Ask the actress to move her arm so you can judge how much movement she has. Periods with dropped shoulders have special problems as directors so often seem perverse in wanting the arms to move upward instead of across the body.

The fit of the sleeve changes with each period, and young women today have wider and squarer shoulders than in the past. In some periods you can disguise this by setting the sleeve well onto the shoulder. Of the periods covered in this book only the Tudor trumpet and the late 18th-century sleeves will give this trouble.

7. If you have a collar, pin it onto the neck line. If it is a stand collar always keep it well into the base of the neck unless the design is otherwise.
8. Check that the waist of the bodice fits easily over the skirt.
9. Look at the hem. If tacked up, you will be able to see at a glance if there are any problems. If it is level but not the right length, just note how much you must lift or drop it. If it is very uneven you may have to take out the tacks and start again. (If the petticoat was the right length you can leave the dress hem and level it from the petticoat.) Make sure the skirt is the right shape and meets with the designer's approval.

When you become experienced, fitting will take about half an hour and will become automatic. Try not to be hurried as it is very important to everybody concerned that the costume fits well. You will not need a prolonged second fitting — when that time comes the company will be doing complete runs of the piece and the director is not so keen to let actors go.

Ask the designer as you proceed if, for instance, the line of the bodice is as he likes it or if the shoulder line is right. Ask the artiste if the neck, waist, underarm and wrists are comfortable. Suggest she sits, kneels or curtsies if any of these movements are needed in the piece. You will learn with experience the right things to ask, and the decisions you must make for yourself.

Now is also the time to discuss with the designer the aspects of the design. Produce samples of decoration, toiles of cuffs, sleeve frills, etc. — in fact, anything that is going to make decision-making easier. Don't forget that you have been living with the design for days, whereas the designer of, say, an opera may have 300 others on his mind. If you are making for the over-large soprano he has, no doubt, just been grappling with the problems of a short tenor.

FINISHING AFTER THE FIRST FITTING

1. Mark through alterations from the fitting, remembering to alter balance marks if necessary.
2. Pin and tack together on new lines making sure both sides are alike. Put the bodice on the stand and check.
3. Machine all seams, trim and neaten (see appendix 1).
4. Back fastenings. There are four ways to close a bodice — eyelets and lacing (machine, handmade or metal); hooks and bars; hooks and loops and hooks and holes (see appendix 1).

5. Finishing back placket. There are two ways to prepare the placket for fastening:
 - a. Turn in both left and right side seam allowance by 5cm (2in) and edge stitch, putting on hooks and loops or a bone channel and eyelets for lacing. Both these methods need an inlay (see appendix 1).
 - b. Turn in right side (right side facing) as above to carry hooks. Face back or leave double width when cutting and fold back. Machine down the CB line. The bars are now placed slightly to the right of the stitch line.
6. Pipe the bottom and the neck taking the piping across the placket. If you think that at some time the bodice will need to be let out, pipe across the placket allowance on the hookside as well. This will, however, make it more bulky.
7. Finish sleeves in a manner appropriate to the period and set-in using the marks made at the fitting.
8. Adjust skirt pleating if necessary.
9. Finish placket, waistband and fastenings.
10. Make adjustments to hem if necessary and finish. (Some designers do not like the hems finished until they have seen the costume on stage, especially if the stage is raked.)
11. Tack top to bottom.
12. Apply decoration if any. (Again, some designers do not like to start the main decoration until after the second fitting, but it is often too late then to do a well-finished job.)

You are now ready for the second fitting.

SECOND FITTINGS

For the second fitting the costume should be at a finished-fit stage. This means that the structure of all the component parts (bodice, sleeves, skirt, corset, petticoat and chemise — if you have one) are completely finished, and if possible most of the decoration applied.

If all the alterations were marked and worked through correctly after the first fitting there should only be small adjustments to make at the second. These can often be cured by, for example, a small pad, or by pulling up the piping cord round the neck. Both the artiste and designer should then be able to see the full effect.

There are artistes who think they know what flatters them. If so, listen to them, and to the designer's wishes. If there is conflict, see if your technical knowledge can steer a middle course.

The first fitting will take about half an hour, and the second 15 minutes, for a full period costume. If you have a difficult corset to fit and more than one costume, it is advisable to fit the underwear and one skirt only, and do the bodice and sleeves as a toile fitting. This will then be the first fitting. A costume should need no more than three fittings in all.

FINISHING OFF

After the final fitting do any alterations needed and:

1. Machine in sleeves.
2. Stab stitch the bodice to the skirt.
3. Finish any decoration still needed.

8. MAKING PETTICOATS AND PADS

THE petticoat is an important part of any costume. Together, with a frame or pad, it will make the skirt or dress the correct shape for the period.

Between 1500 and 1800 the petticoat can be made up of straight strips joined together. The width of the petticoat will vary with each change in shape as fashion dictates, but it must never be wider than the skirt that covers it. There is usually a 5cm (2in) hem plus a frill. The bottom can, alternatively, be stiffened with cord, canvas or tucks, to a depth of 30cm (12in), to ensure that the

skirt keeps its shape at the bottom. The top is shaped to accommodate the frame or pad and mounted on a waistband.

For most purposes the petticoat can be made in calico or sheeting. For a superior petticoat, though, acetate poult taffeta mounted onto lawn is strong and if it has to be seen, can, of course, be coloured. This type of petticoat allows the top skirt to move easily as it has a slippery surface, is very durable and cleans well. (Petticoats I made 10 years ago are still used today!)

Petticoats can also be made in quilting — either

shop bought to give stability or quilted in a pattern to be seen, as in the 18th century.

The width round the hem of a petticoat is dictated by the period. The early Tudor petticoat need not be more than 3.6m (4yd) round the bottom and should be flat pleated round the waist over a small pad. If it is shaped by a Spanish farthingale, the front 91cm (36in) can be shaped to fit the frame with 1.38m (54in) on either side to form the back skirt. This can either be flat pleated or cartridge pleated from the sides to the CB.

The skirt gradually gets wider until, at its zenith in the late Elizabethan/early Jacobean period, the wheel farthingale is so large that the petticoat will be between 4-5m (5-5½yd) round the hem. You do not need a great deal of fullness at the hem edge but there must be sufficient to let the costume move well.

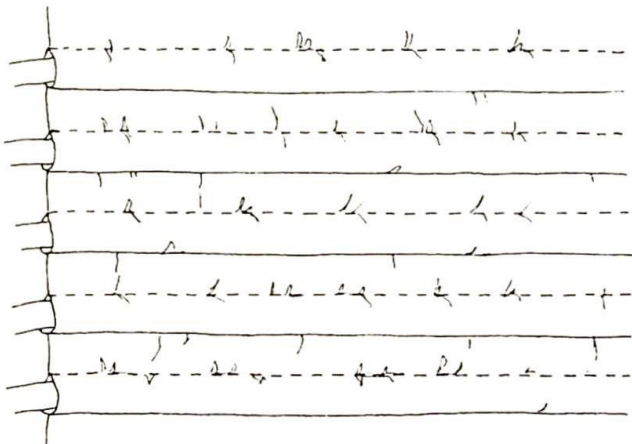
From 1620 to 1720 3.6m (4yd) will work as a standard petticoat which is pleated over a pad. From 1720 to 1760 the width will vary and depends on whether you are using pads, pocket-hoops or a panier, and can be from 2.75-4.5m (3-5yd). From 1760 into the 1790s the skirt width for theatrical use can be approximately 3.6m (4yd) but from 1795 it narrows down again to 2.3m (96in) by the end of the century.

In appendix 1 I include a list of skirt widths taken from theatrical costume and dresses in museum collections.

MAKING PETTICOATS

Cutting

The length of fabric needed is calculated on the following measurements (the figures given are samples):



Waist to ground	106cm (42in)
Hem allowance	8cm (3in)
Top allowance	8cm (3in)
The depth of shaping for top	15.5cm (6in)
Plus any length required for train at back	

A petticoat with a finished W-G measurement of 106cm (42in) will therefore be cut to a length of 1.37m (54in) excluding any train required.

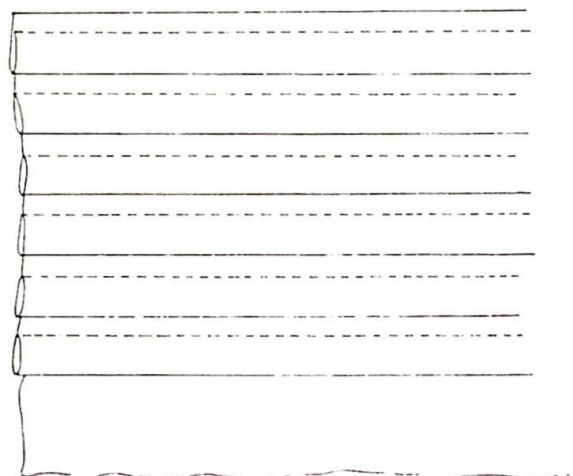
Making up

1. Join all pieces but leave an opening for the placket. Do not assume the opening will be down the CB, as it will depend on whether your petticoat has a pad or not. For the Gates covered in this book, I would put the opening at either the side front or CF. This allows the pad to be stitched into the back of the petticoat, and also allows your artiste to get herself out of the costume more easily.
2. Put a hem on the bottom using the 8cm (3in) allowance. The hem at ground level will always be on the straight of grain — if there is a train it will be added to this.
3. Cut the frill to the required length and depth. You will need three times the length of the hem if the frill is to be pleated and two times if gathered.

Example:

3.6m (4yd) hem = 9.1m (12yd) length for frill,
30cm (12in) deep from fabric 90cm (36in) wide.
The length of fabric need for frill = 3.6m (4yd)

Apply the frill or stiffen the hem at this point. If you are going to stiffen the hem, use canvas or net backed onto calico to the depth required and apply to the hem by stitching round in rows about 1.25cm (½in) apart, from bottom to top of stiffening. You can also use size 7 piping cord



and pipe it into the petticoat all the way round the hem in rows 2.5cm (1in) apart, and as deep as required.

If you use either this method or tucks, you must allow enough length when cutting — approximately 2.5cm (1in) per cord. For tucks plus depth of tuck twice.

4. Hem bottom of frill — either turn by hand or with a baby hemmer on a machine.
5. Pleat the head into 4cm (1¾in) box pleats and machine 2cm (¾in) down from the top. Then either run through an overlocker or finish on a zig-zag machine.

6. If the frill is to be gathered it can be done in one of two ways:
 - a. If the fabric is fine, gather it using a big stitch on the machine with buttonhole thread in the machine bobbin (see appendix 1), or;
 - b. If the fabric is thick, gather by zig-zagging over piping cord and pull up to the required length (see appendix 1). When using this method, divide and mark both cord and frill into eight parts, and pull up the fullness as you go. When finished, even out the gathers between the marks.



Dividing the petticoat into eight also makes the next stage much easier.

7. Stitch the frill through onto the petticoat, allowing it to drop 1.25cm (½in) below the hem, and finish by zig-zagging the head flat or cover with a tape.

If the skirt of the dress does not have a frill or hem decoration, you must not put a heading onto the petticoat frill as it may show as a lumpy shadow through the top skirt.

Pleating the top

8. Adjust the stand to the required W-G measurement.
9. Place the skirt support, or pin the pad, onto the stand.
10. Put a petersham which has been marked in quarters round the waist.
11. Divide the petticoat into quarters, moving side marks 15cm (6in) forward of the actual quarter (see appendix 1).

Example:

If half the petticoat is 2 widths of 91cm (36in) each, you will now have 76cm (30in) at the front and 107cm (42in) at the back.

12. Place the petticoat over the skirt support, pinning the quarters to the stand. The hem must be level with the floor and the surplus left above the waistline.
13. Put a tape or wide elastic round the waist and tie tightly. (Do one side only at this stage.)
14. Pleat or pull into gathers under the elastic, as the period dictates. It is usual to leave a section of 8-13cm (3-5in) flat across the front. The pleats behave and look better if pleated from the side to front and side to back — this means you have inverted pleats at the front and back and box pleats at the sides. (Keep the hem level with the ground.)
15. Draw a pencil line under the elastic.
16. You will now have a rough line across one half of the top. Lay the two halves flat on the table and even it off. Transfer the line to the other side, marking the quarters. Trim to 2.5-5cm (1-2in) above the line — the allowance you leave will depend on how confident you are.
17. If you are pleating, rather than gathering, the petticoat put it back on the stand, and re-pleat using the quarters. Pin and machine onto the petersham.

If gathering, use the piping cord trick. Pull up and pin using quarters and then machine onto petersham.

18. Before finishing the waist make the placket, keeping as flat as possible.
19. Trim away excess fabric and cover the waist with tape, putting in hanging loops, 10cm (4in) long, at each side.
20. Hook and bar, popper placket and label.
21. If you are shaping your petticoat with a pad, put both on the stand and adjust the pad. Cross-stitch in place at both ends, sides and CB as needed.
22. If your measurements were right, the waist should be perfect at the fitting. If the petticoat is too long — it should touch the top of the shoe — take a tuck in the skirt just above the frill.

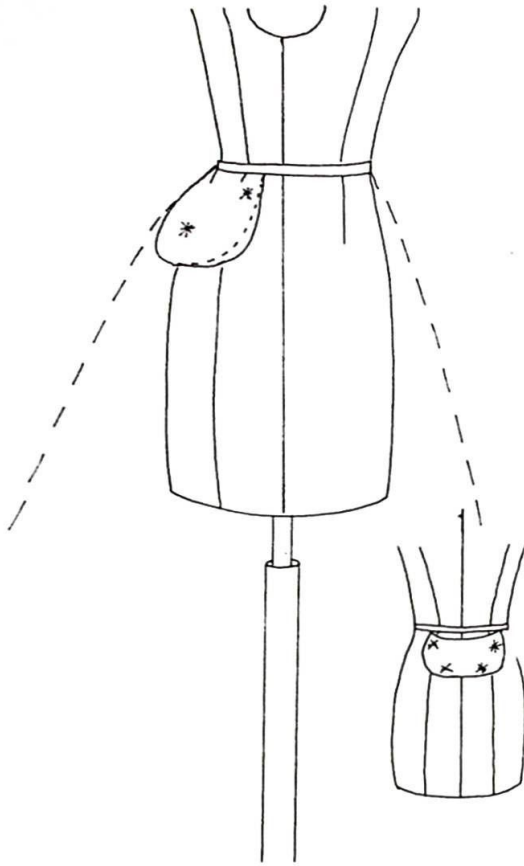
MAKING PADS

The shaping of a dress in any period is made either with a farthingale, panier or crinoline skirt support, or by using a pad under a petticoat.

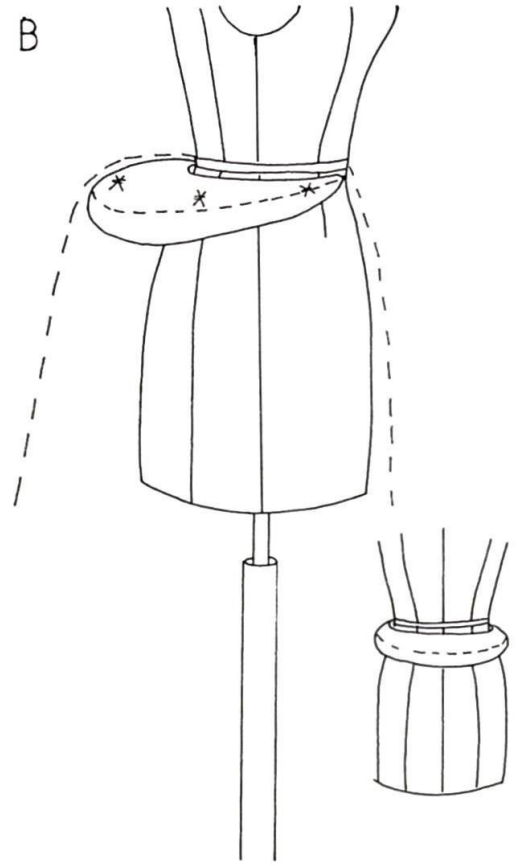
When shaping the skirt with a pad you must look carefully at the design, and decide on the size and shape you will require. I have included a selection that, together with the skirt supports, cover the periods in this book. With thought and experience you will be able to adapt them to suit all your needs.

1. **The farthingale pad.** This is used inside the farthingale to support the back and stop it from falling forward. The same shape can be used in the 18th century in the back of the panier but not filled so hard.
2. **The phoenix pad.** I developed this while making costumes for Glenda Jackson in the BBC series *Elizabeth R* and can be used from 1560s to 1580s.
3. **The Armada pad.** A very large pad used from 1580 to 1610. It can be used on its own and under both the wheel farthingale and the biscuit pad.
4. **The large biscuit.** This can be used on top of the Armada pad and will create a wheel farthingale shape, but is much easier for the actress to wear as it is more stable. These pads are also more predictable when moving about and in performance — much better for dying in!
5. **The small biscuit.** Shallower than the large, and worn on its own. It can be used

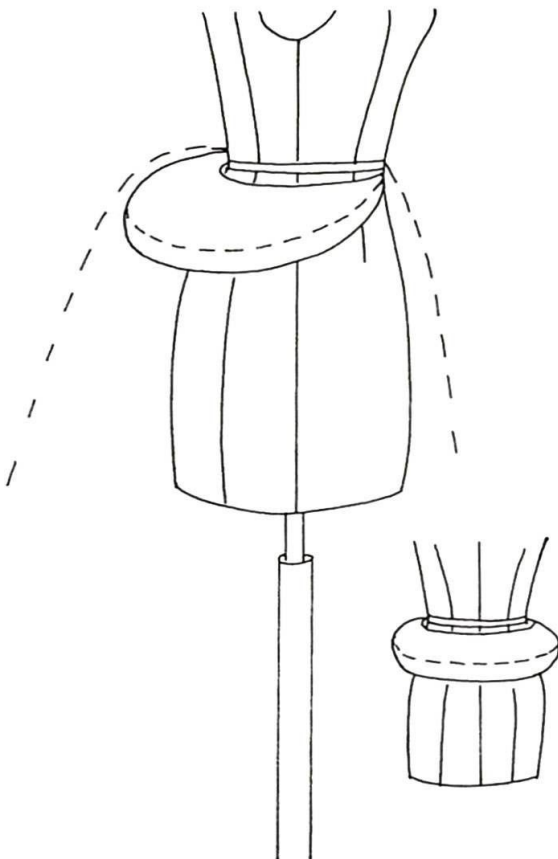
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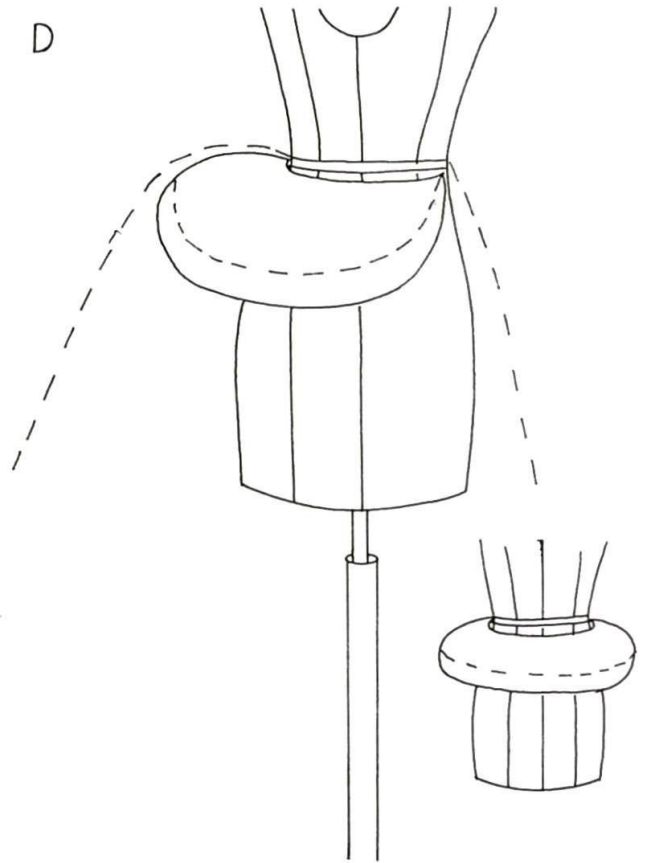
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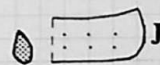
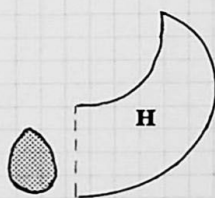
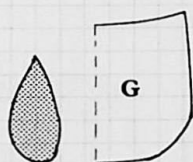
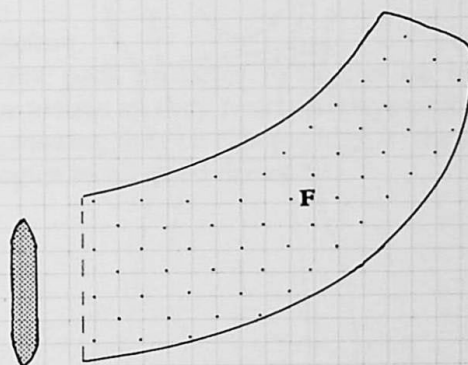
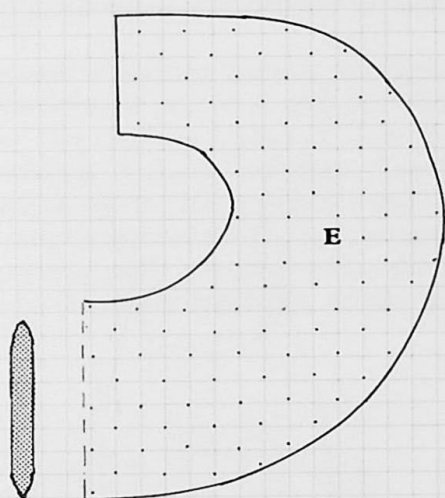
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Pads

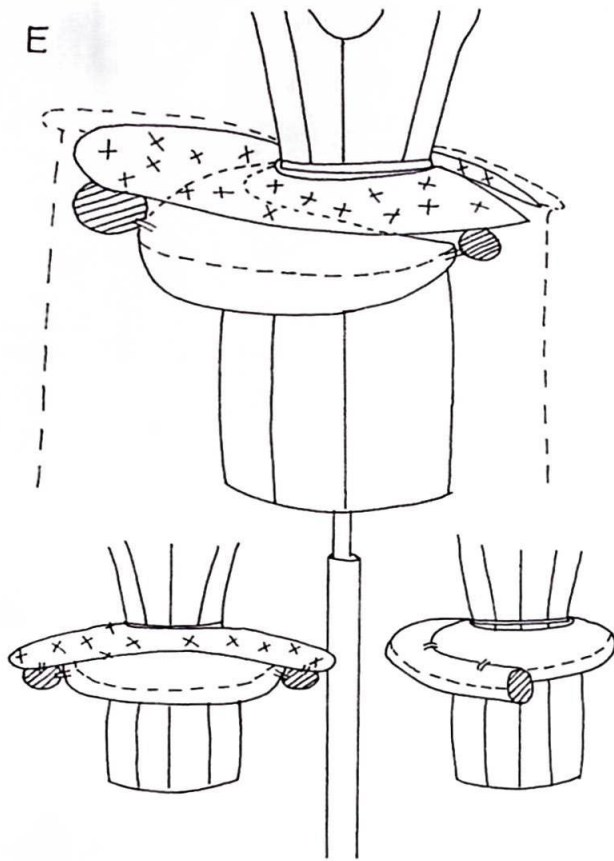
- A** Farthingale pad
- B** Sausage pad
- C** Phoenix pad
- D** Armada pad
- E** Biscuit pad
- F** 1630-40 (Henrietta Maria)
- G** Panier pad
- H** 18th-century hip pad
- J** Regency pad

 Cross section

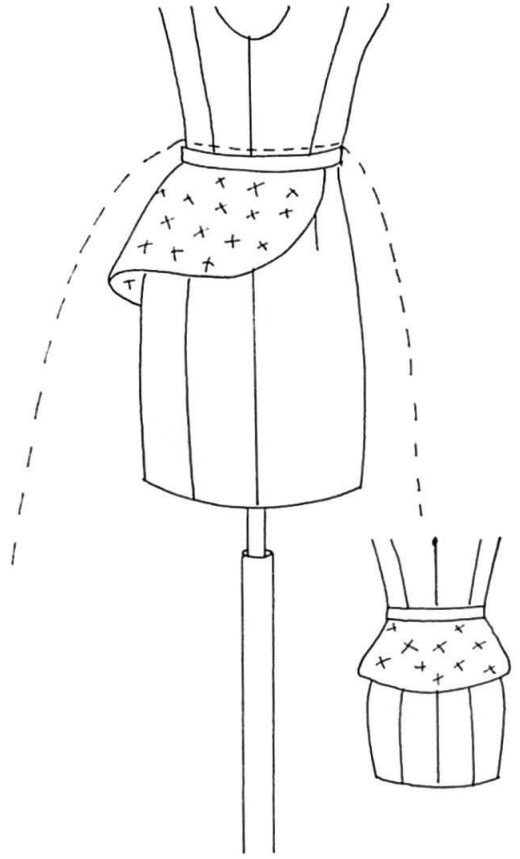


SCALE: 1 square = 2.5cm (1in)

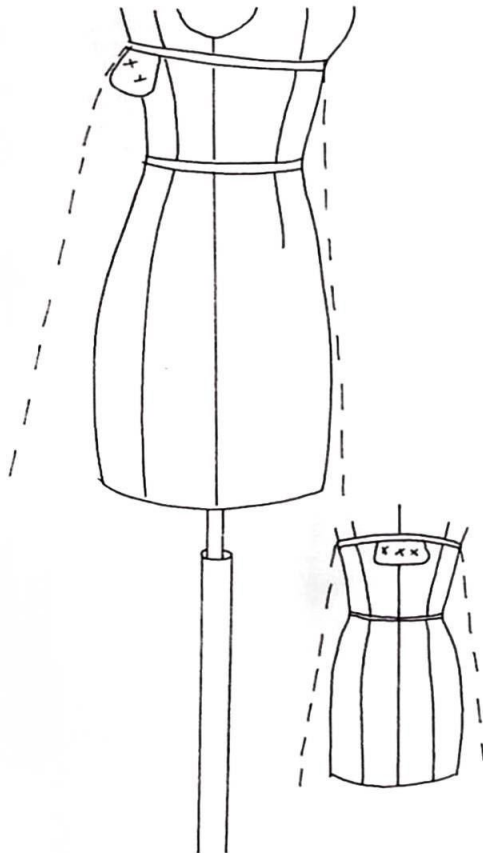
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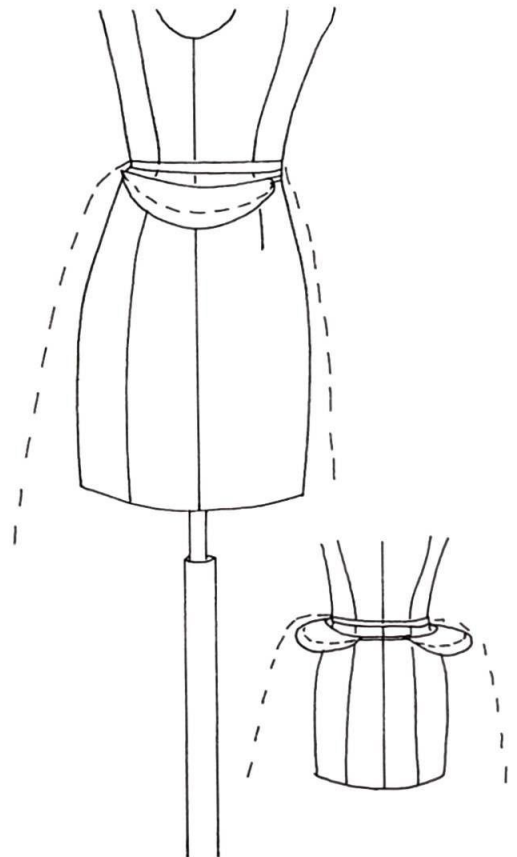
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J



H



from 1615 to 1640.

6. **The sausage pad.** This is similar in shape to the phoenix pad but comes further round to the front, just forward of the hip bone. It has a smaller circumference which can be varied according to need. It is used from c.1640 to 1710, and again from approximately 1775 to 1795.
7. **Small pad** for the back of the high waists at the end of the 18th century.
8. **Small hip pads** can be worn for 18th century costumes instead of paniers or pocket hoops.
9. **Panier pad,** used in the back of 18th century paniers or pocket hoops.

MAKING UP

Cut two calico layers on the straight. Machine round leaving a gap through which the pad is filled. Trim, turn, poke out the corners and fill the case with shredded Terylene wadding or kapok, to be hard when finished.

There are variations to this general method:

The biscuit pad is made by cutting two layers of calico, another layer of canvas or stiff net without turnings and two further layers of 1cm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in) Terylene wadding without turnings. Lay one calico, the canvas and wadding together and catch through just sufficiently to hold the layers together. Put the remaining calico onto the calico side and machine round leaving a large gap on the inside

curve, and turn through. Poke out the corners and lay one or two more layers of wadding inside. Close the gap by folding the turnings in and whipping the edges together by hand, or by zig-zagging over them on a machine. Finally, stab stitch through all the layers until the pad is quite stiff and 1.5cm (1in) thick.

The biscuit can now be put on top of the Armada pad and the two should be attached together. If you need a very square edge, you will need to attach a 5cm (2in) diameter sausage pad under the edge of the biscuit.

The small pad: Machine round the curved edge leaving the top open. Fill the pad and machine across the traceline for the seam allowance and neaten. The pad is sewn directly onto the waist band.

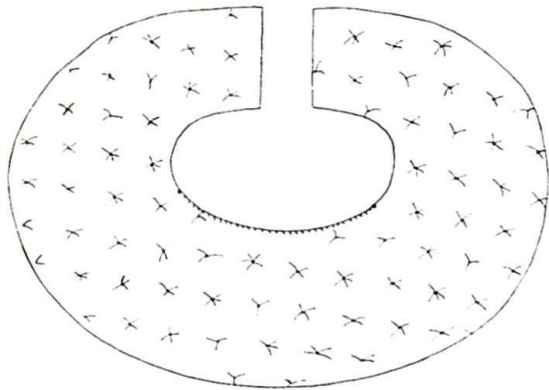
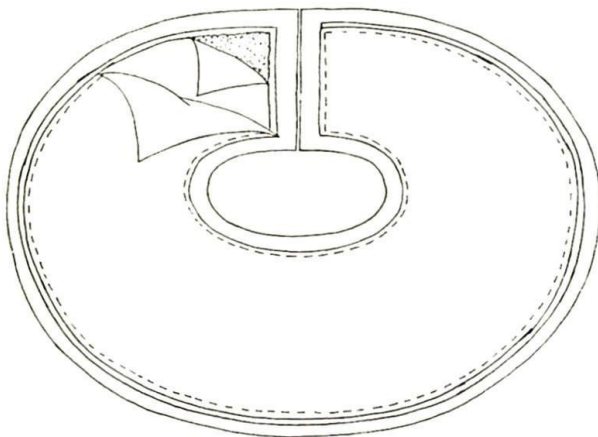
Grading the pad patterns

Measure the high hip and make the inside curve of the pad the length that is required, plus 5cm (2in).

Re-measure the width of the pad all round and make wider or narrower according to size of hip. Attach the pad into the petticoat with cross stitches.

Watch point

Never leave pads on tapes to be put on by the dresser or artiste as they nearly always pull them too tight, making the pad ride too high in the waist. My apologies to all good dressers!



Left: biscuit pad. Right: biscuit pad stitched.

9. LINEN

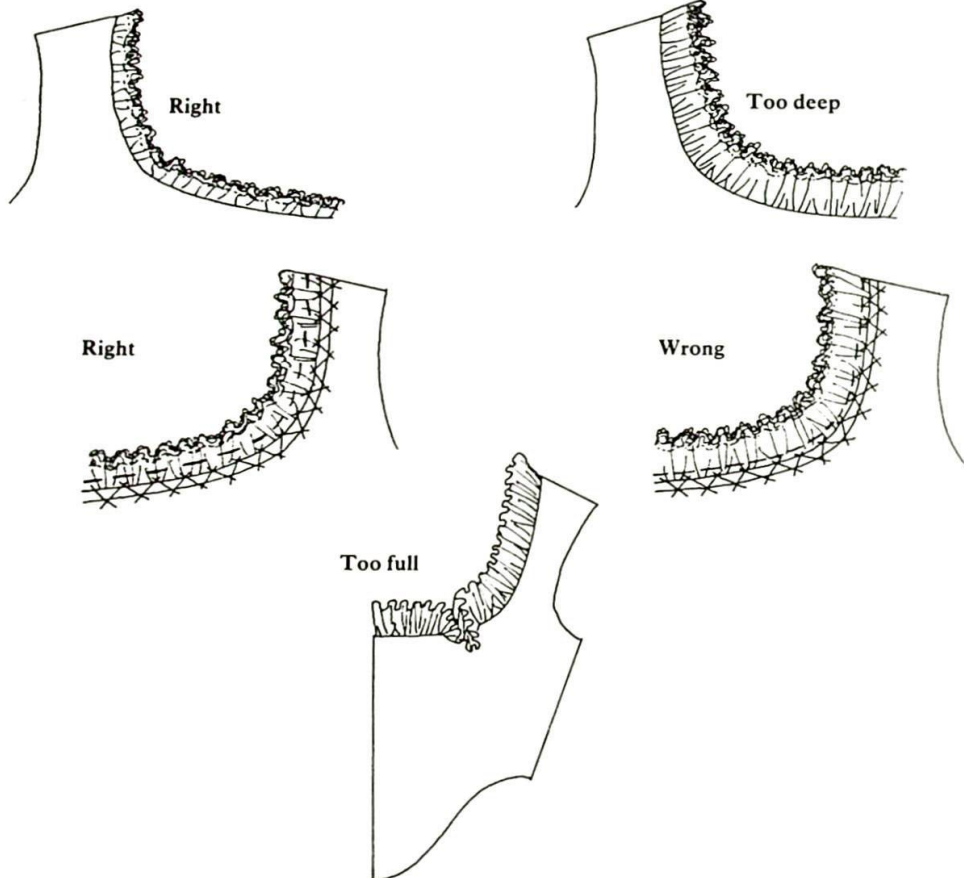
IN the theatre, shifts or chemises are very rarely worn under costume, unless there is specific business which involves dressing or undressing, and as this is quite a lengthy process it rarely happens. In television and film, on the other hand, it is easier for the camera to cut away from the action, thus shortening a process that can become tedious. Nevertheless if underwear is to be seen, or simulated in necks and cuffs, it should at least have a semblance of reality.

It is usual when linen is seen in the neck or cuffs of a costume, to put a frill or fill-in into the neck and false frills or chemise sleeves into the end of the sleeves. The common mistake is to make the neck frill too full and deep which closes up the neck line. If they are made in lace, remember that this has always been an expensive item. Any addition must always look like the garment it is trying to simulate, and must not be stitched onto the very edge of sleeves or neck. For example if the bodice has a neck

frill which in reality would have a draw string, put the edging, lace, etc. onto a piece of lawn approximately 2.5cm (1in) wide and gather it where the lace and lawn meet, putting a ribbon bow on the CF to look like a tie, or put a soft bias binding over the join on the wrong side and put in a draw string. Set the whole piece into the neck edge so that the lace only will show. The same thing applies to false sleeve ends.

The fill-in or chemisette is usually simulating an undergarment which fills in the neck of the dress. There are two ways to do this:

1. Make a yoke and mount the neck of the shift or chemise onto this making it approximately 2.5cm (1in) larger than the dress neckline. Finish the edge with soft bias binding and herringbone the fill-in into the dress. These are not easy to fit, and need to be removed from the dress each time they are to be washed.



Chemisette

A Front

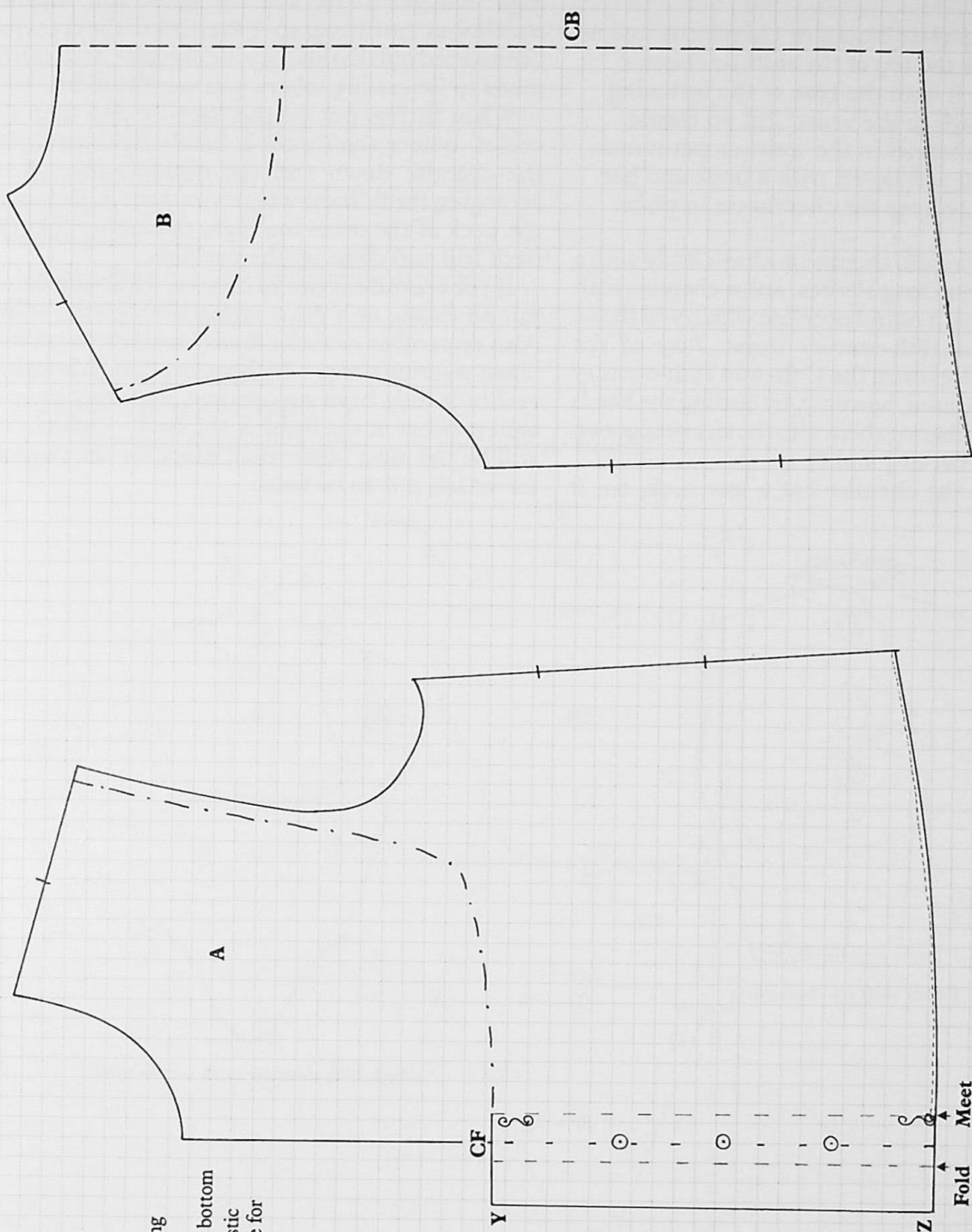
X-Y Front wrap fastening

B Back (cut 1 to fold)

Add enough turnings on bottom

to hold 1cm ($\frac{1}{2}$ in) elastic

- - - - - suggested line for
false shift or chemise



SCALE: 5 squares = 5cm (2in)

OR

2. Make a sleeveless blouse or chemisette and as above make the top of the shift or chemise and mount it onto the base of the fastening going through to the waist. Put an elastic through a channel in the waist or put it onto a waistband and fasten with a hook and bar. This helps to keep the chemisette in place.

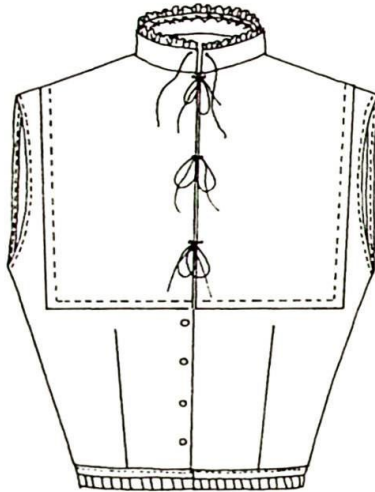
My pattern for a shift/chemise is a basic body with a shift neckline and long sleeves, and a chemise with short sleeves and a round neckline which will fit the neckline of an 18th-century dress. Any of the chemise type sleeves on the 17th- and 18th-century patterns can be used, however, by cutting the heads straight and gathering them into the sleeve space on the pattern between J and K.

Even when the chemise has a low neck, cut it

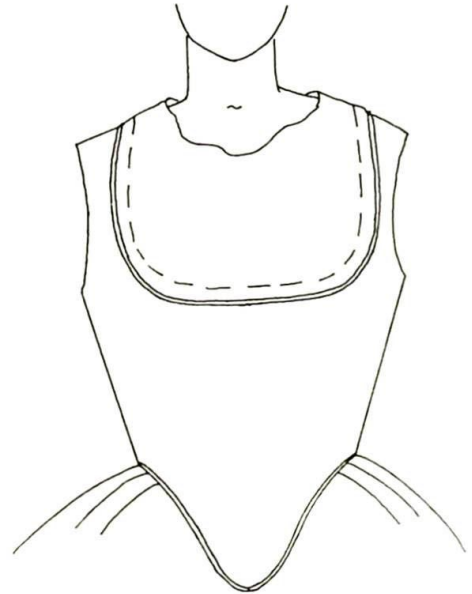
high enough to be able to mark the finished neckline at the fitting, after the neck of the dress has been sorted out. In this way the chemise neck can be made to lie exactly where you want it to be.

When fitting, put on the chemise and then the corset. Before the corset is finally tightened, pull the chemise down and the neckline into place, arranging the fullness where you want it. Do not fit the neck of the dress too high, remember that the neck frill will close up the neckline.

If the chemise is not to be seen without a corset put an elastic or a draw string through the waist. Also remember to make it easy enough to get into when wearing a wig, which means that although in reality it may have no opening, you may have to split it either at the front or the back — whichever will be the most convenient place for the purpose for which it is to be used.



Tudor shift on chemisette.



Mark 18th-century neck on chemise.

Shift/chemise

A Body of the shift/chemise (cut 1 to fold)

B1 Elbow length sleeve (cut 2)

B2 Long sleeve (cut 2)

C1 Square gusset (cut 2)

C2 Diamond gusset (cut 2) — insert into wheel piece to 0

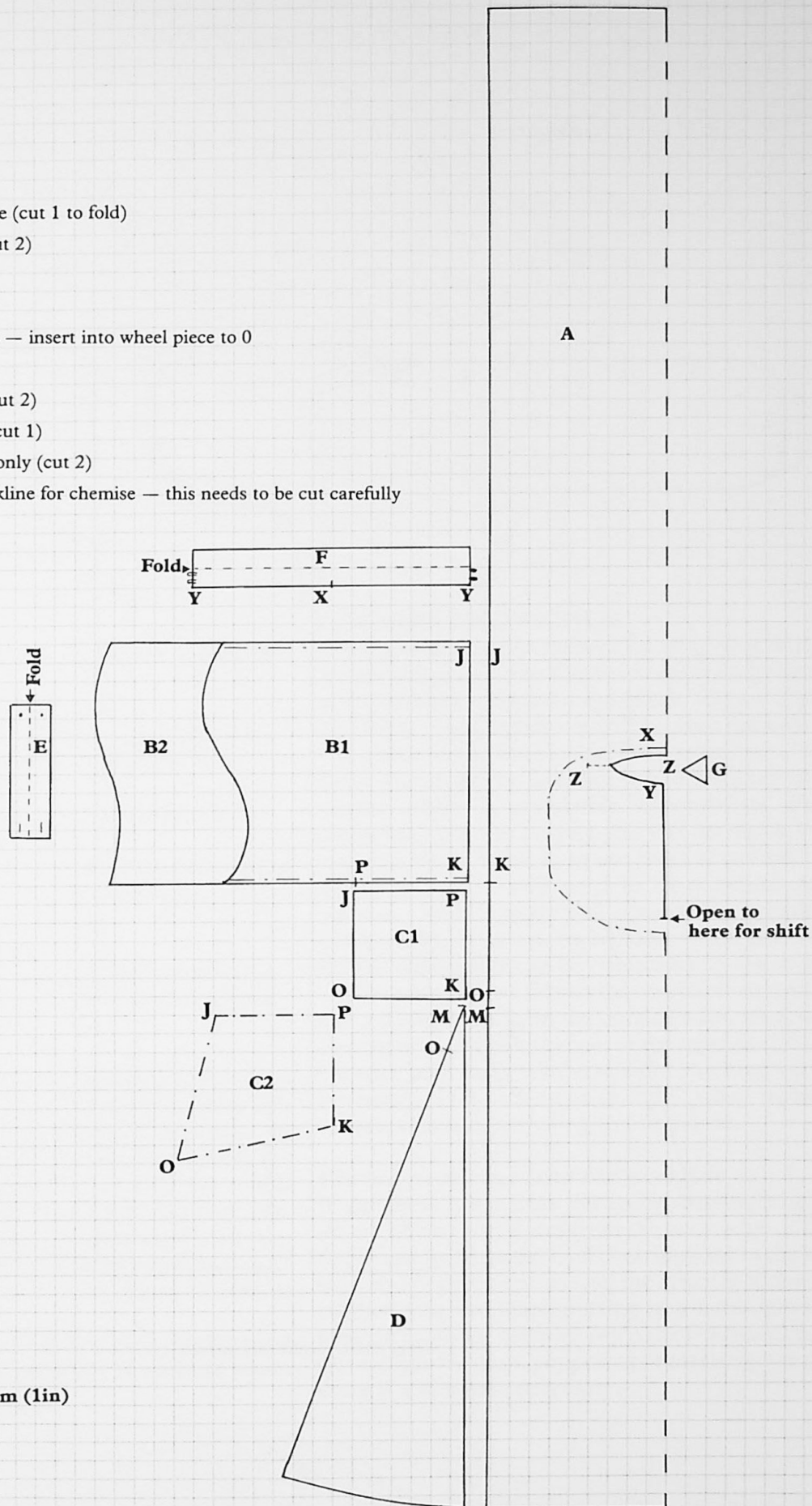
D Wheel piece (cut 4)

E Cuffs — for shift only (cut 2)

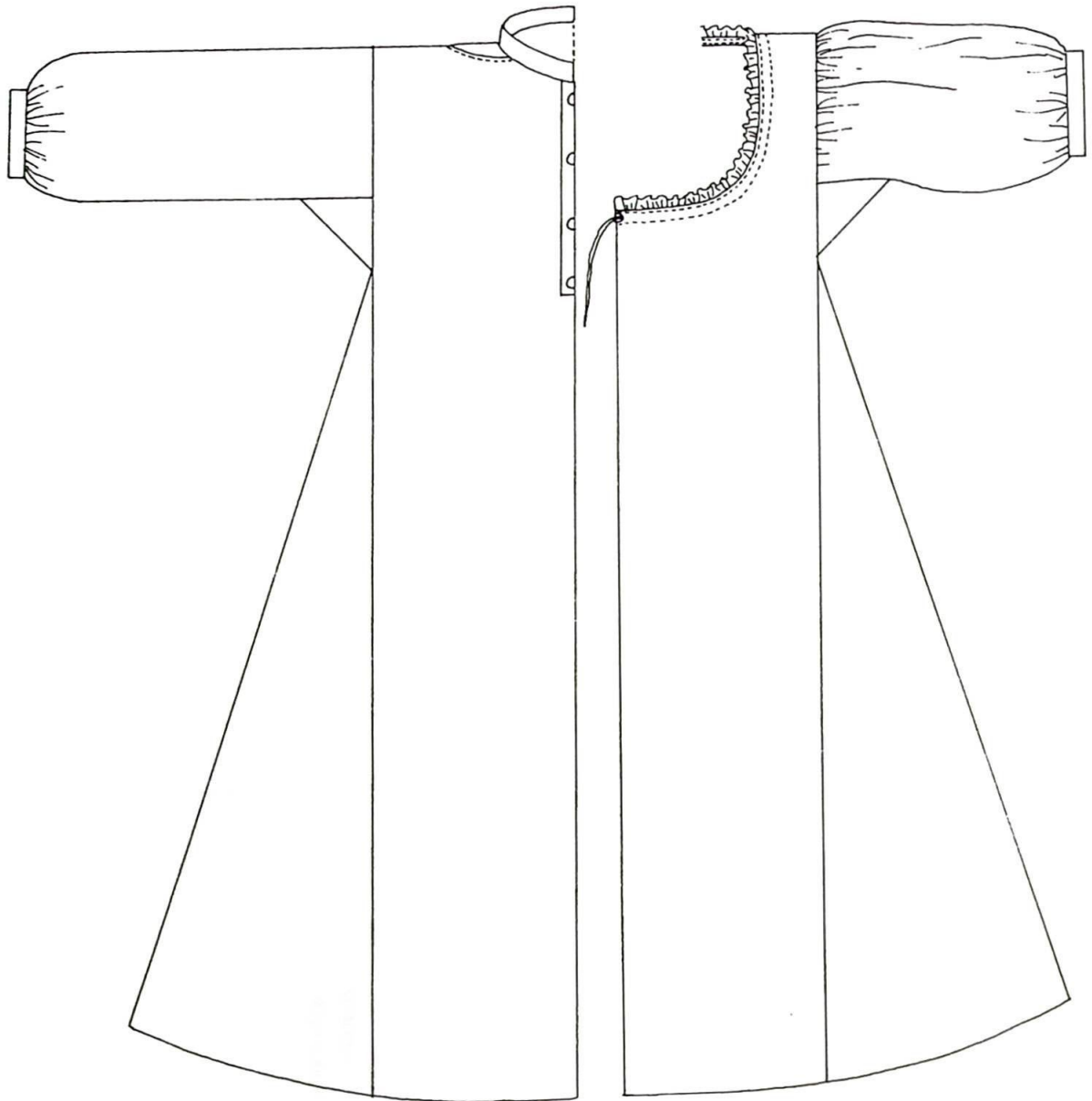
F Collar — for shift only (cut 1)

G Neck gusset — for shift only (cut 2)

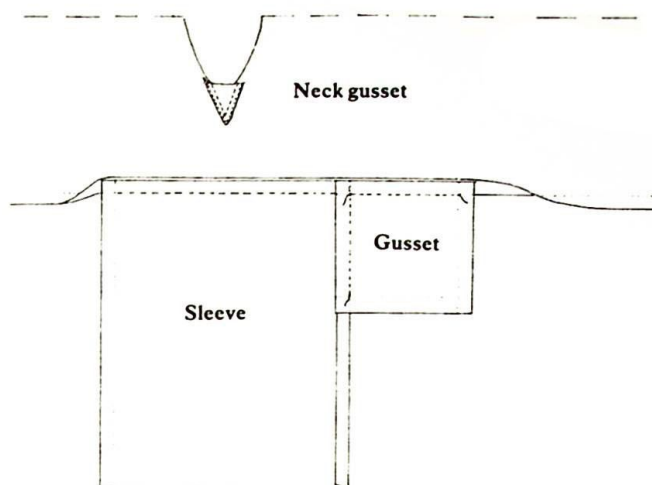
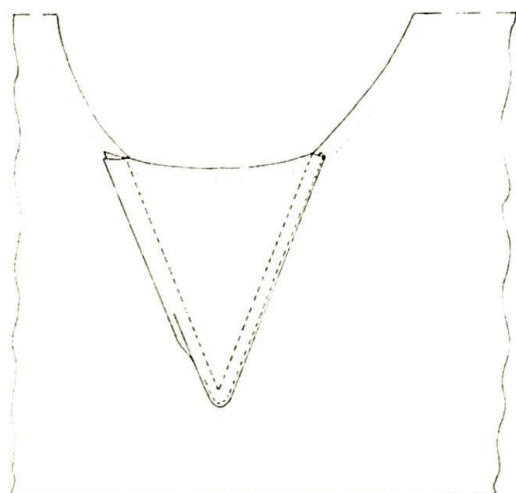
— · — · — · Alternative neckline for chemise — this needs to be cut carefully



SCALE: 1 square = 2.5cm (1in)



Left: shift. Right: chemise.



Left: neck and right: sleeve gussets.

Making up

1. If the fill-in is to go up to the neck, put in the shoulder gussets.
2. Put the sleeve onto the body.
3. Put the godet or wheel pieces onto the sides — if you have not cut the shape into the body.
4. Put the underarm gussets into either the front or the back.
5. Join the side seams from the underarm gusset to the hem, and then from the gusset to the wrist.
6. Put a hem on the bottom.
7. Finish the neckline either with the collar or, if the neck is cut out, finish the neck edge in the appropriate way

When putting in gussets only machine as far as the allowance and back stitch, then start the next side of the gusset beyond the allowance. If the seams are to be flat seams (run and fell) clip the seam at the join, and trim the allowance to half the width turning in the gusset allowance and machine flat.

The seams can either be machined and zig-zagged, or a run and fell seam can be used but try, if it is a delicate garment, to make them as neat as possible.

There are shifts and chemises on display in most museums of note, and patterns in various books and publications.

COLLARS AND FICHUS

It is important to remember that all sewing during the periods covered by this book was done by hand, and that however good a machinist you are if you are doing reproductions it will be very difficult to reproduce the delicate look of hand sewn linen. The linen was also very fine, but it had a slightly stiff quality which is impossible to reproduce. Fine Swiss batiste is the nearest you will get today, but very few shops stock it, so use lawn or cambric. If cotton is used it will need to be starched. Silk organza looks good but cannot be washed successfully. It is apt to balloon when used for fichus, although it can be controlled by steaming.

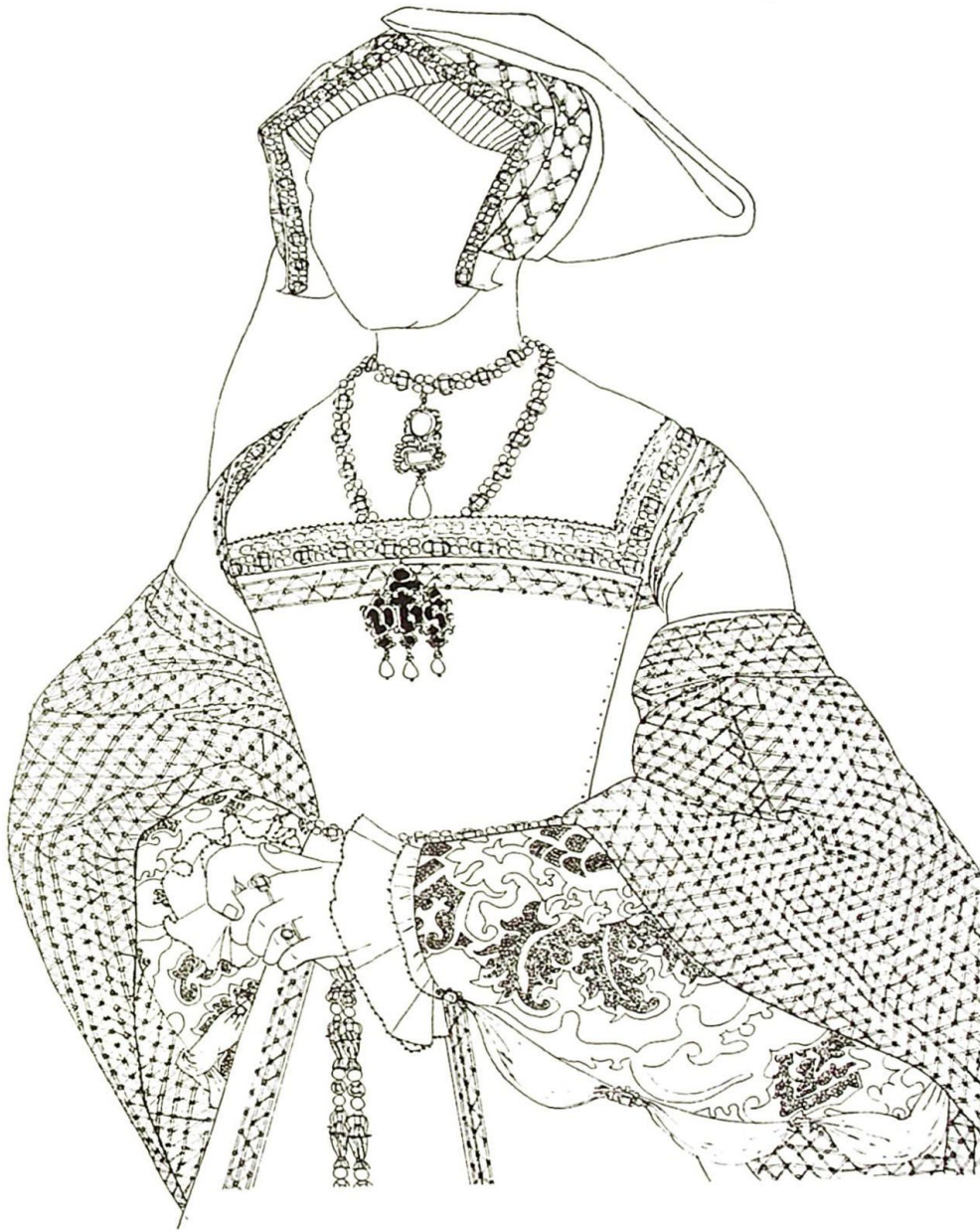
When edging fine fabrics that are liable to stretch run a straight stitch on the outside edge, trim, and zig-zag or turn a baby hem over the machine line. If the edge pulls in, break the straight stitching where necessary. This technique is useful when making collars, fichus or anything in fine fabric.

Fitting neckwear into the neckline

If the dress has a front fastening, herringbone in about 2.5cm (1in) down from the neck edge. If the dress fastens down the back, herringbone in the left side, and popper or press stud the other. Whichever method you use when putting in a fichu leave it loose from about halfway down the front neck and tie or drape the ends, poppering or catching it to the dress if and where necessary.

PART TWO:

Period Patterns — 16th century



10. EARLY TUDOR CORSETS AND SPANISH FARTHINGALE

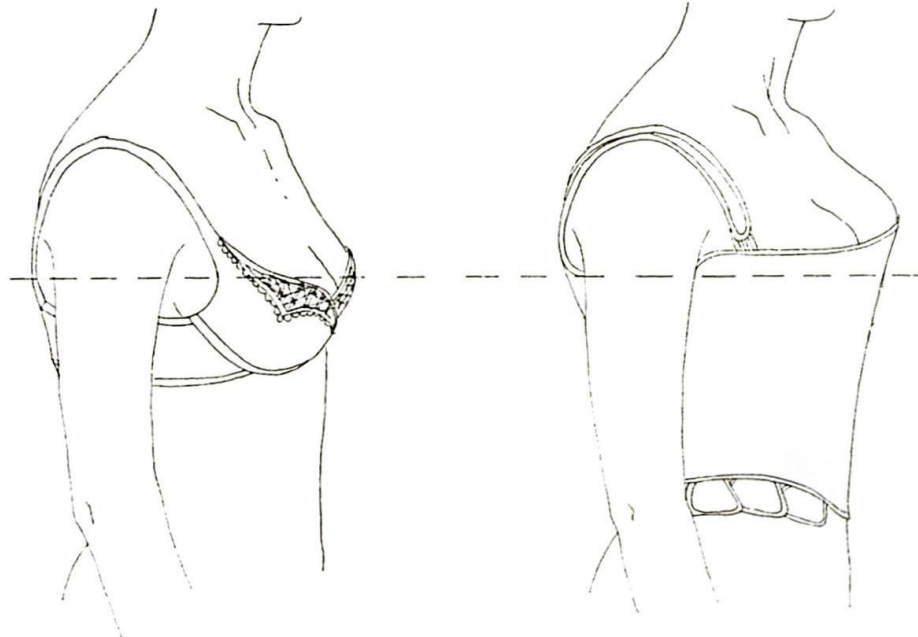
WHEN looking at a costume it is the silhouette of the dress which suggests in which period the drama is set since each period has a typical shape which dissolves into the next. The silhouette is achieved by foundation garments, such as a corset, or boned bodice, a pad and petticoat, or a skirt-support. The last is usually made of calico with steels or cane inserted into casings.

CORSETS

Corsets used in the theatre do not need to be accurate museum copies, but it is important to get the correct shape for the period. Bodices always look better when worn over a corset because less

bones then need to be used in the bodice — the fabric lies in a more natural way than when it isn't stretched over a boned foundation. A corset will also keep the costume off the body, so keeping it cleaner. If well made in the right materials, a corset will wash well and can be used again in future productions perhaps making hired costumes look a great deal better.

There are two main types of corset spanning the 450 years from 1500 to 1950, and two methods of construction used to make corsets for the theatre today. The shape of the first, from 1500-1800, is an inverted cone which compresses the breasts with little or no shape under the bust, but pushes them up into a much higher position.



The second, from 1800 to 1914, is constructed in many panels constricting the diaphragm and waist. The bust and hips are smoothed and moulded into an hour-glass shape. The modern bra is constructed in the same ways as a late Victorian corset although the fabrics and cut have radically changed.

CORSET: 1500-1800

Materials

Calico or decorative fabric — possibly both if the decorative fabric is thin
Cotton drill
Rigilene (nylon) boning
Steel bones
Eyelets with washers
3.6m (4yd) corset lace

This corset is made with two layers. The white drill is next to the body and the nylon boning applied onto it. Cover the drill and boning with the calico and/or other fabric and then stitch through a second time. Should a very sturdy corset be required, a layer of canvas between the drill and the bones works very well although any stiff, affordable fabric will do.

Measurements

It is important to take these for yourself whenever possible.

Bust

Waist

N-W-B

N-BP (pushed up) -W

X-chest with pushed up bust — use the muscle just forward of the underarm to get the correct position.



Tudor corset

A Front (cut 1 to fold)

B Side front (cut 2)

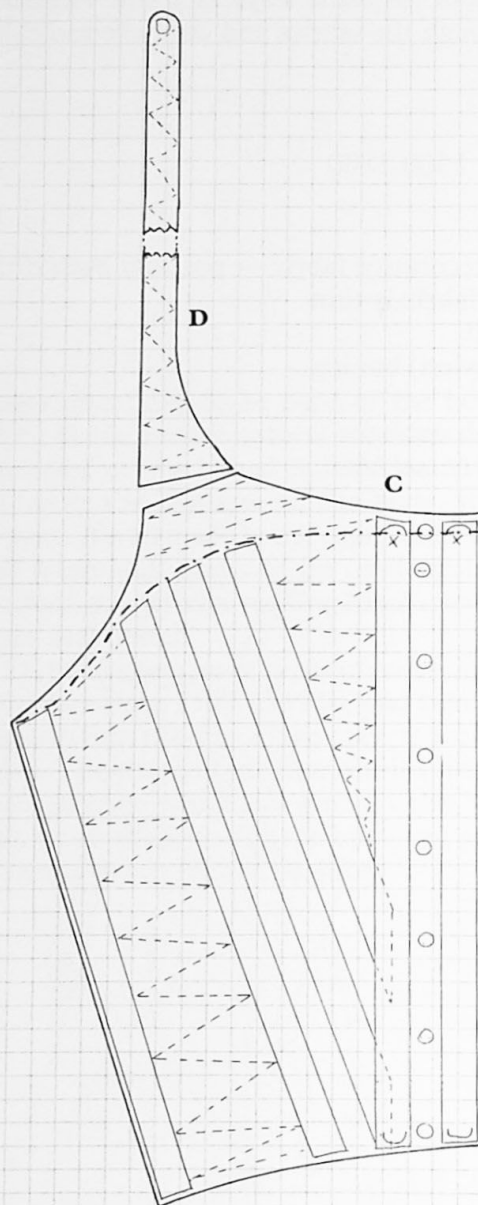
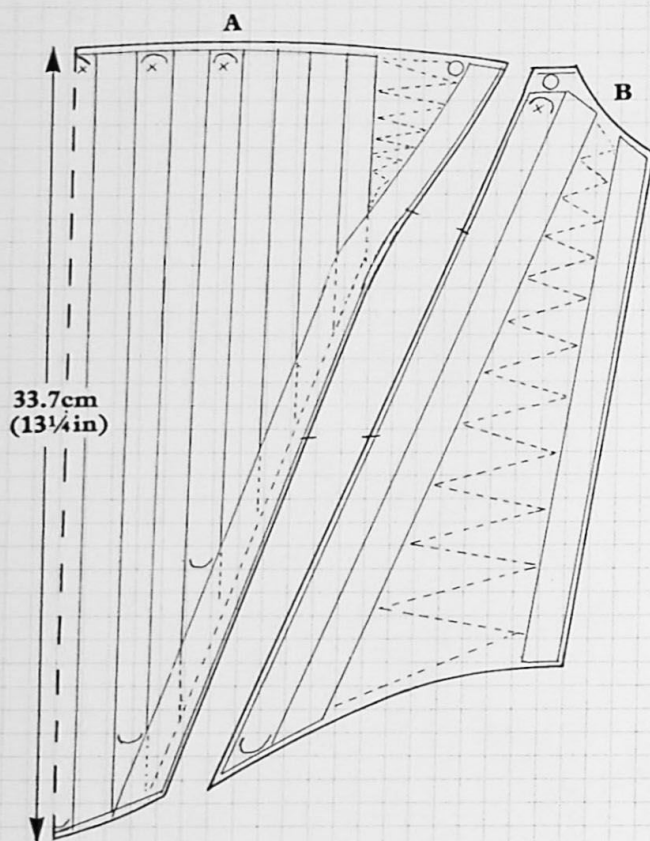
C Back (cut 2)

D Strap (cut 2 to required length)

All pieces to be cut from drill, canvas and top fabric

--- Alternative cut out line (no strap)

X Steel



SCALE: 5 squares = 5cm (2in)

From the same place at side of bust, measure down to the waist. This is the position the strap will come to and gives you the depth of the corset at the side front.

From the same place measure over the shoulder to back waist.

NB Bust measurements over any flat-fronted corset are smaller and higher than those taken over a bra.

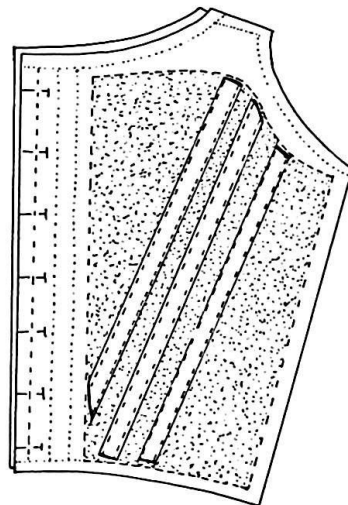
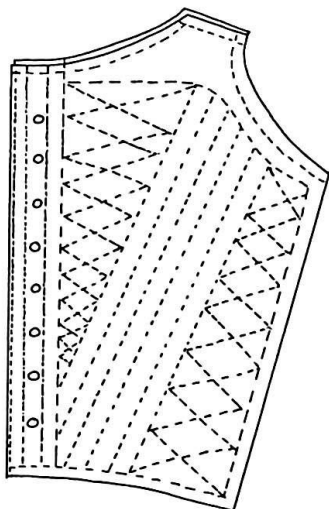
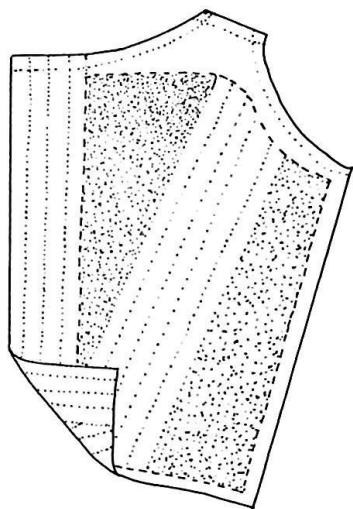
When cutting the corset take 2.5cm (1in) off each side of the CB seam to allow for lacing in.

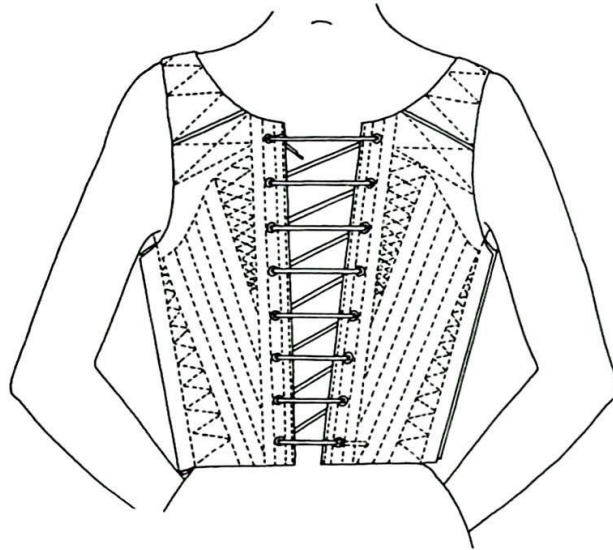
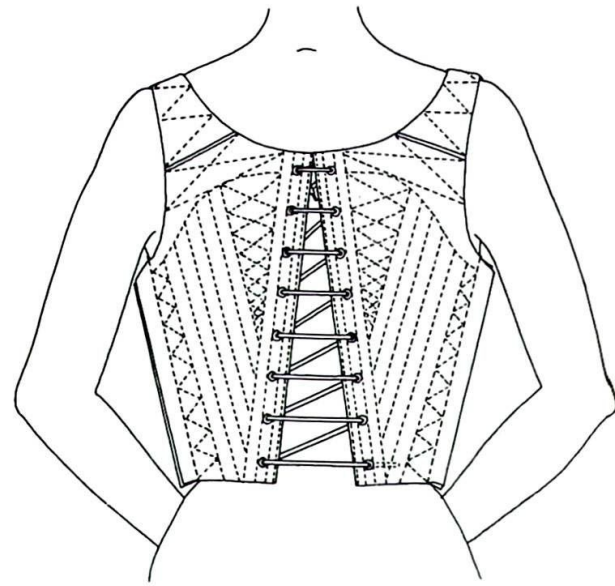
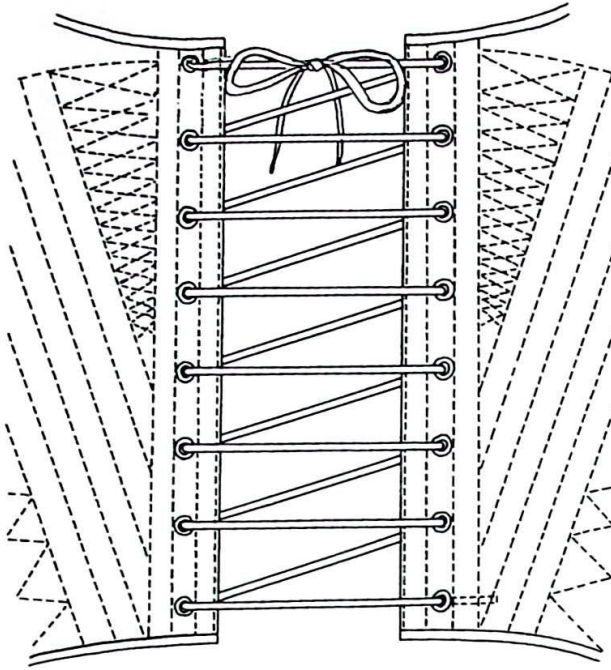
Making up

1. Cut drill, calico, decorative fabric and canvas (if using) to just within the pattern shape.
2. Trace the pattern shape onto both right and wrong sides of drill. Also trace the bone lines, but on the wrong side only.
3. If using canvas: trace the seam allowance onto the drill and machine canvas and drill together, and trace bone lines onto the canvas.
4. Cut bones and number them — the bones should be cut approximately 6mm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in)

shorter than the pattern. Candle the ends (see appendix 1).

5. Apply boning directly onto the drill over the canvas leaving a slight gap at the top and bottom of the bone to allow for binding. **NB** Omit bones on all seams except those down CB before fitting
6. Press all pieces with a *warm* iron until flat.
7. Take the backs and pin outside fabric to boned lining with *right sides facing* and machine together down CB.
8. Trim allowance to 5mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in), turn wrong sides together and press.
9. Pin both layers together and edge stitch 2mm ($\frac{1}{8}$ in) from edge.
10. Machine-in channels for both steels and eyelets and then machine through on all bone lines from the drill side.
11. Pin out the fronts and sides (wrong sides together), stitch through all bone lines so that steels can be pushed in where necessary.
12. Hatch all spaces marked on pattern.
13. Flat machine round sides and bottom.
14. Hand tack the tops of the pieces.





15. Pin pieces together being careful to match balance marks. Leave the seam allowance on the side seam between pieces B and C on *right side* — this helps when fitting.
16. Machine tack a strip of fabric to shoulder seam to act as strap — the finished strap will, in fact, be shorter but this allows for adjustment.
17. Put in the eyelets, omitting top and bottom. You are now ready to fit.

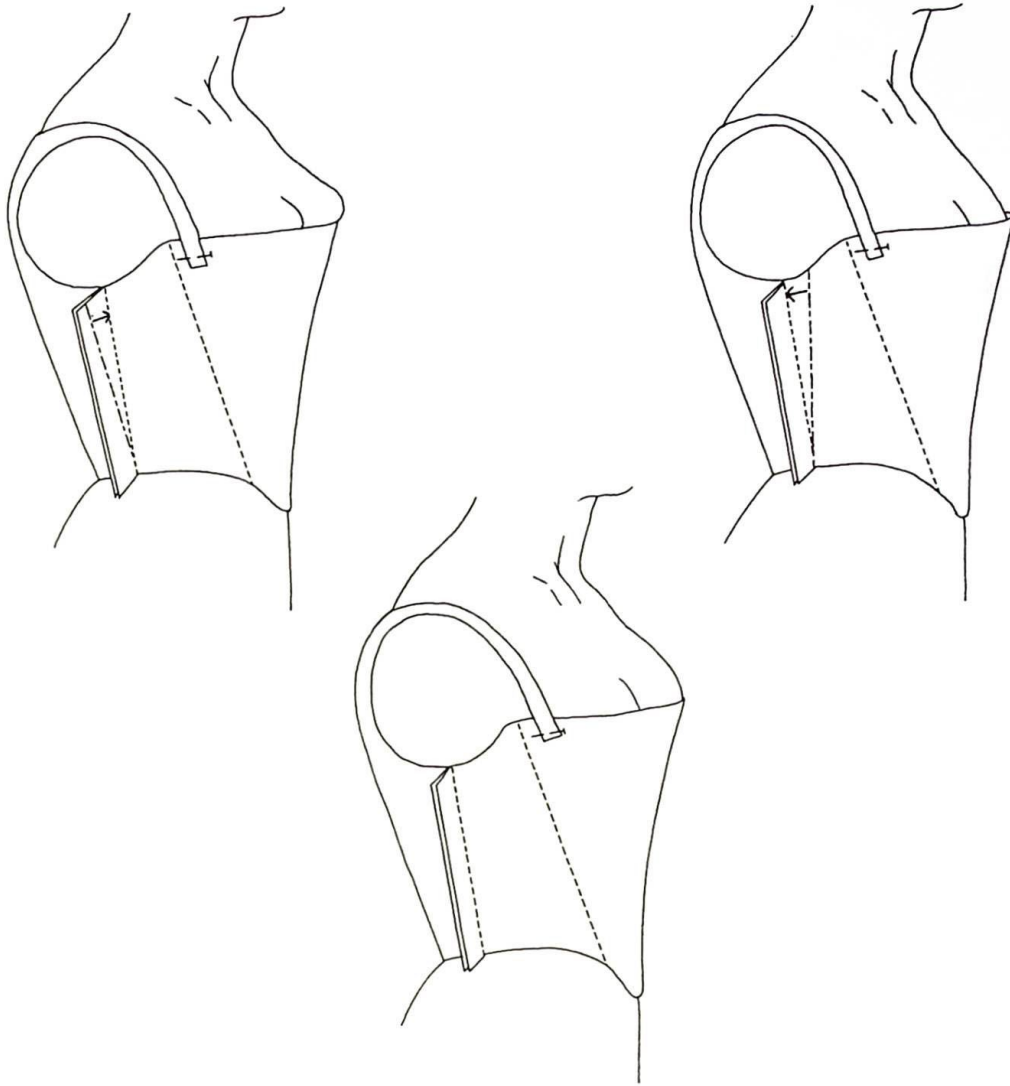
Fitting

1. Lace the corset from the waist, leaving a 5cm (2in) gap down the back to allow for pulling in.
2. If the top of the gap is narrower than the bottom, you will need to take it in at the top

on the side seam, usually just off the back piece.

3. If the bottom of the gap is narrower than the top, take it in equally on both sides at the bottom of the side seams.
4. If the top of the front is either too loose or too tight, adjust the side front until it is comfortable; supports the bust without having to put pads in and looks right.
5. Adjust the straps — they need to be quite tight.

A corset is easier to fit if the top layer is not applied until after the fitting (except for the backs). This is not always advisable, however, as some designers and artistes need to be able to see what the finished garment is going to look like.



After fitting

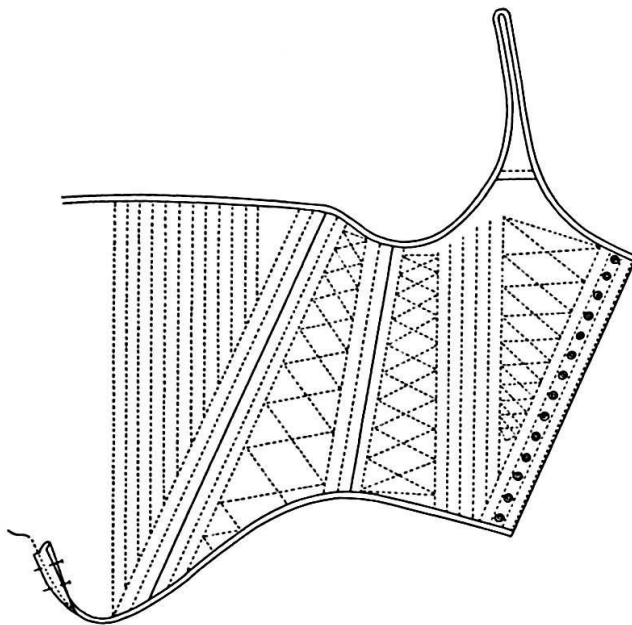
1. Work through the alterations, re-marking all seams and balance marks where necessary.
2. Run and fell all seams from wrong side to finish. Trim the inside layers to 6mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in) and machine through to the right side.
3. Make straps — cut double, hatch and attach to body. (Make sure they are the right way round.)
4. Stuff steels into rigilene channels, as marked on pattern or where indicated at the fitting.
5. Trim top and bottom down to fitting line and bind both with a strong bias binding. The top is bound from the CB, round the straps, across the front and continued to other side.
6. If straps are not used, trim down to alternative line and bind.

7. Put in top and bottom eyelets, also on straps if required. Straps can have a piece of 1.5cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in) wide elastic in the 2.5cm (1in) gap to give a good pull and to aid movement.

Tassets

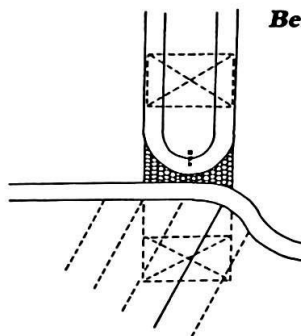
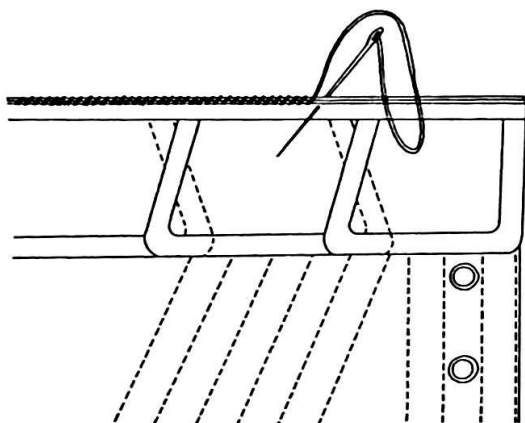
Tassets on the bottom of corsets are not just a pretty feature: their purpose is to stop the waistbands from slipping under the corset and cutting into the waist. The petticoat works well if it goes under the front point of the corset and over the tassets at the back.

1. Cut two layers of fabric as for the straps. Either cut and make each one separately or make a large piece of stiffened fabric and cut them out of this to shape on pattern.
2. Bind each one around the curved edge.

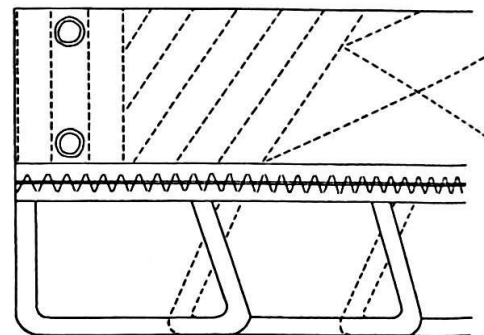


3. Butting one tightly up to the next, machine into a string and then bind over the edge.
4. There are two ways to attach them to the corset. First line them up to the CB and then:
 - a. put right sides together and whip together by hand or;
 - b. butt the top of the tassets to the bottom edge of the corset, and zig-zag them together with a wide bite and medium
5. stitch on a machine.
5. When lacing corsets of this type, only one lace should be used. Stitch a short piece of lace behind the left-hand top hole. Attach the main lace to the bottom right-hand side — it must be long enough to lace through every hole from bottom to top. Use it as if sewing the corset edges together, tying off to the lace at the top.

Insert elastic into strap to help movement.



Below: attaching tassets. Left: whip together or right: zig-zag together.



Watch points

Shoulder straps should always be kept as narrow as possible — 1.25-1.5cm (½-¾in) at most. They are otherwise apt to show at the neck edge of the dress.

The top of the front when finished should be 1.25cm (½in) above nipple level, but still on the soft part of the breast to avoid a ridge. If the artiste has protruding shoulder blades, it is advisable to keep the back quite high and keep the top of the corset soft.

Never take bones as far as the trace line but stop approximately 5mm (3/16in) from both top and bottom to allow room for binding.

When machining the bones onto the drill, do not go backwards and forwards, go straight off onto the seam allowance. This makes unpicking and alteration easier. Always try to work in one direction when machining both layers together — top to bottom.

THE SPANISH FARTHINGALE

The Spanish farthingale supports the cone-shaped skirt which is familiar in portraits of the Tudor period. This farthingale was popular in Spain from the end of the 15th century to well into the 17th and was popular in England in the early 16th century although the cone-shaped skirt was in decline by the 1570s. A medium (phoenix) pad and quilted petticoat with a frill should be used between the eras of the Spanish and French farthingales. The pads grew in size until by the end of the 16th century a wheel or French farthingale was worn. The alternative is to wear an arrangement of pads.

Having a cage-type foundation for any period helps the artiste feel less cluttered around the feet; enabling her to negotiate stairs or ramps more easily than with copiously frilled petticoats.

The same method of construction and type of fabric is used for most skirt supports — only the crinoline is the exception.

Materials

Crinoline steel 9mm (¾in) wide
Heavy weight calico or mattress ticking
Good quality twill tape 1.5cm (¾in) wide
(NB Twill tape available today is usually too wide for the width of the steel.)
2.5cm (1in) skirt petersham
2.5cm (1in) buckle
1.25cm (½in) India tape

Measurements

Waist

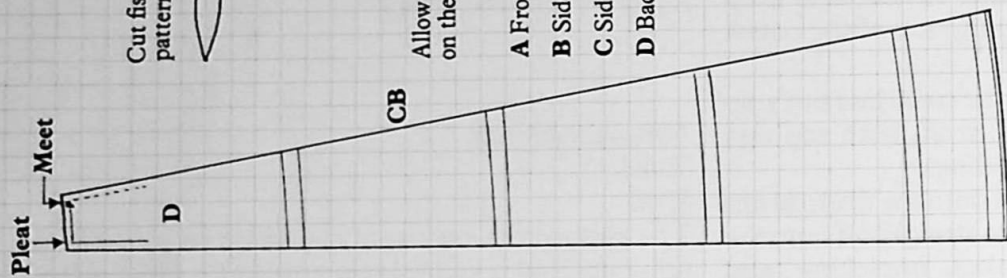
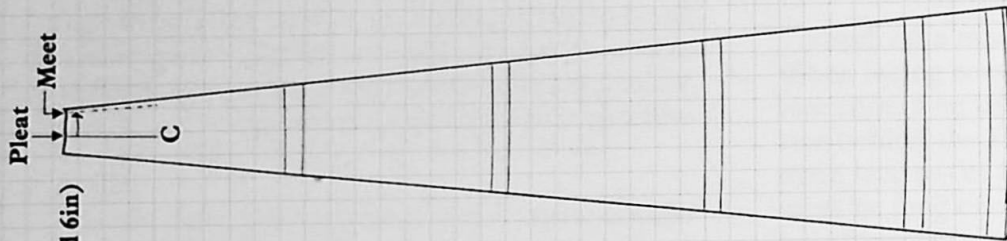
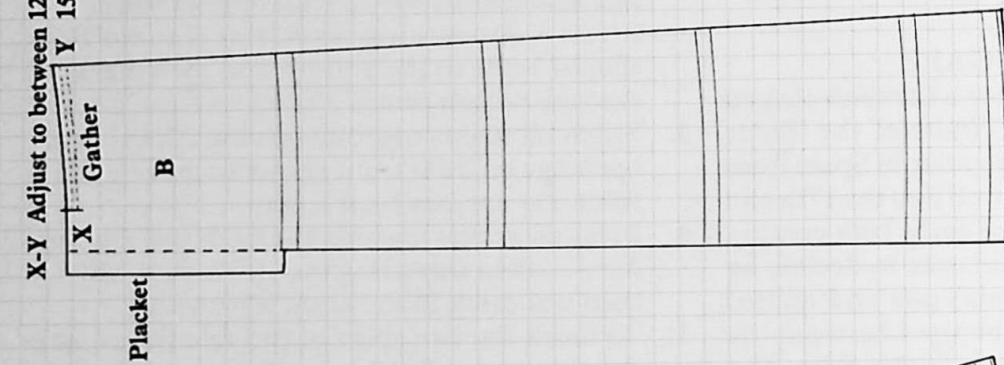
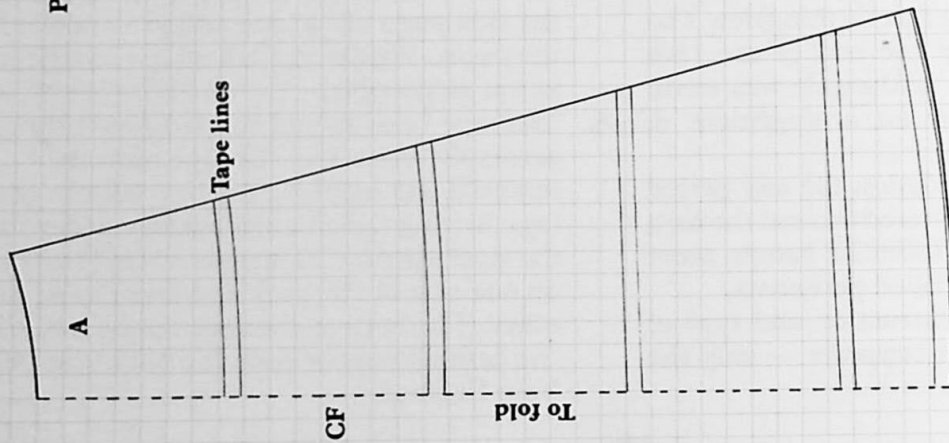
W-G

The pattern fits a waist of approximately 60-65cm (24-26in) and is suitable for a 102-112cm (40-44in) W-G. It must be 15cm (6in) off the ground but not more than 25cm (10in). It is important to note that the shorter the person the shorter and narrower the skirt becomes, and likewise the taller the person the wider it must be. Do not get it out of proportion or it will begin to look like a crinoline.

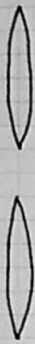
Making up

1. Cut the pattern pieces in calico with 2cm (¾in) turnings.
2. Trace the pattern pieces (see appendix 1), and also the lines where the tape is to be stitched. An easy way to do this is to cut fish-shaped holes in the pattern and then mark through with a pencil.
3. Stitch all seams together leaving 20cm (8in) openings on both front seams to make a fall front. *Do not join back seam.*
4. Press all seams towards the back and zig-zag flat — when threading the steels they will then not catch in the seam allowance.
5. To finish the two splits at the side fronts, snip the side seam allowance and press towards the *fronts*. Finish off with a tape so that it is as flat as possible.
6. The tape lines should run continuously across the skirt. Lay the tape onto the material and machine top and bottom of each tape leaving the channel slightly wider than the steel. At the CB turn in 2.5cm (1in) of tape on one side of the back and leave loose on the other. The bottom channel can be made in the hem allowance once the back seam has been finished.

Spanish farthingale



Cut fish-shaped holes in pattern on tape lines



Allow an extra 4cm (1½in) on the hem

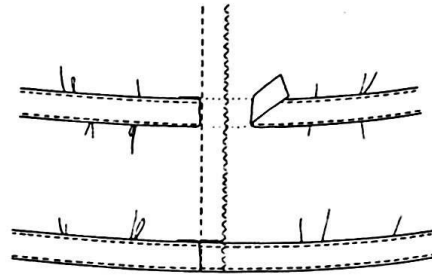
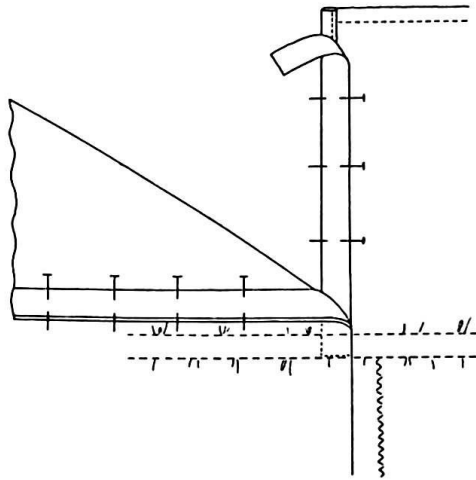
A Front (cut 1 to fold)

B Side (cut 2)

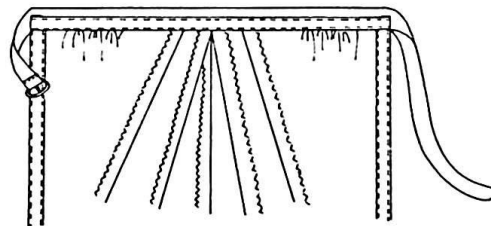
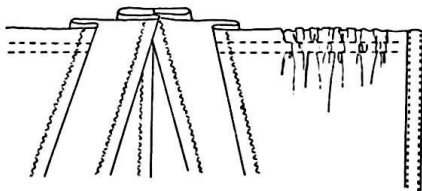
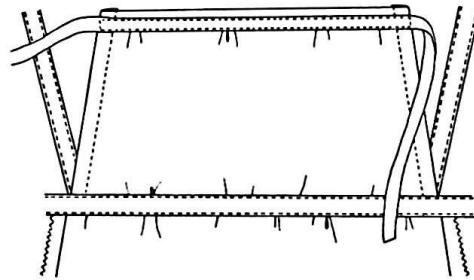
C Side back (cut 2)

D Back (cut 2)

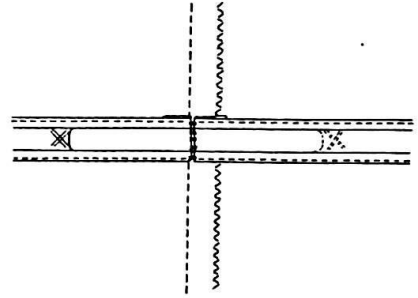
SCALE: 1 square = 2.5cm (1in)



7. Join the back seam and finish as other seams making the final channel in the hem.
8. To finish the top, mount the front panel onto a short petersham and cover with India tape leaving long ends to tie. Gather or pleat the CB and gather in the sides, as indicated on the pattern. Mount onto a petersham — previously adjusted to the correct waist measurement — leaving enough length to accommodate the buckle and an end to thread through. Cover raw edge with tape to finish.
9. Cut the steels, allowing 15cm (6in) overlap on each. Cover the ends with zinc oxide plaster and the leading end also with a layer of sellotape — this helps the steel to slip through the casings more easily. Start threading at the top pulling the calico flat until the steels overlap.



10. When all the steels have been threaded, finish off the tapes down the CB cross-stitching through tapes to the cotton cover on the steels to stop them from slipping in the casing.
11. In order to make the farthingale hang straight, a pad is placed in the back. If it tilts forward too much, lift the back, and if it wrinkles across the front put a dart across. Different hip sizes create different problems — lifting or dropping the back or adjusting the sides will soon show how to balance the skirt.



Mary Tudor, c.1544.



Princess Elizabeth, c.1546.

11. EARLY TUDOR DRESS

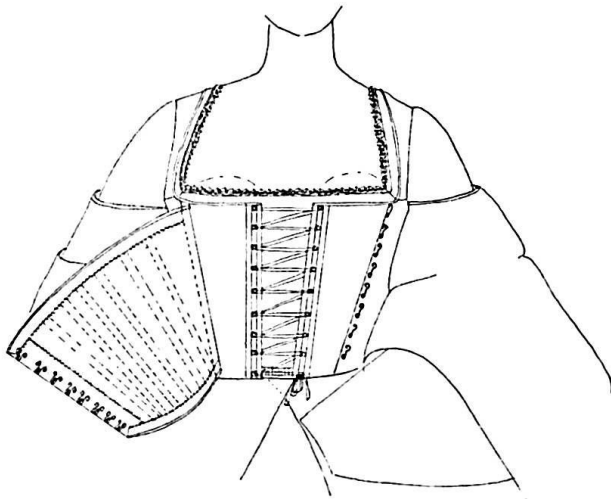
(See illustration, page 37)

THE pattern for this dress is based on the painting of Jane Seymour by Holbein, of which there are several versions. The bodice construction differs slightly from the basic bodice but the principle is the same. It can be fastened in two ways — at the back by hooks and loops or lacing, or at the front — as perhaps it would have been during the 16th century.

To fasten at the front, a bodice can either be laced over the top of a contrasting stomacher as in some of the dresses in the drawing of Sir Thomas More's family, also by Holbein. The stomacher piece can alternatively be applied over the top — as in Jane Seymour's portrait. A careful look at this one will reveal the gold headed pins which are probably pinning the stomacher onto the bodice.

Both back and front fastening methods work, but the advantage of the front fastening is that the artiste is able to get out of the costume herself.

Detail of a painting of Sir Thomas More's family by Holbein.



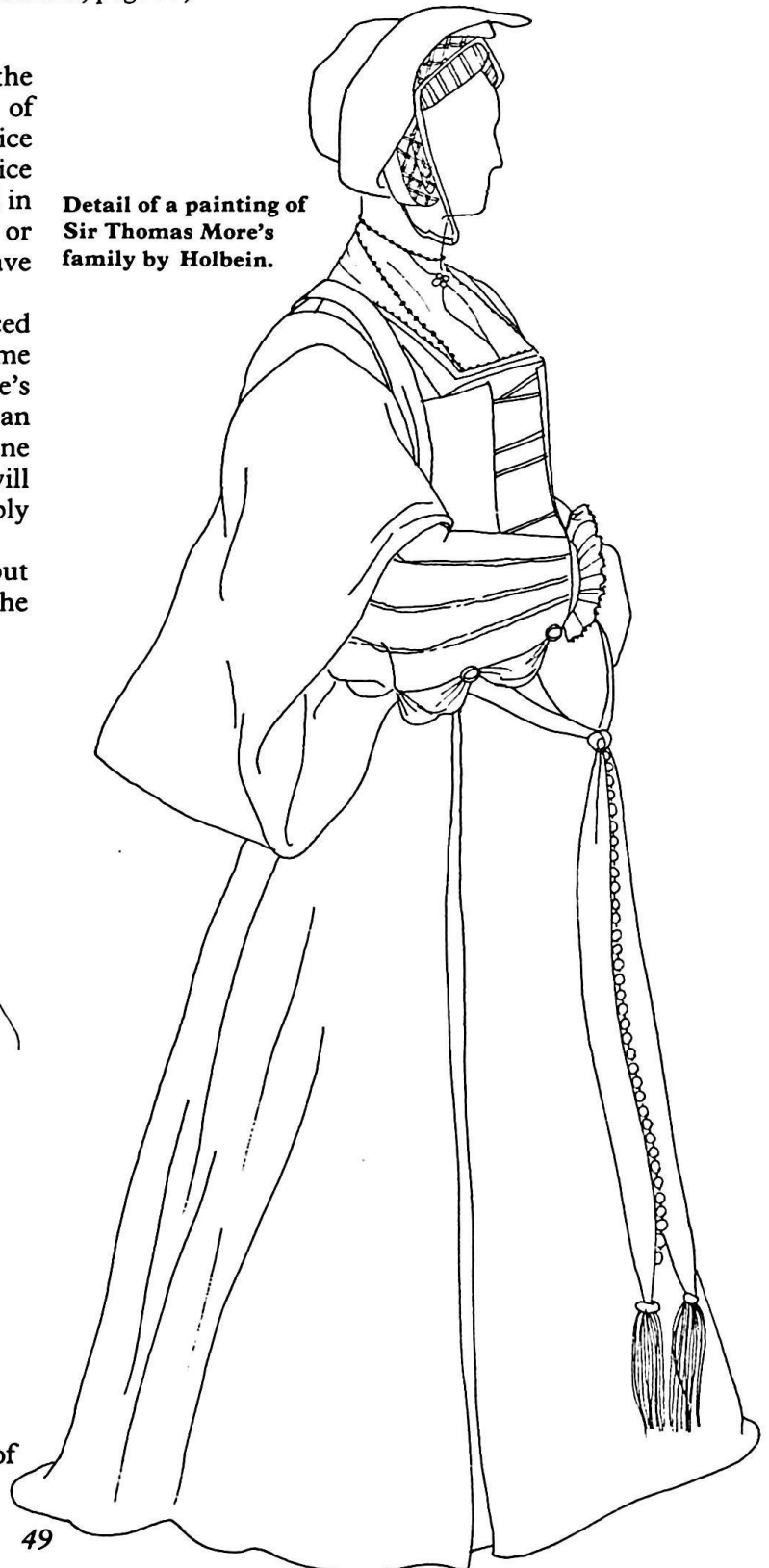
BODICE

Measurements

As basic measurements form.

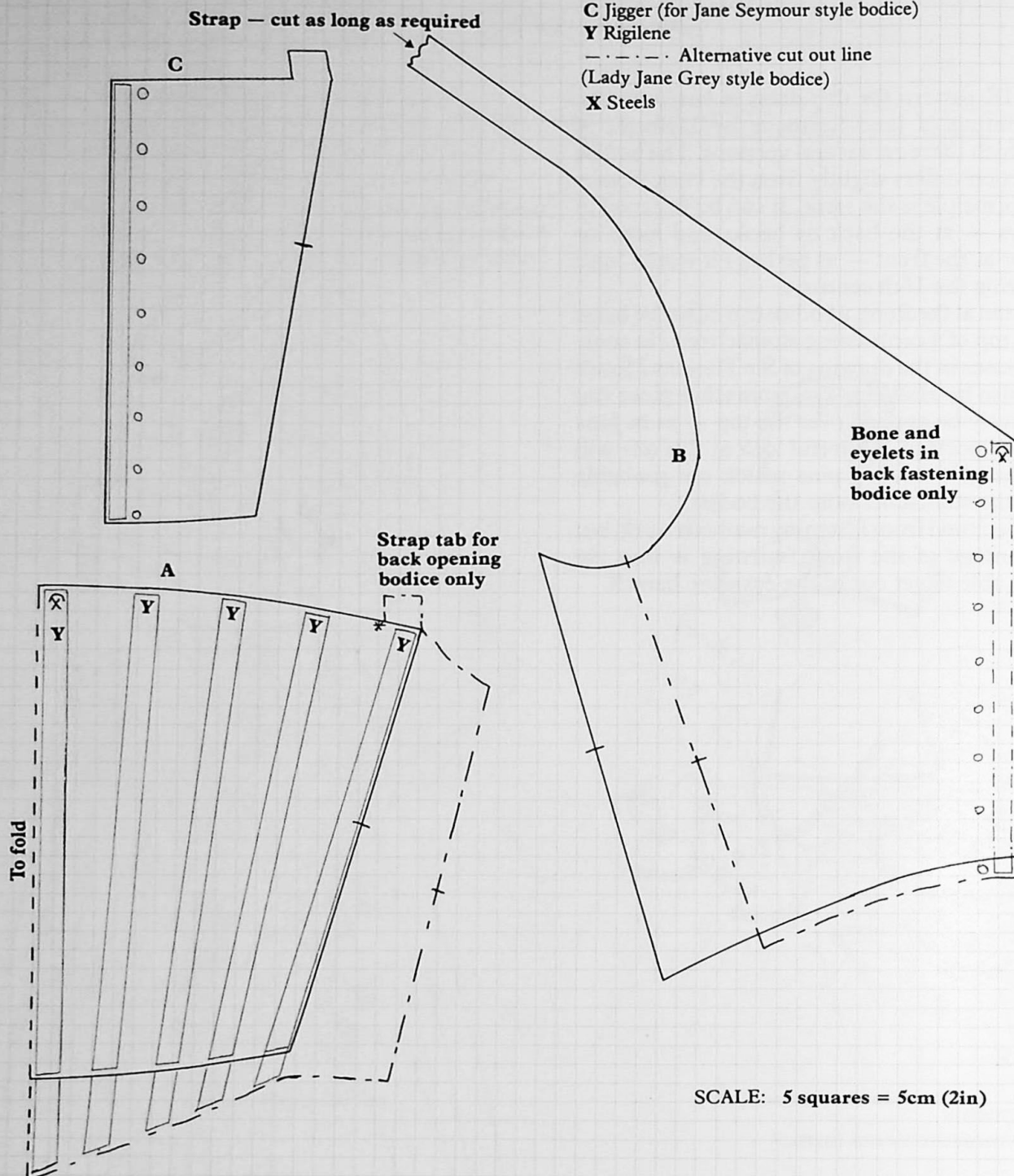
Making up

1. Cut front to fold, two backs (allowing extra length on the straps) and two jigger pieces.
2. The shoulder strap is built-in with the back bodice, and is therefore cut off the straight of the grain. To avoid stretching tack a stay



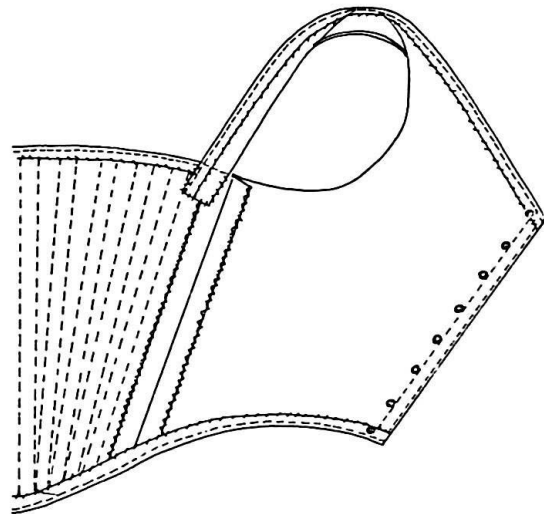
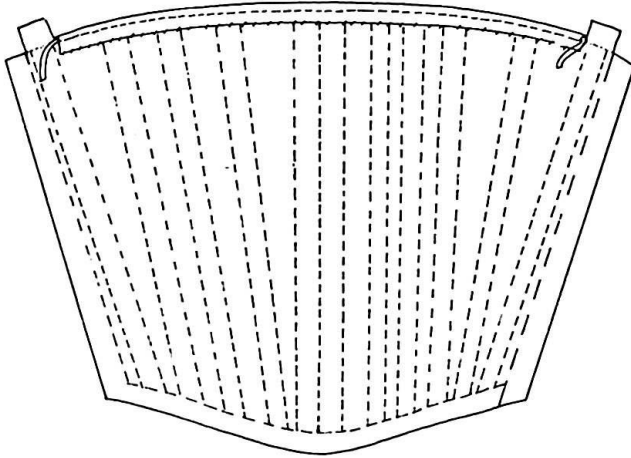
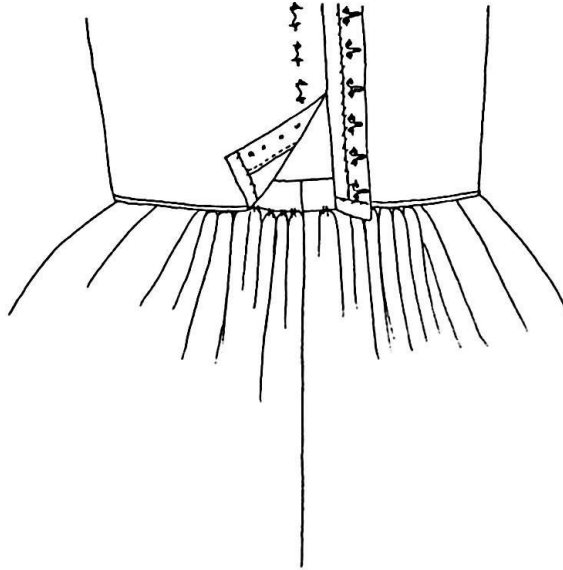
Tudor bodice

- A Front (cut 1 to fold)
- B Back (cut 2)
- C Jigger (for Jane Seymour style bodice)
- Y Rigilene
- - - - - Alternative cut out line
- (Lady Jane Grey style bodice)
- X Steels



Early Tudor Dress

Right: back placket. Below: inside of bodice.



tape to the back neck edge/strap and then pipe the edge. Although piping the neck edge is not correct for the period it allows the neck to be tightened by pulling up the cord.

3. To keep either the front panel or stomacher flat approximately 10 Rigilenes are needed — see pattern. Make as for corset. A layer of calico or thin domette will be needed between the bones and the top layer of fabric to avoid the pattern of the bones coming through to the right side.

BACK FASTENING BODICE

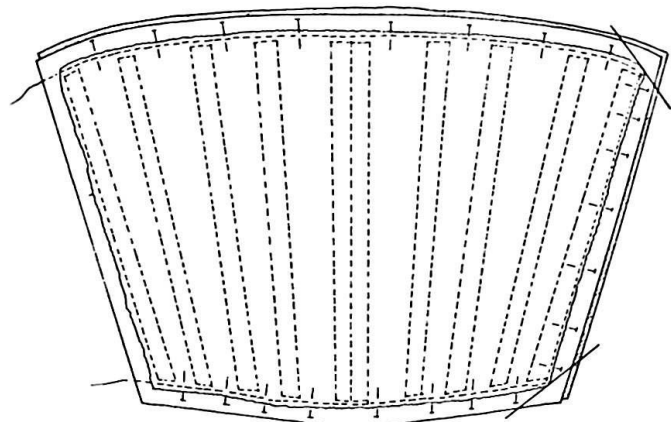
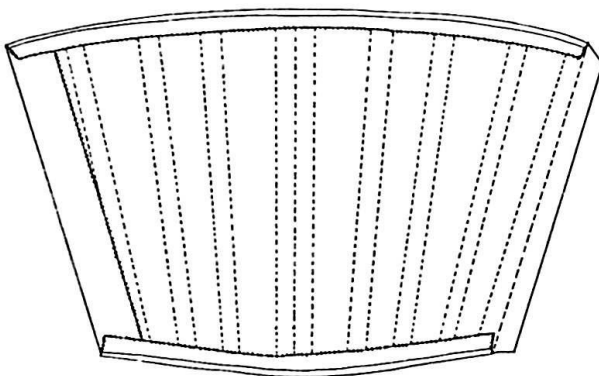
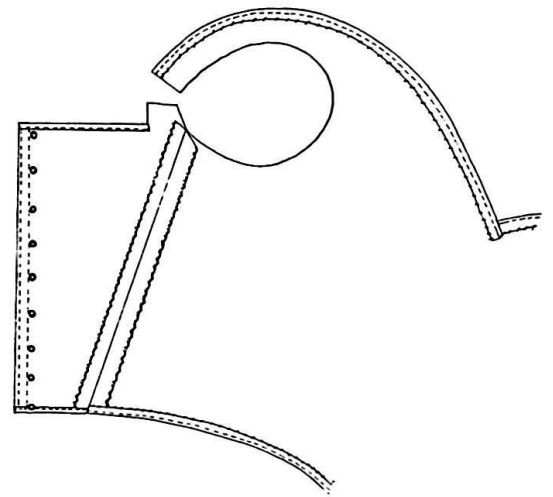
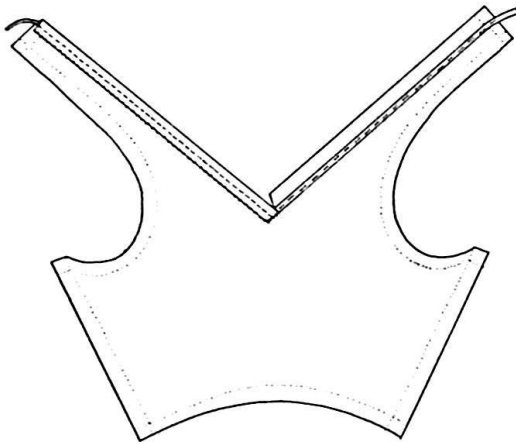
- 4a. Finish the back as for basic bodice. Fasten

with hooks and loops, or lacing.

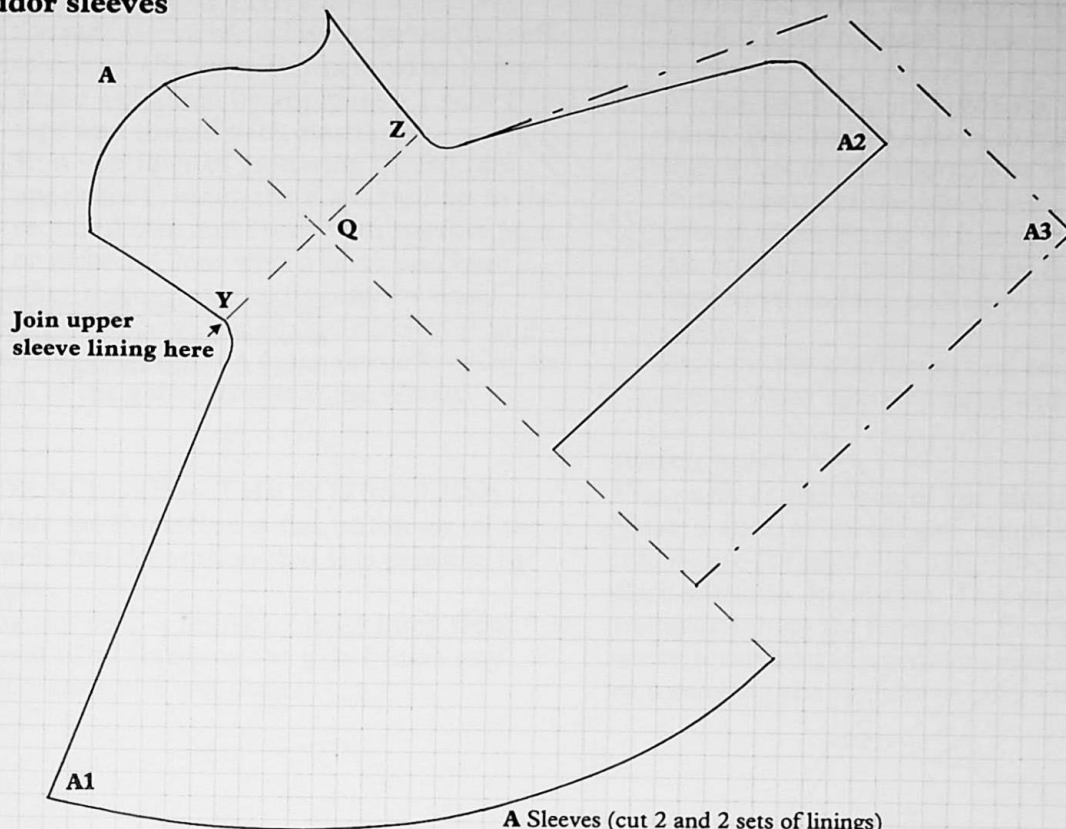
- 5a. Front bodice — mount fabric onto the boned lining and tack together. Pipe the front section from * to * and finish. Alternatively, pipe all the way across and attach the strap by hand.
- 6a. Put the front and the finished back pieces together. Machine and finish seams.
- 7a. Press the seams towards the front and stitch beads onto the stomacher side of the seam.
- 8a. Attach the shoulder straps to the allowance left at the extreme ends of the front neck edge and finish.
- 9a. Pipe or face the bottom and finish.

FRONT FASTENING BODICE

- 4b. After piping the straps/neck edge, join the CB seam, machining over the piping cord to stop it slipping out.
- 5b. Attach the jigger piece as in the pattern. This extends the back under the stomacher piece by about 7.5cm (3in) beyond the side front seam. Finish both of the fronts by putting in a bone and lacing holes. When this method is used attach strap to the jigger piece.
- 6b. Pipe or face the bottom of the bodice.
- 7b. Trim down any inside layers of domette, etc. of the stomacher as close as possible leaving only the outer layers to machine together.
- Face, pipe or bag out the stomacher front, across the top, left side and the bottom. Trim, turn and press. Tack to mark the trace line on the right-hand side.
- 8b. Attach the stomacher to the main part of the bodice by machining or pricking through by hand.
- NB** The width and placing of the stomacher depends on the design.
- 9b. After lacing, velcro the stomacher across onto the left side. Stitch small gold beads 2mm ($\frac{1}{8}$ in) from the edge on both sides to resemble the pins in the portrait.



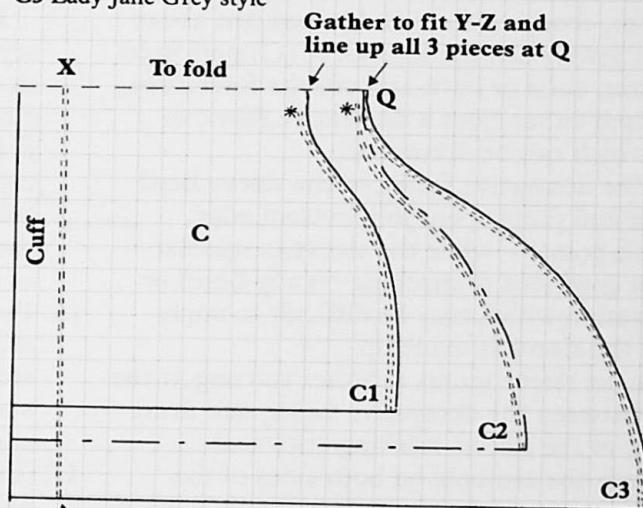
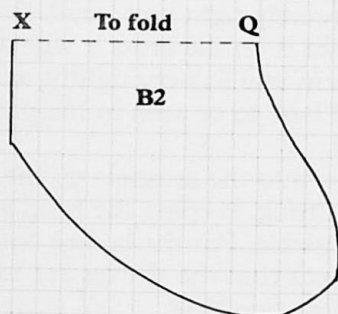
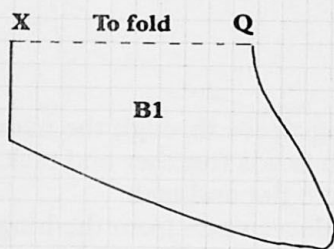
Tudor sleeves



- A** Sleeves (cut 2 and 2 sets of linings)
- A1** Large trumpet sleeve (Jane Seymour style)
- A2** Small alternative square ended sleeve
- A3** Large square ended sleeve (family of Sir Thomas Moore style)

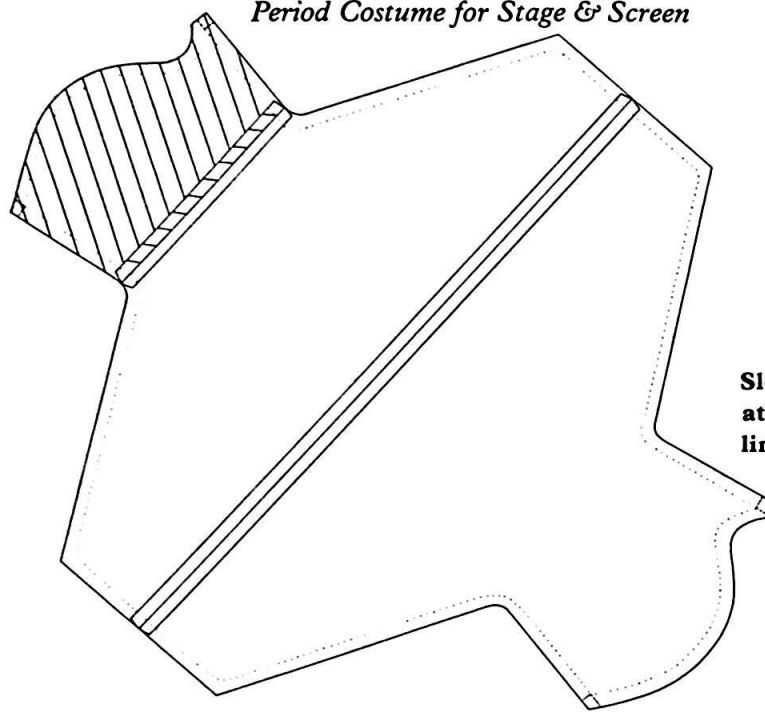
- B** Foresleeves (cut 2 plus 2 sets of linings)
- B1** Jane Seymour style
- B2** Lady Jane Grey style

- C** Chemise sleeves (cut 2)
- C1** Small
- C2** Jane Seymour style
- C3** Lady Jane Grey style

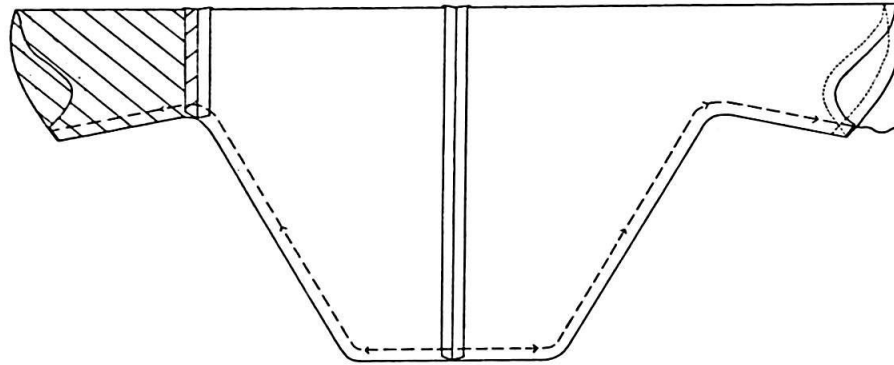


Gather or elasticate for cuff

SCALE: 1 square = 2.5cm (1in)



Sleeve with, top: decorative facing attached and, below: before lining is pulled through.



SLEEVES

10. Cut main sleeve (A) in dress fabric and decorative lining. (If the lining fabric is either thick or expensive, the head can be cut in a thinner, cheaper fabric and joined just above elbow level.) Cut the foresleeve (C) puff from organza, voile or lawn and cut the foresleeve (B) itself either from a decorative fabric or one which can be decorated.
11. Join the decorative facing to the sleeve head lining and press open. Join bottom edge.
12. At this point — while the sleeve is still flat — it is a good idea to machine on any braid or decoration which may be difficult to apply once the sleeve is made up.
13. Tack the sleeve seams together starting at the join between the decorative facing and dress fabric of the sleeve, working outwards towards the armhole on both sides of the join.
14. Machine from sleeve head to sleeve head and press open.
15. Pull the lining sleeve through the main sleeve bringing both heads together and tack. Press sleeve end, join flat and tack.

Hang the sleeve seam from the hinge, or scye, point at the back. The under arm of the sleeve can be cut with or without a built-in gusset (see appendix 1) — the armhole in this period is extremely tight and small. Because the sleeve head is on the cross it will stretch around the arm and fit very tightly, achieving the stretched look to be seen in the paintings of the period.
16. Pin the sleeve into the armhole on the marks made at the fitting, keeping the head as smooth as possible. Put the bodice onto the stand and check that the sleeves are hanging correctly before finishing.
17. Tack the sleeves into the armhole. It is always as well to tack in the sleeves for the second fittings, in case of adjustment.

INSIDE SLEEVE — THE PUFF

18. If the puff sleeve has a lace edge on the cuff, machine on the lace. To finish wrist either:
 - a. Make a channel by applying a 1.3cm (½in) tape and thread with elastic, or
 - b. Run two rows of gathering thread (see appendix 1) along the edge, pull up to the required size and cover with narrow tape or ribbon. Close with a hook and bar.
19. Gather the top edge to fit into the main sleeve just above the elbow. Bind-over and herringbone into the main sleeve keeping the bulk of the gather towards the elbow.

INSIDE SLEEVE — THE FORESLEEVE

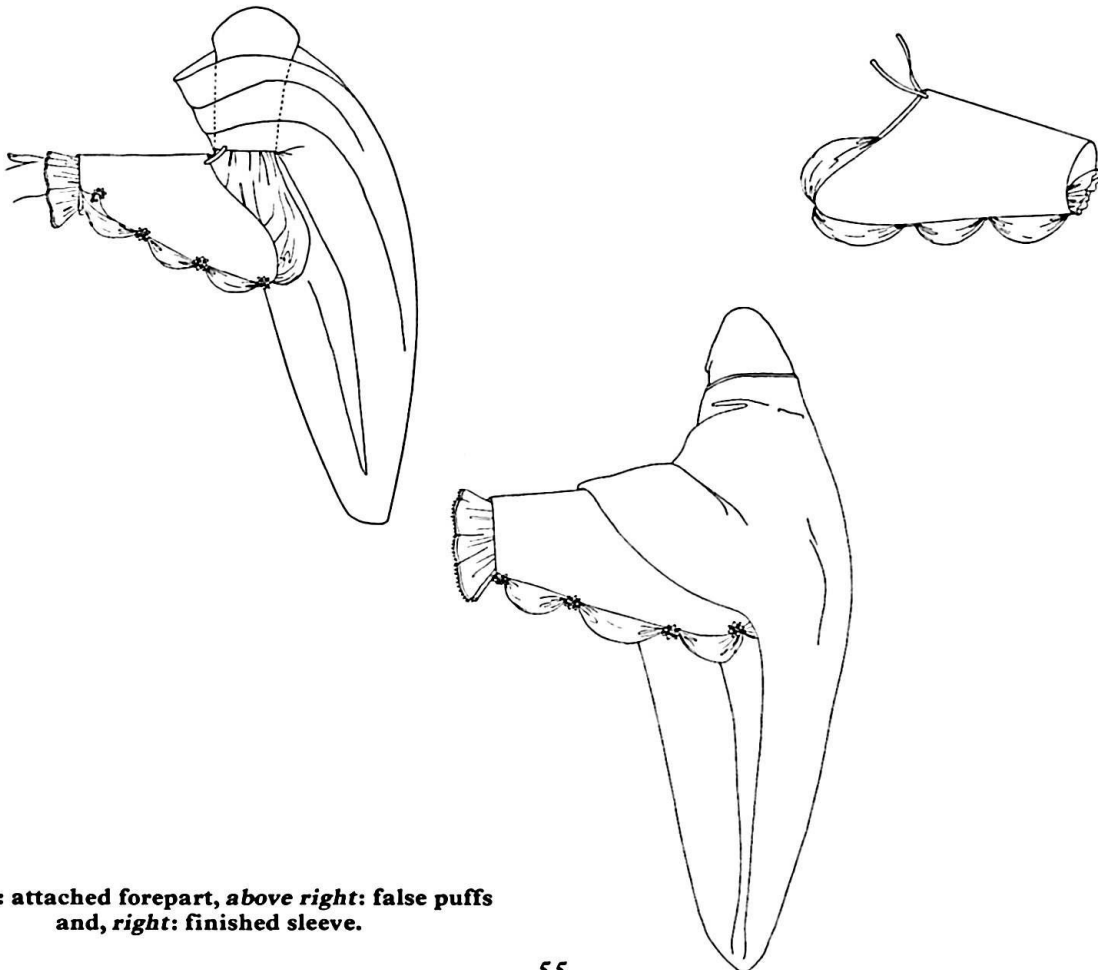
20. While the foresleeve is flat, stitch on all the jewels and decoration that it is possible to apply.
21. Bag out onto a lining by machining from * to * and hand finishing the gap. Finish any decoration still not done.

NB If you want the sleeve to look thick and padded you will need to add a layer of wadding.

22. Mount the foresleeve onto the puff sleeve by hand. Fold the foresleeve in half and place so that it lies on the thumb line at the wrist and in the centre of the inside arm. This can be placed when fitting — it is also important to get both sleeve fastenings for both the foresleeve and the puff sleeve in the same place.
23. Pull out the puff sleeve and catch together evenly from elbow to wrist with jewels.

Watch point

The puffs at the back of the sleeve can be false. Make a tube of fabric and stitch it into the gap catching to the edge with a slip stitch and holding in place with the decoration. This method, however, makes attaching the foresleeve firmly into the main sleeve something of a problem which can be solved by mounting the foresleeve onto a false lining.



Above: attached forepart, **above right:** false puffs and, **right:** finished sleeve.

SKIRT

The Tudor skirt usually has an inverted 'V' opening down the front showing an embroidered or brocade forepart or petticoat.

NB If the fabric is lightweight the pieces must be mounted before making up.

Making up

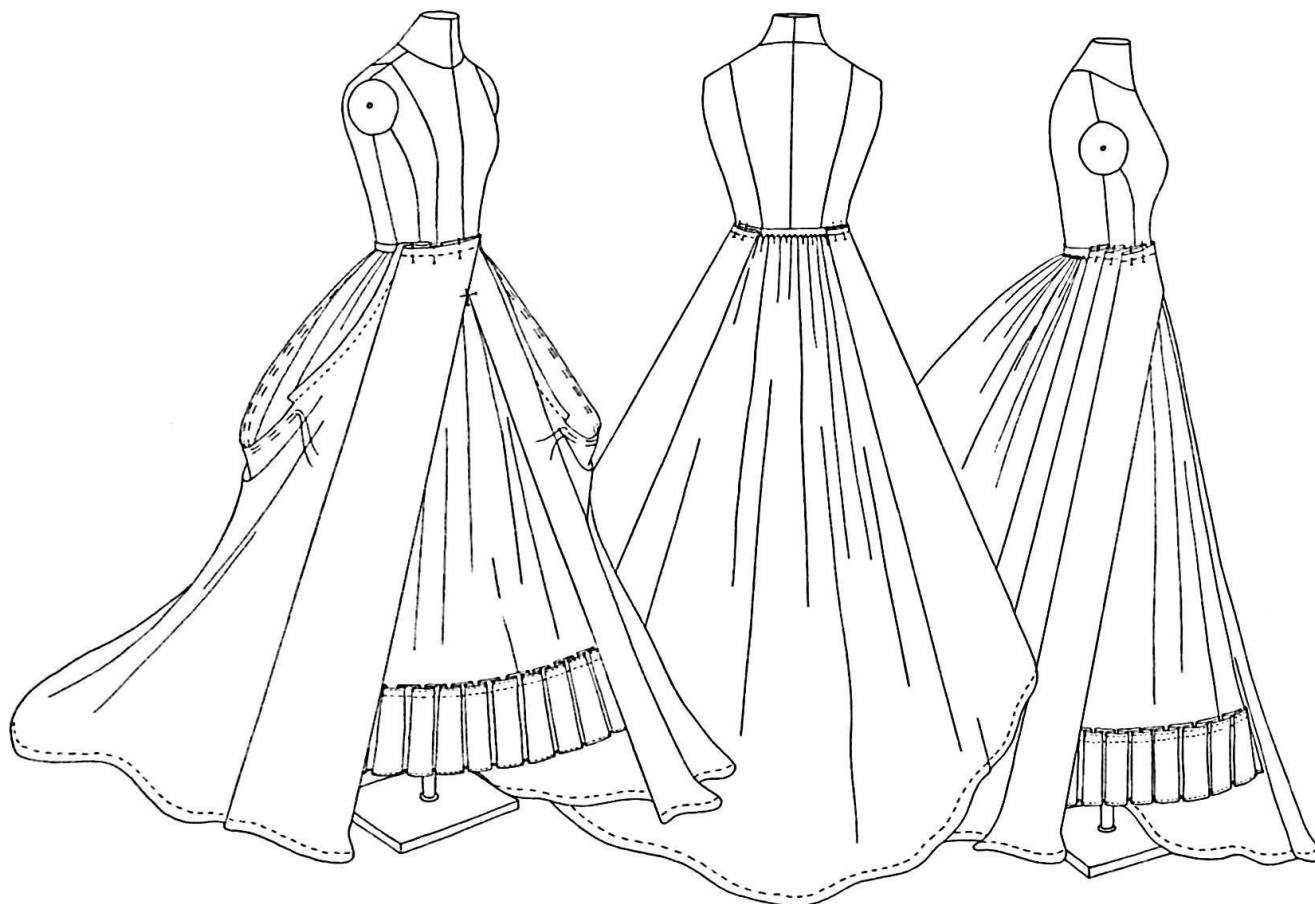
1. Either face back both front skirts or turn in approximately 15cm (6in) of the fabric — this will depend on the width, type and pattern of the fabric. Put a 5cm (2in) piece of iron-on cotton (stayflex) down the front edge of the facing — to provide a sharp edge — and press. If there is decoration down this edge apply it at this stage and then finish by felling or herringboning the facing to the inside of the skirt.
2. To pleat the skirt put the petticoat, etc. onto the stand and mark where the bodice point falls.
3. Lay the two finished front skirts so that they cross over just under the point of the bodice. Place the bottoms at the correct distance from

the CF. Pin into position leaving most of the surplus skirt length at the top — make sure there is enough material at the bottom for the hem — and pin the rest of the skirt to the stand in quarters.

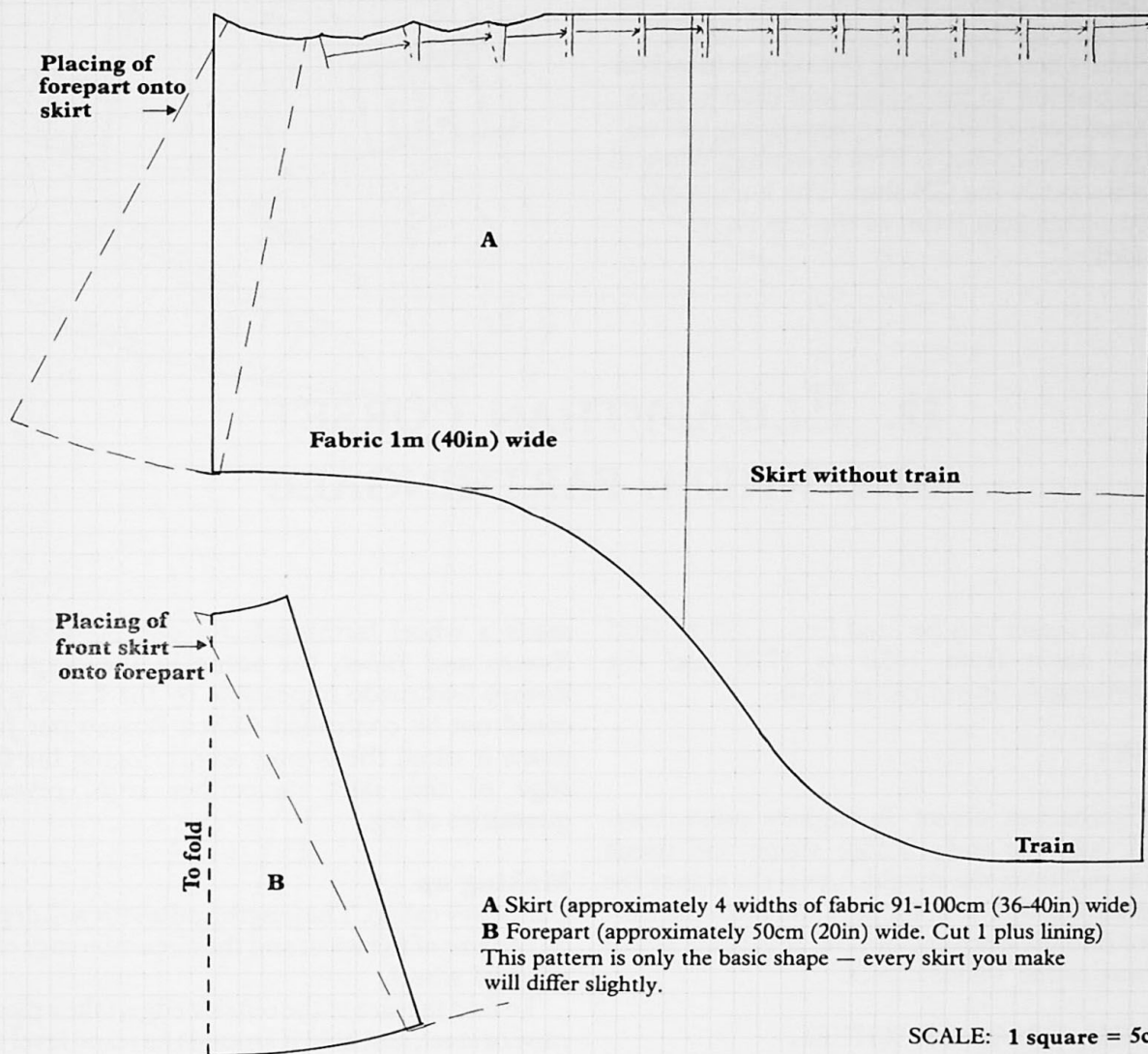
4. Smooth the fabric round to the side keeping as flat as possible. Put a large backwards facing pleat into the side, approximately 15cm (6in) deep at the top coming to about 5cm (2in) deep at the bottom. The fullness can also be cut out at the side, in the shape of a large dart.
5. Put in two more 10cm (4in) pleats, 5cm (1in) apart. The rest of the skirt can either be flat or cartridge pleated. If the fabric is thick it will be difficult to flat pleat the bulk so cartridge pleat into CB. The designer, however, may have a preference.

Watch point

Pleat using the same method used for the petticoat to get the length right.



Tudor skirt and forepart

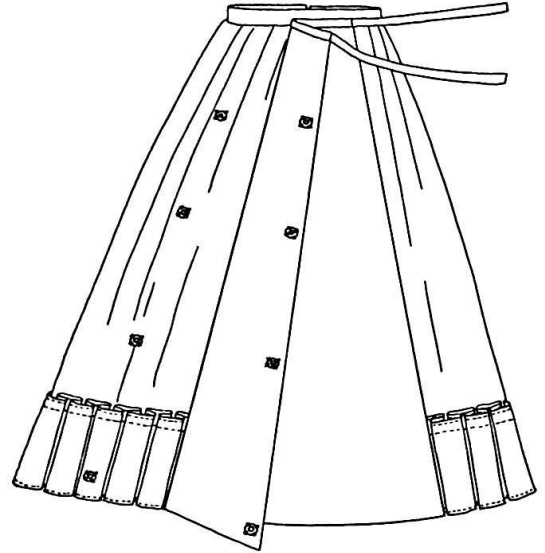


SCALE: 1 square = 5cm (2in)

THE FOREPART

The forepart is the decorative part of the under skirt seen at the CF of the main skirt. It can be either a separate petticoat, or it can be decorated and mounted as for the foresleeves, leaving the top open and machining it onto a petersham. Attach the tapes to the petersham to tie around the waist and popper down onto the petticoat. This method makes for quicker changes, is cheaper and less time consuming, especially if more than one dress is involved.

Stab stitch the bodice onto the skirt. If the bodice has a front fastening, the skirt is attached as far as possible to the bodice and then hooked and barred across, the whole dress being put on as a coat. If the bodice is back fastening, you will need a placket in the CB skirt. The bodice is stitched within 2cm (¾in) of the CB on both sides.



12. ELIZABETHAN CORSET AND WHEEL FARTHINGALE

THE corset can be used from 1595 to 1625 and again from 1680 to 1720 and the farthingale from 1590 to 1610.

CORSET

The Elizabethan corset is slightly more bow-fronted than the early Tudor shape and needs straps to pull from the shoulder, past the side of the bust to the waist. These support and push the bust forward into the correct position. It is made in the same way as the Tudor corset.

FRENCH, DRUM OR WHEEL FARTHINGALE

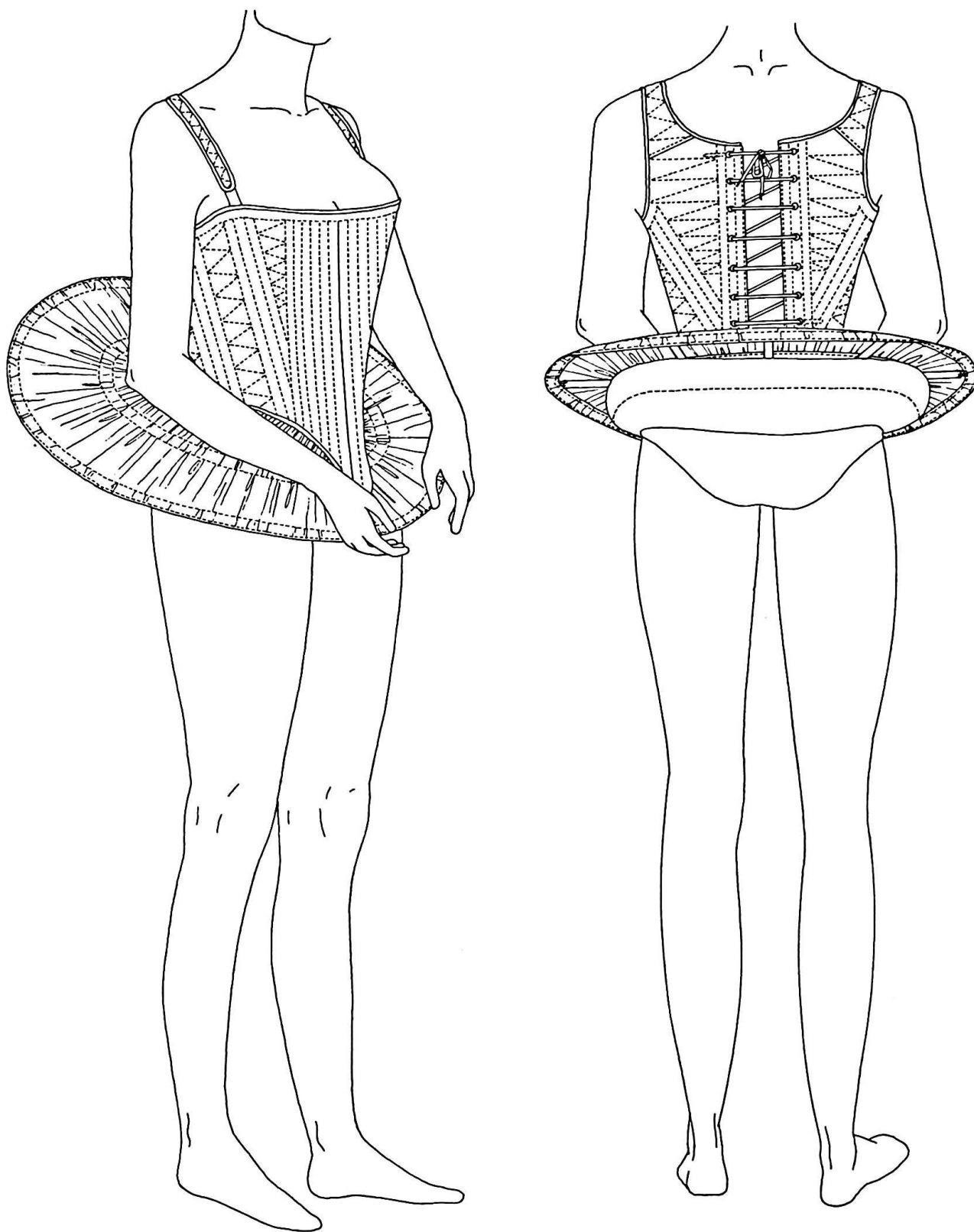
This farthingale is one of the most difficult shapes to achieve and during movement the skirt is apt to be ungainly. The shape can be achieved either by a frame made of cane pushed into the calico shape, or by a combination of pads. This last is better if the character has to fall about for any reason. When I

made a wheel farthingale for one production of *Romeo and Juliet*, the scene in the crypt with Romeo was made impossible by the frame which could not be controlled. When Romeo put Juliet down it tilted the wrong way, bringing the front edge of the skirt under her chin, revealing quantities of leg.

Making up

Use heavy calico. The length and width will depend on the size of the waist and the circumference of the finished wheel.

To find the size of the outside edge, take a piece of cane or steel, and hold it around the stand level with the waist. Draw it in or let it out until you think it is a suitable size for the character and size of the person wearing it. This measurement will be the circumference, and the width will be from the waist to the outside edge. The larger the waist, the larger the circumference of the outside edge. The pattern in this book is for a 61cm (24in) waist and is 23cm (9in) wide.



Elizabethan/Jacobean corset

A Front (cut 1 to fold)

B Side front (cut 2)

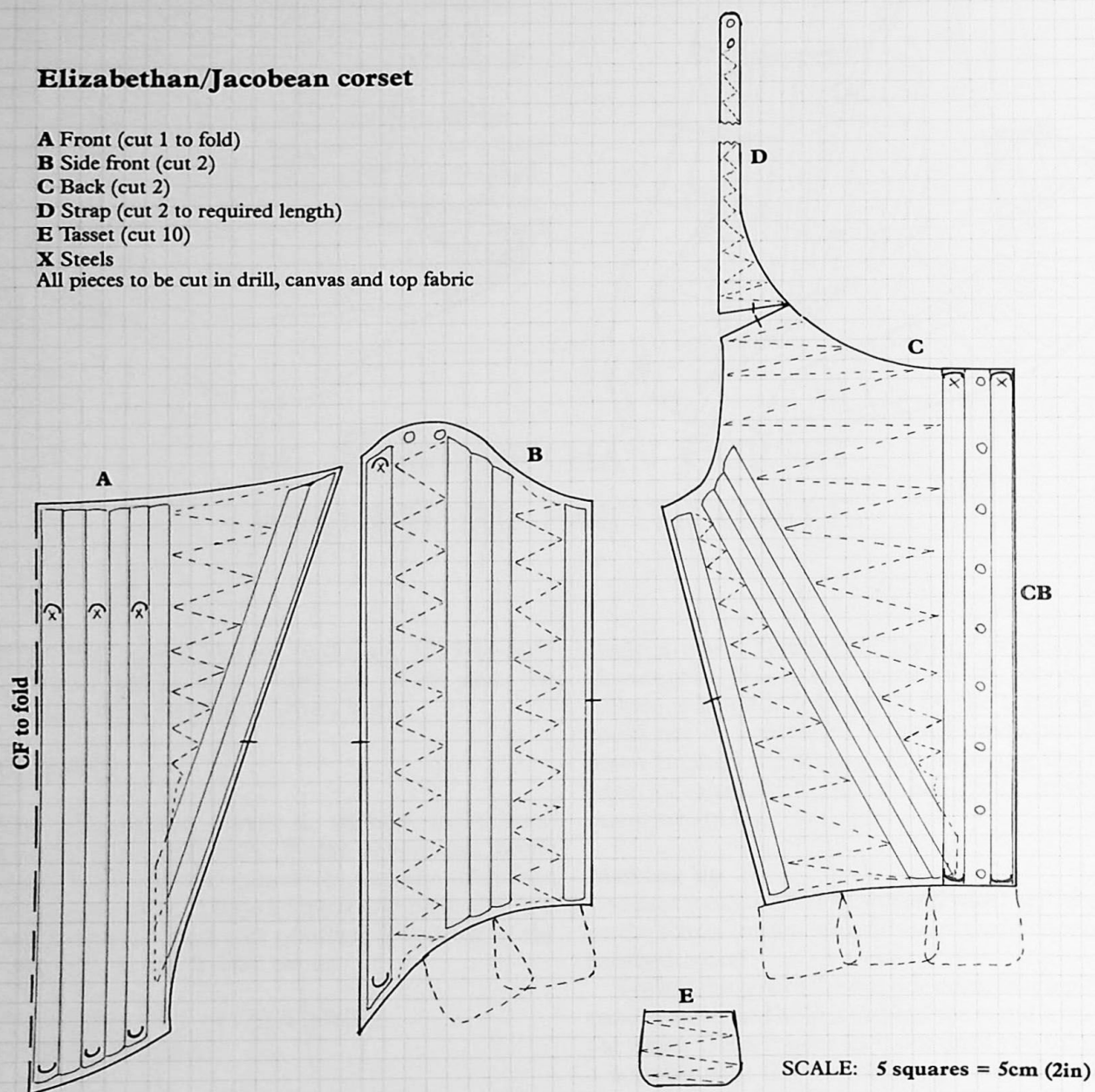
C Back (cut 2)

D Strap (cut 2 to required length)

E Tasset (cut 10)

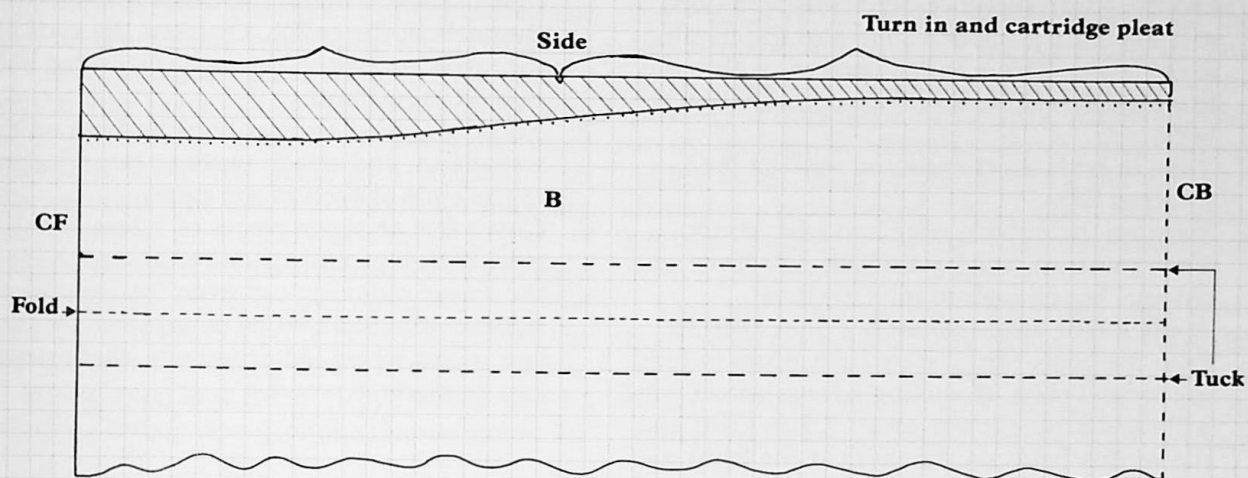
X Steels

All pieces to be cut in drill, canvas and top fabric

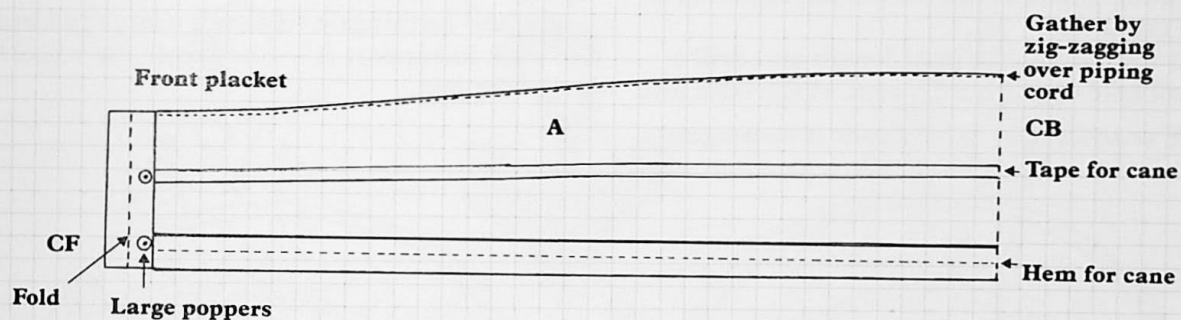


Elizabethan wheel farthingale and skirt

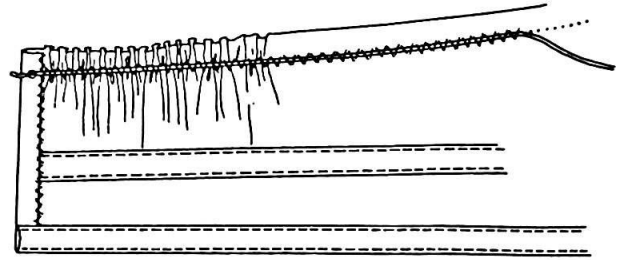
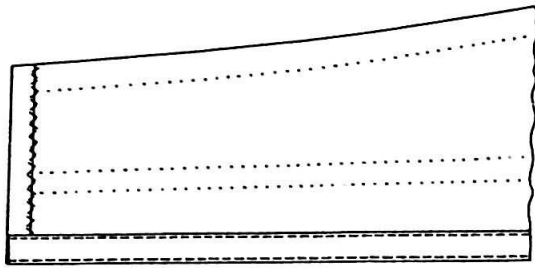
A Wheel farthingale
B Elizabethan skirt with tuck (cut as long as necessary)
 The width will depend on the depth of the farthingale



SCALE: 1 square = 5cm (2in)



SCALE: 1 square = 2.5cm (1in)



1. Cut the calico to the length of the circumference plus 2.5cm (1in) for turnings, and the width measurement plus 5cm (2in) to allow for the outside cane and the turnings at the waist. Shape as the pattern so that the front width will be slightly narrower than the back.
2. Turn in both short ends and zig-zag the turnings flat.
3. Turn up the outside edge and edge stitch. Then machine in a hem which will serve as a channel big enough to take the cane.
4. Apply a tape approximately 7.5cm (3in) in from the edge. Stitch it on both edges to hold the second cane. If making a large wheel you will need a cane about every 7.5cm (3in) and the widths between the tapes at the front will have to be graded where it gets narrower.
5. Gather the waist by zig-zagging over a piping cord and stitch to the waistband, finishing in the usual way.
6. Cut the cane to the right length and drill a small hole through each cane at the ends and

one in the middle. Soak the canes to get them supple — you can do this while making the calico shape. Thread the canes through the channels in the calico. Oversew the ends of the tapes and stitch through the drilled holes to hold in position.

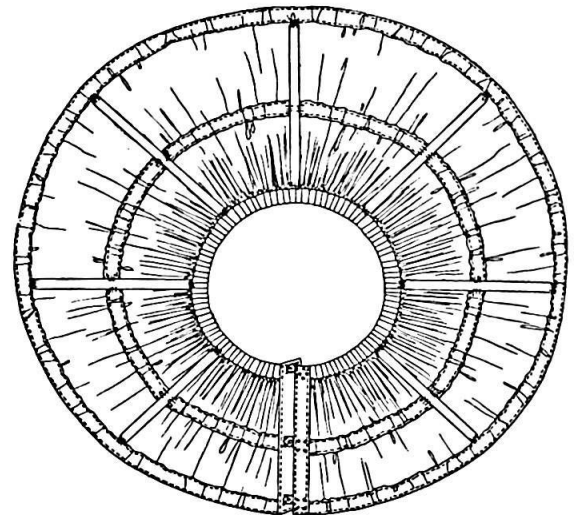
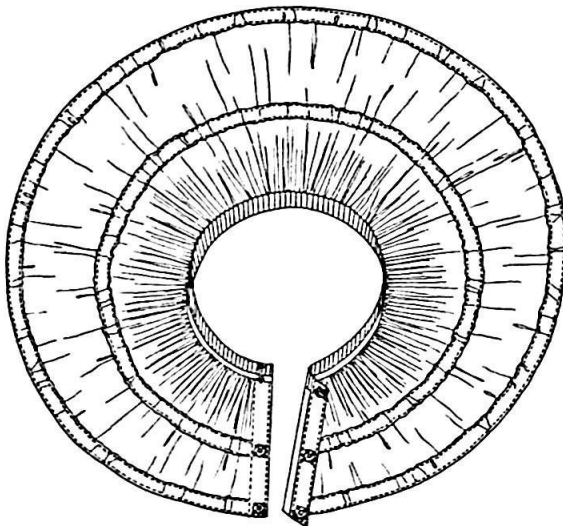
7. To finish, put a trouser hook and bar on the waistband, and attach tapes or large poppers at the ends of each of the canes.
8. Cover five or seven pieces of 1.5cm (3/8in) steel with tape and stitch to the underside of the frame radiating out from the waist — the number of steels will be determined by the size of the wheel. Alternatively, these struts can be made in wood.

Watch points

Do not use steel in the channels as it will twist in the tapes.

A wheel farthingale will need a large pad under the back to support it — the larger the wheel the larger the pad.

Left: underside and right: topside of farthingale.



13. ELIZABETHAN DRESS

THE four Elizabethan patterns in this chapter cover the period from 1569 to 1603, and were developed from paintings while working on the 1972 BBC television series of *Elizabeth R*, designed by Elizabeth Waller. I have used them since and refined my ideas, and when made up they look a true representation of contemporary paintings.

During the reign of Elizabeth I the shape of costume constantly changes. For instance, the bodice becomes more unyielding and reaches its most extreme shape by about the end of the century when the front point is long and appears to be very rigid. The frill on the chemise collar becomes more pronounced, until it is made as a separate item becoming a ruff. The skirt becomes fuller and more rounded, ending the century as a drum shape.

The sleeves take two main forms, the first being a tight, straight sleeve. At the beginning of this period this would be cut in one piece but by the end of the century it was developing into a two piece sleeve. The second type is a fuller sleeve which can be either like a bishop sleeve, or one that is tight at the

wrist and curves out in a variety of shapes. They are all based on a simple basic shape and I include in this chapter a few variations — the small sleeve and large versions.

When cutting sleeves for the Elizabethan period you need to forget most of what you know. Think forward from the late Mediaeval and early Tudor periods and of the influences from Spain, France and Italy. Put yourself in the position of a dressmaker of the period and the knowledge that was available. By changing the position of the head and the shape of the back seam; by leaving the front partially or fully open, buttoned or caught together; or by letting the chemise sleeve come through (either at the front or the back) a great variety of shapes can be achieved. These sleeves were often held out by padding, cane or whalebone and there is often a hanging sleeve as well.

Very little information has actually come down to us about the cut and construction of dress in this period. There are two early Spanish tailoring books: *Libro de Geometrica Practica y Traca* by Juan de Alcega, published in Madrid 1589 (recently

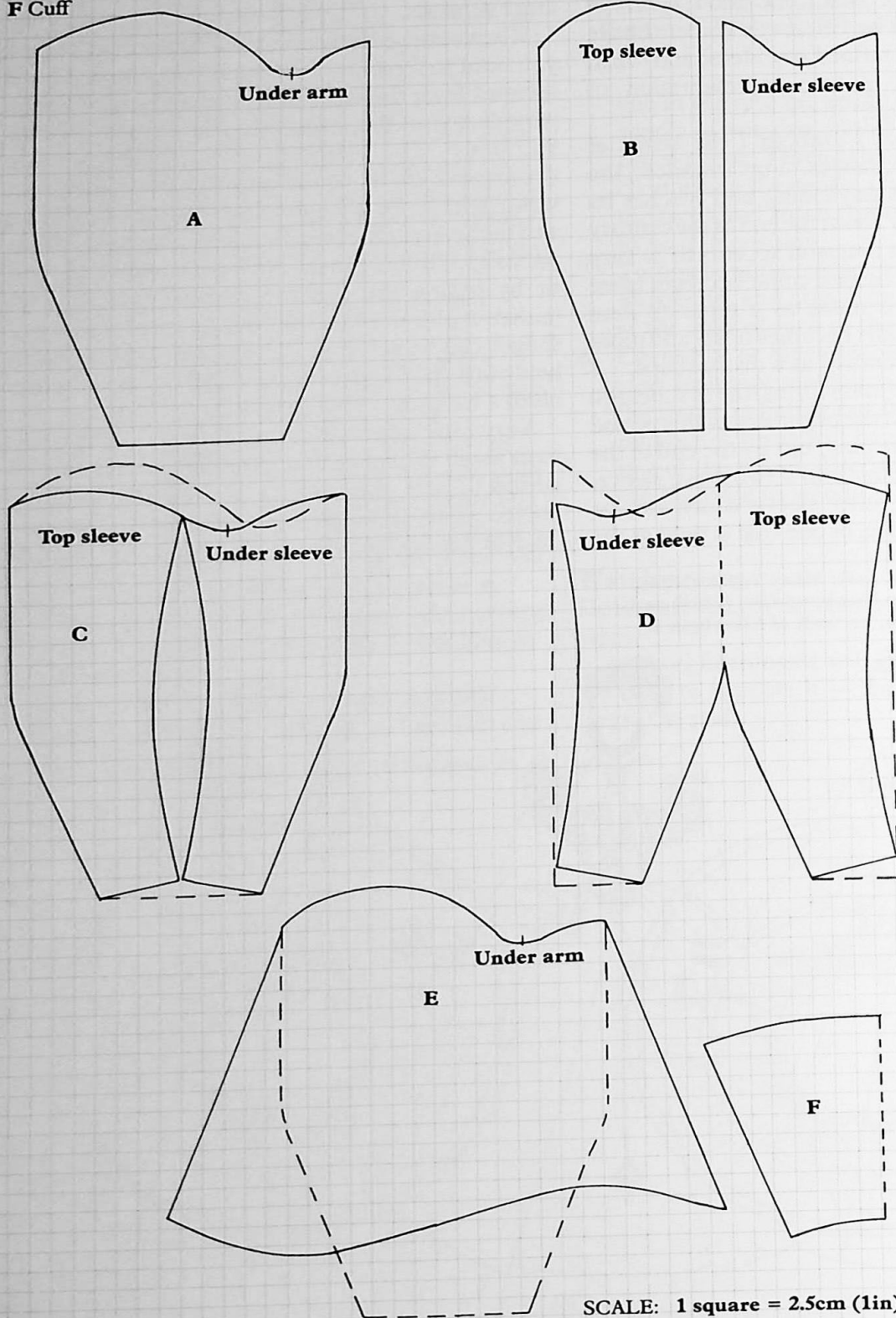
Three Tudor dresses. *Left: Mary Tudor (1544), centre: Portrait of an Unknown Girl (1569) and right: The Ditchley, portrait of Elizabeth I.*



Elizabethan sleeves (small)

- A Basic sleeve
- B Basic sleeve — use as front opening sleeve
- C 2-piece sleeve
- D 2-piece sleeve with back dart and front seam
- E $\frac{3}{4}$ bishop-type sleeve with long cuff
- F Cuff

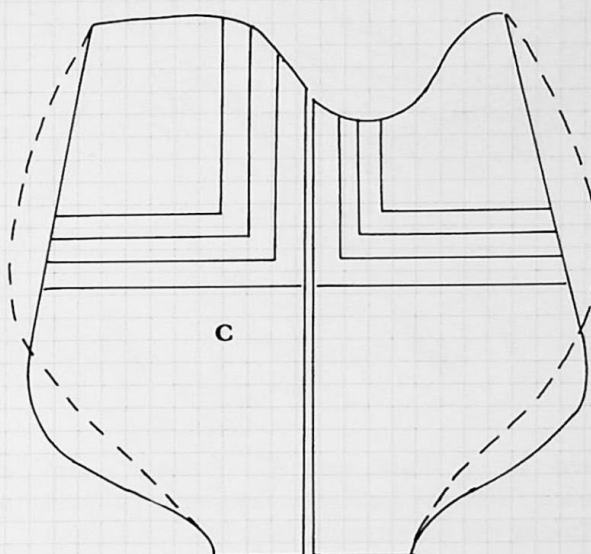
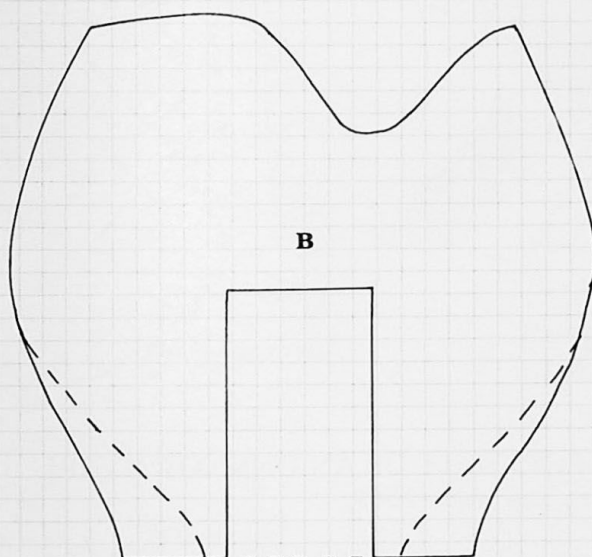
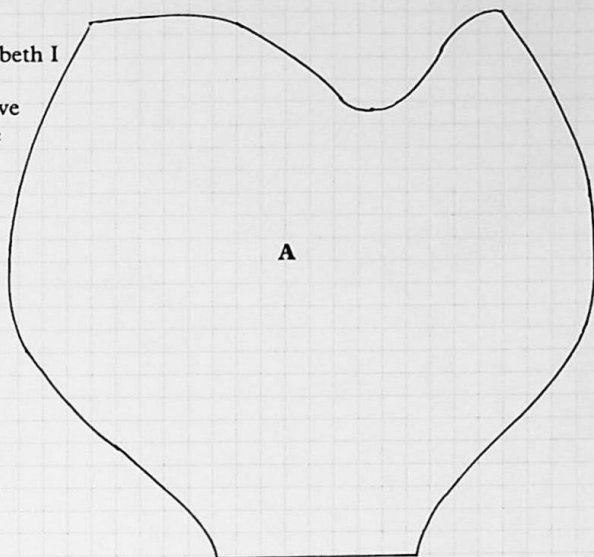
--- To fold
 --- Basic sleeve shape



SCALE: 1 square = 2.5cm (1in)

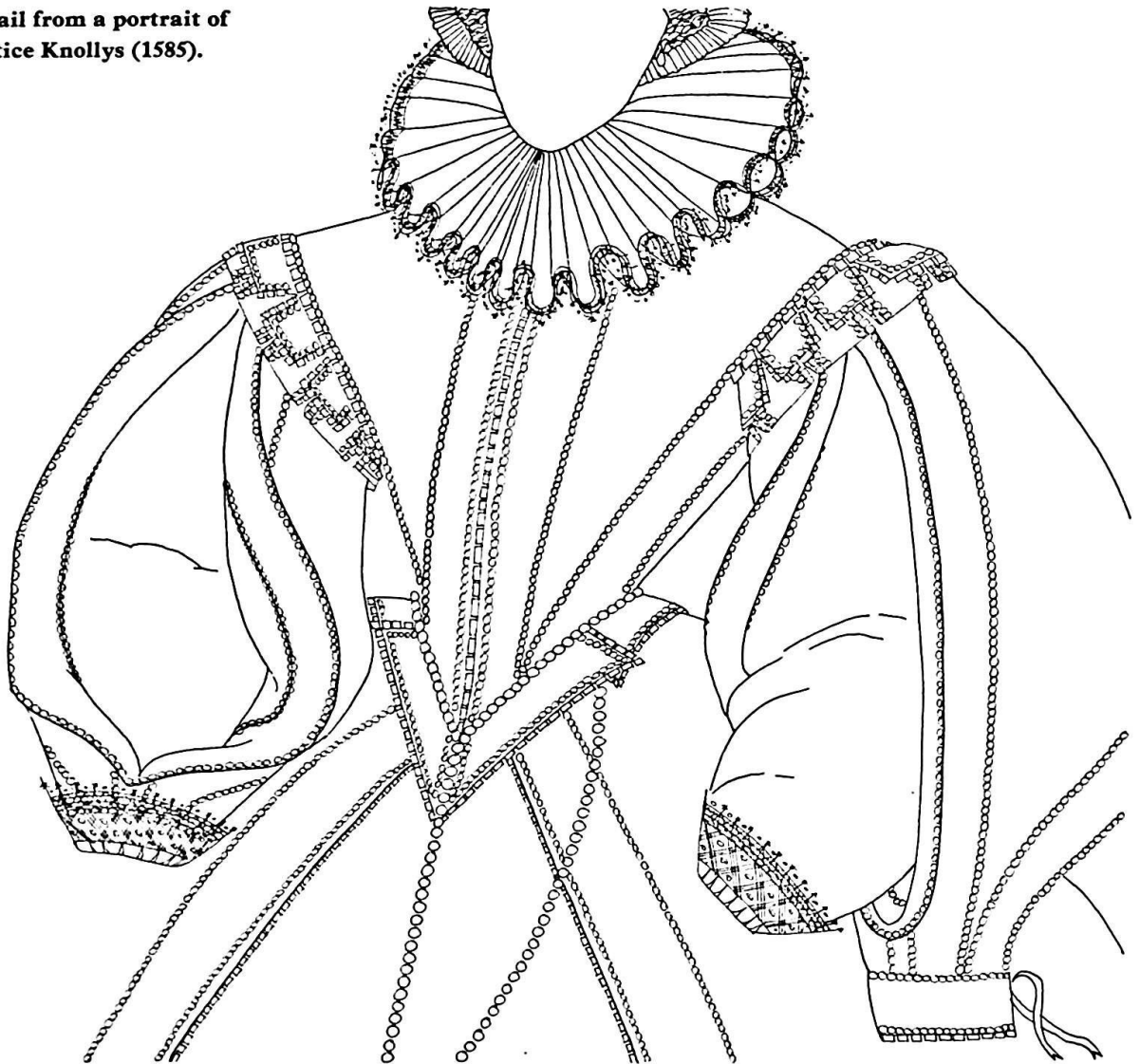
Elizabethan sleeves (large)

- A** Large basic sleeve as for
The Armada Portrait of Elizabeth I
B Spanish hanging sleeve
C Spanish front opening sleeve
— — — Large basic sleeve



SCALE: 1 square = 2.5cm (1in)

Detail from a portrait of
Lettice Knollys (1585).



translated by J. Pain and C. Bainton) and *Geometrica y Traca* by La Rocha Burguen written in 1618. Among the patterns in these books you will find a few for women's dress and the men's patterns will help you to understand doublets and sleeves. The original books can both be found in, for example, the Victoria and Albert Museum library, London, but I would like to stress that these are not 'pattern books' as such but contain diagrams of the layouts on differing widths of cloth, just as you get in a modern paper pattern. If you are willing to work at making toiles and experiment with the different shapes you will find the Elizabethan period a fascinating adventure.

A. PORTRAIT OF AN UNKNOWN GIRL
artist unknown (1569)

The bodice is fastened down the front which is on the straight and the braid down the side front could cover a seam. The square neck is filled-in with an embroidered chemise with a stand collar and a small ruff trimmed with gold. The back neck of the bodice is probably rounded like the back view of a dress in a miniature of Elizabeth distributing the Royal Maundy. The sleeve heads have an elaborate epaulette with the chemise sleeve coming through and down to the wrist finishing in a cuff and has a gold trimmed ruff. The skirt is now much fuller at the waist than in earlier dresses, and the pleats can be seen quite clearly on the left side. There is a

white fabric belt covering the waist join.

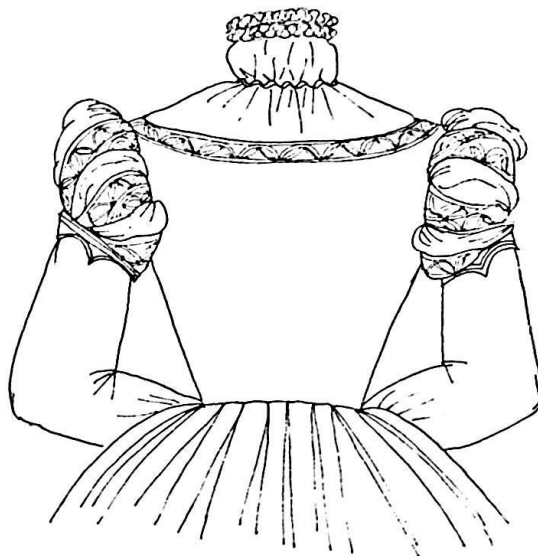
Making up

BODICE

Make as for Tudor bodice, boning both fronts as for the stomacher. The shoulder straps are on the straight and so do not need a stay tape. These can be attached at the fitting.

After fitting:

1. Pipe from armhole to CF and down to the point at the waist.
2. The straps and the back neck can all be piped in one length.
3. Hand stitch the strap to the bodice front.

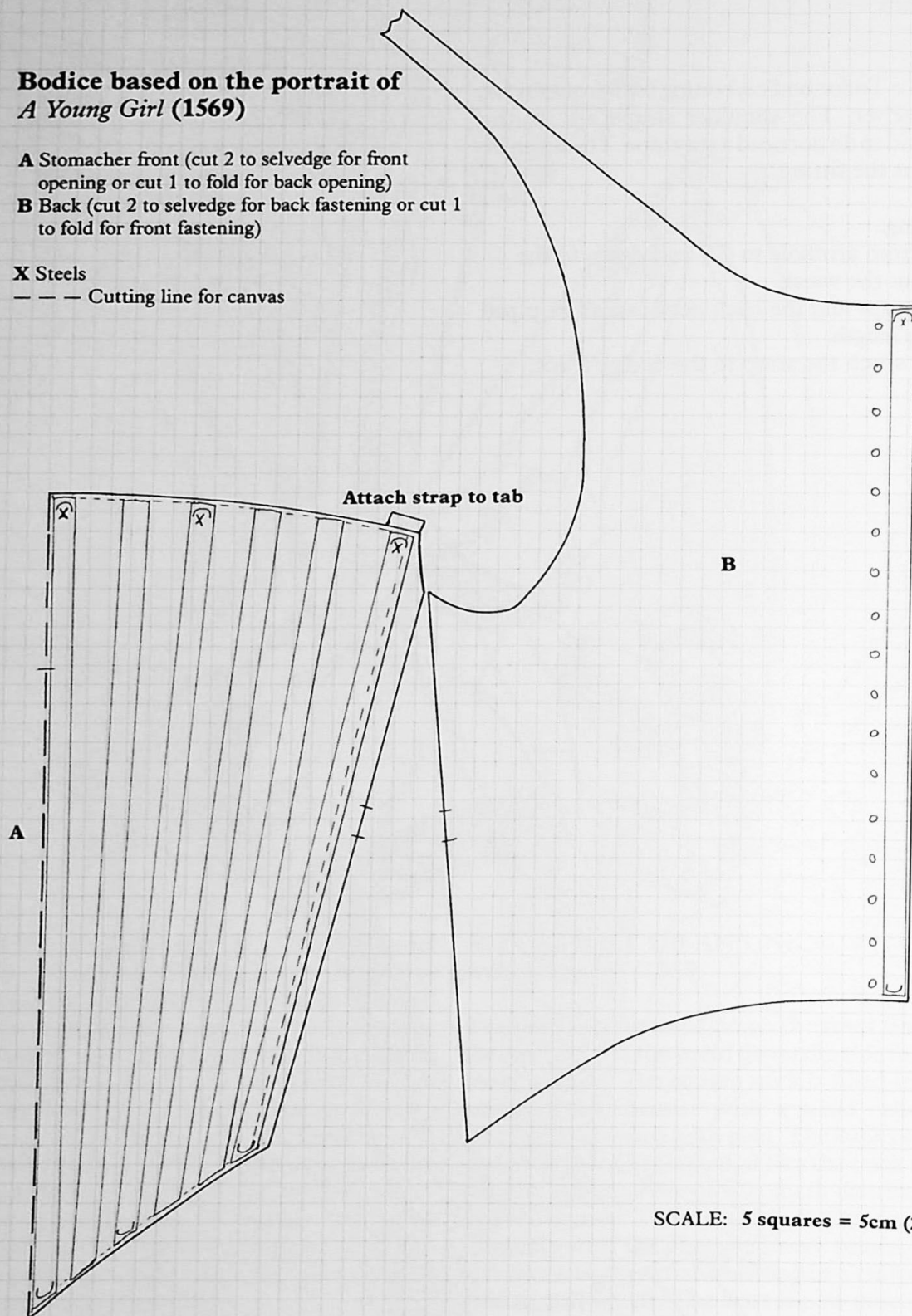


**Bodice based on the portrait of
*A Young Girl (1569)***

- A** Stomacher front (cut 2 to selvedge for front opening or cut 1 to fold for back opening)
B Back (cut 2 to selvedge for back fastening or cut 1 to fold for front fastening)

X Steels

— — — Cutting line for canvas



4. Bind armholes, making the binding as narrow as possible. Pipe the waist.
5. The braid decoration on the front bodice can be hand sewn. If it is put on by machine, place the steels so that they can be avoided when machining.
6. Hook and loop bodice with large hooks and put in the inlay.

SKIRT

Proceed as for petticoat.

CHEMISE/FILL-IN

1. Gather the straight edge — the neck — and pull up to the correct length.
2. Mark neckline of bodice onto the stand with chalk or tape.
3. Make up yoke, attach the collar and pin onto the stand. Make sure that the yolk is at least 5cm (2in) larger than the bodice neckline.
4. Pin gathered edge into position onto the yoke and through to the stand to hold it firm. Smooth out towards the shoulder, front and back, and pin firmly onto the yoke.

Keep the gathers sparse on the shoulder to avoid it puffing, which although correct is not liked by designers or artistes. If the fabric is very bouncy you will have to catch it down to the yoke. The fabric should be flat all round when it reaches the extreme edge of the yoke.

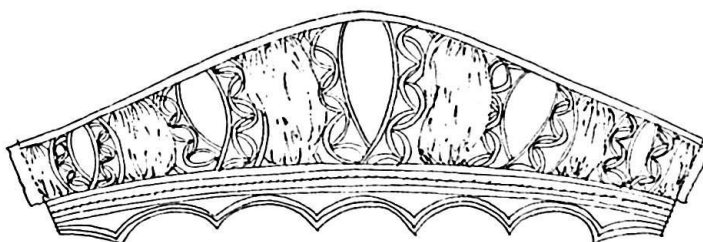
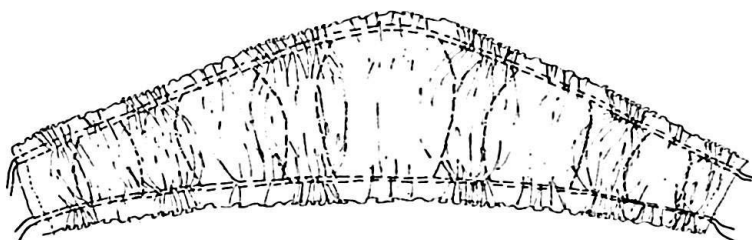
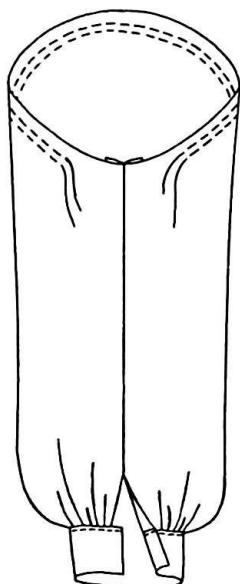
5. Make up collar and attach to neck edge.

At the fitting: If the yoke is long enough, pin it to the corset before putting on the bodice.

After the fitting: Work through any alterations. Machine on collar line and finish with braid and bind the outside edge of the yoke with soft bias binding.

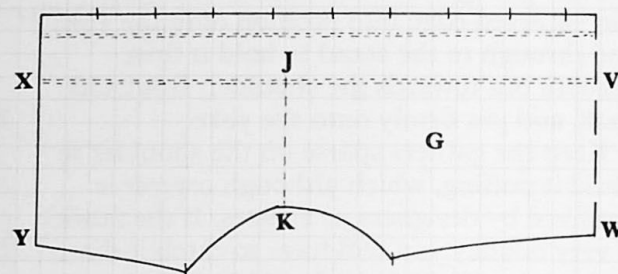
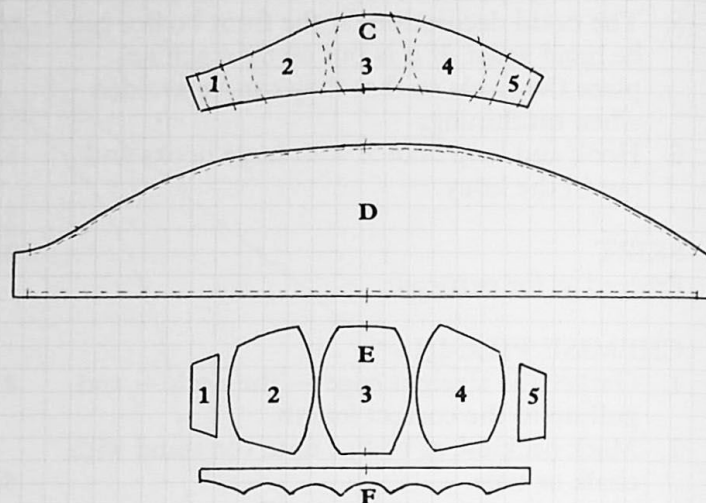
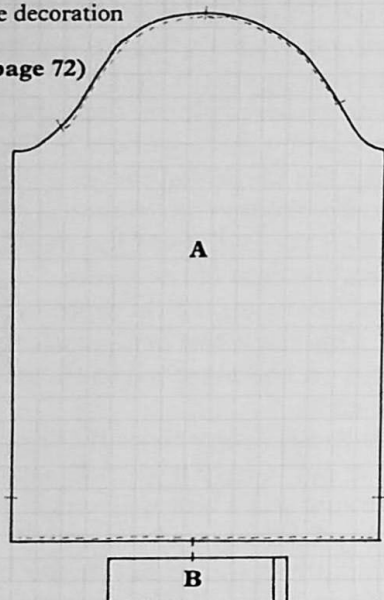
SLEEVES AND EPAULETTES

1. Make up chemise sleeves, gather head and wrist and tack onto the cuff.
2. Cut small inner sleeve in a firm fabric.
3. Cut the puff sleeve in lawn or organza and white net. Put both layers together and stitch gathering threads through the top and bottom treating them as one.
4. Tack the gathered sleeve onto the inner sleeve, placing more gathers in the gaps between the decorated pieces.
5. Cut and make up the decorated pieces and place over the puff and bind over both the head and bottom of the sleeve.
6. Cut and make up the decorated scalloped band. This piece can be completely finished and laid on and attached to the bound over sleeve end.
7. It may be necessary to stuff the puff with a scrap of net to help it keep its shape and to ensure that the white sleeve is in place between the decorated pieces.
8. For the fitting, the epaulette can be made roughly in calico so that the proportions may be decided when on the actress.
9. To set-in the sleeve, put right sides of both bodice and sleeve together and either machine or whip together by hand.



Portrait of A Young Girl (1569) — Sleeve

- A Chemise sleeve
 - B Cuff
 - C Epaulette base
 - D Puff — cut in lawn or organza and net
 - E Decorative pieces
 - F Scallop sleeve decoration
 - G Chemisette
- (for yoke see page 72)



SCALE: 1 square = 2.5cm (1in)

If the chemise is to be a separate item which can be washed, make a chemisette instead of just a yoke, and attach the mock chemise and sleeve to this. The epaulettes are then attached to the bodice.

This type of 'bitty' costume depends a great deal on proportion which can only be worked out when the artiste is wearing it. If you tack the costume together for a first fitting, the first thing you will do once it is on the body is take it apart.

Fitting

Put on the petticoat, corset, skirt and fill-in. Pin this to the corset front and back, or the chemisette with

the chemise sleeves attached. Then pin the bodice and lastly the epaulettes. Fit each piece as it is put on.

Finishing

1. Overhand or machine the finished the epaulettes to the bodice.
2. Herringbone in chemise and sleeves if they are to be attached into the bodice.
3. Stab stitch the bodice to the skirt.

If there is a second fitting, tack the whole thing together for it and then finish afterwards.

B. THE PHOENIX

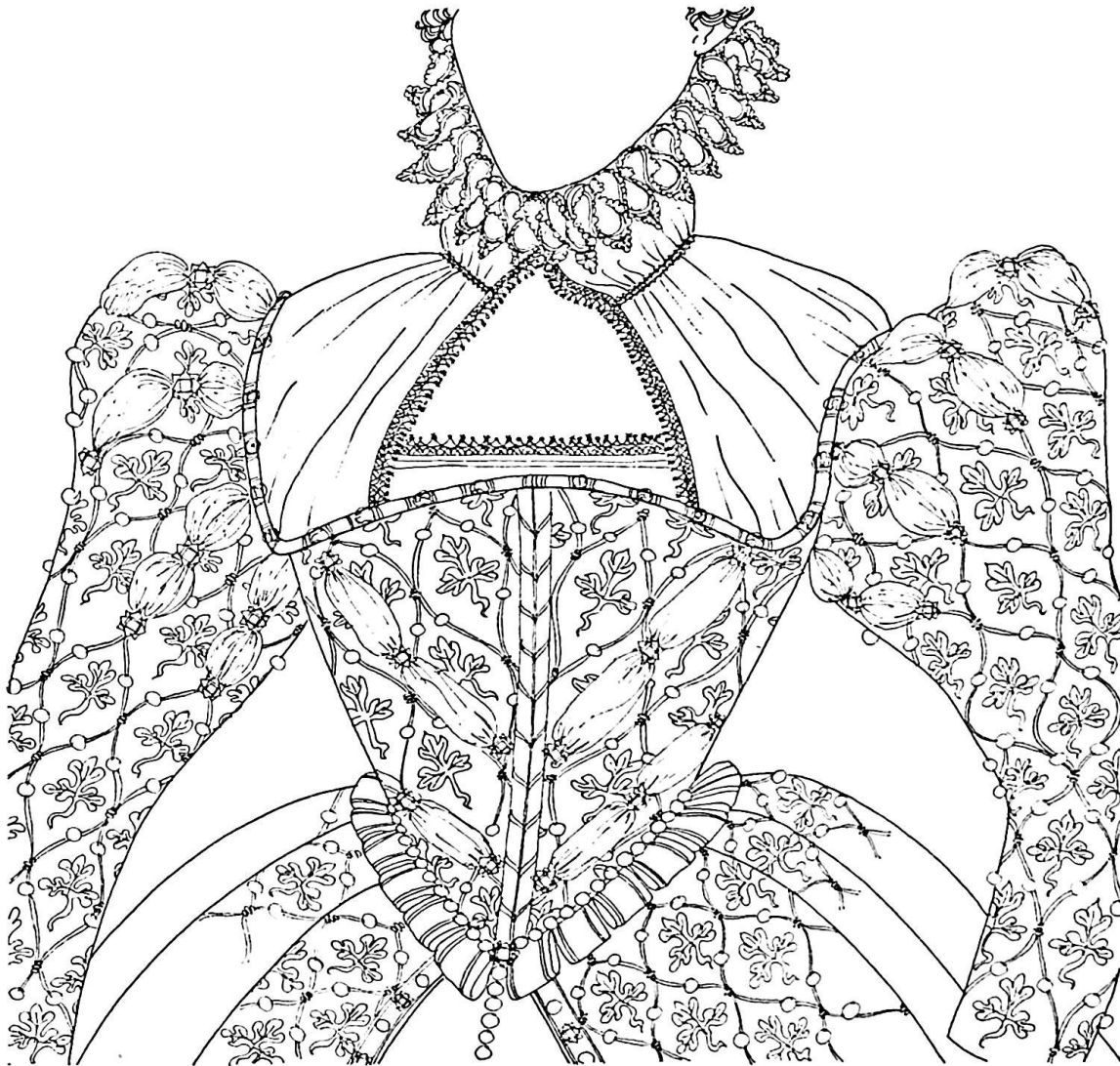
Portrait of Elizabeth I by Nicholas Hilliard (1575)

The portrait of *The Phoenix* is so-called because the jewel Elizabeth is wearing has a phoenix suspended from the white rose.

The bodice is cut in one piece — I discovered this by following the embroidery pattern on the painting. It would have been embroidered on the straight of the grain and it is easier, but not impossible, to stitch if there are no seams to embroider over. There is a decoration round the

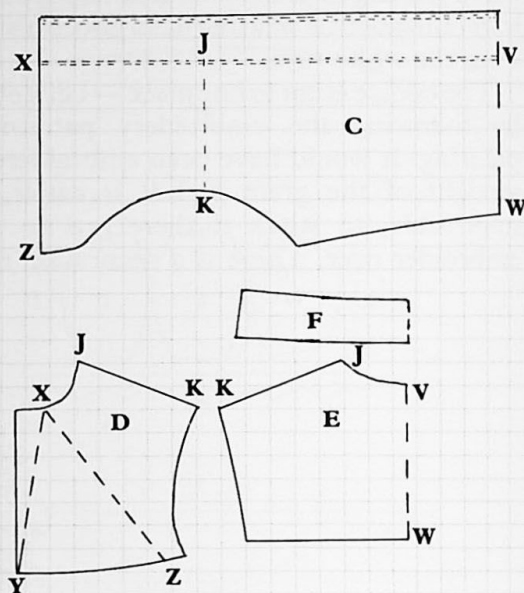
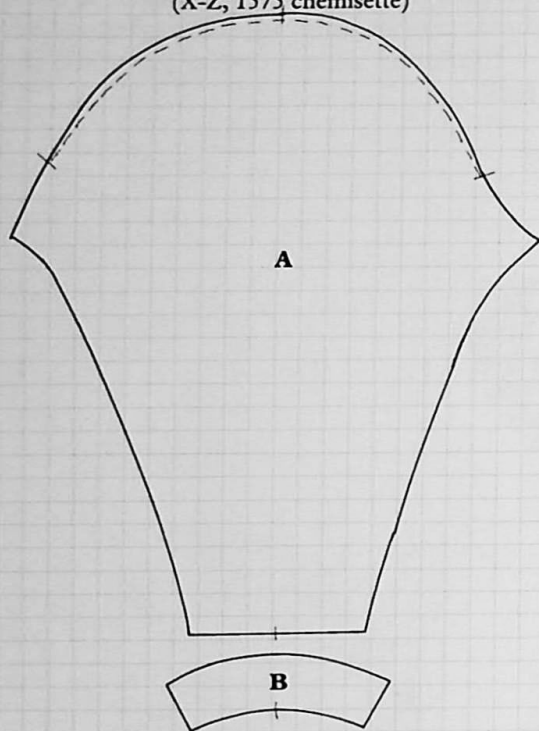
neck comprising of small loops of the black fabric embroidered with gold lines. The same decoration also runs in diagonals down the front opening, and the tassels round the bottom are made of the same fabric but are larger.

A fine white gauze is pulled through the loops round the neck, and if, when making the dress, a cord is threaded through this channel it can be tied at the CF keeping the very wide neck line securely on the shoulders. There could be both a square necked chemise and an embroidered partlet on the costume — the latter with a stand collar which holds the ruff.



The Phoenix (1575) — Sleeve

- | | |
|--|------------------------|
| A Sleeve — to be cartridge pleated | E Yoke back |
| B Cuff | V-W, CB) |
| C Chemisette | F collar (1575) |
| D Yoke front (X-Y, 1569 chemisette) | |
| (X-Z, 1575 chemisette) | |



SCALE: 1 square = 2.5cm (1in)

The sleeve head, although shallow if the embroidery is followed, has quite a large head. There is a black cuff at the wrist and also a ruff. The skirt is straight round, as can be seen by following the embroidery pattern. The skirt and bodice do not need to be attached together as the tassets on the bottom cover the join, and the jewelled belt distracts the eye.

The dress I made for Glenda Jackson, based on this painting, now in the collection of theatre costume at the Museum of London, has 600 embroidered motifs and half pearls. All the embroidery on Miss Jackson's clothes was done by Phyllis Thorold.

Making up

SLEEVES AND SKIRT

As for basic dress.

CHEMISE

As for the 1569 dress.

BODICE

1. Cut in one piece. Should the bodice need to be altered in the future, there can be a seam under the arm.
2. Put in boning as on the pattern, and make as for the boned bodice.

The Phoenix bodice (1575)

A Bodice

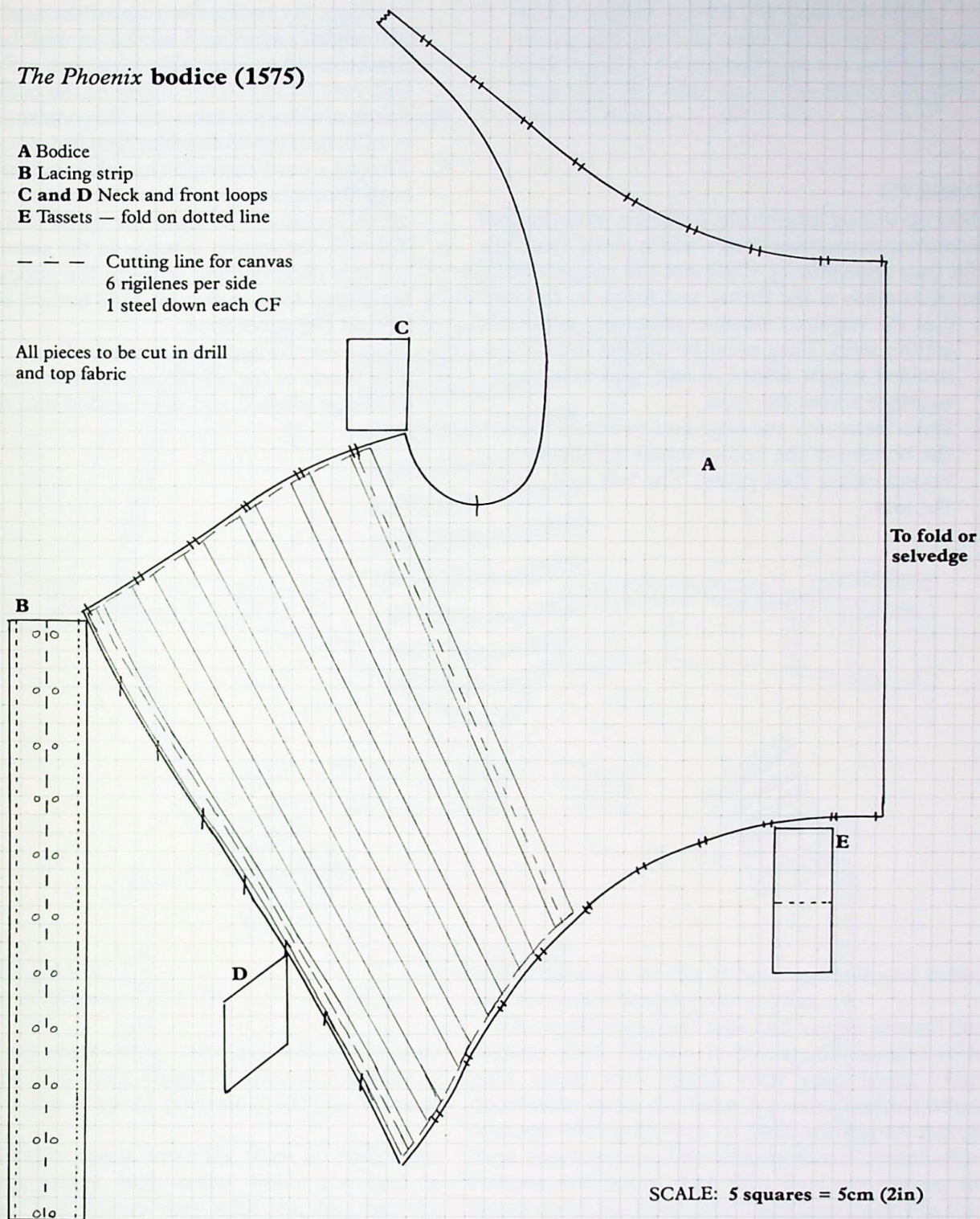
B Lacing strip

C and D Neck and front loops

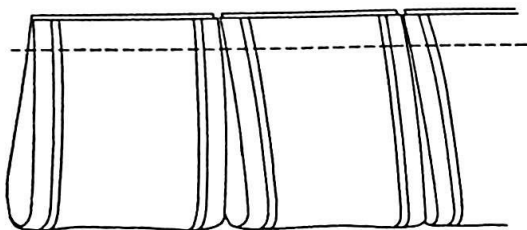
E Tassets — fold on dotted line

— — — Cutting line for canvas
6 rigilenes per side
1 steel down each CF

All pieces to be cut in drill
and top fabric



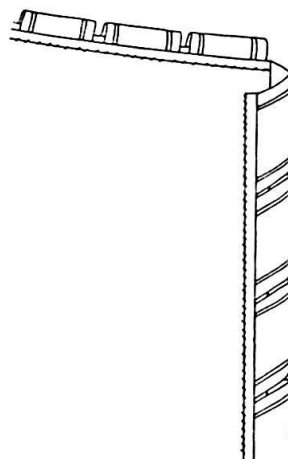
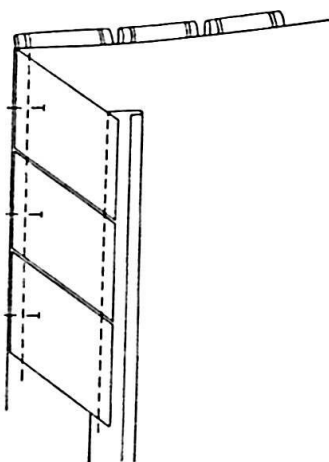
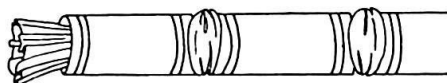
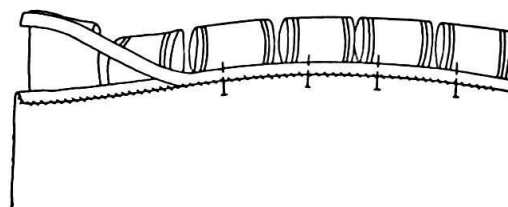
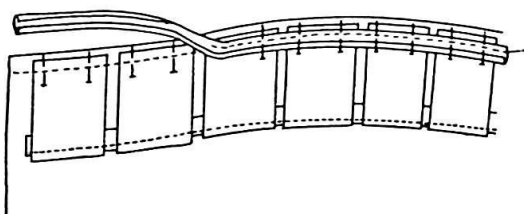
SCALE: 5 squares = 5cm (2in)



TASSETS

Make up in long lengths like a ribbon, with the gold decoration a machine foot's width away from the edge (see appendix 1). Work out the proportion of the decoration at the fitting and finish as follows:

1. Cut the required number of bottom tassets off the strip. They must be double the decided length, folded in half, and machined together across the tops.
2. Bind them over the edge and overhand onto the bottom of the bodice which has been bound rather than piped. The belt will cover the join.



LOOPS FOR FRONT AND NECK

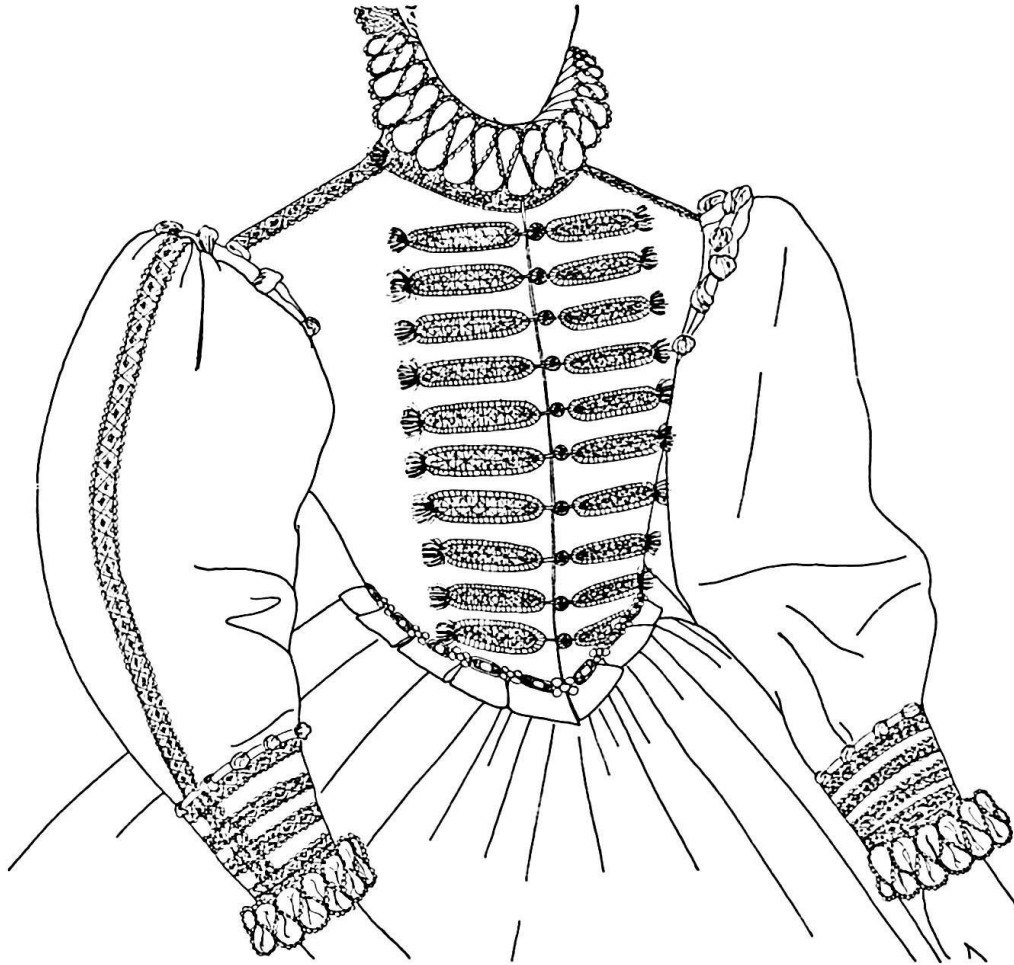
1. Cut to the length as the pattern plus turnings, lay round the edge of the neck line just slightly apart and bind over with tape.
2. Bind the other edge, also with tape.
3. Fell very firmly to the inside of the bodice.
4. Stitch and turn a tube of white organza that is 1.25cm (1in) wide when finished.
5. Thread a cord through the tube and thread both through the neck line decoration. Finish off the organza but leave the cords to tie.
6. The CF decoration is made in the same way, but it is diagonal and without the organza.
7. Hook and loop as for the 1569 bodice, or lace behind the decoration.
8. Bind over the armhole of the bodice.
9. The heads of the sleeves are bound and cartridge pleated and overhanded into the bodice.

Finishing

1. Finish the skirt which can be worn without being attached to the bodice.
2. The chemise can be finished as for the 1569 bodice and herringboned into place or made as a separate item.
3. The white puffs that decorate the bodice and sleeves can be made as a tube, cut off in

lengths and attached with the jewels.

Alternatively, make small holes in the bodice with a stiletto. Stitch the puffs onto the wrong side, pull through to the right side and hold in place by stitching on the wrong side. This is a very neat way if the fabric does not fray too much.



C. THE DARNLEY

Portrait of Elizabeth I (1575)

There are many other paintings which illustrate this type of doublet closed bodice, an example of which is the *Armada* portrait (1585) at Woburn Abbey.

The bodice opens down the front on both these paintings and a high collar holds the ruff in position. The sleeves vary with the date but the Darnley's are full at the head and ease into cuffs decorated with bands of gold braid. The wrists are finished with ruffs. The *Armada* sleeves are padded

and shaped but lie flat at both armhole and wrist, and there are hanging sleeves too.

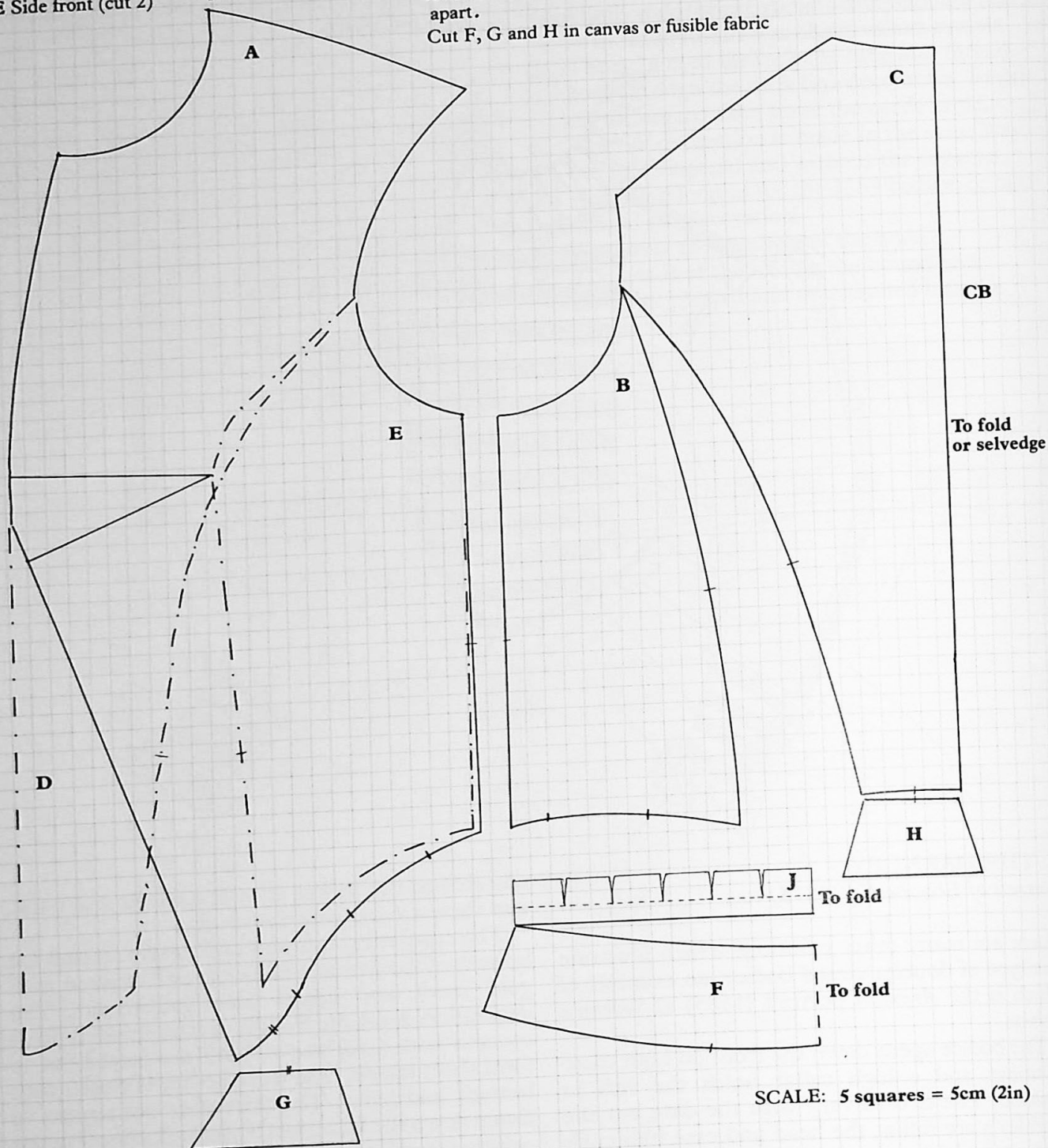
The epaulettes, cuff tops and tassels around the bottom of the *Darnley* bodice are all covered with gold mesh and edged with gold braid. The decoration down the front is scarlet-braided braid covered with gold lace — both are frayed out to form short tassels. The front bodice is closed with buttons and holes. The skirt does not appear to fasten down the front, but if you look closely at the painting there are two rows of braid on the skirt just below the point of the bodice indicating otherwise.

Darnley, or Closed, bodice

- A** One-piece front (cut 2)
- B** Side back (cut 2)
- C** Back (cut 2 to selvedge or cut 1 to fold)
- D** Front (cut 2)
- E** Side front (cut 2)

2-piece bodice front

- F** Collar (cut 1 to fold)
- G** CF tassets (cut 2)
- H** Tassets (cut 12)
- J** Pickadils — make by bagging in fabric or cut in leather
- — — — Alternative cut out line for 2-piece bodice front
- Cut all pieces in drill and top fabric
- A** and **D**: Cut CF in canvas and bone to dart line 1cm (1/4in) apart.
- Cut **F**, **G** and **H** in canvas or fusible fabric



SCALE: 5 squares = 5cm (2in)

Darnley sleeves

A Epaulettes (cut 2 sets)

B Sleeve (cut 2)

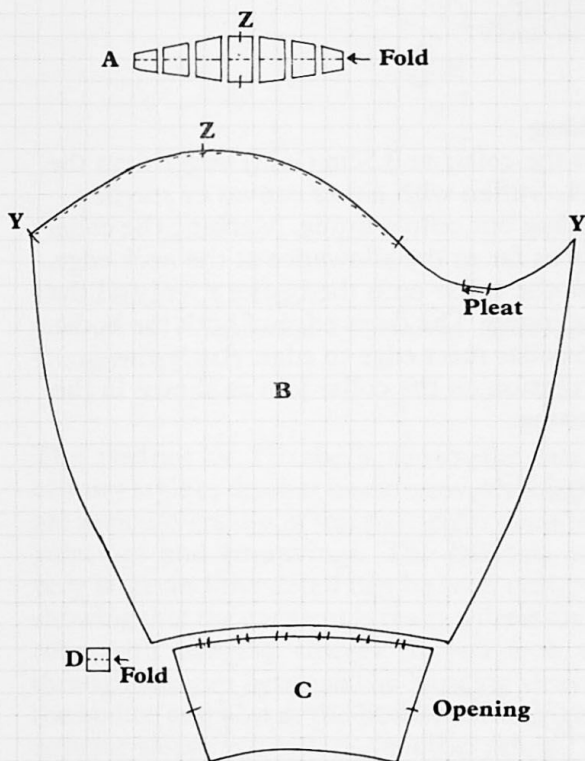
C Cuff (cut 2)

D Decoration between sleeve and cuff (cut 14)

Tubes of lawn or organza to thread through epaulette and cuff decoration:

Epaulette 7.5 × 24cm (3 × 9½in) (cut 2)

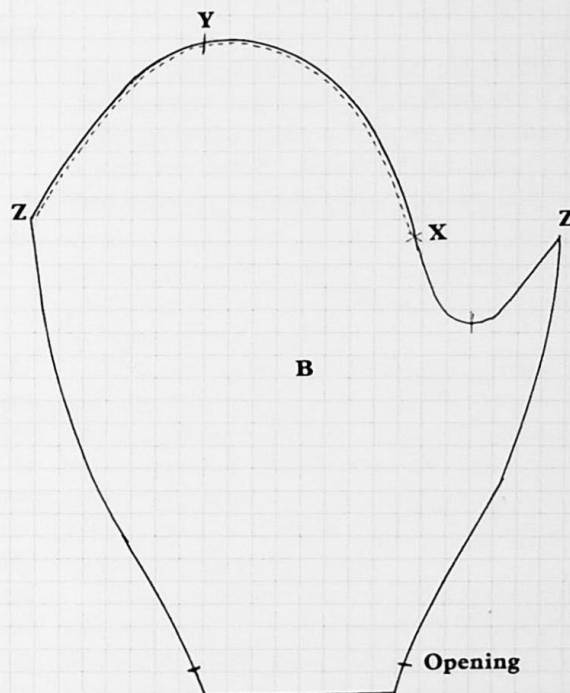
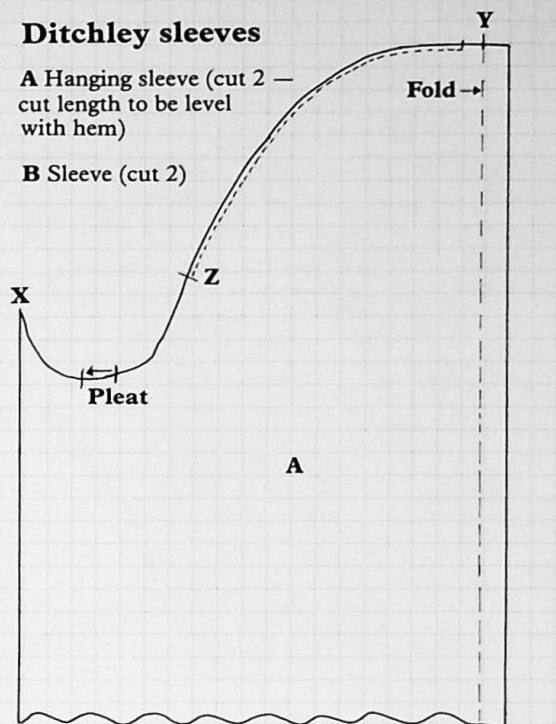
Cuff 5 × 28 cm (2 × 11in) (cut 2)



Ditchley sleeves

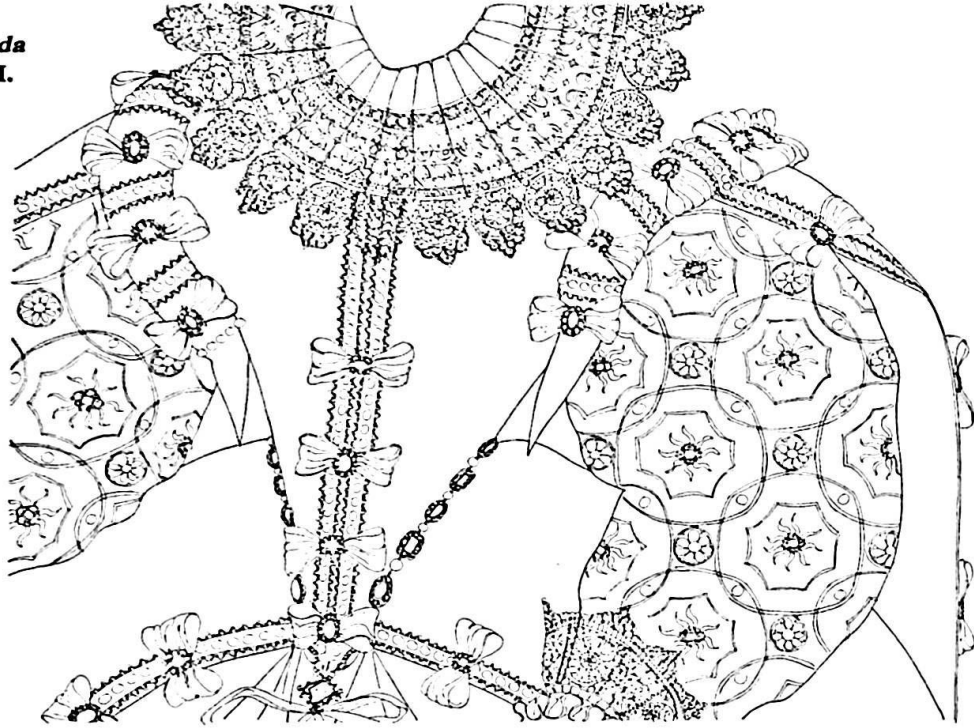
A Hanging sleeve (cut 2 — cut length to be level with hem)

B Sleeve (cut 2)



SCALE: 1 square = 2.5cm (1in)

Detail from *The Armada*
portrait of Elizabeth I.

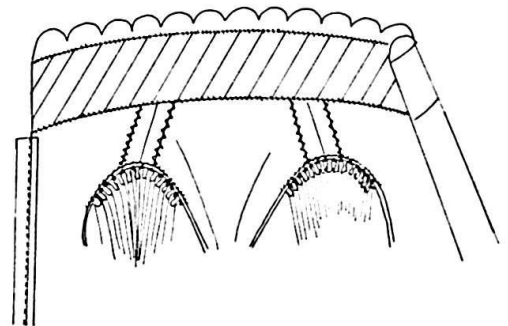
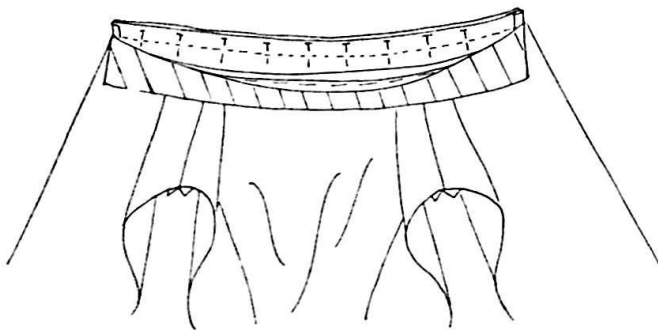
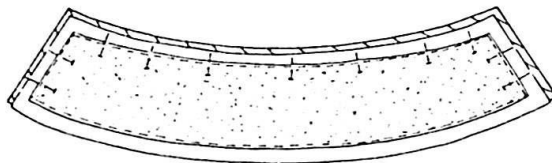


Making up

Make as for the basic bodice. It can be cut in two ways, either with the front in one piece with a dart under the decoration, or with a seam curving from the armhole towards the waist. Bone the front panel as per pattern for both versions to keep the point straight.

Finishing

1. Cut the collar at 0.5cm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in) larger than the neck. Stiffen with either canvas or stayflex and bag out onto a lining. Machine the collar only as far as the allowance at the neck edge.
2. Ease the collar onto the bodice evenly all the way round. The front edge of both the bodice and collar meet edge to edge. Apply the decoration on the collar join as shown in the painting.

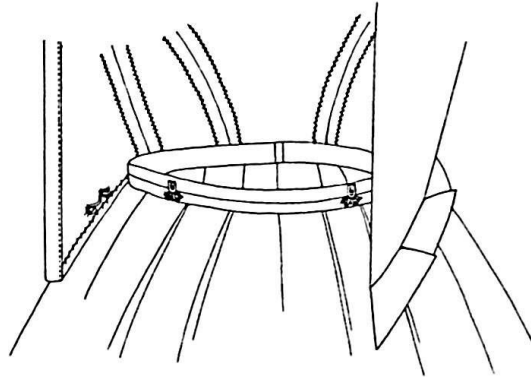
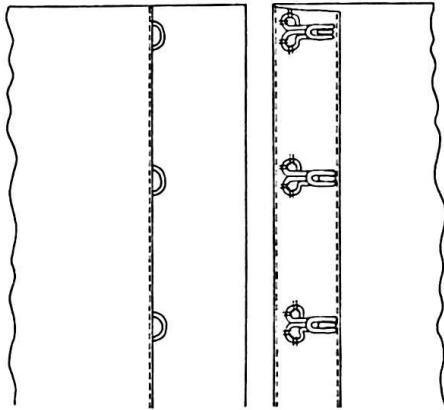


3. Put on the hooks and loops. Place an inlay behind the fastening, catching the edge of the bodice onto the inlay to make a very tight fastening.
4. Bag out the tassets as collar stiffening with canvas or stayflex and apply to the bottom of the bodice — see *The phoenix* bodice.
5. Put the decoration onto the sleeve and then make up easing the body of the sleeve onto the cuff.
6. Finish the armhole and sleeve head and set

into the armhole as for *The phoenix*.

7. Stitch the pickadils onto the collar and cuffs.
8. Sew on buttons down the front to simulate buttons and holes.

The bodice does not need to be attached to the skirt if it fits well. If they part when the arms are raised, put hooks onto the outside of the skirt waistband and bars onto the inside of the bodice so that the skirt hangs from the bottom of the bodice.



D. THE DITCHLEY

Portrait of Elizabeth I by Marcus Gheeraerts the Younger (c.1592)

The portrait of Elizabeth shows the late 16th-century style of dress at its extreme, although there are various versions of this particular dress in other paintings and engravings. The painting itself is very large and the detail can be seen quite clearly showing that the garment is really a dress and over-robe with hanging sleeves. If you look closely through the gap between the hanging sleeves and the bodice and also at the bottom of the righthand hanging sleeve you will see another fabric. This is reputed to be gold and silver tissue. The fabric for the white front of the dress is enhanced by a lattice of appliquéd strips of fabric, and puffs surrounding the jewels. There are about 270 jewels in all which would have to be on any re-creation to make the pattern complete, although the jewels appear at first to be random, the colours actually run diagonally and are repeated about every three rows.

This number of jewels does not allow for any around the back of the dress itself, not does it include the belt or any of the jewellery — it is a very grand dress indeed. Well may Elizabeth I have been thought of as an Icon.

The white skirt is on the grain around the bottom and has no train. The top of the skirt is shaped and has a tuck at the edge of the farthingale. Having made quite a few dresses of this type, the tuck, which in this period was often pinned in position, is, in my experience, a good place to make adjustments to the length of the skirt.

When looking at the bodice, notice that there are, in fact, two — one the white and jewelled dress bodice in which the padded sleeves are set, ending in a lace cuff; the other the back bodice of gold and silver tissue with the turnback of white, decorated with jewels, and into which the hanging sleeves are set. The long point of the stomacher front would tilt the farthingale and skirt, pushing the front down and making the back bodice appear quite short. The illusion of the long point is completed by the jewelled belt.



The ruff is a large, open ruff and is probably pinned down to the neckline of the dress. Behind the head can be seen a wired collar, covered with a very fine fabric, and decorated with jewels, from which a veil would fall.

Making up

I am not going to give detailed instructions for how to make the dress since I feel anyone who is asked to make such a costume does not need to read this book. I shall just go over a few main points on the use of the materials for the best possible effects.

With such an elaborate dress, it is best to fit a toile, so that at the second fitting it will be nearly finished when seen by the actress. The designer must see it in the workroom at each stage because the work and money involved in making such a dress today would be considerable — when I made it in 1972 for Glenda Jackson, it cost approximately £200.

The fabric used was a pale grey, slub rayon used on the wrong side, giving texture and sheen without looking like the fashionable curtain fabric it was. The back was red and gold coloured furnishing brocade. The lattice in the background was made up of 10cm (4in) tubes of silk organza stitched and turned, intersected by jewels made up of six pearls and a coloured stone glued onto a gold plastic mount. This way of making jewels is quick, easy to sew onto a dress and they are large enough to look effective without taking over and becoming too 'musical comedy'. The pearls around the edge of the hanging sleeves, the hem and down the sides of

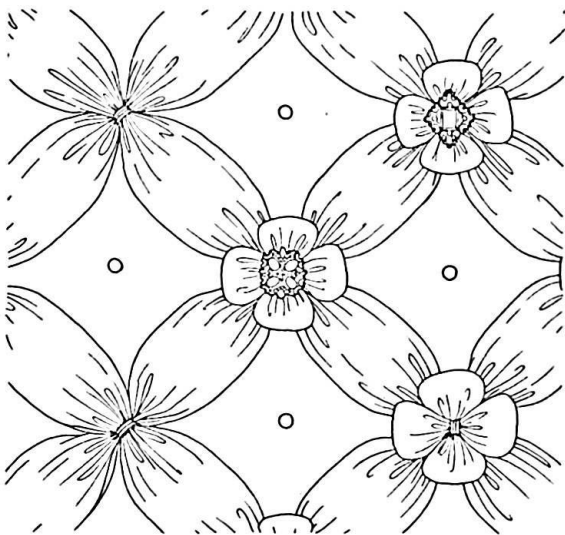
the stomacher were half pearls in strips, first glued and then stitched.

The inside dress was decorated only as far as it can be seen, the back being made in calico and laced. The stomacher was very stiff, made in canvas on drill and machined into channels filled with corset steels. The skirt was also open at the back so that it would be easier to put on. The padded sleeves were set into this dress.

The brocade on the back bodice was quite soft, having only one bone down either side of the front fastening. The bottom was piped. The skirt was cartridge pleated onto a petersham, and the bodice stabbed onto this. The hanging sleeves were stitched into this bodice which, in turn, was fastened with mantel hooks to just above the top of the corset. The side fronts of the overdress hooked onto the under bodice.

After making the hanging sleeve the difficulty was getting the sleeves, which were heavy, to support themselves at the head. They consist of the two layers of fabric, plus a layer of fluffy domette and all the jewels. As a result, the padded sleeve was pushed down by the hanging sleeve. The problem was partially solved by putting a crinoline steel support inside the head of the hanging sleeve, and extra padding in the dress sleeve. Sadly time defeated a real solution which would have had to be found if this dress had been for a stage play and not television.

The whole operation of dressing Miss Jackson, including a full wig change, took four people about 20 minutes.



BODICES

Make and decorate the inner and outer bodices.

SKIRTS

1. Make both skirts.
2. On the inside skirt keep the straight of the grain level with the ground and shape from the top. Leave about 15cm (3in) extra length on the inside skirt.
3. Cartridge pleat onto a strong petersham and level by pinning-in the tuck around the edge of the farthingale at the fitting.
4. Cartridge pleat the overskirt onto a petersham, and level the hem of the overskirt at the fitting. It will probably be straight at both top and bottom.

The Ditchley bodice

Under bodice

A Stomacher front — 16 rigilenes, 4 steels (cut 1)

B Side front (cut 2)

C Back (cut 2)

----- Alternative cut out line
for under bodice

B1 Strap (cut 2)

B2 Side back — add on
turnback as for Ditchley,
if required

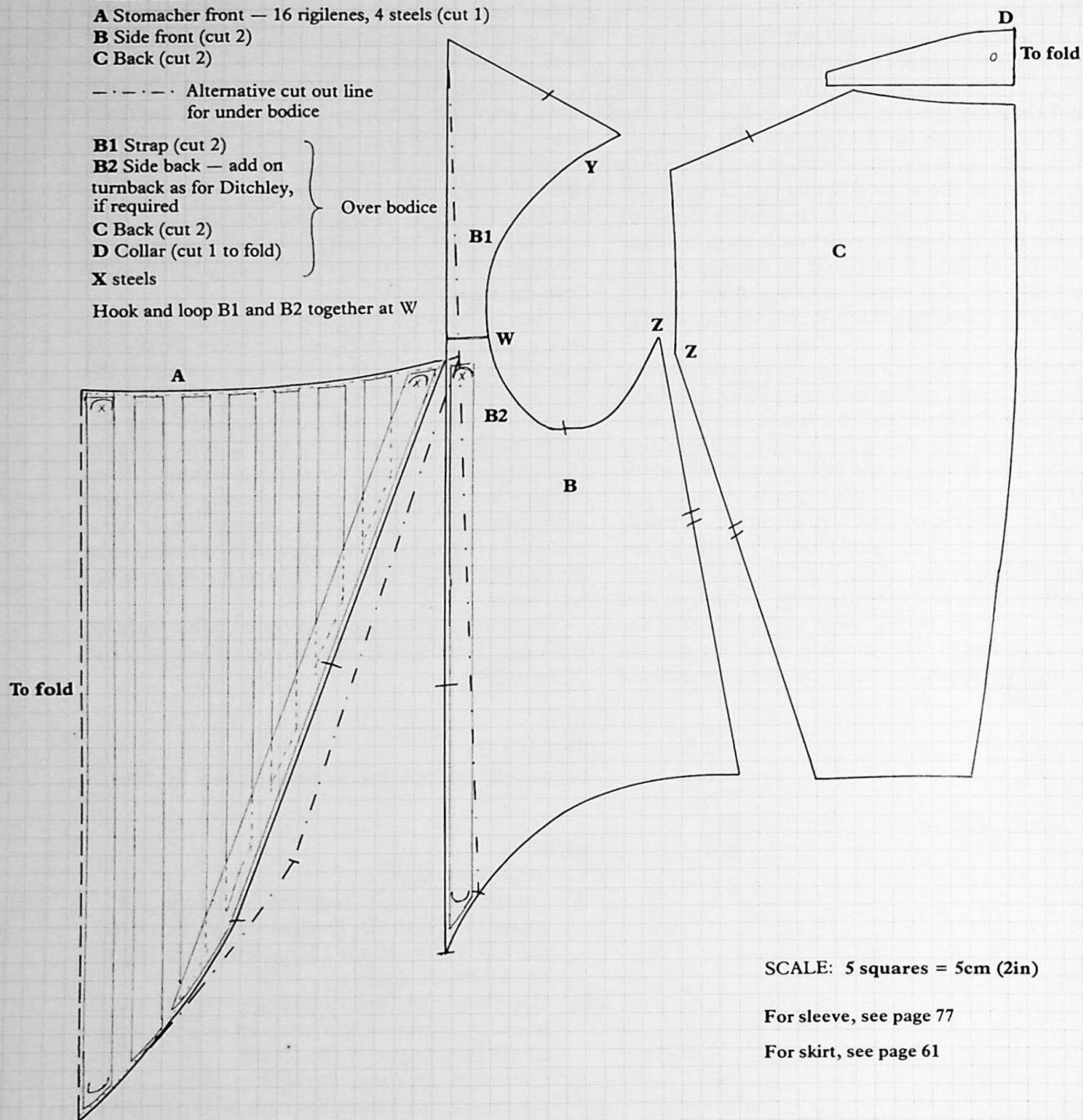
C Back (cut 2)

D Collar (cut 1 to fold)

X steels

Hook and loop B1 and B2 together at W

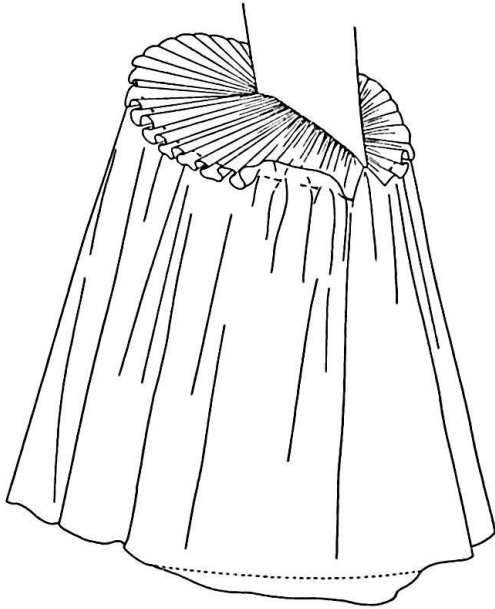
Over bodice



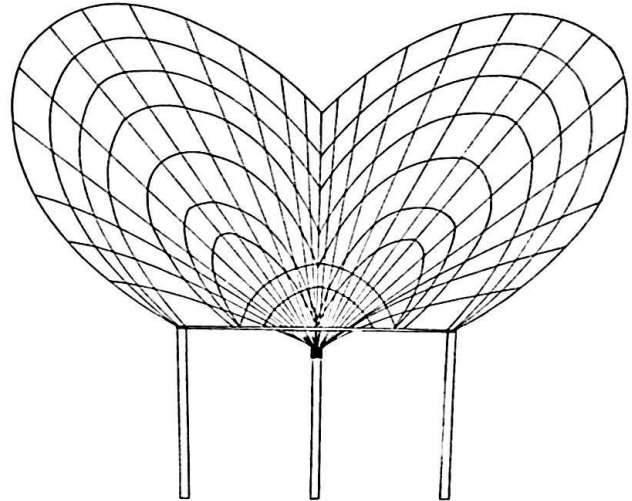
SCALE: 5 squares = 5cm (2in)

For sleeve, see page 77

For skirt, see page 61

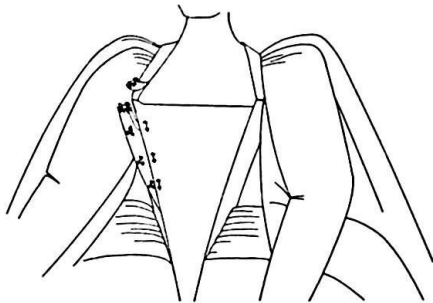
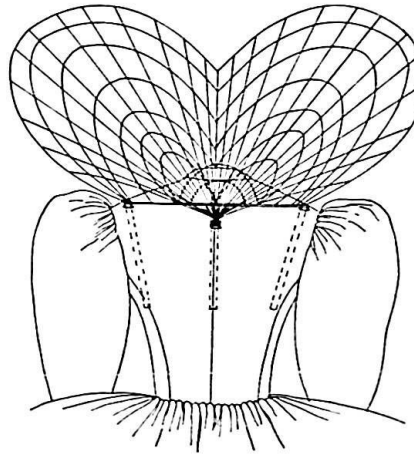


The collar at the back was made from wire soldered together and there were half the number of wires shown in the portrait. The collar was covered with a very fine chiffon, applied flat on the front, and pleated at the back and allowed to fall from the bottom of the frame to the ground. The edge was covered with gold braid and the jewels stitched to the braid.



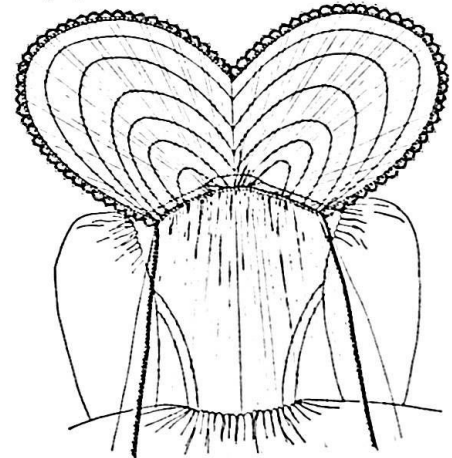
SLEEVES

1. Make up both pairs of sleeves, supporting the inside sleeve with either a pad or a cane or crinoline steel frame. It will be necessary to cartridge pleat both pairs of sleeves into the heads, so both bodices need to be bound off and edge stitched.
2. The fastening in the over robe at the top of the corset needs to be tight or the weight of the sleeve will pull it off the shoulder. If there is a small stand collar with tabs at the back of the bodice neck this will hold the ruff support.



THE WIRED COLLAR

The wires that form the shape of the collar can be drawn together into three bunches, one on either side and one in the CB. Attach these to lengths of crinoline steel about 25cm (10in) long and make three buttonholes in the back of the bodice for the steels to slot into.



14. RUFFS

ARUFF began life as a frill on the top of the chemise collar band, and by the late 1550s had become a highly decorated box pleated ruff, with the outer edges still free. By 1560 it became more formalized, being precisely stitched at the edge into 'figures of eight'.

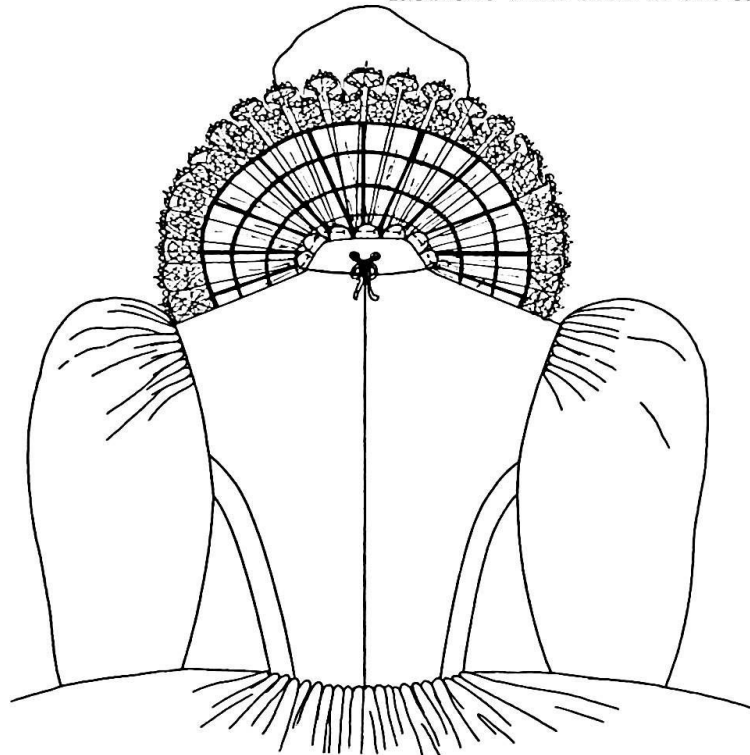
The ruff develops in size throughout the 1570s until it reaches a width of 5-10cm (2-4in) and a depth of 5cm (2in). It is clear from the portraits at the end of the 80s that the women who laundered and set the ruffs had become highly skilled at what must have been a very difficult and laborious task.

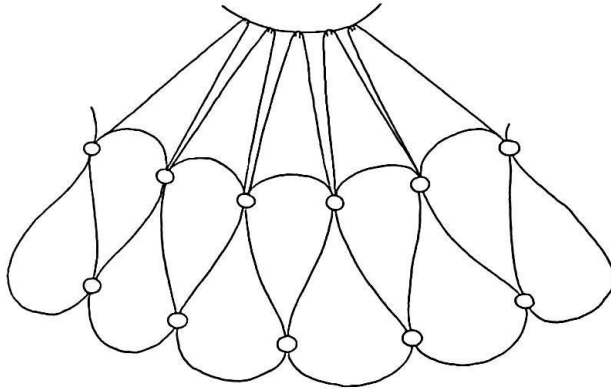
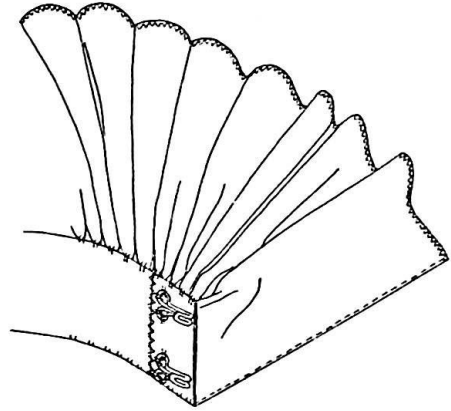
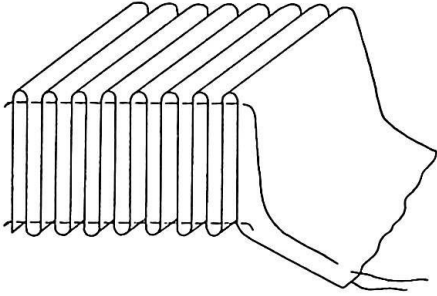
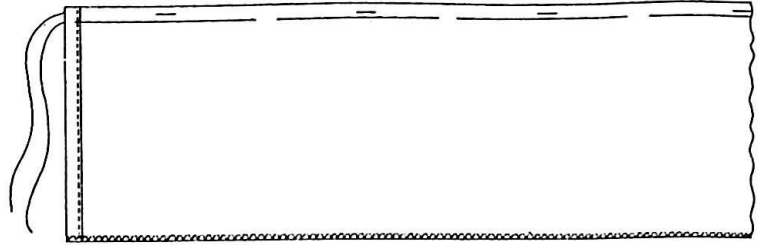
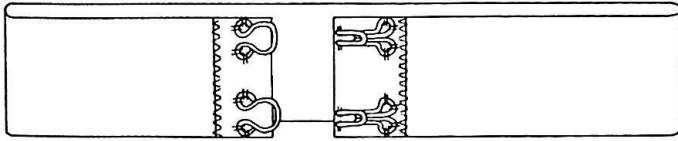
By 1590 many ruffs seem to be shoulder width and 5-7cm (2-3in) deep. There are many variations in the way they are pleated — they can be single or double; formed or unformed; shallow or deep and some are open. Such open ruffs are made in the same way as the large round ruffs but instead of being fastened at the front they are pulled down and pinned into the open neckline of the dress. The large ruffs were held in position by a 'supportasse' to which the ruff was pinned and this in turn was attached to the 'pickadils', or tabs, stitched to the top of the collar.

While working on *Elizabeth R* for BBC television, the ruffs, being in close-up, had to be immaculate. We made gold wire frames — a half circle for the open ruffs and for the large closed ruff a circular frame that hooked together by extending the centre wires beyond the edge at the front, forming them into hooks and loops.

To the top of the dress collar I stitched 'pickadils' of dark red leather or stiffened and turned out tabs of fabric to match or contrast with the dress. The stand collar of the costume must be stiff, as must the band on the ruff. If you attach the ruff to the frame with either pins or stitching, the stiff band on the ruff will then just slide into the collar of the dress once the artiste is dressed. Stitch on three size 4 press-fasteners — one each on either side of the front and one at the CB. These will hold the ruff in place very securely. To add a little touch of authenticity you can put a bow on the CB of the collar to imitate the tie that would have originally held the ruff in place.

By 1605 the flat collar and standing band, had become fashionable. The latter was worn on a 'supportasse', often highly decorated. The two fashions were seen at the same time and were an





ideal way of displaying the superb lace of the period. The ruff and the standing band can also be worn without support, as falling bands.

In Holland and Spain the ruff continued as a piece of fashionable dress after its decline in this country. Both countries had their own distinctive styles.

Making up

There are four methods by which a ruff can be made for stage or screen. It is, after all, just a formalized frill on a band. The band needs to be made of something stiff such as two layers of good petersham ribbon or skirt petersham and the fabric of the ruff needs to look fine and gauze like.

For experiments use tarlatan, as this makes pretty ruffs and is easy to handle but is not very durable. Stiffened silk organza is the lightest both in look and weight, but it has to be looked after very carefully. Nylon marquisette is tough but difficult to handle at the pleating stage and is best made by method 4.

The length and width of the fabric needed to make the frill will depend on the type of ruff. The wider the ruff, the longer the length will be, varying between 4.5 and 13.5m (5 and 15yd).

METHOD 1

1. Cut a length of petersham for the neck band; finish the ends and put on hooks and bars or ties, and mark the quarters.
2. Cut or tear the frill fabric and zig-zag both edges. [Nylon horsehair can also be used for this method.] Mark the width of the band along the length of the fabric. If the band is 2.5cm (1in) deep mark 3.5cm (1 $\frac{3}{8}$ in) intervals along the length of the fabric.
3. Run two threads through the top edge in a method similar to cartridge pleating and then draw it up like a concertina.
4. Oversew the top and bottom onto the band.
5. Finish by stitching or sticking the eights together. They can be decorated with beads or pearls.

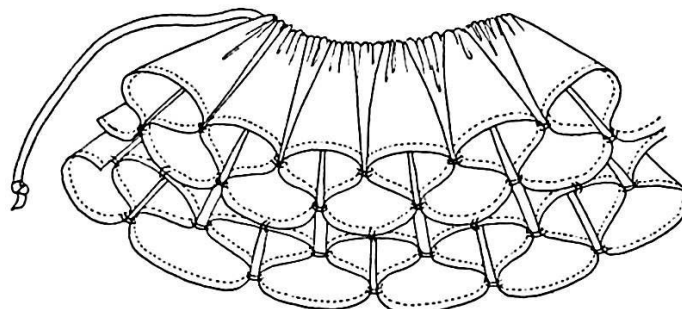
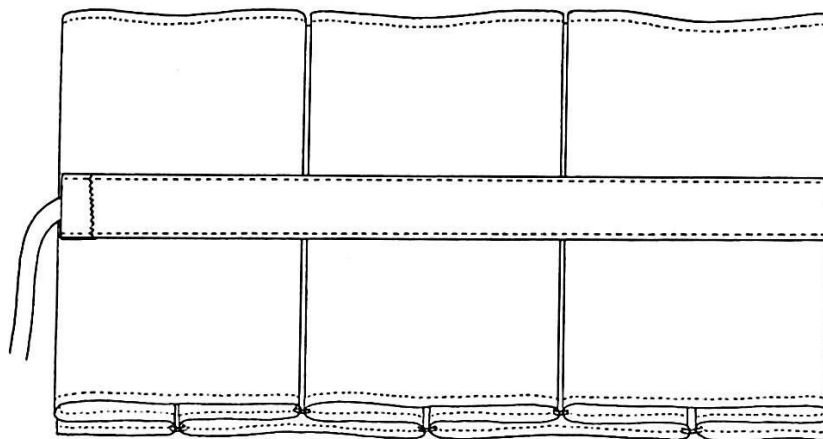
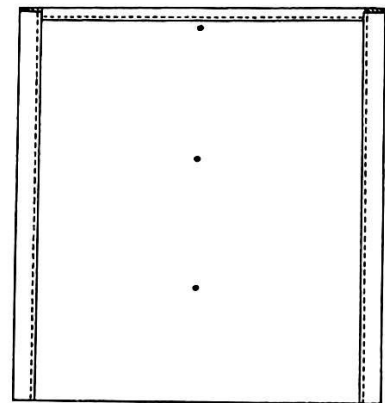
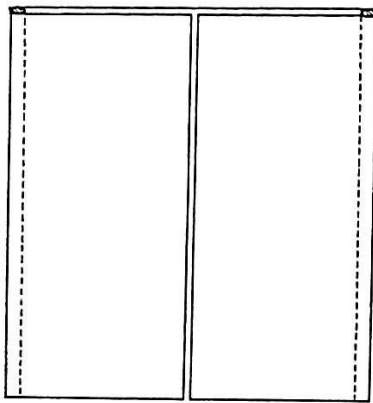
METHOD 2

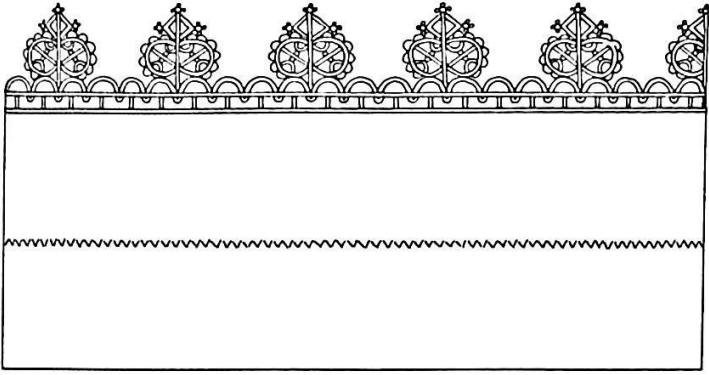
This ruff just gathers on its tape when tied round the neck and always makes a double ruff. It can be as mean or full as you wish, but you should always make a sample first in order to work out the length. It is a good one for those that need to be washed or made untrimmed, for servants, men, etc. (All width measurements are samples only and will vary with the designs.)

1. If the fabric is fine enough you can use it double.
Double thickness: cut 15cm (6in) wide
Single thickness: cut 7.5cm (3in) wide
2. Stitch piping cords on the edge along the

length of the fabric. If using double fabric, press in a crease down the centre and fold the two outside edges to meet the centre line. Pipe on these folds. If using single fabric, pipe both outside edges.

3. Mark down the centre at 2.5cm (1in) intervals ready to box pleat.
4. Box pleat on the marks. The ruff will take about twice the neck measurement after pleating.
5. Stitch a tape down the centre.
6. Thread a cord through to gather up.
7. Stitch the ends of the eights.





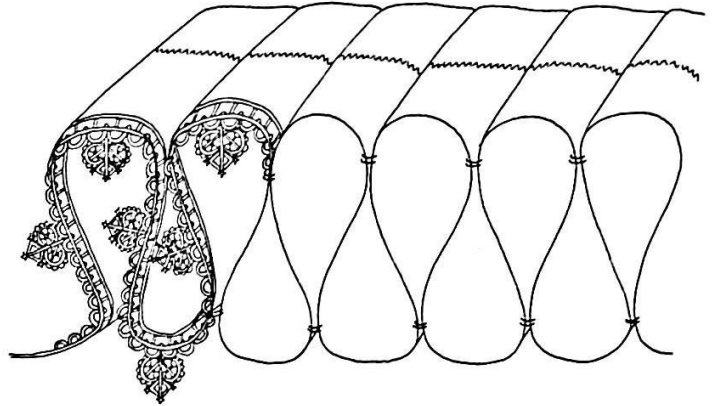
METHOD 3

Elizabethan ruffs were not made in either of the two previous ways but were constructed like enlarged, organized frills. I think this is still the most successful, prettiest and, in many ways, the easiest method to make them today. If made in the right materials they can easily be washed or cleaned.

To look right, the collar of the costume must be stiff and deep enough so that when the ruff is in place it makes the head look as if it is sitting on a plate.

1. Prepare neck band as for Method 1.
2. Cut the fabric and zig-zag the outer edge.
3. Apply the lace to the outer edge.
4. Apply a very fine sprung steel wire or buttonhole gimp for approximately every 2.5cm (1in) of the ruff's width. Do this by zig-zagging over the buttonhole gimp or sprung steel wire using a machine foot with a gimp hole in it. You may have to put in two or three wires, depending on the width of the ruff, from the neck to the outside edge.
5. If the ruff is made in fine fabric, eg silk organza, you will have to paint the ruff with stiffener used for stiffening hats. For large ruffs more than one coat may be needed.

This process is very messy and best done outside or in an airy room. Fix up a clean tape to act as a clothes line. Using a 2.5cm (1in) paint



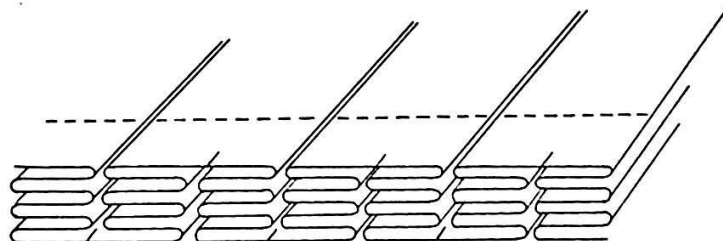
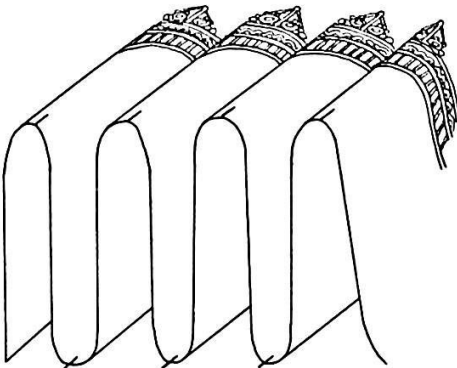
brush, paint the fabric with stiffener. Leave the side you are going to pleat and stitch onto the band unstiffened approximately 1cm (½in) from the stitch line. Peg the strip in loops onto your clothes line. Dry with a hair dryer if necessary.

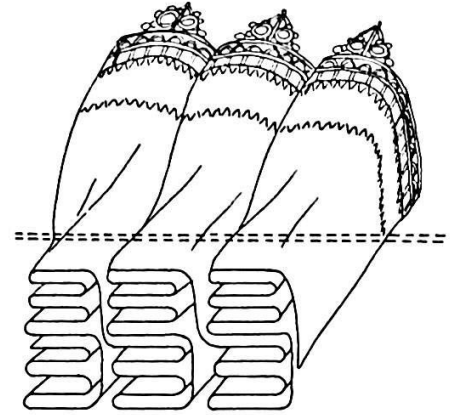
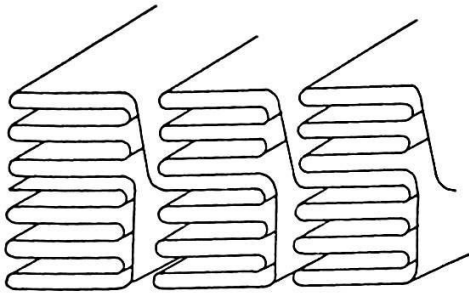
6. When dry, press with a clean steam iron — the steam will even out the stiffener. The iron will get very dirty so clean it continually or you will get dirty patches on the ruff.

Watch point

If you have lace with a definite scallop or vandyke edge this will dictate the size of the eights you are going to make. It is important to make your designer realize this.

7. Form the fabric into eights by first pinning and then glueing the eights together. They will need to be held with clips — the old-fashioned spring sort used for pin curls are the best. It is impossible to sew the eights together as they are not only very hard, but the stiff edges of the lace snag and cut the cotton.
8. Mark, on the neck edge, the tops and bottoms of the eights with pencil.
9. Start to pleat in 0.5cm (¼in) pleats. The number per eight will depend on the size of the eights, but can be anything from 2 to 10.

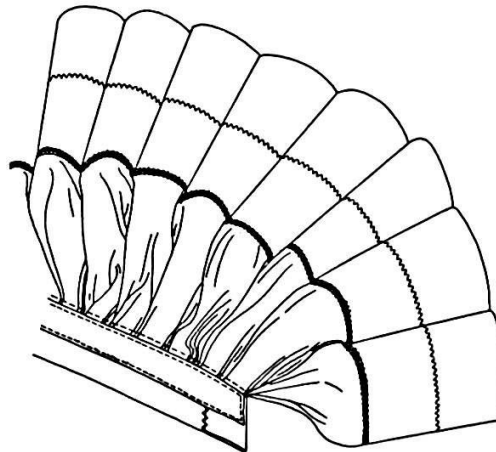




10. Put one group of pleats on top of the next.
11. The next operation is easier if you have quartered both the neck band and ruff. Pin the ruff onto the band at both sides of the CF opening, the sides and the CB. Machine across with the zip foot on the machine, forcing the groups of pleats together. You will also need a new size 16 needle and 30s cotton on the machine.
12. Cover with a tape, put on a hook and eye or ties to fasten.

13. When the ruff is completely finished, steam it forming the eights with your fingers, so that they spring from the neck edge. Stuff each hole with tissue paper as you go round so that the ones already formed aren't distorted.

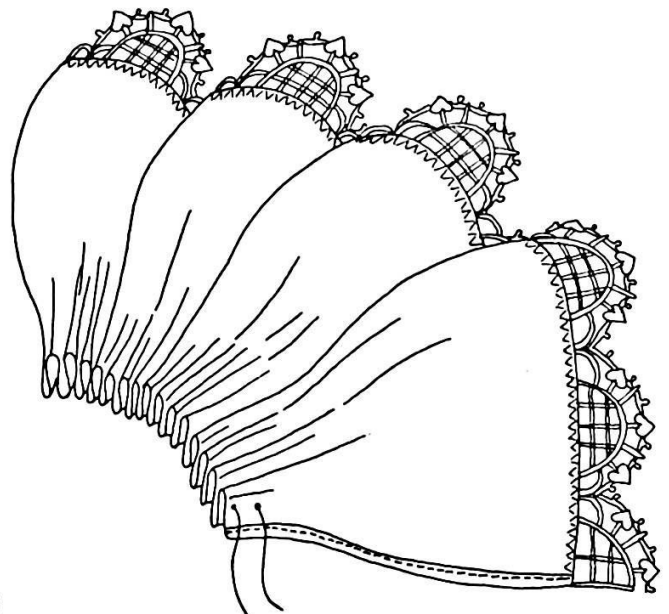
If you have a friendly carpenter get him to make you a poking stick, for ruffs that are wide and shallow, or too deep to get your fingers into. You will soon discover how skilled the original laundresses must have been.



METHOD 4

If you are making a very deep or very wide ruff, both of which will have maximum yardage, it will be easier to arrange the enormous length of fabric into tiny 5mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in) cartridge pleats, and stitch these to the top of the band. If you do use this method, however, it is best to finish the outside edge first. This must be marked out with great care to get the ruff even all the way round.

I found, when making a ruff for Celia Johnson, who appeared in the BBC's *All's Well That Ends Well*, designed by Colin Lavers, that a ruff made in nylon horsehair was too thick to pleat. However, by cartridge pleating the material onto the band in 5mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in) pleats this large cartwheel ruff worked very well.



Whichever method you use, it is as well to make a sample first. There are many ways to decorate the edges of the ruff by machining with coloured cotton over coloured or metallic cord or wool. Experiment and you will be surprised how easy and cheap it can be to get a pretty or stunning effect.



Maintenance

When you have finished your ruffs try to keep them each in its own box, and you will be surprised how long you will be able to keep them pristine.

Tarletan is not good enough if you want it to last any length of time, but is very good for practice ruffs or rehearsal ruffs. Nylon horsehair and marquisette can be swished about in soapy water and scrubbed gently with a nail brush to remove stubborn make-up. Shake or dab off as much moisture as possible and fasten round a clothes line to dry. Although both these materials last, once they are deformed you will have difficulty getting them back to their original shape.

Make-up can be cleaned off silk organza with cleaning fluid, or very gently scrubbed with a soft nail brush and water, and then re-stiffened. You will probably have to re-steam after every performance and when the ruff gets too soft, paint on a little more stiffener. It is a good idea to have a small piece of muslin or paper tissue for the actor to put under the chin to keep make-up off the ruff.

Ruffs with all over cotton lace that has been well wired will stand up to quite a lot of heavy use, but will need freshening with the kettle or steamer regularly.

15. PARTLETS AND SURCOATS

PARTLETS

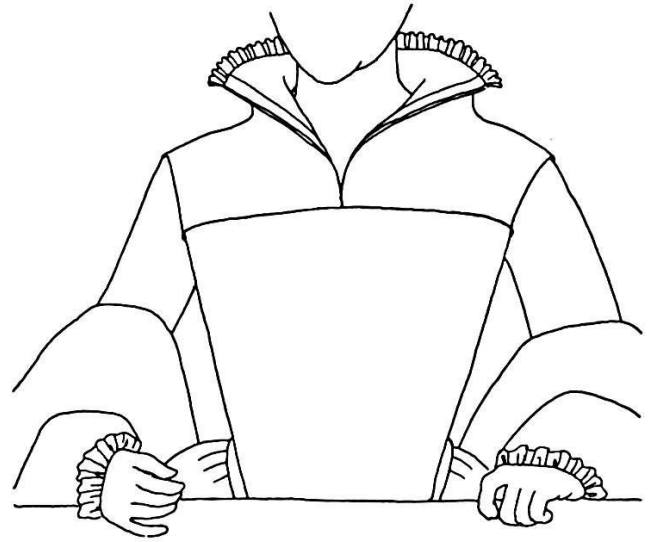
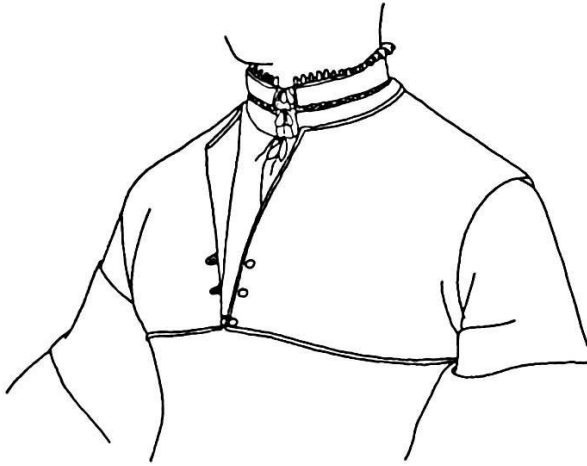
THIS is a very good accessory which can change the look of a costume in seconds. I like to think of it as a Tudor cardigan to keep the chest and back warm on a bleak winter day in a draughty house in Tudor England. It seems to have originally been a small, fur-lined shoulder cape. I know from experience that if used like this the partlet rides up around the neck — not the sort of garment to play an energetic scene in.

The partlet fits over the shoulders and buttons or hooks under the arms, and can be made with or without a collar. It fastens down the front, again with buttons, hooks or ties, and is a very stable garment.

The originals were probably cut in one piece at the back and two at the front, with no darts to shape the neck. For use today, however, if you want it to lie flat with no wrinkles you will need to dart either across the back of the neck or down the CB.

Making up

1. Cut the fabric and lining.
2. Join the shoulder seams of both lining and fabric separately.
3. Any decoration needed on the body of the partlet should be done now.
4. Bag out.
5. Press up the bottom at the back and fell the lining onto it.
6. Decorate the outside edges if required.
7. Put on hooks and bars or buttons and holes

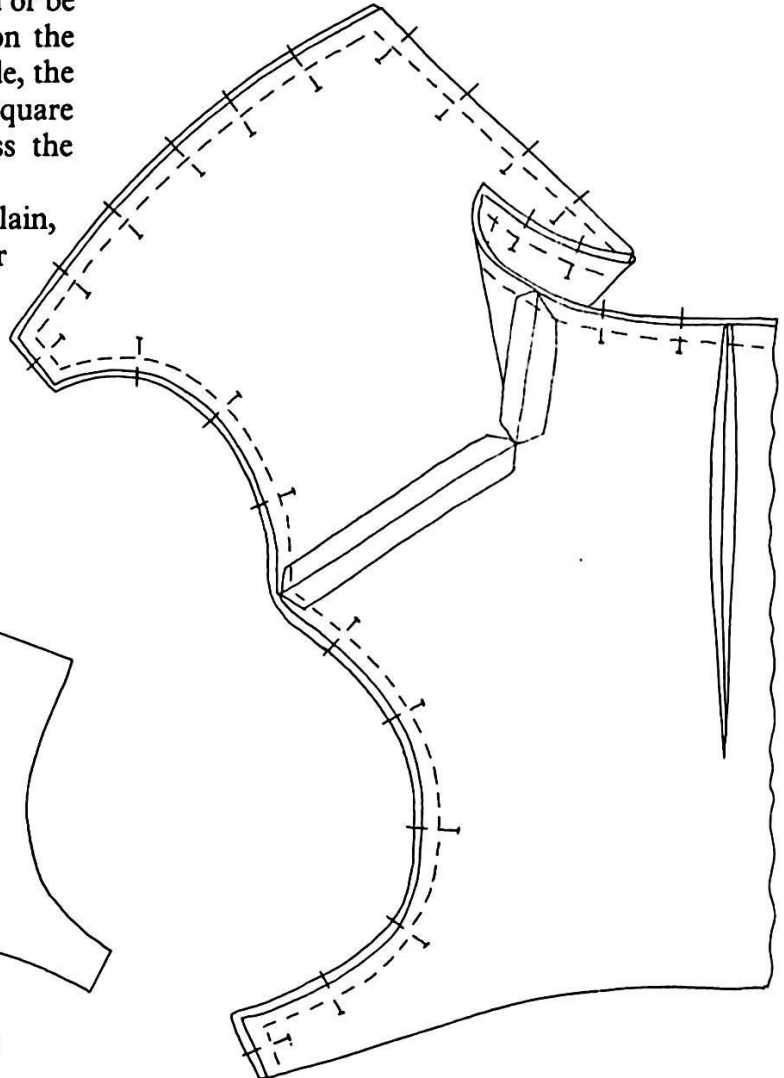
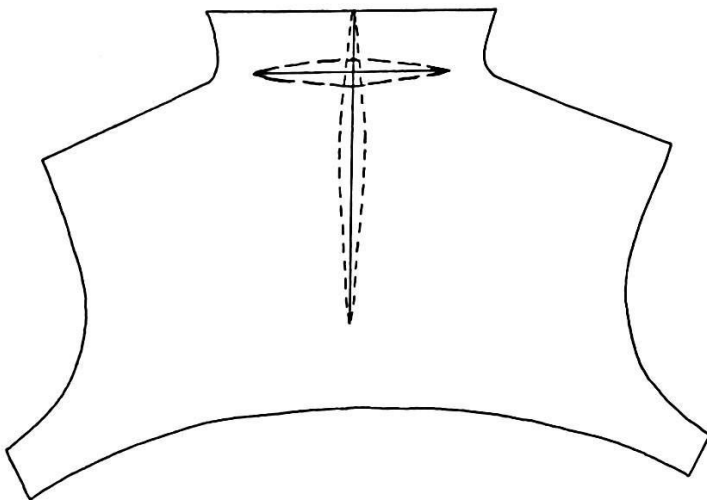


under the arms, and hooks or buttons and loops down the front.

With a little experiment you will find that the collar can be cut either close to or away from the neck, or short or tall or even with no collar at all. The armholes can be cut either to extend beyond or be within the shoulder line. It can be worn on the inside or outside of the dress. If worn outside, the bottom edge at the front comes just over the square neck of the dress and goes straight across the back.

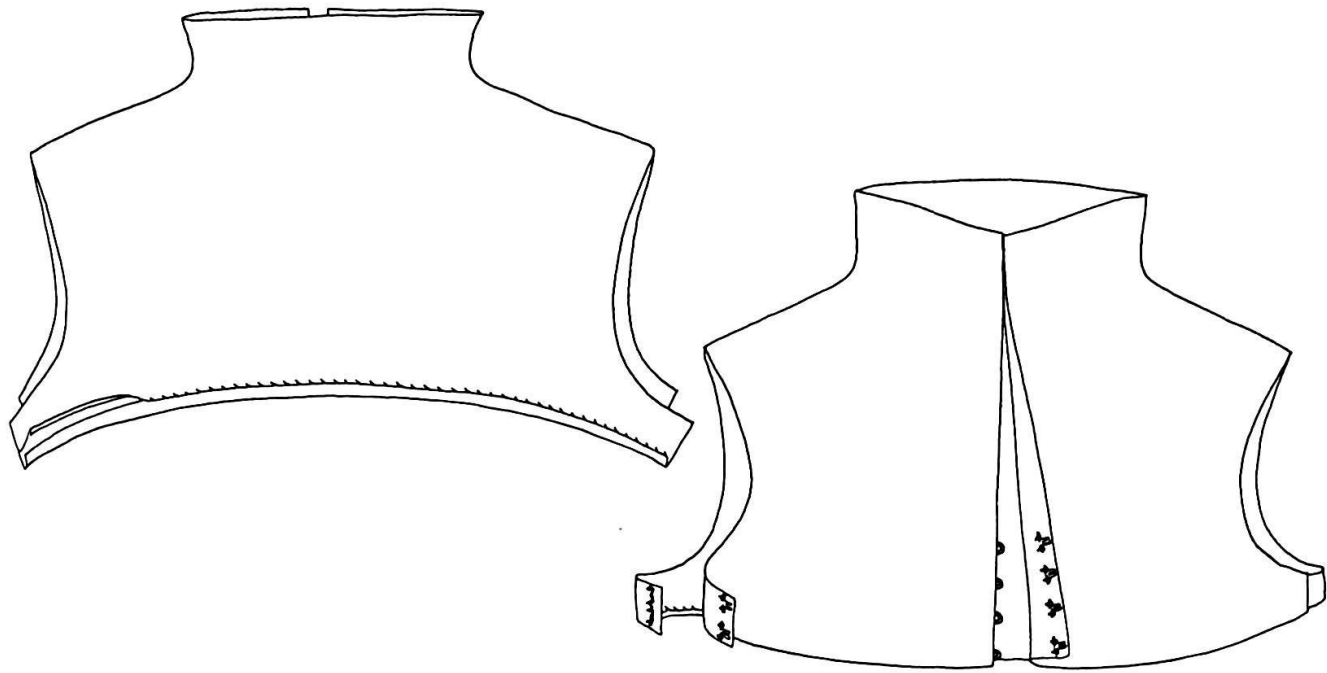
The partlet can be made in patterned or plain, in fine or coarse fabric and lined with fur or just mounted. Depending on the type of fabric used and the style of the partlet,

and also the number of performances for which it is to be worn you may need an interlining. Alternatively, put a strip of iron-on stayflex down the front, round the collar and also across the bottom to give it a sharp edge.



Above: alternative darts on back neck. Right: bagging out partlet.

Partlets and Surcoats

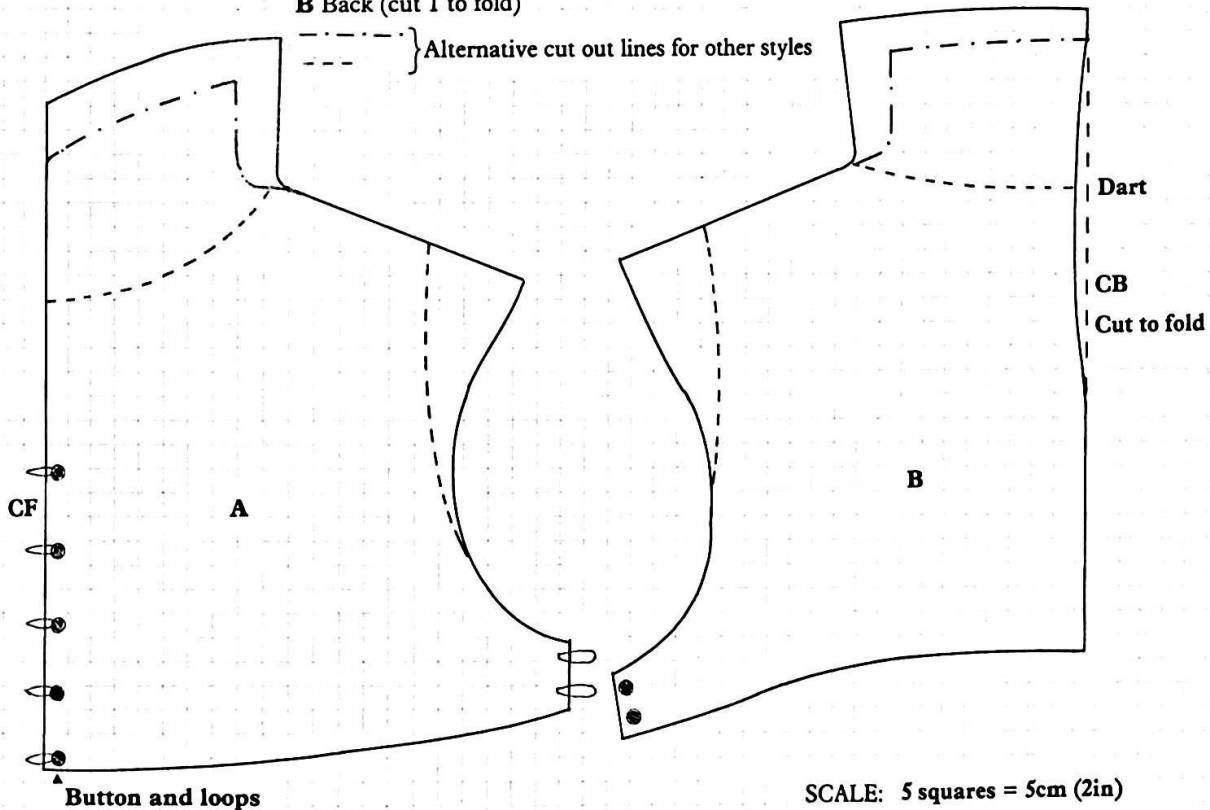


Partlet

A Front (cut 2 to selvedge)

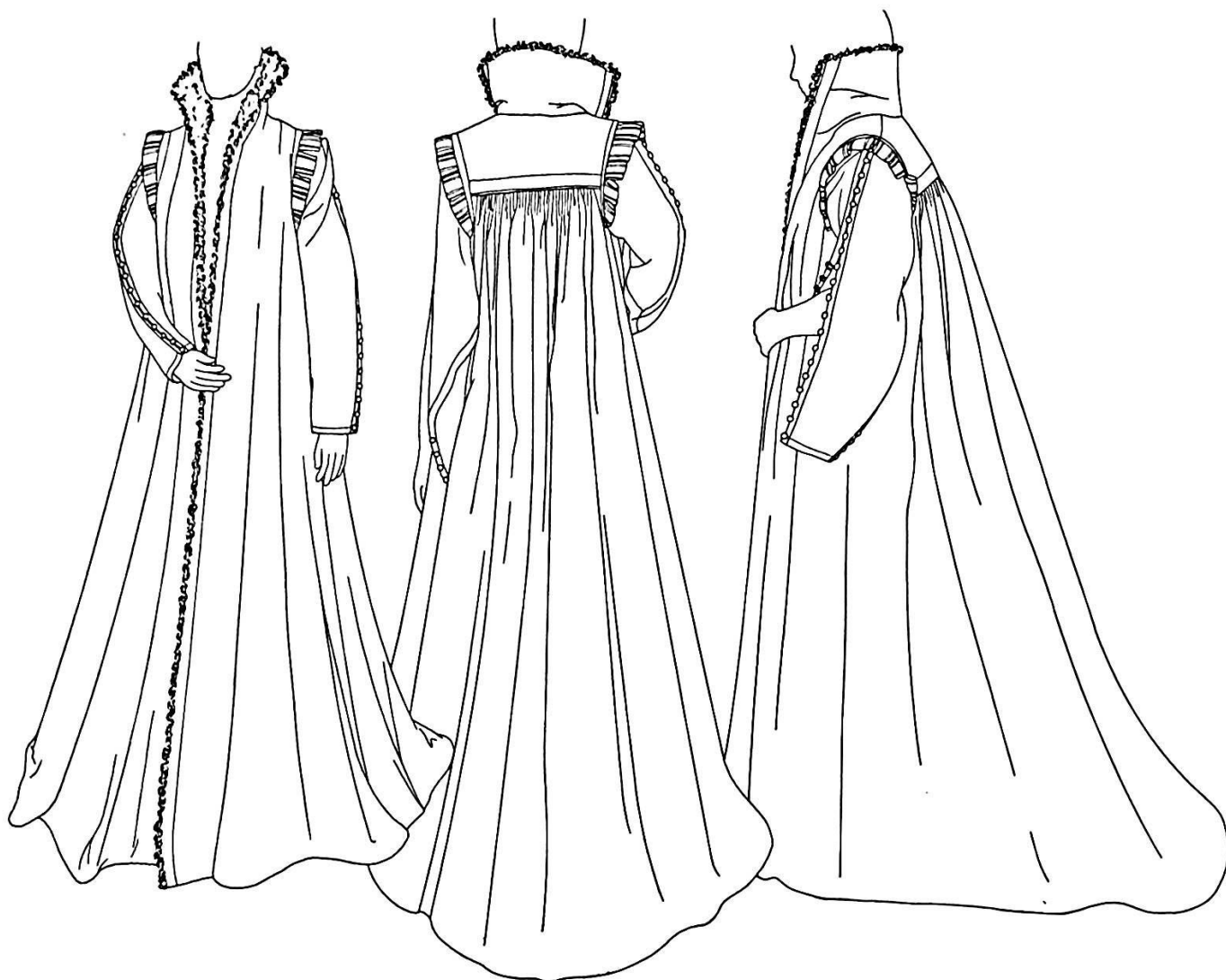
B Back (cut 1 to fold)

} Alternative cut out lines for other styles



SCALE: 5 squares = 5cm (2in)

SURCOATS



The surcoat is another very flexible garment which can be worn indoors or out.

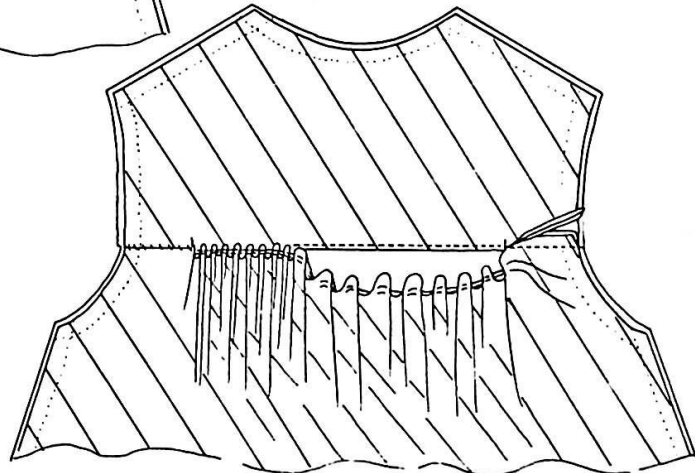
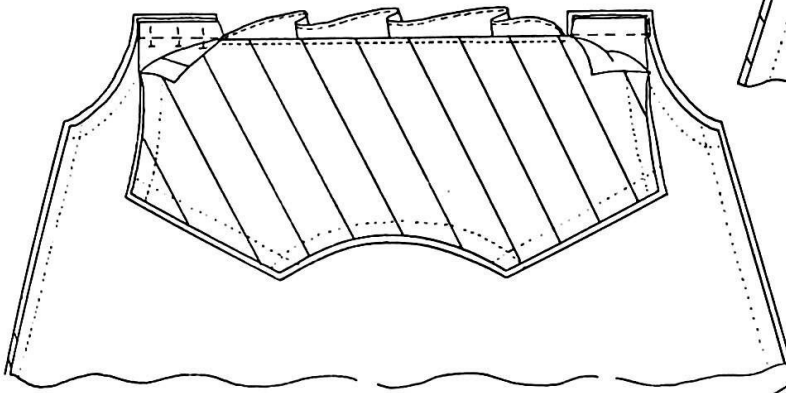
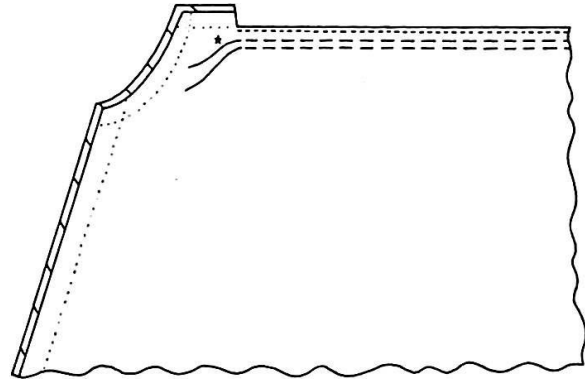
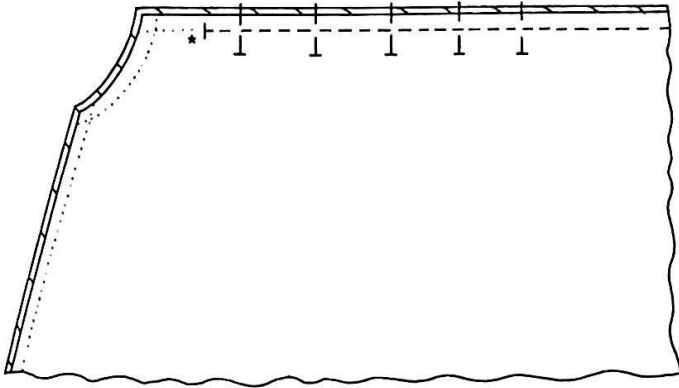
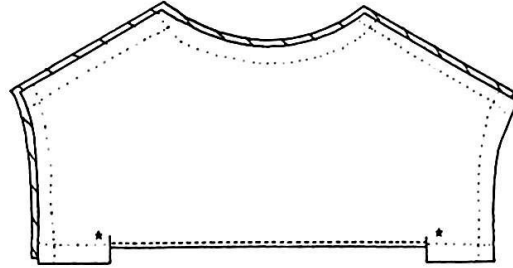
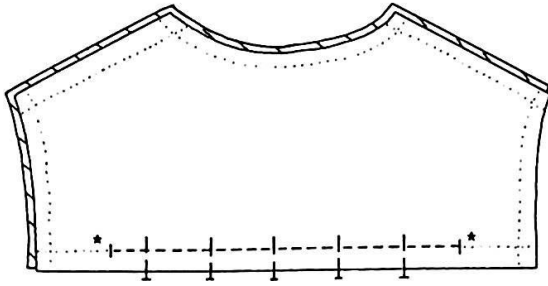
My pattern is an adaptation of an original which I developed while making *Elizabeth R*. The back can be either cartridge or flat pleated onto a yoke which comes just below the shoulder blades. This makes it hang and move well on stage.

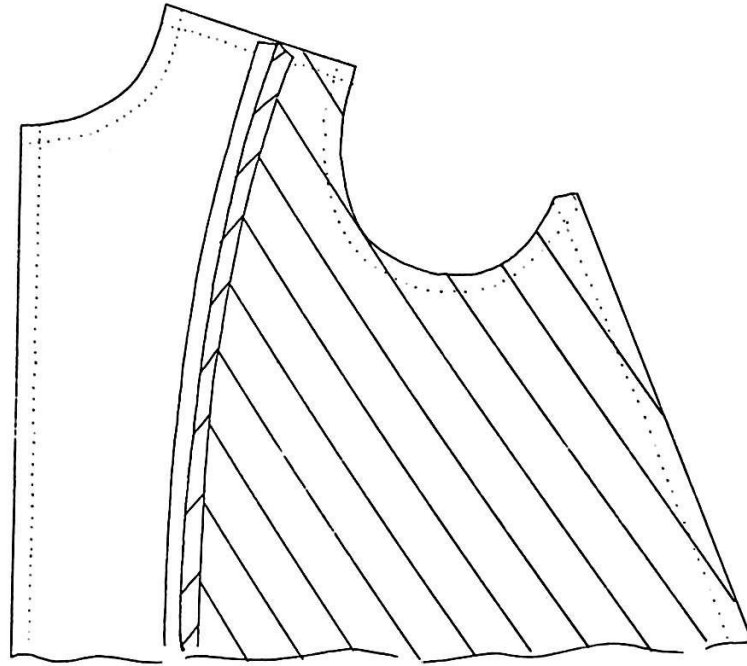
It can be made in any sort of fabric from silk to heavy wool. When using heavy fabric it is very easy to get a humped back look, but with fine fabric it is not a problem.

Designers are apt to choose thick fabric for this type of garment, or want to line them with man made fur which is also thick.

Making up

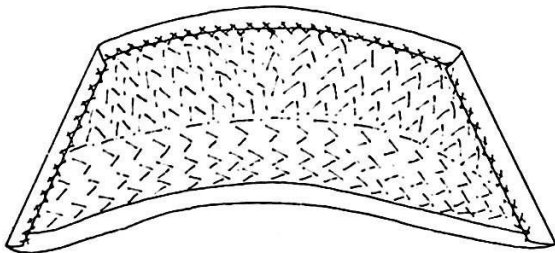
1. Cut all pattern pieces in both fabric and lining and any interlining that you feel is necessary.
2. Bag out across the bottom edge of the back yoke from * to *, press and edge stitch.
3. Stitch any wheel pieces necessary onto both lining and fabric of the body of the garment.
4. Bag out the back from * to *, press and edge stitch, and put in threads for cartridge pleating. These must be as shallow as possible, although the thickness of the fabric will dictate this.
5. Join the yoke fabric to the back from * to the armhole edge as an ordinary seam, pressing the seam allowance upwards. Finish by felling the yoke lining over the seam. Cartridge pleat the remaining back and stitch to the yoke.





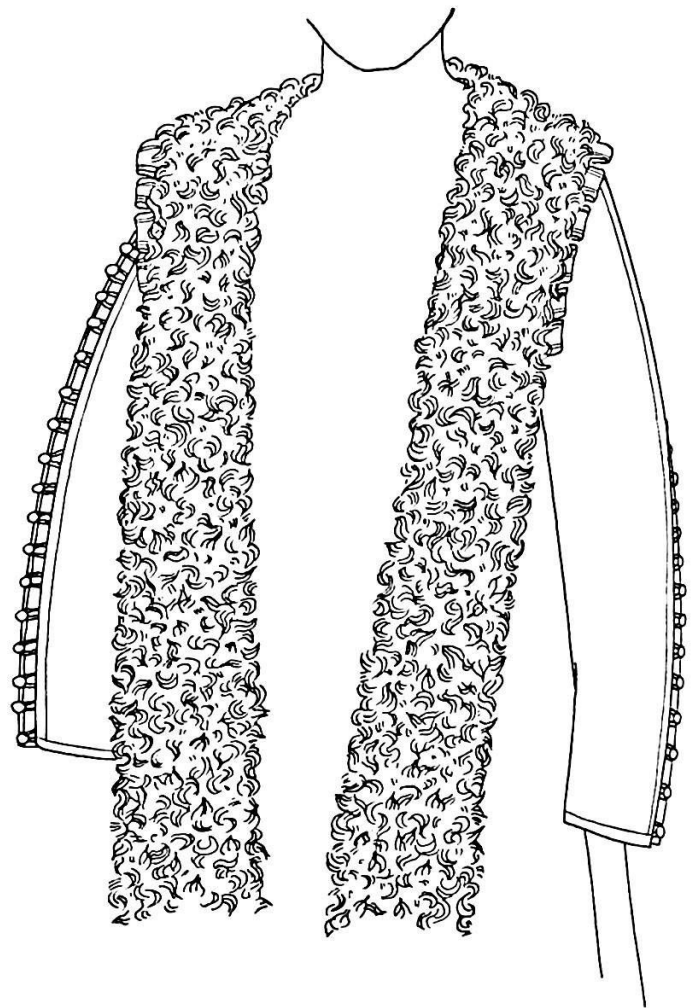
Put the fabric and the lining together and treat the back as one. Flat pleat by putting the pleating onto the top fabric of the yoke and then felling the yoke lining over the join.

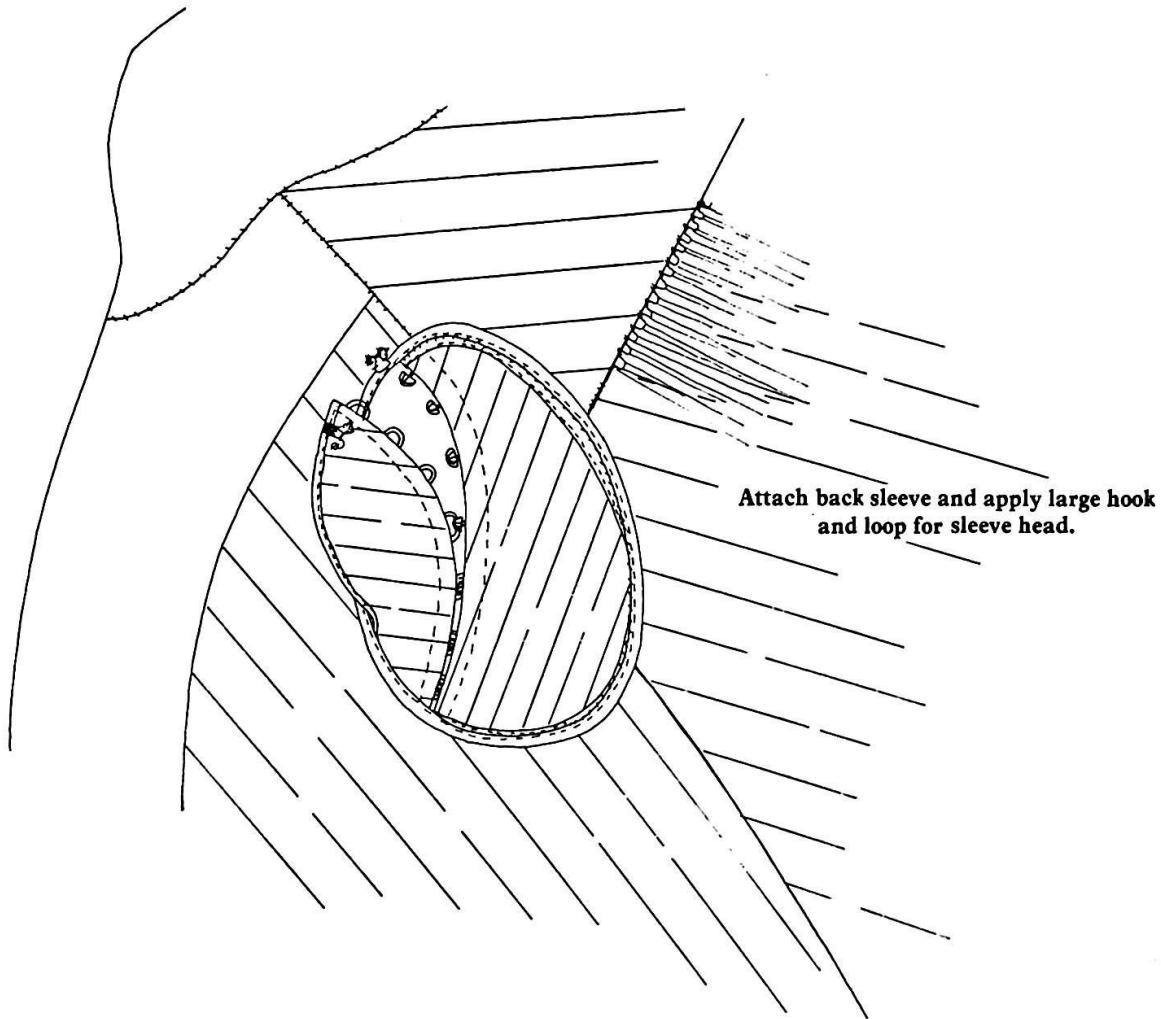
6. Put on any decoration needed across the back.
7. Join the front to the back at the shoulder and side seams.
8. Prepare the under collar. This may have to be interlined, which can be done either in the traditional way by pad stitching canvas, or by ironing on stayflex or vilene. Turn in the allowance over the interlining, herringbone down and press the edge.



The front of the coat may also need interlining.

9. Put the under collar onto the neck edge.
10. Apply the top collar by felling the under collar onto it, or bag it out.
11. Put the facings onto the linings and from now on treat them as one unit. (Any good commercial coat pattern will explain the technique of putting in the lining and facings as one.)





Alternatively put the facings onto the fronts of the garment, and then fell in the lining in the usual way. The facings will need to be wide enough to cover the lining sufficiently when the fronts are turned back, if the coat is to be worn this way.

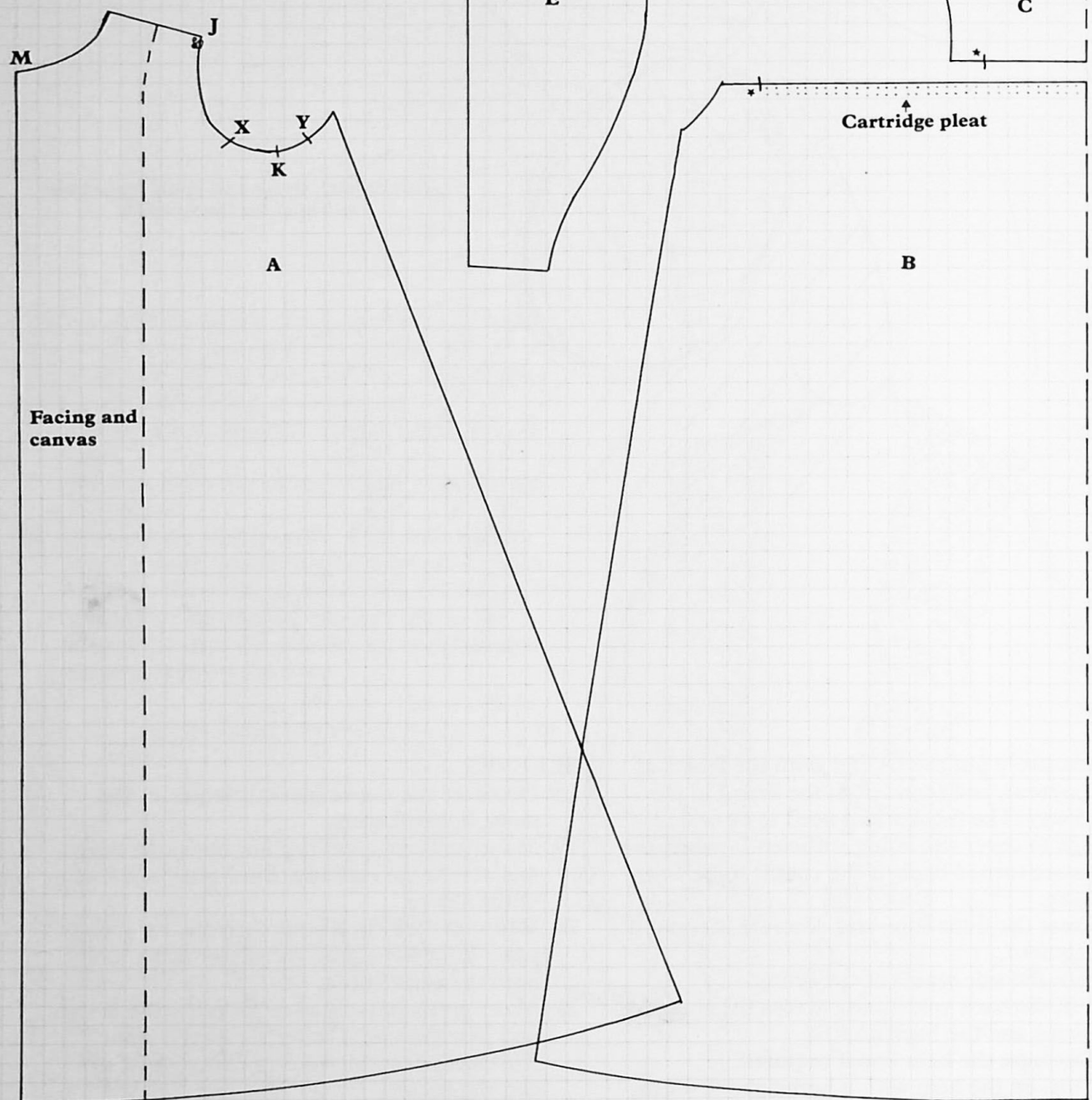
12. Press the front edge and decorate the join if required.
13. Join the side seams of the lining.
14. Fell the back yoke lining across the shoulder seams and the back neck.
15. Decorate the hem line if required.
16. Turn up the hem with a herringbone stitch, and then fell down the lining.
17. Bind over the armhole edge.

SLEEVES

18. Decorate the sleeve fabric if required and make up back seam.
19. Make up lining, and bag out down the fronts and across the cuff end. Bind over the head of the sleeve.
20. Whip into the back armhole from Y - Z and put a large hook onto the sleeve and a loop onto the sleeve head.
21. Make up the tassets as required by the design and put them onto cover the sleeve seam. This sleeve can be worn in many ways, as can the collar.

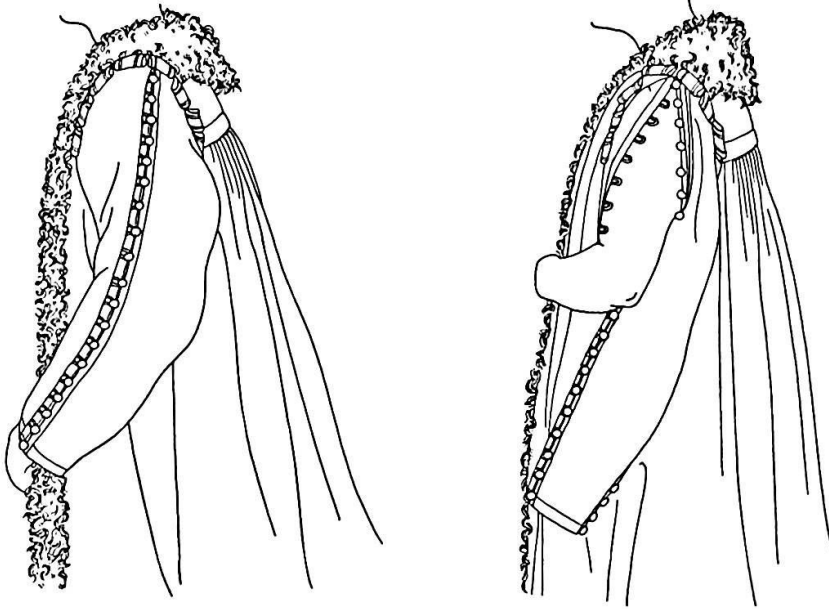
Elizabethan Surcoat

- A** Front (cut 2 plus canvas, facings and linings)
- B** Back (cut 1 plus lining to fold)
- C** Yoke (cut 1 plus lining and interlining to fold)
- D** Collar (cut 1 plus canvas and under collar to fold)
- E** Sleeve (cut 4 plus linings)
- F** Epaullette (cut 2 sets — 11 pieces each)



SCALE: 1 square = 2.5cm (1in)

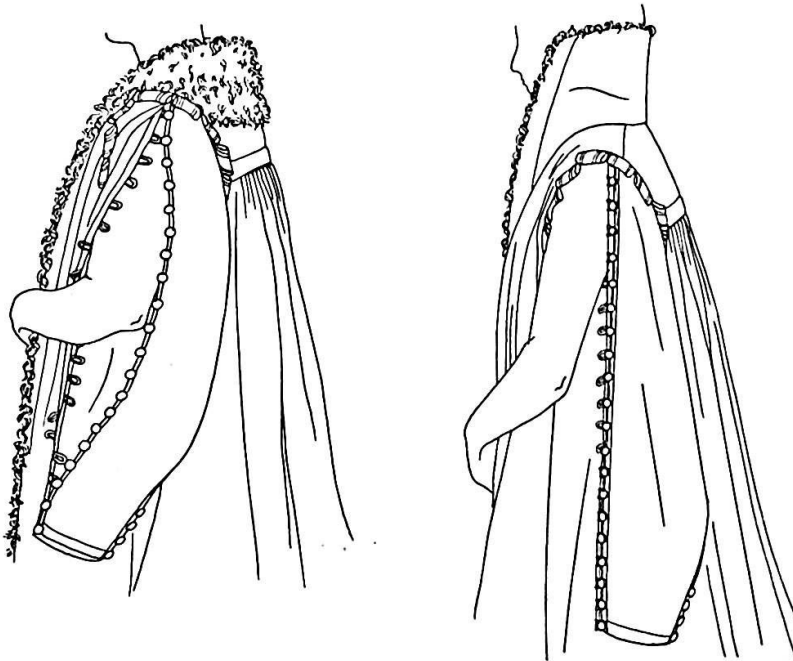
Four alternative ways to wear a surcoat.

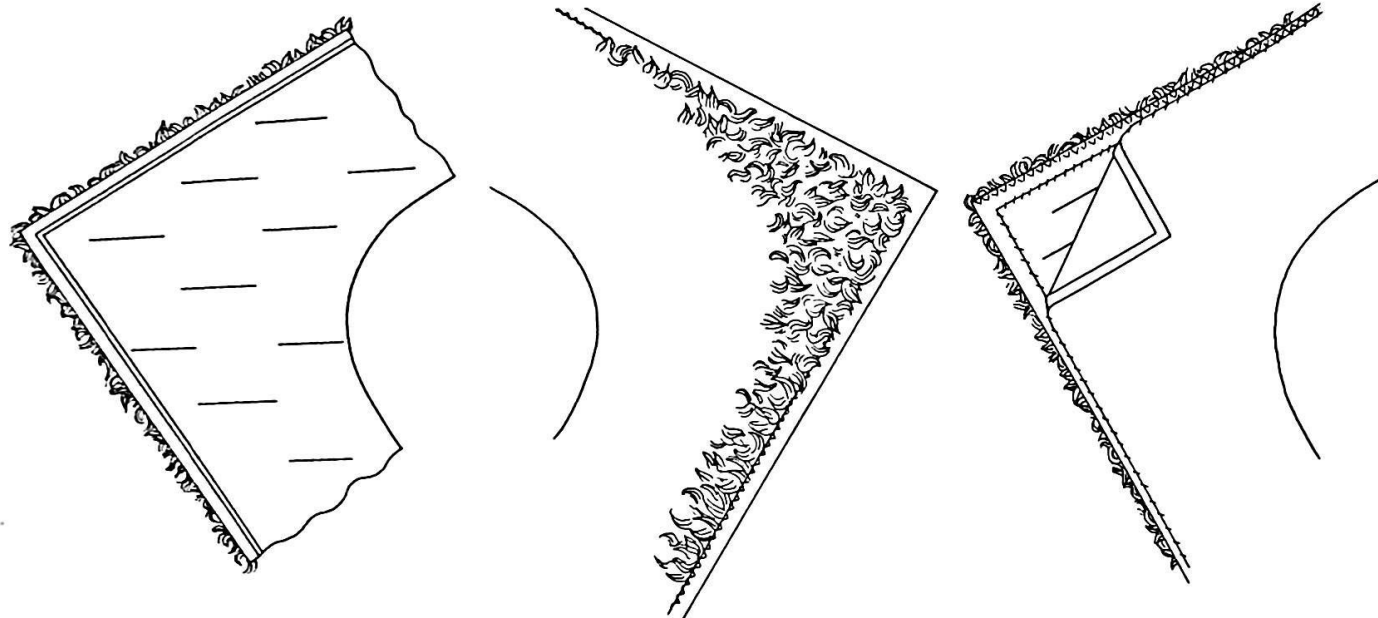


This type of garment is usually faced with fur. In the theatre — both amateur and professional — an old fur coat is often presented to the maker for this purpose. Fake fur can also be used and treated in the same way. I am not in any way a furrier but have been faced with this problem on more than one occasion.

Choose the best pieces of the fur for the parts which are going to be prominent. You may have to

cut pieces from various parts of the skin or coat to get strips that are long enough for floor length garments. Always cut from the wrong side with either a fur knife or by sliding the scissors through the skin, or, using very short cuts, slide the lower blade of the scissors along the skin between the pile of the fur. The fur itself must not be cut. Join the pieces by either whipping the edges together by hand or zig-zagging.





If you want a nice rounded appearance to a facing or collar, put on a layer of cotton wadding or a thin terylene wadding. This must be cut to lie within the 1.25cm ($\frac{1}{2}$ in) turnings you have cut on the fur, and caught to the skin with diagonal basting. Put a 1.25cm ($\frac{1}{2}$ in) tape round the outside edge of the fur

side of the skin. This can be zig-zagged on; the corners trimmed and mitred by hand and the turnings folded in and either glued or stitched onto the skin side or wadding. The edge of the garment or the lining is then felled down onto the stitch line of the tape.

**Surcoat over a 1610 jacket from
The Museum of London.**



PART THREE:

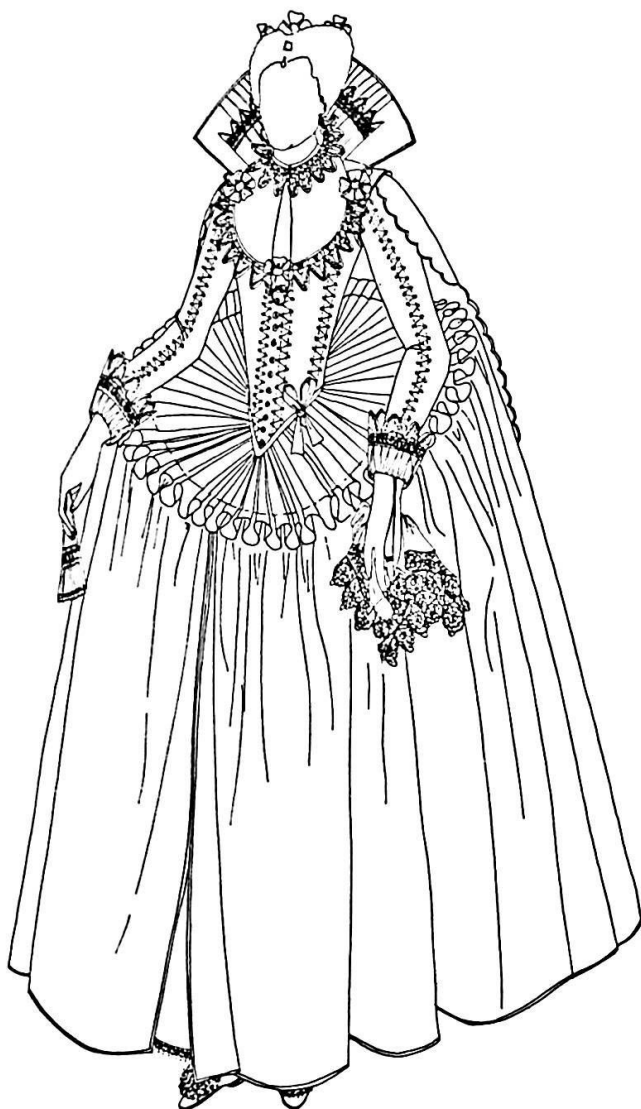
Period Patterns 17th century



Detail from a portrait of Anne of Denmark (1605).

16. 17th-CENTURY DRESS

Three typical 17th-century dresses. Left: 1615, right: 1634 and facing page: 1660-70.



THE exaggerated shape of the latter part of the reign of Elizabeth I continued into the second decade of the 17th century. The stomacher soon disappeared which left a simpler bodice with a low, U-shaped neckline and the waistline was slightly raised. The sleeve, a tight two-piece caught with jewels, sometimes opened down the front seam showing the chemise sleeve. There were also long hanging sleeves falling from the shoulders to the hem of the dress. The many variations of this sleeve can all be cut on the same principle and the shoulder seams are covered by epaulettes.

As the waist rose, the skirt lost its wheel and French farthingale shape and by 1620 had become dome-shaped again. This shape was probably worn for informal dress throughout the Elizabethan period but it was customary to be painted in more fashionable clothes.

A. 1605-1625

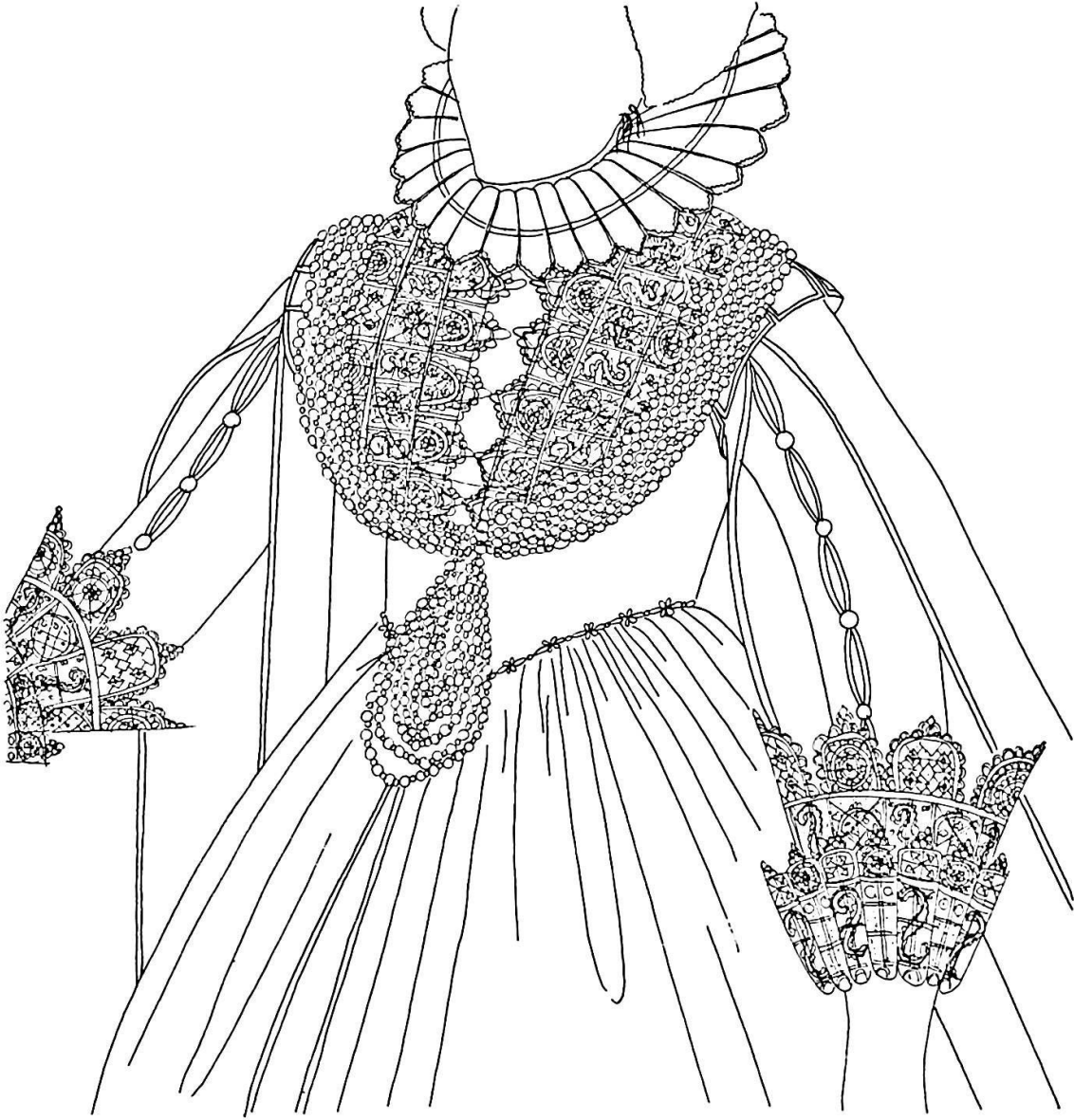
For theatrical use, bodices from 1605-1680 look correct when made as a boned bodice. If a corset is worn, it is only necessary to bone down the bodice fastening. The bodices of this period are fastened





down the front, enabling the standing collar or band, or a ruff to be fixed more easily. A small stand collar is necessary on the back neck of the bodice to which the ruff is attached. The neckline can be cut very low and still avoid the bust falling out of the

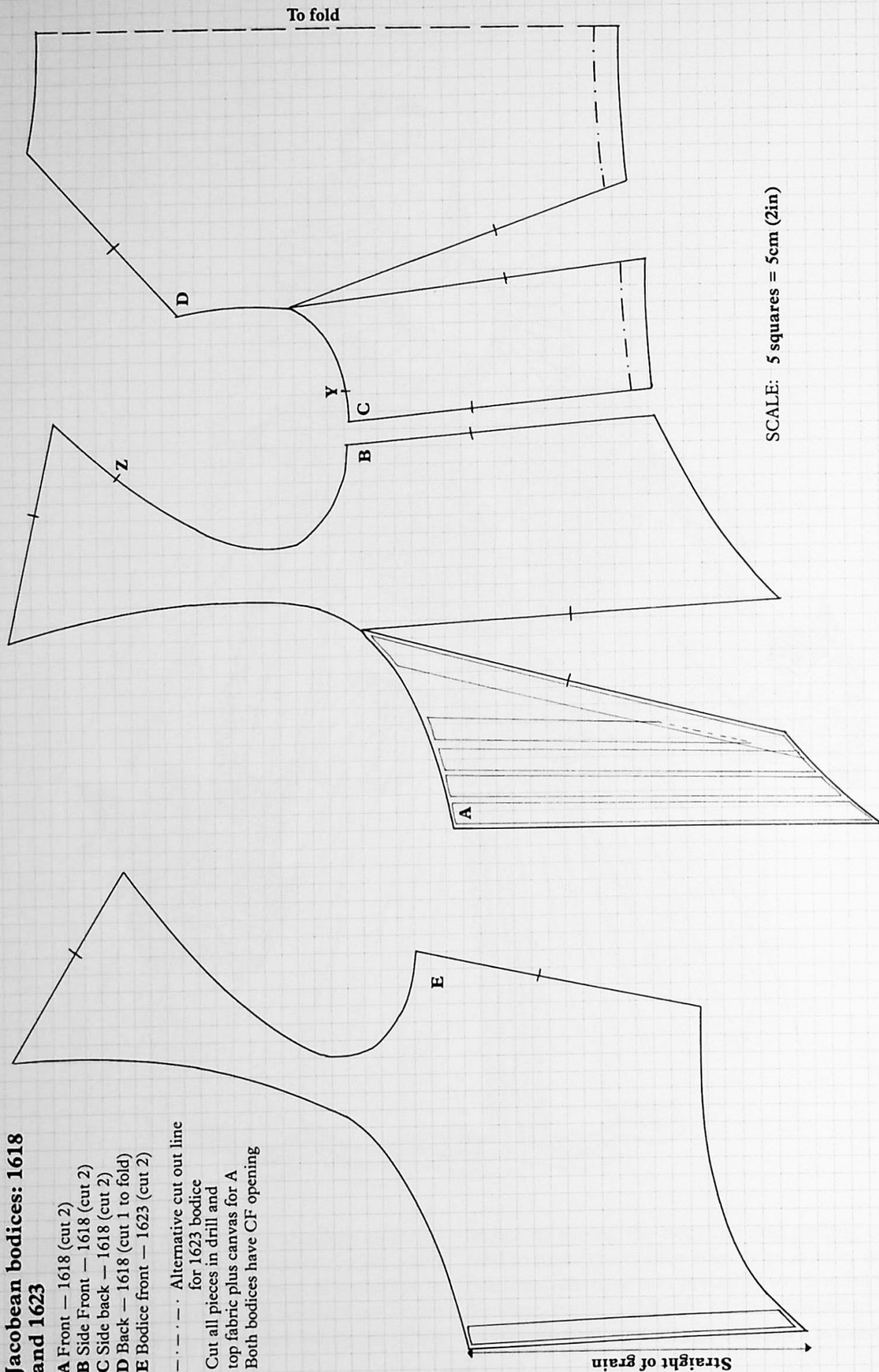
bodice by piping the neckline and pulling up the cord to make the bodice edge grip. A lace, or very fine linen, chemise was probably worn to fill in the neckline, but it is difficult to see such detail when looking at contemporary paintings.



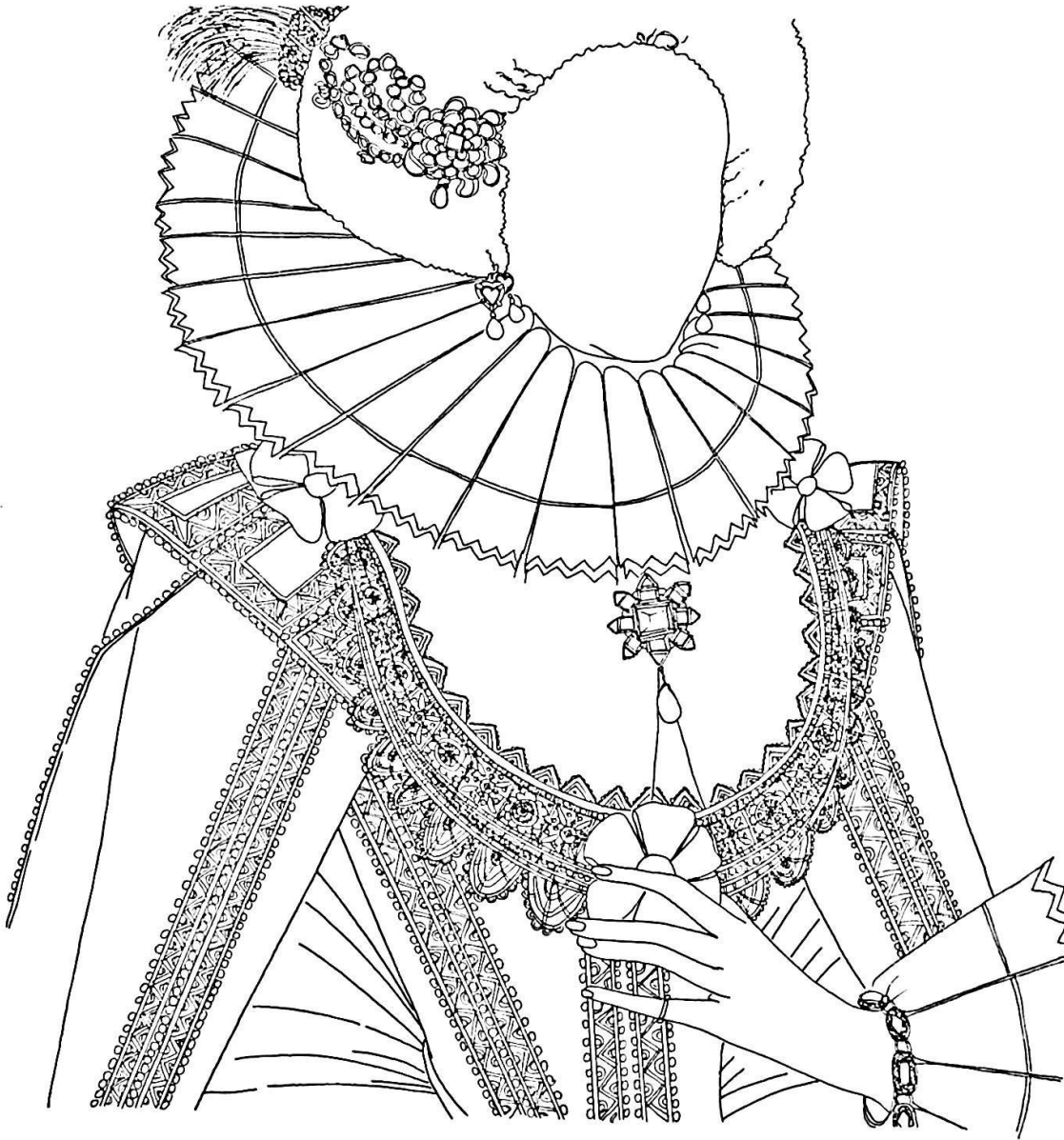
Detail of a portrait, illustrating a lace chemise.

Jacobean bodices: 1618 and 1623

- A Front — 1618 (cut 2)
- B Side Front — 1618 (cut 2)
- C Side back — 1618 (cut 2)
- D Back — 1618 (cut 1 to fold)
- E Bodice front — 1623 (cut 2)
- - - - Alternative cut out line for 1623 bodice
- Cut all pieces in drill and top fabric plus canvas for A
- Both bodices have CF opening



SCALE: 5 squares = 5cm (2in)

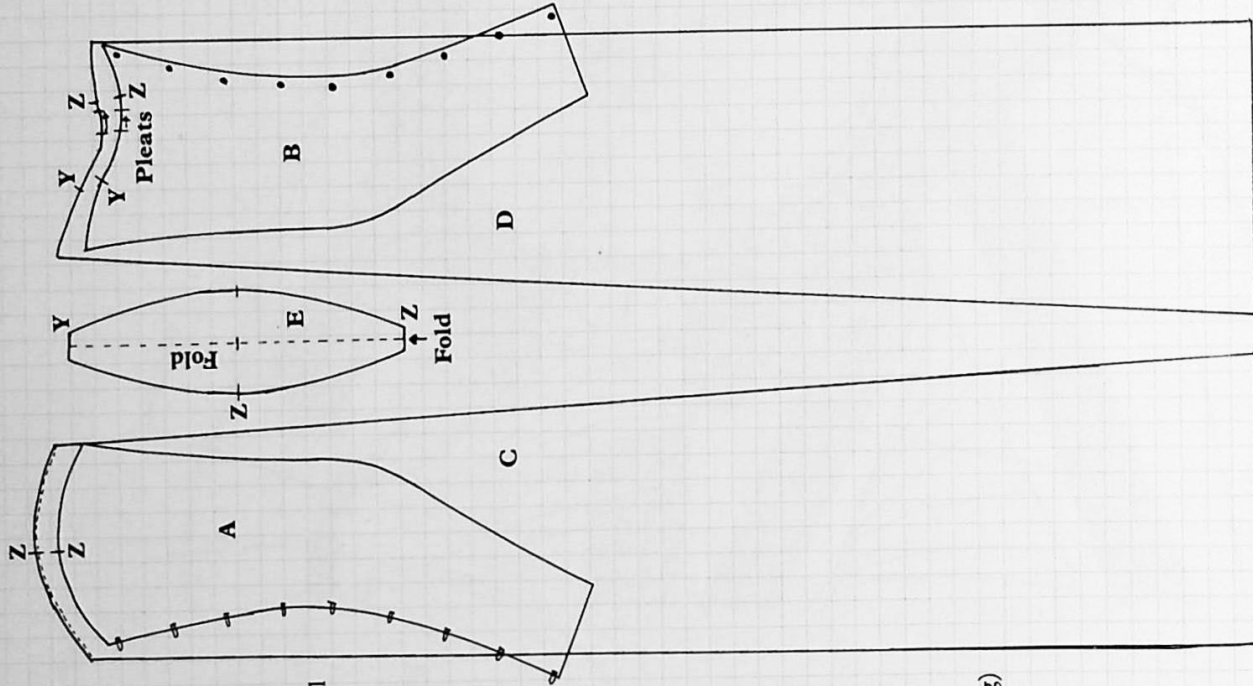


Another, much less ornate, 17th-century chemise.

Jacobean sleeves

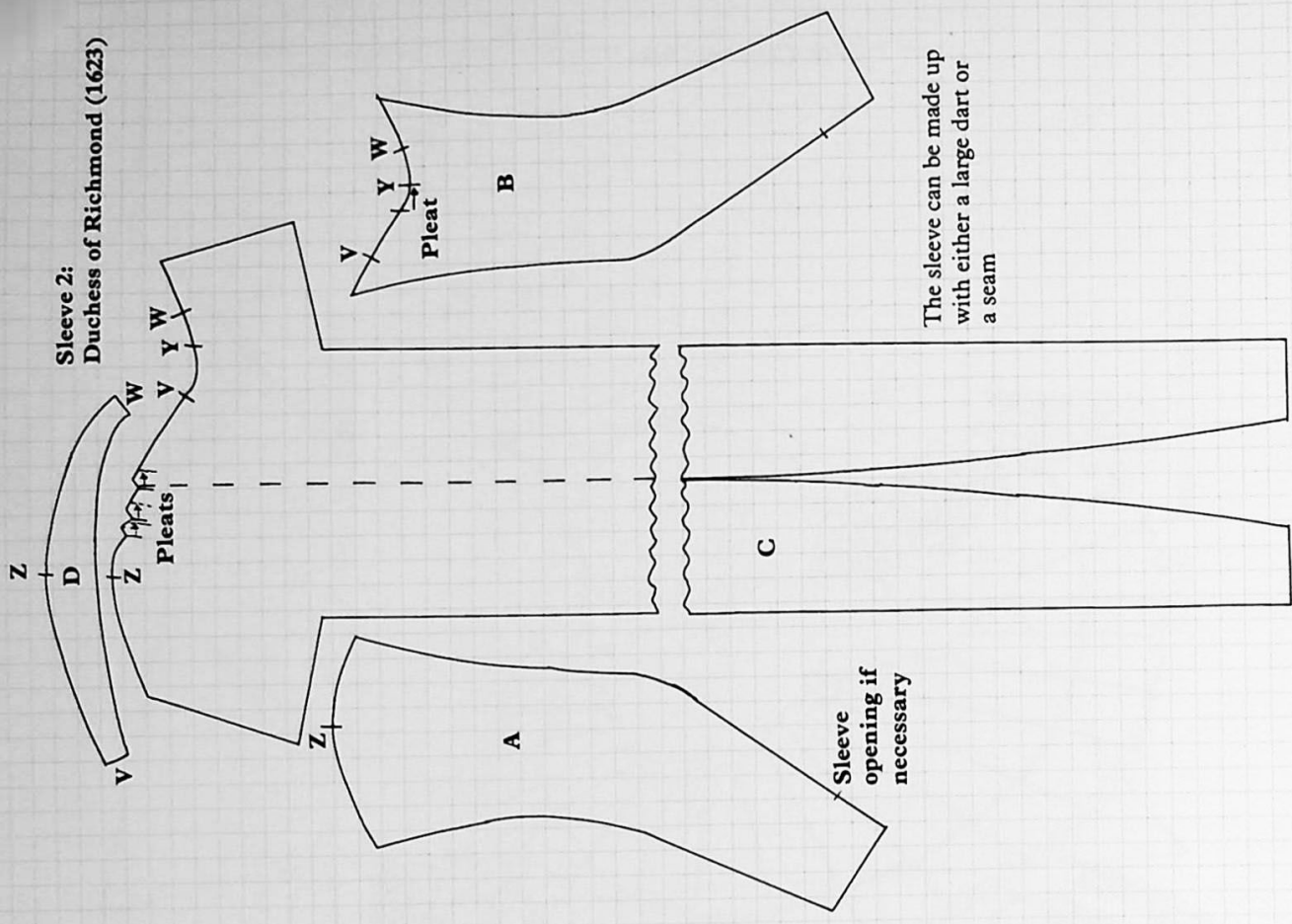
Sleeve 1: 1618

- A** Top sleeve (cut 2)
- B** Under sleeve (cut 2)
- C** Top hanging sleeve (cut 2 plus lining)
- D** Under hanging sleeve (cut 2 plus lining to fall level with the hem)

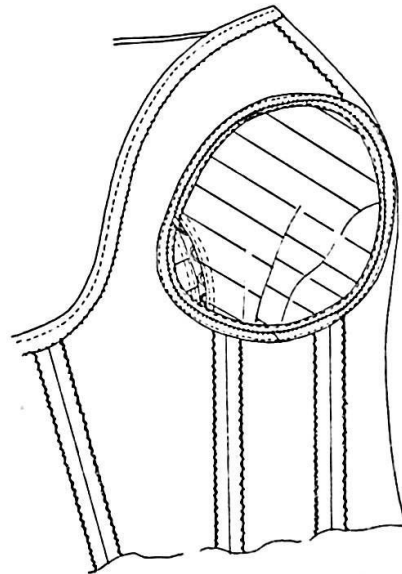
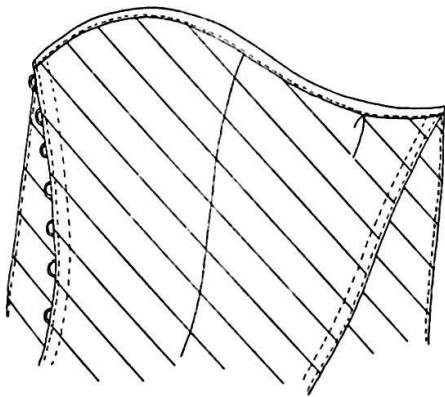
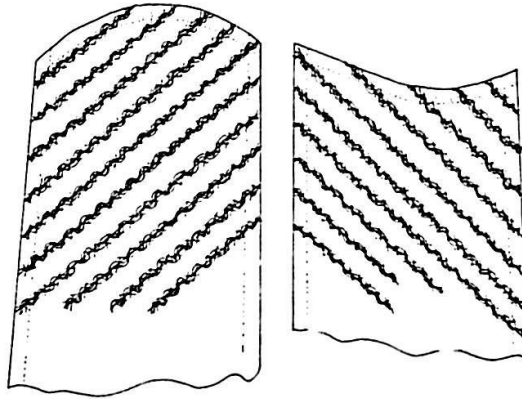
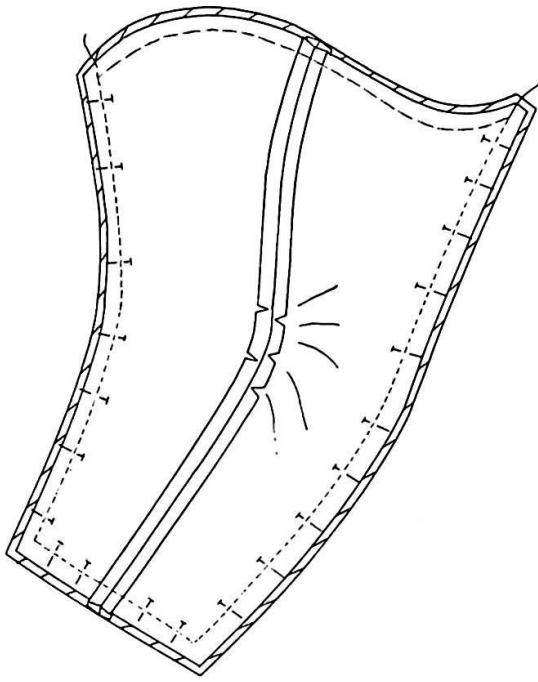


Sleeve 2: 1623

- A** Top sleeve (cut 2)
- B** Under sleeve (cut 2)
- C** Hanging sleeve (cut 2 plus lining)
- D** Epaulette (cut 2 plus lining)



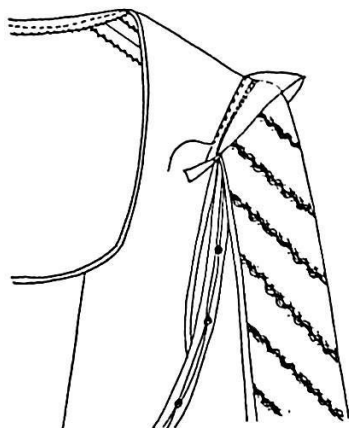
SCALE: 1 square = 2.5cm (1in)



Making up

SLEEVES

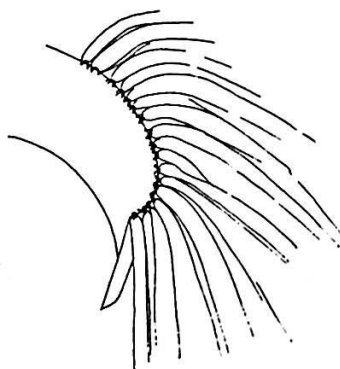
1. Mount the fabric. If the front seam of the sleeve is to be closed, the fabric and the front seam should be finished and decorated before the back seam is finished. If the front seam is open, bag out both front edges and finish the back seam as normal.
2. If the outside fabric of the hanging sleeve is decorated, this should be done before the sleeve is put together.
3. Either bag out or fell the lining onto the inside edge.
4. Bind over both sleeves together and whip into the armhole of the bodice, which is bound in the same manner.
5. Completely finish the epaulettes and apply onto the bodice side of the sleeve seam about 0.5cm (1/4in) in. Either stab stitch from the right side or whip onto the bodice from the underside. The epaulettes then cover the seam disguising the construction.



PETTICOAT

The petticoat can usually be seen through the gap at the front of the skirt and must be cut long enough to be attached onto the top of the petersham.

1. If necessary, lift the waist by varying the depth of the petersham and stitching the petticoat to the top with either cartridge or flat pleats. The method you use will depend on how domed or high you want the finished shape.



2. Evenly distribute the fullness around the waist, leaving about 7.5cm (3in) flat at the CF.
3. Attach the pad to the bottom of the petersham, making it between 13 and 17.5cm (5 and 7in) deep, depending on the finished shape of the skirt.
4. The hem must be on the straight of grain and levelled from the top. Remember to leave enough length and adjust by putting a tuck above the frill. The frill must not be seen across the front of the petticoat as it is there to keep the bottom of the skirt in shape, not as a decoration.

SKIRT

1. Pleat the dress onto the bottom of its petersham as for Tudor skirt.
2. Only tack the hem for the fitting and

remember to leave the opening at the front if the bodice has a front opening. The bodice can be stab stitched onto the skirt.

B. 1630-1645

By 1632 the neckline becomes square and wide and the shoulder begins to drop. The waist of the bodice is now quite high with large tabs on the bottom. The armhole is very large, and the boned underbodice goes higher under the arm than the silk covering into which the sleeve is set. The sleeve itself, which begins as a double puff often with panes, develops into a large three-quarter Bishop sleeve ending in either a ruff-type frill of stiff lace or a soft bobbin lace cuff. The wide shoulder is covered by a large lace collar, sometimes with two or more layers.

The skirt and petticoat are softer and the dome shape is nearly gone. The pad is small or can be dispensed with altogether. This type of dress does not need a corset and can be made with a boned bodice.

The quality of the fabric for this style of dress is important as there is no decoration or pattern on the fabric to distract the eye. As can be seen in the paintings the sleeve and skirt fabric must fall in thick folds, and the mounting for the fabric, assuming you cannot afford pure silk satin, will be important.

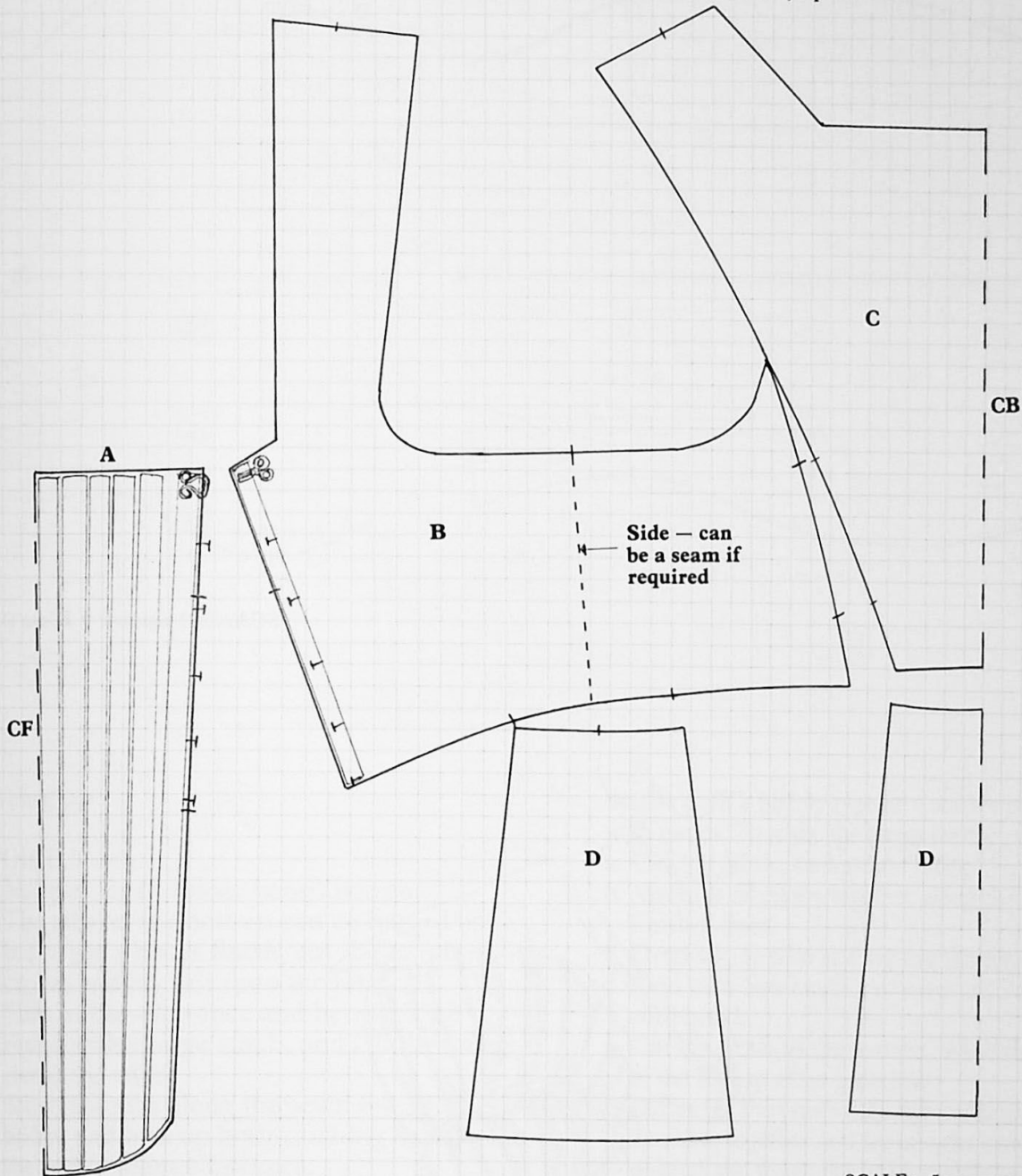


**17th-century bodice:
Henrietta-Maria (1630-1645)**

- A** Front — 12 bones (cut 1 to fold)
- B** Side front and back — 2 bones (cut as 1 or 2 pieces)
- C** Back (cut 1 to fold)
- D** Tassets (cut 7 plus linings)

All pieces to be cut in drill and top fabric

A and D to be cut in drill, top fabric and canvas



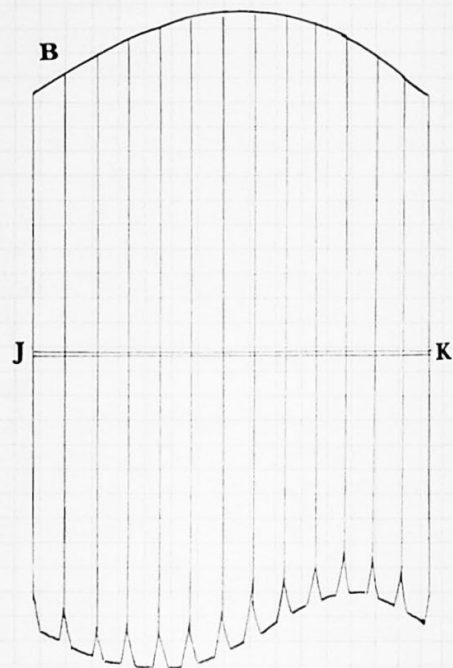
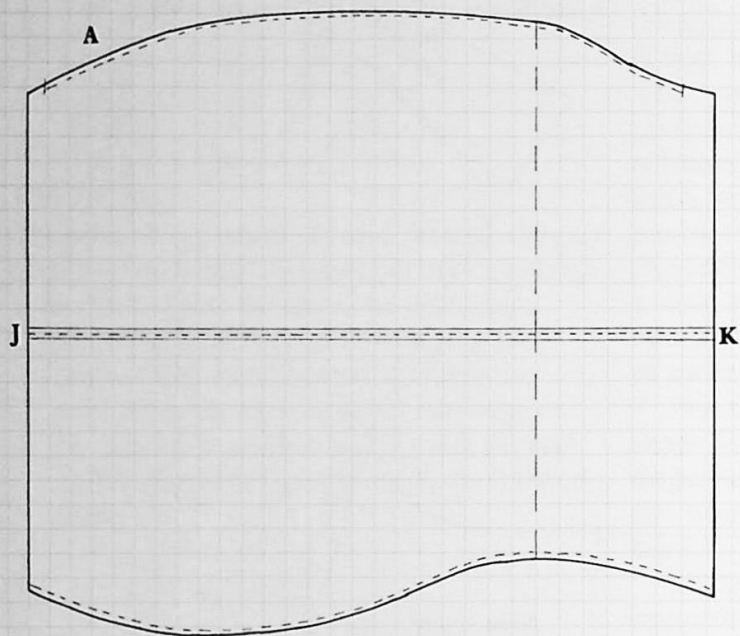
SCALE: 5 squares = 5cm (2in)

**17th-century sleeves:
1630-45**

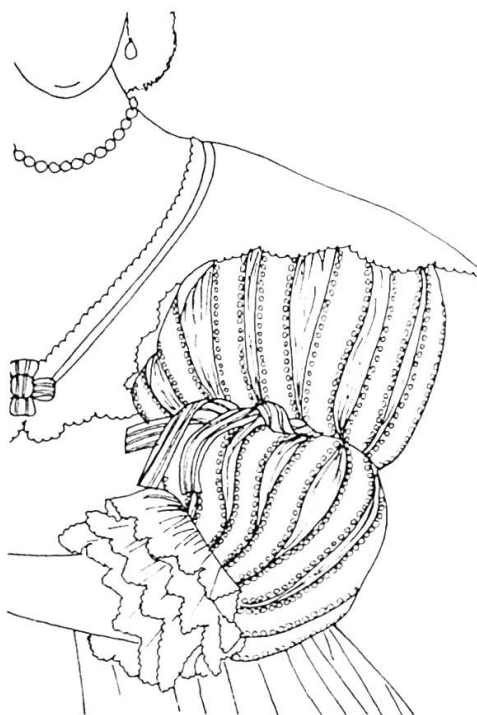
A can be used either as a large bishop-type sleeve or as a double puff with or without panes.

B Panes showing how to cut paned sleeves. They are cut to the same shape as the under sleeve when gathered. The wrist is shaped to fit into the sleeve end measurement. This method applies to any style of sleeve covered by panes or strapping.

Both bishop and double puff can be opened down the line _____



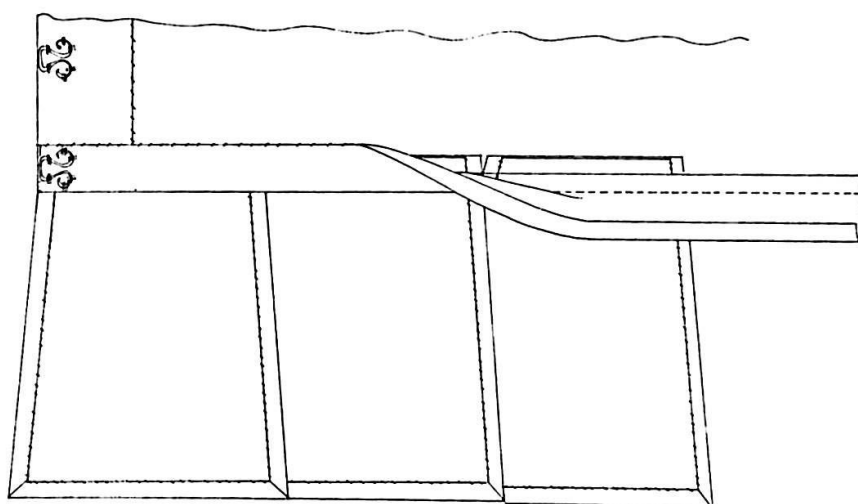
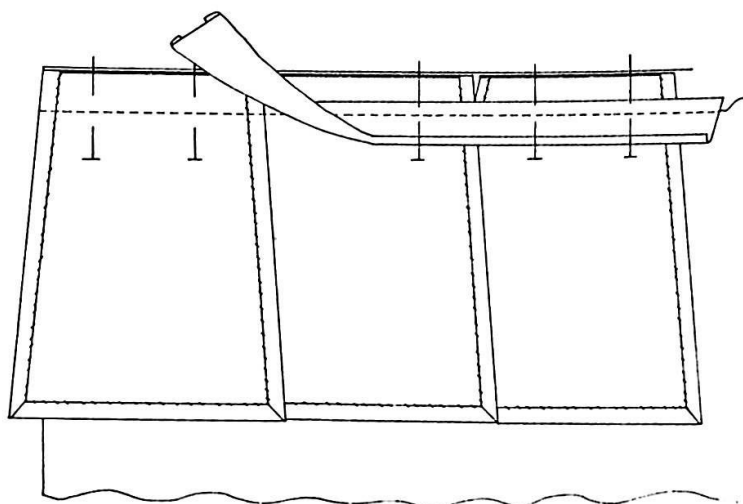
SCALE: 1 square = 2.5cm (1in)



Pane sleeves.

17th-Century Dress

Right: bind over tabs and,
below: apply to bottom of
bodice.



Making up

BODICE

1. Make as for the basic boned bodice.
2. The tabs on the bottom can be bagged out, but to get a better finish, cut the tabs in canvas and lay this onto the fabric.
3. Turn in the allowance and herringbone round with a large stitch, and fell the lining round the edge.
4. Stitch the tabs along the seam line of the bodice and bias up both catching lightly onto the bodice seam allowance.

SLEEVES

1. Gather the head with two rows of gathering (see appendix 1) and set-in as a modern sleeve.
2. The pattern can be adapted and used as a

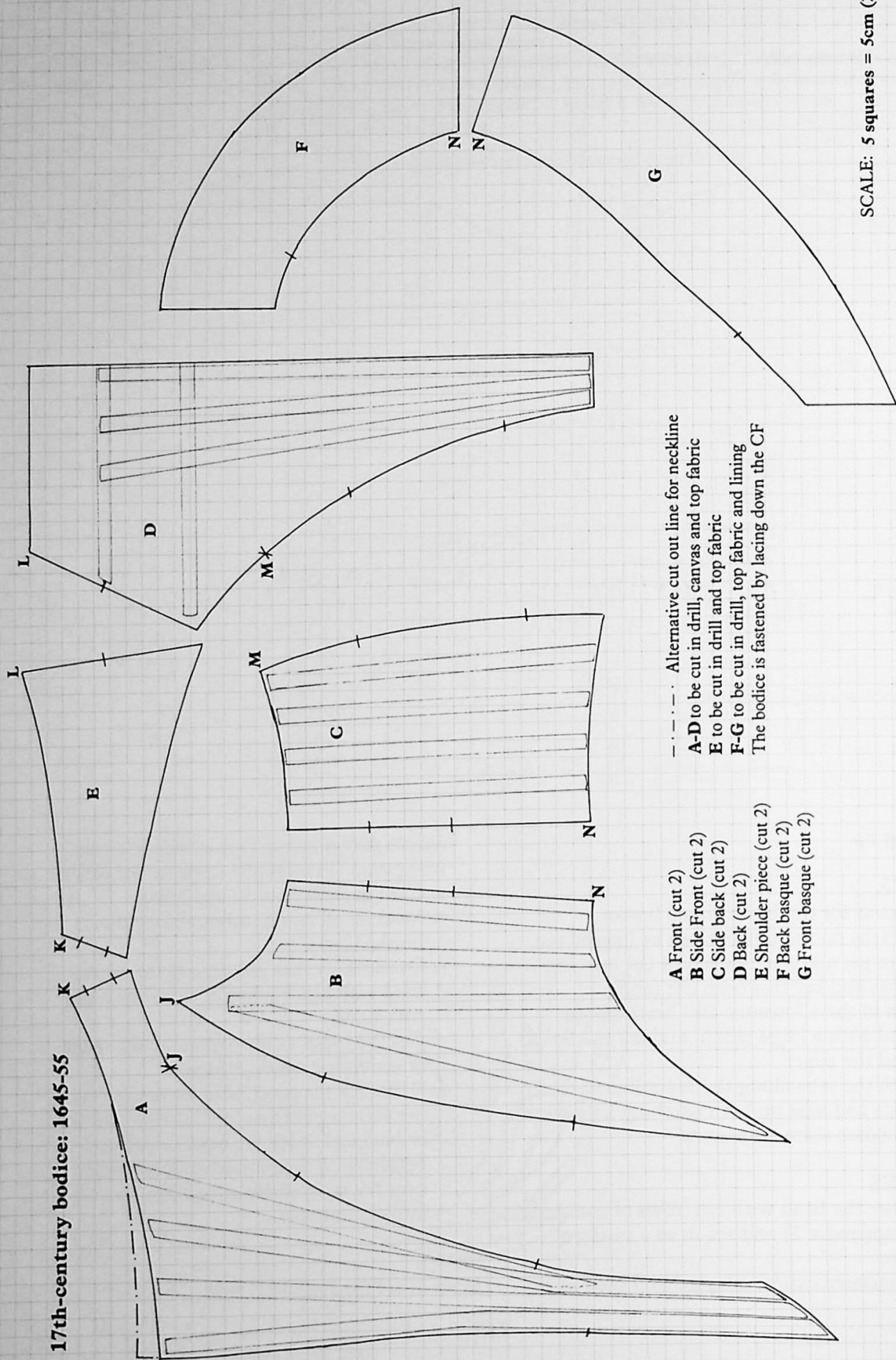
double puff, a bishop type or a double puff with panes. To make the strips for the panes:

- a. Cut top fabric, canvas and lining.
- b. Machine all layers together along the finished lines.
- c. Overlock, or trim and zig-zag the edges.
- d. Bind with bias binding or cover the edges with braid.
- e. Cut the panes as the pattern, to the shape of the bishop when gathered.
- f. Either lay the panes onto the under sleeve, machine together and set into the armhole; or bind and finish the head, middle and bottom with decorative bands and apply over the undersleeve once it has been set into the armhole.

SKIRT

Make as for the 1605-1625 skirt.

17th-century bodice: 1645-55

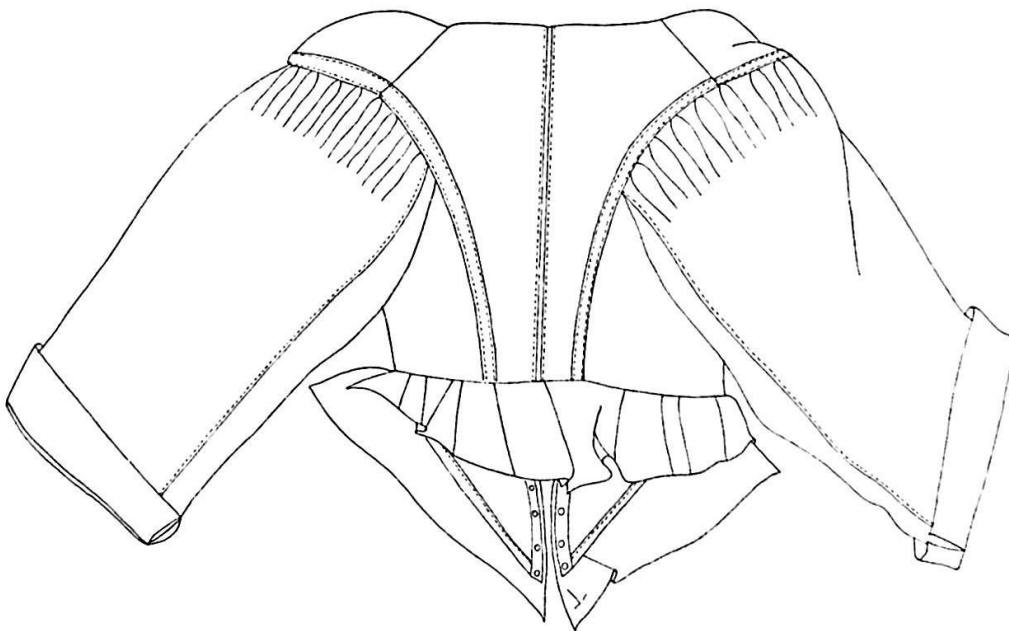
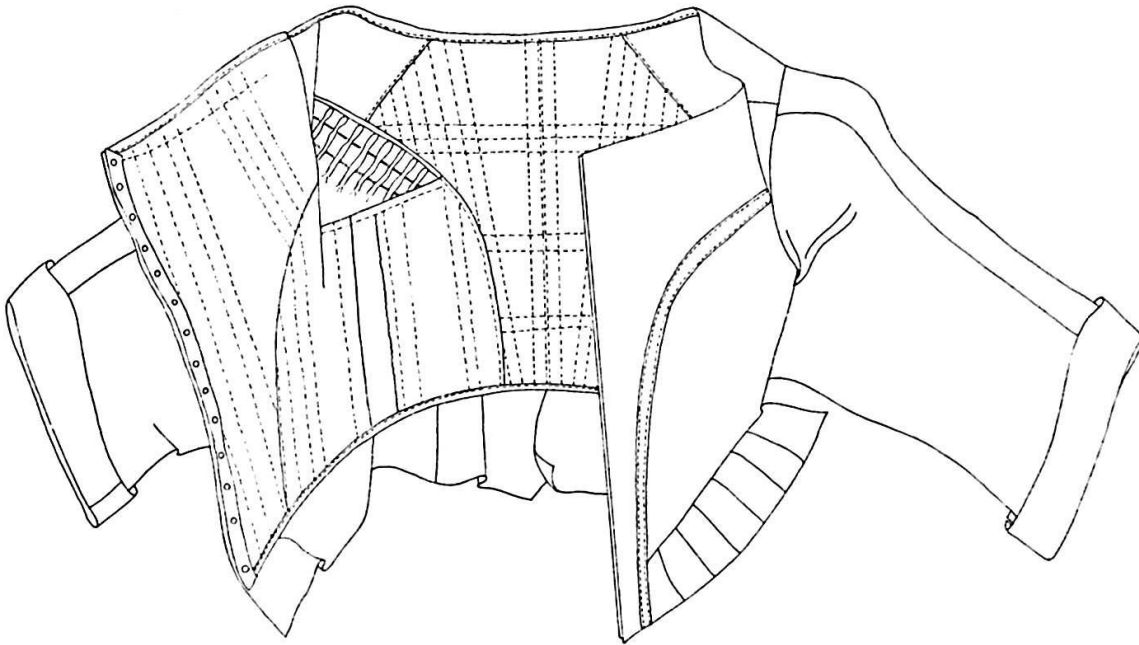


SCALE: 5 squares = 5cm (2in)

C. THE DOUBLET BODICE: 1645-1660

This bodice is made in the same way as the closed Elizabeth bodice and is suitable for the more austere characters and plays of the Cromwellian period. Pictorial information for the years of the interregnum is difficult to find and since the costumes in paintings are usually black it is difficult to see the detail.

A well preserved bodice with a boat-shaped neckline is to be found, however, in the Museum of London collection, dated 1645-55. It is made in pale blue watered silk and mounted on a heavily boned, coarse linen cotton lining. The sleeves are also lined with a stiff interlining as far as the elbow, and the whole sleeve lined with a fine silk going through to the sleeve end and turned back as a cuff.





The basque is similarly mounted onto a stiff interlining and lined with fine silk. The right side is made up of small, tab-sized pieces of the body fabric cut on different grain lines, probably made from the pieces of fabric left from the main dress.

The bodice is very narrow across the fronts and back and the bands, which cover the seams, are on the same grain and shape as the bodice. They could have been cut from the negative remaining after the bodice fronts and backs had been cut. They are pricked through on both edges and look, at a glance, like bias strips. This could be made today as a piping in the seam. The bodice is fastened by lacing with the eyelets being in the boned part of the garment. The silk layer is stabbed through just behind the eyelets so that when it is closed, the silk is drawn together and the lacing invisible.

The neckline is an oval shape, quite high at the back, just lying on the shoulders and curving down to above the cleavage at the front. A collar of fine linen edged with lace would have been worn from the edge of the bodice or round the neck and falling over the neckline of the bodice.

The sleeves are set-in low on the shoulder and are smooth from under the arm to the shoulder. The fullness is put into shallow cartridge pleats at the back. There is piping or a fold of fabric between the sleeve and the bodice around the armhole. At the back there is a fine whalebone running through about the size of 00 piping cord.

Contemporary drawings, such as *The Seasons* by Wenceslaus Hollar and the many Dutch paintings of the period, give a good idea of how this bodice would have been worn.



Making up

1. Make as for the basic boned bodice.
2. Set-in the sleeve from side back under the arm to the head of the sleeve as a modern sleeve.
3. At the back, between these points, the bodice edge must be finished and edge stitched.

4. The sleeve should be prepared and attached by cartridge pleating, or gathered into the back armhole.

SKIRT

Make as before. It should be cartridge pleated onto the bottom of the petersham in the normal way.

D. 1660-1680

By 1670 the oval neckline has dropped off the edge of the shoulder and the cylinder shaped bodice continues to be heavily boned. Although both this bodice and the 1645-60 bodice appears to be restricting, it is, if cut and fitted well, quite comfortable. The front of the bodice has a long spade-shaped point, the skirt being worn under the point and over the tassets at the sides and back. The sleeves of the dress are now much shorter with large chemise sleeves made with one or more puffs ending just below the elbow. A plain chemise or small fichu finishes the neck edge. The waistline is on the natural waist and the skirt is a soft domed shape usually open down the front over the petticoat.

For the theatre the bodice can be made by the same method as those in the earlier part of the century based on the boned bodice and using the boning arrangement in the pattern.

17th-century bodice:

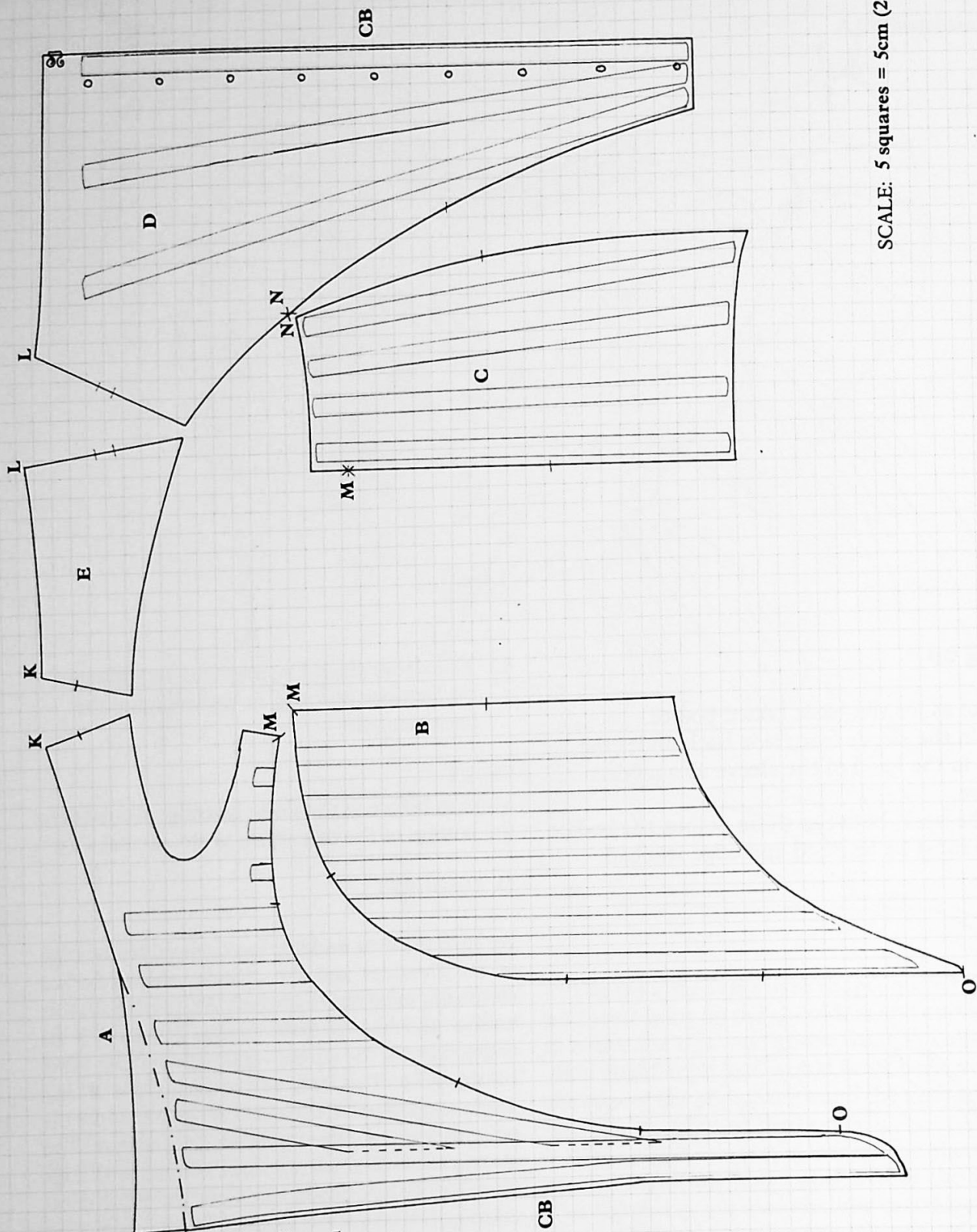
- A Front (cut 2)
- B Side front (cut 2)
- C Side back (cut 2)
- D Back (cut 2)
- E Shoulder strap (cut 2)

--- Alternative cut out line for neckline

The bodice can be laced down either the CF or CB

A-D to be cut in drill, canvas and top fabric

E to be cut in drill and top fabric

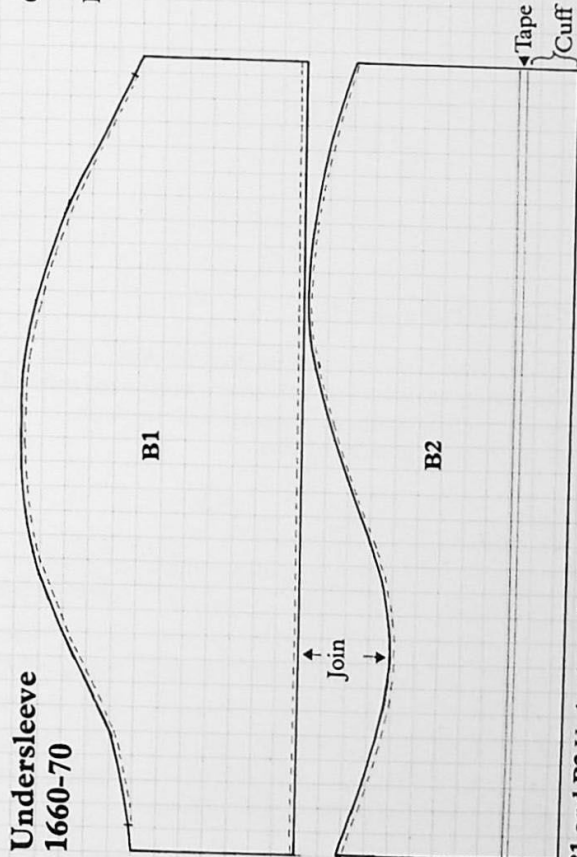


SCALE: 5 squares = 5cm (2in)

17th-century sleeves: 1645-1670

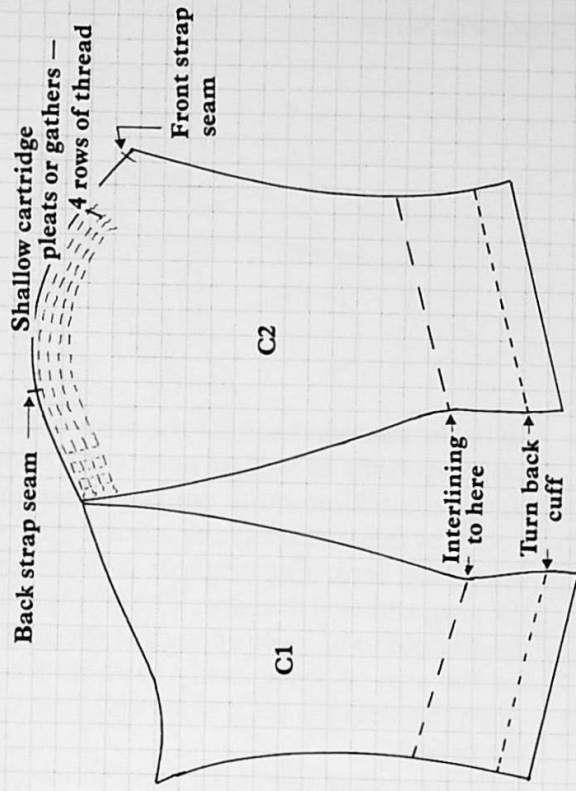


Undersleeve 1660-70



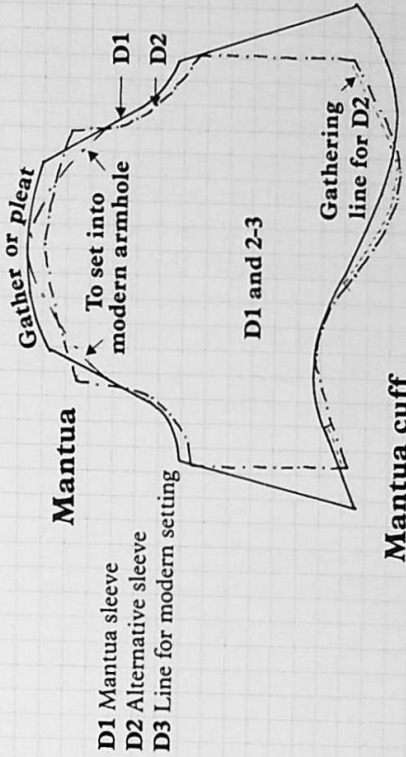
B1 and B2 Undersleeve for A

B1 Upper puff
B2 Lower puff and cuff. It the cuff frill is to be lace, turn the B2 shape over and cut B1 and B2 as one sleeve taking away the depth of the cuff. Join B1 and B2 and put either on a tape for elastic or gather and put onto a band. When finished, decorate with a ribbon and bow.

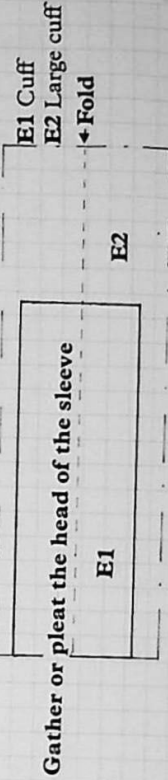


1645-55

C1 Under sleeve (cut 2 in lining and top fabric)
C2 Top sleeve (cut 2 in lining and top fabric)
Interlining optional



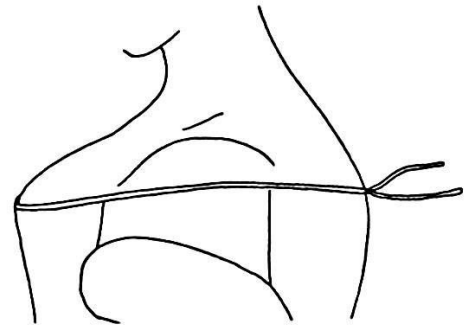
Mantua cuff



SCALE: 1 square = 2.5cm (1in)

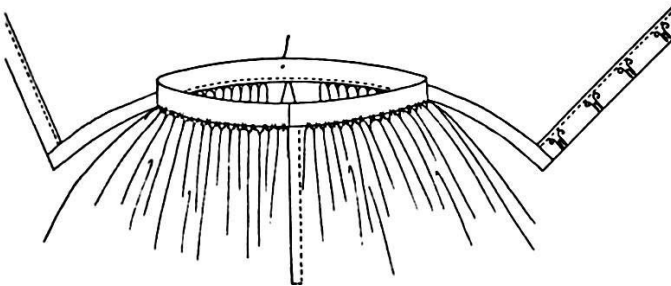
Making up

1. Pattern pieces A and B are put together and boned. This is because some bones cross the seam lines.
2. The outside fabric is made up separately and mounted with a layer of domette or interlining over the boned drill.
3. Put the bodice together and pipe both the neckline and the bottom of the bodice.
4. The frill or false chemise is then herringboned into the neck.
5. The skirt is cartridge pleated onto the waistband and the bodice stab stitched onto the skirt with a long catch holding the bodice into place at the CF.



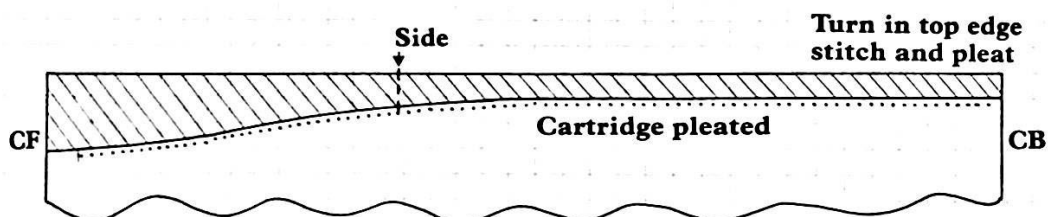
To fit the shoulders so that the arms will be able to move upwards as well as across the body, fit the shoulder/neckline quite snugly although not too tightly as this can always be adjusted by pulling up the piping cord. The armhole is quite high under the arm, and oval in shape. The two shoulder strap seams need to be loose enough at the armhole edge for the arm to move easily to shoulder level but when the sleeve is set it must still look correct for the period.

By the end of the 1670s men no longer had the monopoly of cutting women's clothes and during the next two decades there is a marked change of style, which heralds the elegant fashions of the 18th century.



17th-century skirt

This is a basic 17th-century skirt. As most skirts of the 17th century are worn over medium or small sized pads all of the skirts will be similar in shape but will vary with the size of pad and width of skirt.



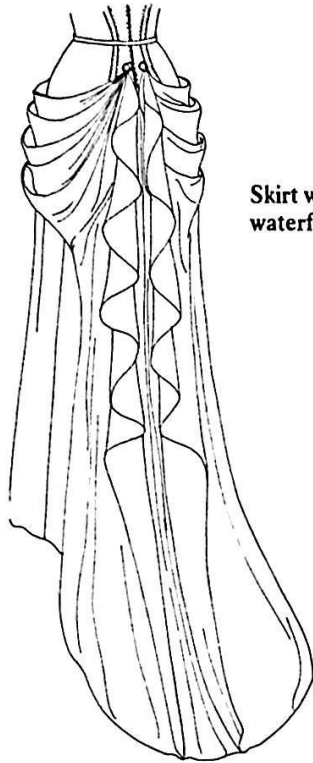
SCALE: 1 square = 5cm (2in)



E. THE MANTUA 1680-1730

The Mantua develops gradually from a T-shaped garment, which is first pleated informally at the shoulders and the waist pleats are controlled by a belt. This loose style of dress must have been a joy to wear after the extremely stiff bodices of the previous decade, and it is the forerunner of the Sack, Robe à l'Anglaise and the 'fossilized' Court Mantua seen in the mid-18th century.

When making the Mantua it must be realized that a dress of this type would have been made from the outside. A linen bodice was made and fitted to the body, after which the front and back fabric would have been draped onto the figure, then pleated and tucked to fit. The pleats on the early Mantuas were not always caught to the lining, but the later specimens are pricked down onto the linen underbodice. This method is still the best way to make a Mantua look convincing, in both look and



Skirt with a full waterfall backdrapery.

movement. It was with this style that the tradition for cutting the sleeves of the 18th century with the stripes or pattern going around the arm started.

Making up

A Mantua must be worn with a corset or boned underbodice rather than boning the body of the dress. If the Mantua is to meet down the front, the corset can be plain but if the front of the corset is to show and look like a stomacher, then the CF must be covered in a decorative fabric. The corset can be made by the same method as the earlier ones. Cut and make up the underbodice in drill or sheeting.

PETTICOAT

Make from straight strips. The shape is achieved by using the sausage pad and gathering or cartridge pleating the fabric onto the waistband.

SKIRT

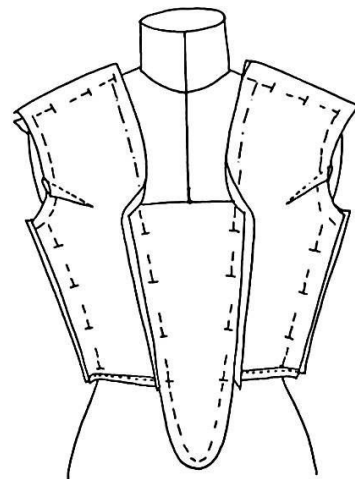
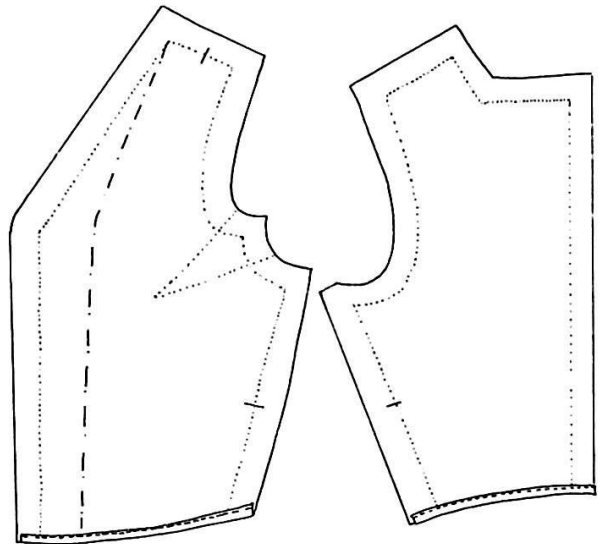
The skirt is usually made with the stripes or decoration going round horizontally rather than vertically. It should be gathered or cartridge pleated if the fabric is bulky.

Fitting

If possible, it is best to fit the corset, petticoat, skirt and underbodice, before starting the mantua itself.

After fitting

1. Mark through all the alterations and finish the bottoms of all four bodice lining pieces separately.
2. Pin the seams together with the allowance on the outside.
NB All the bodice seams will eventually be turned to the inside.
3. Pin a length of fabric long enough to reach from shoulder to floor to the shoulder of the stand. Pleat the back starting from the top of the CB.
4. Pin either the selvedge or the centre of the fabric to the CB seam allowance keeping the grain the same as that of the inside bodice. Make a pleat approximately 2.5cm (1in) deep at the neck edge, and about 6cm (2¼in) deep at the waist. Pin this flat at intervals to face the CB.



Mantua: 1680s to 1730s

A Front lining (cut 2)

--- Pleat lines

----- Alternative cut out line for closed front

The size of the dart will vary with the bust size

B Back lining (cut 2 in drill)

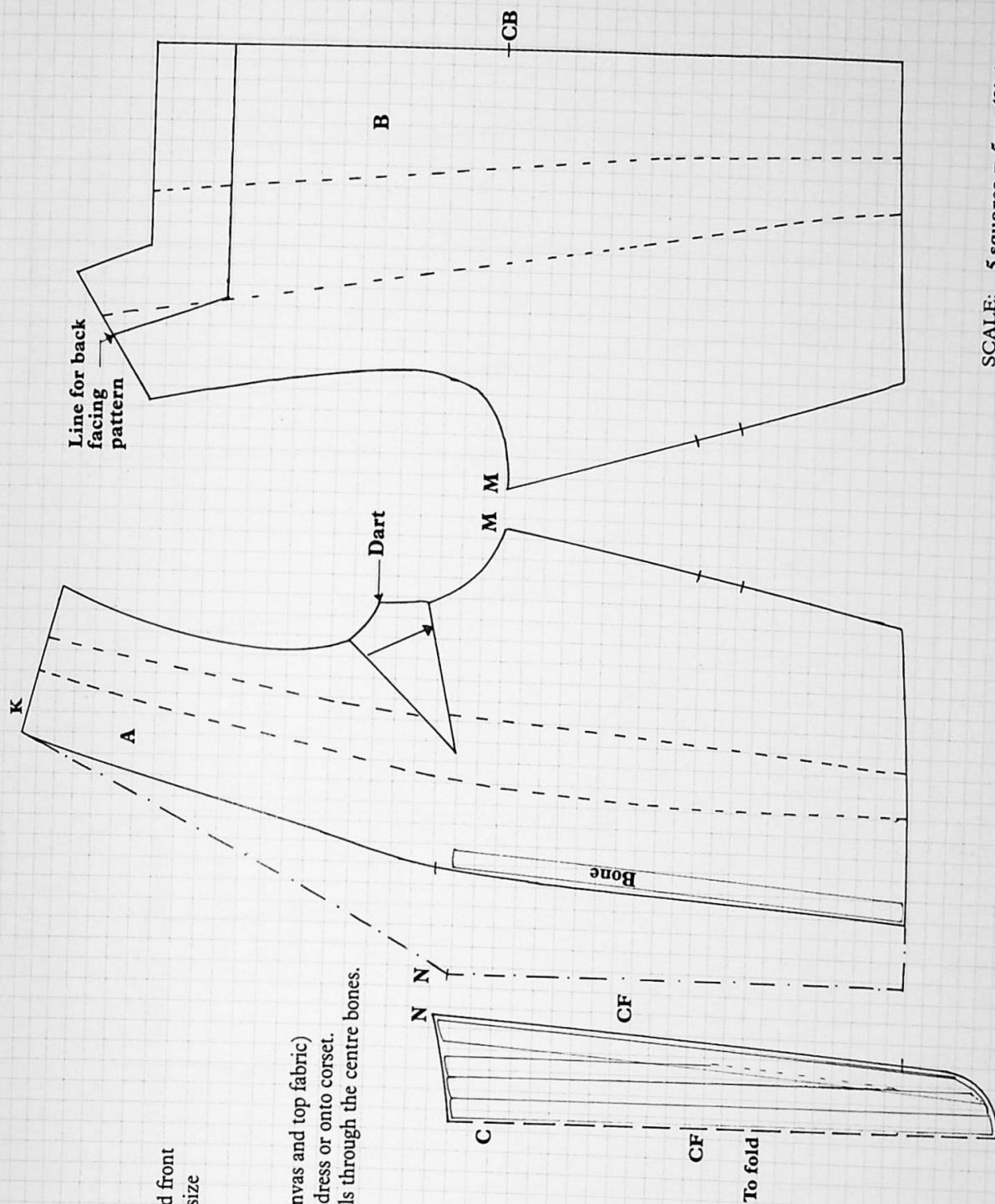
--- Pleat lines

--- Back facing

C Stomacher shape (cut 1 to fold of drill, canvas and top fabric)

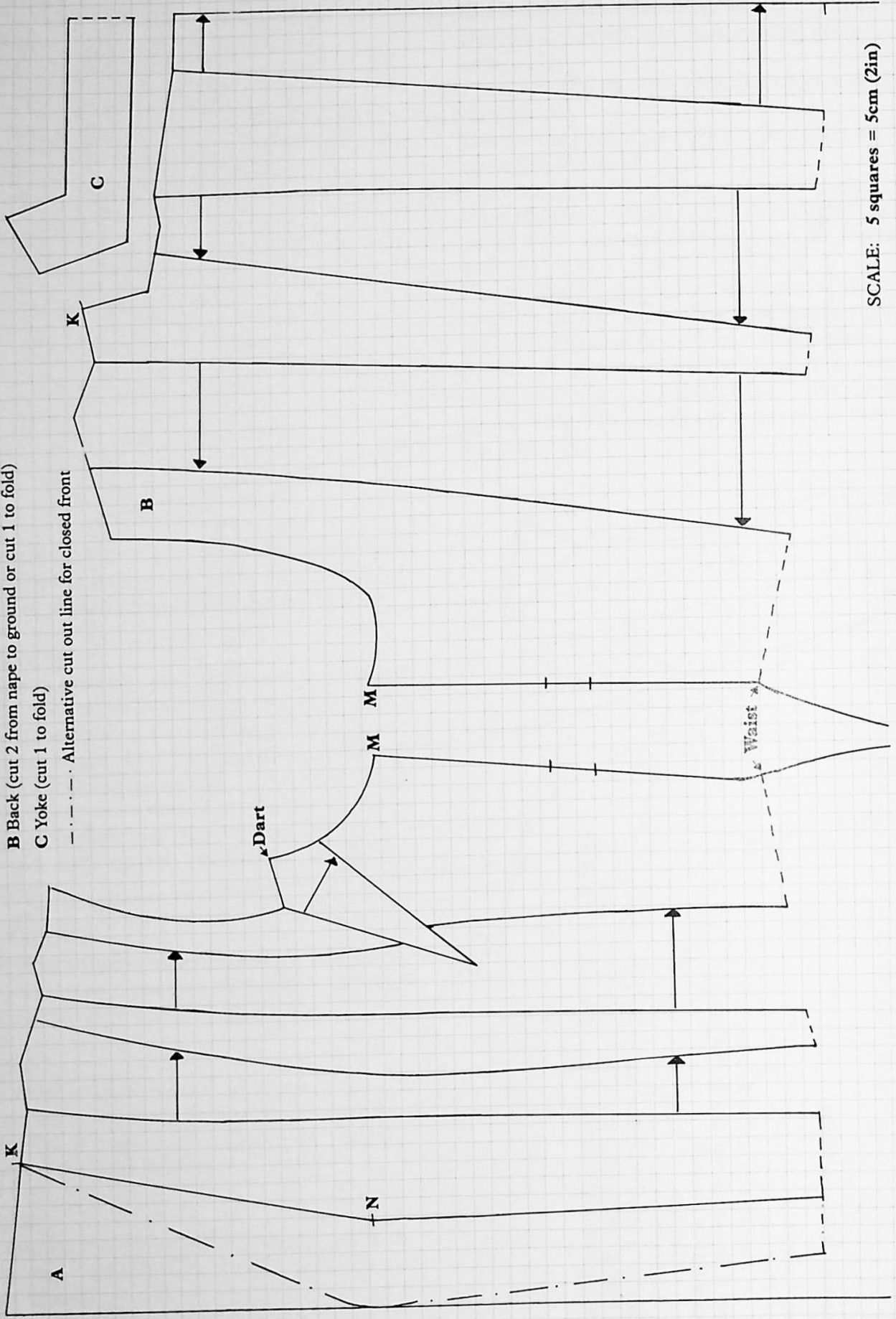
Extra turnings will be needed to attach into dress or onto corset.

The boning must be close together with steels through the centre bones.

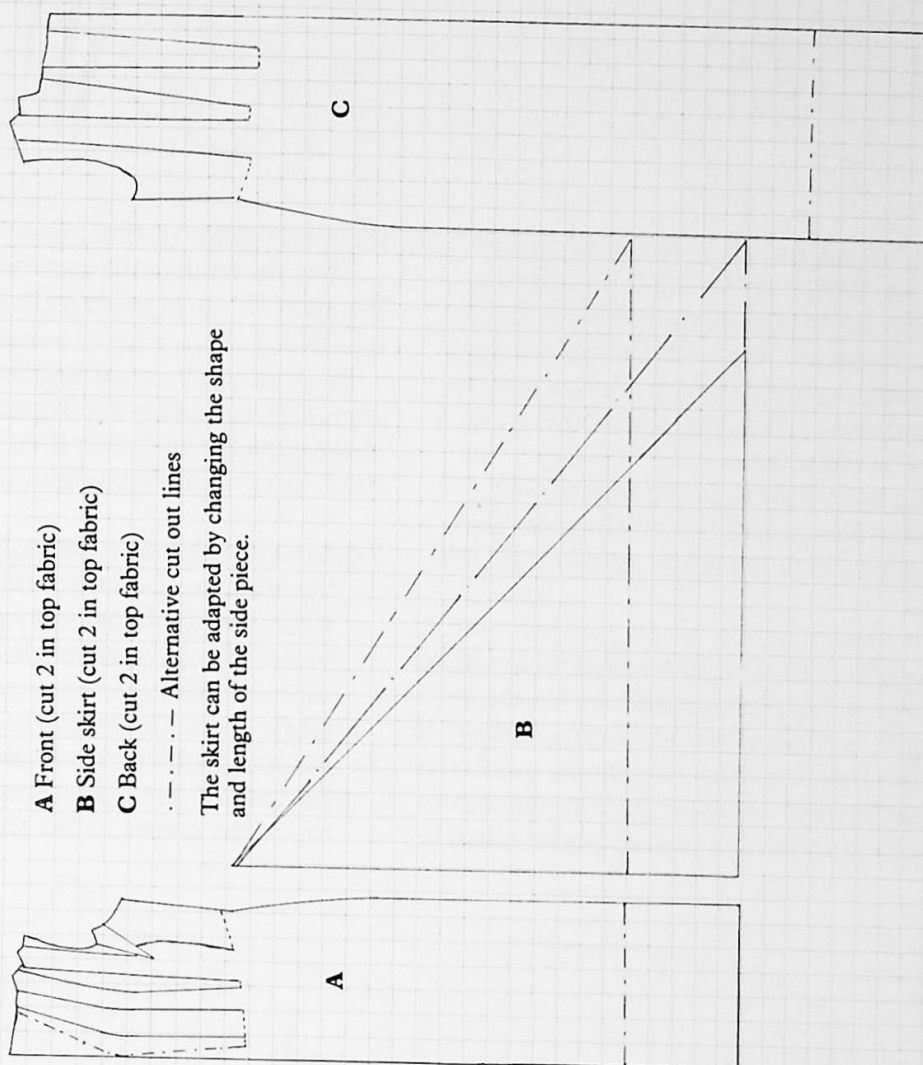


SCALE: 5 squares = 5cm (2in)

Mantua: 1680s to 1730s — bodice



Mantua: 1680s to 1730s — full layout



A Front (cut 2 in top fabric)

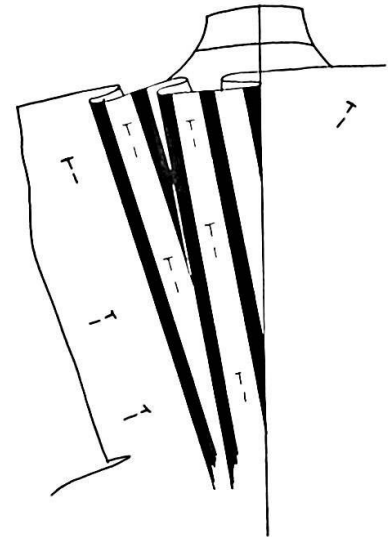
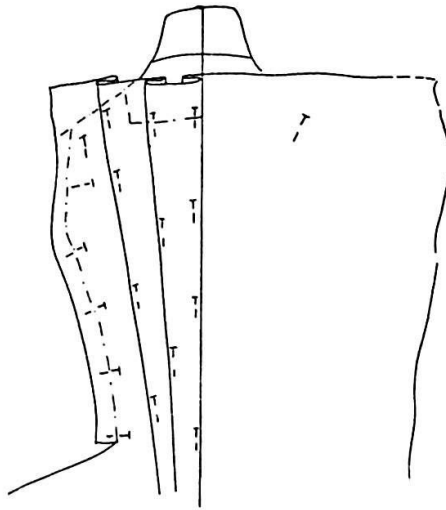
B Side skirt (cut 2 in top fabric)

C Back (cut 2 in top fabric)

--- Alternative cut out lines

The skirt can be adapted by changing the shape and length of the side piece.

SCALE: 1 square = 5cm (2in)



5. About 7cm (2¾in) along the shoulder line make another pleat turning it towards the shoulder so that it is like a box pleat. Repeat this at the waist 3cm (1¼in) along, but again compensating by turning in a larger pleat as before or 2cm (¾in) deep at the top and 4cm (1½in) at the waist.
6. Make a second pleat, facing towards the armhole. Now repeat this on the other side, and then smooth the fabric round to the side seam.

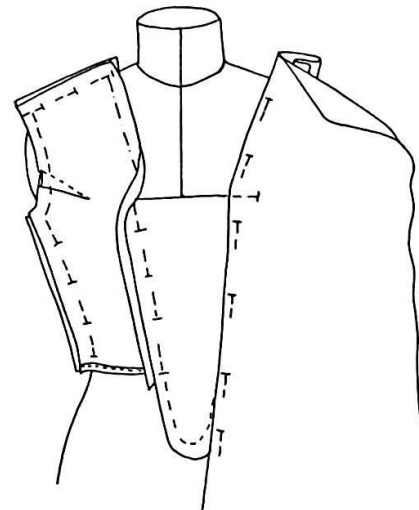
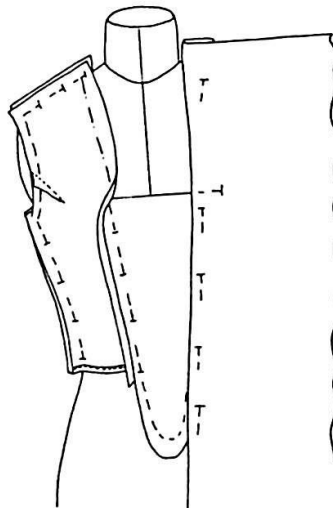
I try to keep the grain straight on the outside edge of the outward facing pleats, as this makes the back look neater especially if you have striped fabric. If you practice by using striped fabric you will find it easier to understand. Do not try to copy the pattern exactly as each person and piece of fabric will make

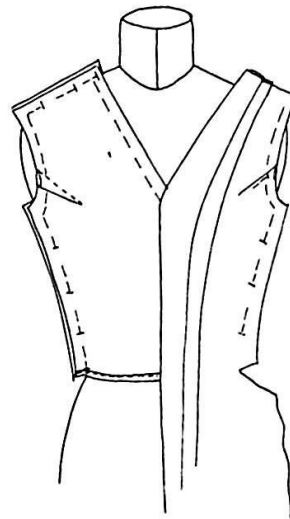
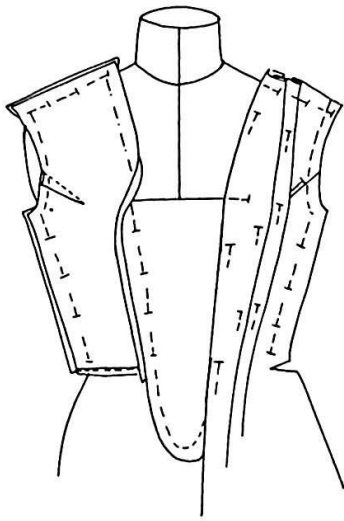
the pleats differ in size.

Treat the front in the same way as the back, using the pattern as a guide rather than following it exactly.

To cut with a stomacher front: Pin the stomacher, or a shape to represent it onto the front of the corset. The fabric should be long enough to reach from shoulder to hem. Then either:

- 7a. Turn in the fabric about 5cm (2in) and pin to the stand at the side of the neck to hold it while you work. Start by pinning the fabric to the top of the corset, to meet the edge of the stomacher. Continue turning in the fabric down the waist.
8. At the shoulder turn in the fabric again to get the correct angle for the neckline from the top of the corset to the place on the shoulder





required by the design.

Or to cut without a stomacher front:

7b. Using the alternative line on the pattern, pin the fabric to the CF of the corset and again to the appropriate point on the shoulder and down to the waist. Try to match the front and back pleats at the shoulder.

9. Face the front edges from shoulder to waist, or use the 5cm (2in) of fabric you have already turned in. Alternatively, for the closed version of the Mantua, cut a facing using the CF shape of the pattern.

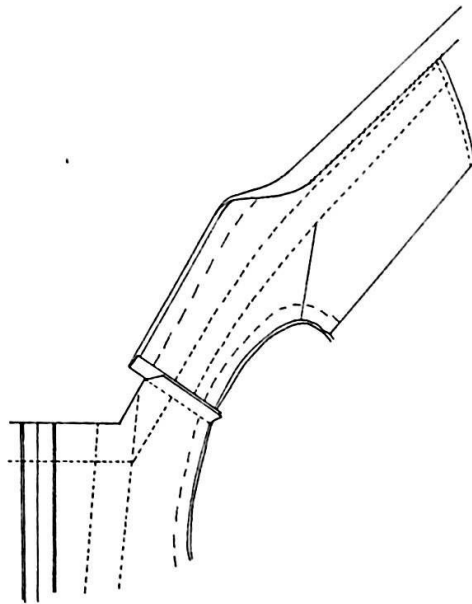
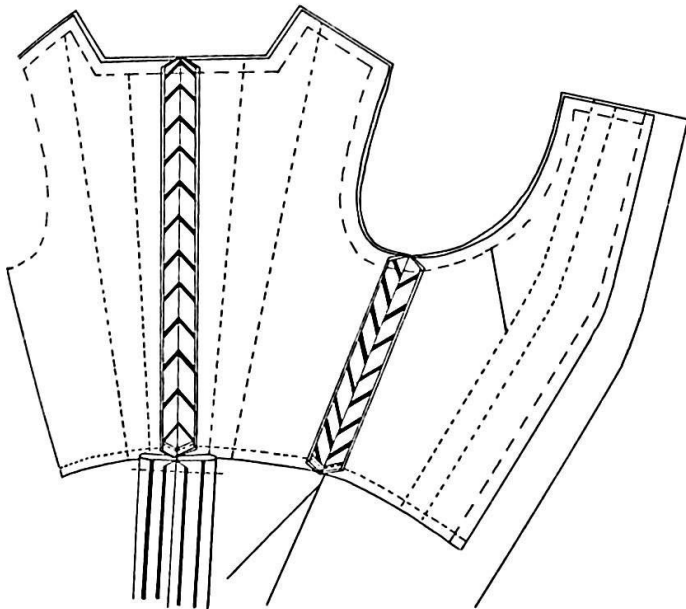
10. When you finished draping the toile, turn in all the bodice seams to the inside, treating both layers as one. Machine, trim and finish the bodice.

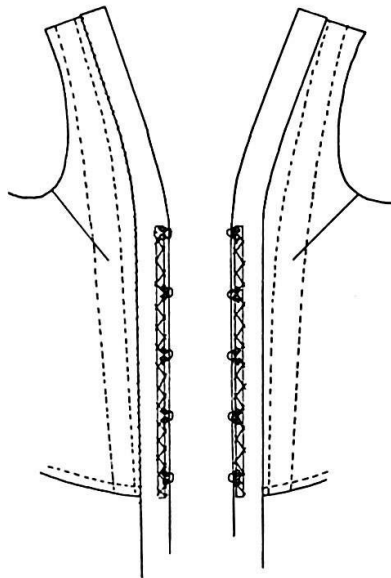
11. For the skirt, continue down the CB, machining from the waist to hem, putting the surplus fabric at the waist into an inverted pleat. If the back is cut to the fold of the fabric, trim out the surplus on the bodice seam and put the surplus fabric of the skirt into a pleat at the waist, as above.

The inverted pleat in the CB can be as large or small as you wish or as the style of the back of the Mantua you are making dictates.

12. Face the back neck from the wrong side onto the right and top stitch or fell down onto the right side over the pleats.

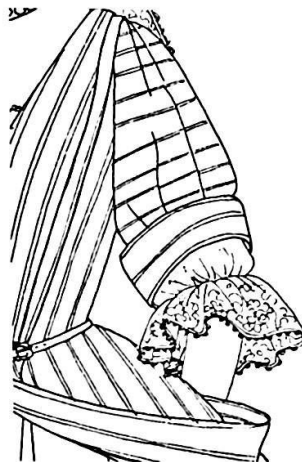
13. Join the shoulders, using the front facing to neaten the edge by felling it across the join. Continue felling down the front onto the inside of the bodice.





14. If the front is to be laced together put on large loops through which to thread the lace. (Fur loops as used for fur coats are very good for this purpose.) If the Mantua is to meet, then put on hooks and loops and an inlay. Whichever method you use either incorporate a bone into the facing or herringbone a bone in a casing behind the fastenings on both sides (see appendix 1).
15. If there are joins in the triangular side skirt (godets) machine together and then, with all the seams on the right side, attach from X — Y to the skirt front and from X — Z on the side back of the main A and B pattern pieces. All the seams are made up on the right side, ie on the outside, and make as neat as possible.

The skirt is made this way, so that when the back is draped up leaving the underside of the skirt exposed, the seams do not show.
16. The seam will need to be clipped where it changes direction at the waist. This must be done with great care by reinforcing the corner, otherwise the fabric may fray away leaving a hole.
17. If the skirt is lined, the skirt and the lining can be made up as normal and the whole thing bagged out. But I think it is better when made in the traditional way, if the material is suitable since this method keeps the whole thing lighter in both weight and appearance.
18. Finish the hem and front edges, and then drape up the back in accordance with the design. On many Mantuas the waterfall drapes at the back are made by placing a button on the top and a loop behind it on the wrong side — the size of the loop and position of the button will alter the type of the drape you achieve.

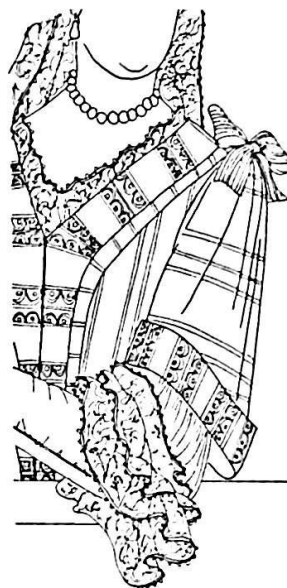


19. Make up and set-in the sleeves, which by the end of the period are set well onto the shoulder and pleated or gathered at the head. The bottom can be eased into a band or a cuff. The sleeve can either be put into the armhole as a modern sleeve, the sleeve seam being pressed towards the shoulder and caught to the shoulder seam. Alternatively, set as 18th-century sleeves by putting the pleats on the head on top of the bodice and covering with the shoulder pleat. For this sleeve use the alternative line on the pattern.

The Mantua is one of the most difficult garments to make today. Within its period it was put together by hand, but today, when the machine is used, its construction is complex. If time allows, the pleats on the body of the garment will look better if they are pricked down onto the lining by hand. If they are machined, try to cut away some of the spare fabric inside the pleats otherwise the hard lines of the machining are apt to make the fabric bubble.

The pattern can be made shorter at the front or

longer at the back by altering the skirt godet accordingly. On the front bodice the alternative line allows the fronts to meet. The facings must then be cut separately. The top of the corset and the width of the shoulder, governs the angle of the front from J — K.

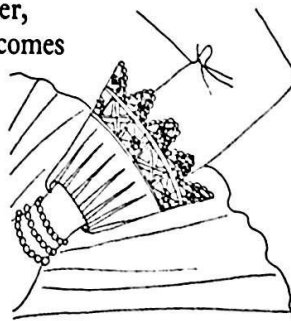


17. CUFFS & COLLARS

COLLARS and cuffs in the 17th century vary in size and shape. The patterns in this book cover most of the century and are not copies of originals but have all been used successfully in theatre or television. With a little experiment they are quite easy to cut and fit. The large plain collars are difficult to make so that they lie flat and must have been folded from the CB to the top of the bodice neckline to enable the fabric to lie flat over the shoulders. A cuff must always be slightly larger at the wrist end, so that it lies easily round the cuff. The top of the cuff can be close to the sleeve as in the Hollar's engravings of *The Seasons*, or as loose as in the portraits of Henrietta-Maria.

The easiest way to make a cuff pattern is to lay the end of the sleeve pattern onto paper and draw round it. Then split the paper and open it up to the size required.

- A. The sleeve end laid onto a cuff shape.
- B. Cuff manipulation. Pleated cuffs and collars are made with a flat piece of fabric pleated in narrow dart-like pleats. Again with a few experiments in paper, the system soon becomes clear. Use a paper pattern to pleat over.
- C. The cuff fabric before pleating.



Cuff C and D.

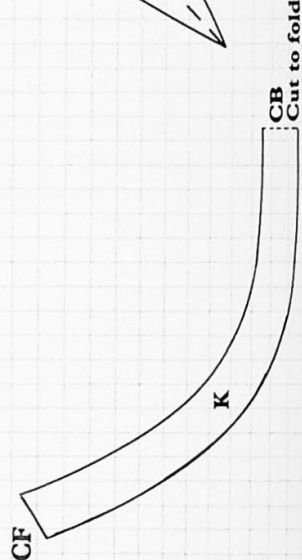
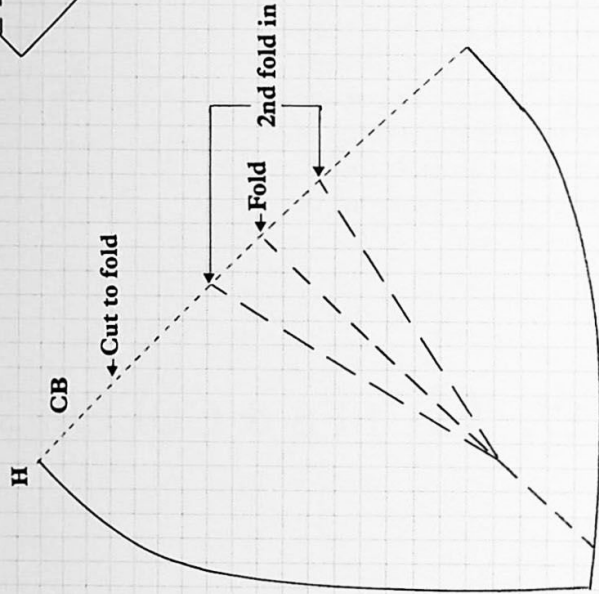
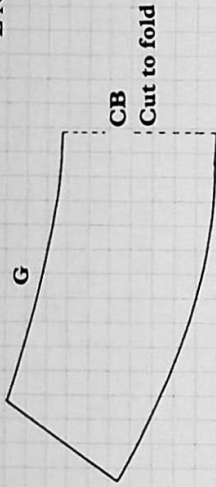
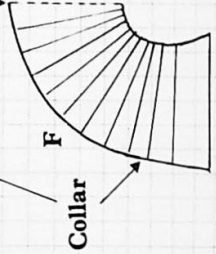
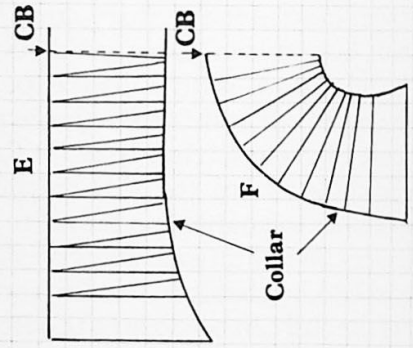
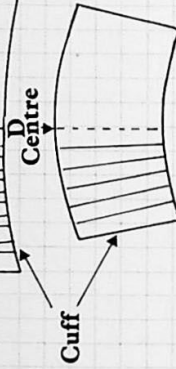
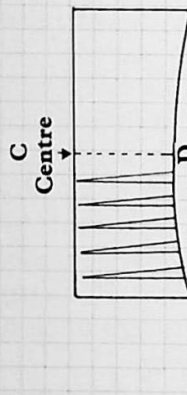
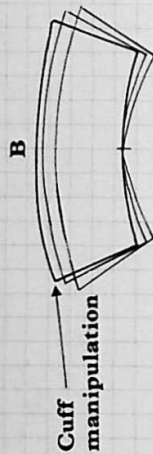
17th-century collars, cuffs and fichus

A Lay sleeve on to manipulate cuff

B Cuff manipulation

C and D Pleated cuff — late Elizabethan and early 17th century

E and F Pleated standing band — late Elizabethan and early 17th century



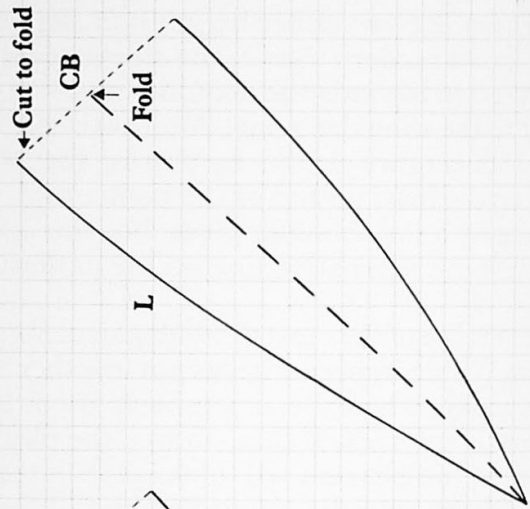
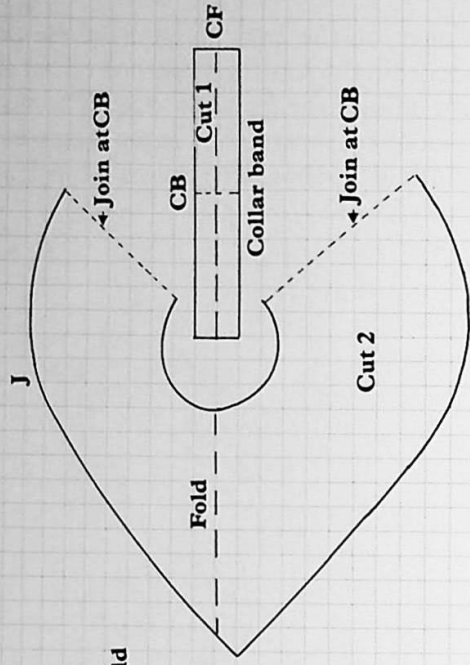
G Back collar (1630-35)

H Double over collar (1630-35)

J Double collar falling from top of band

K Narrow collar for top of bodice (the shape for a perfect fit is achieved as for cuffs A)

L Narrow fichu (1660-70)



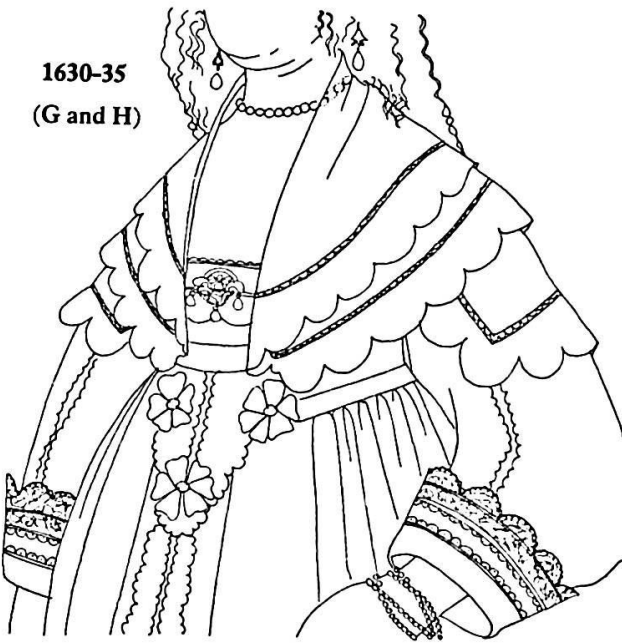
SCALE: 1 square = 2.5cm (1in)

Cuffs & Collars

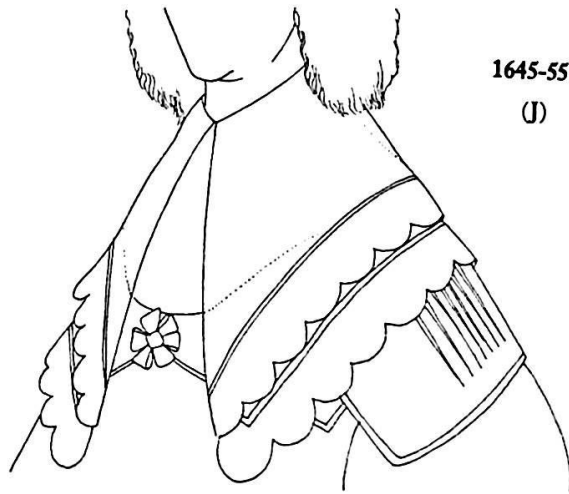
**Standing collar.
(E and F)**



**1630-35
(G and H)**

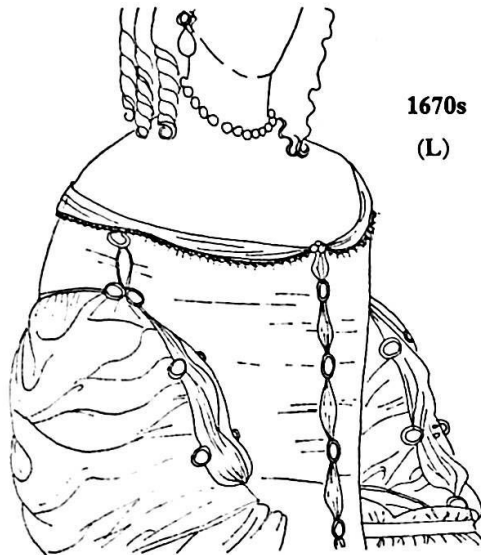


**1645-55
(J)**

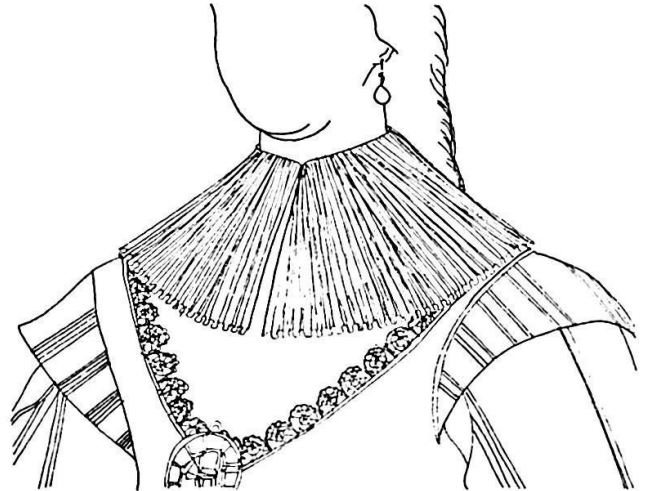


**c.1650
(K)**





1670s
(L)



Falling band
(M)

- D. The finished shape of a pleated cuff.
- E. The collar fabric before pleating.
- F. The finished shape of a pleated collar. (This collar is worn over a collar support or supportasse.)
- G. The under collar worn around the neck bodice, stopping at the front armpit level, 1630-35. Cut to fold. There is also a fold of fabric across the front of the bodice.
- H. A double collar of 1630-35. This falls down either side of the neck, like a folded handkerchief over the collar. It seems, in some portraits, to be pinned to the edge of the front neck.
- J. A double collar of 1645-55. This collar fastens round the neck, falling slightly open at the front. It seems to have been made both mounted on a neck band, or with the neck edge bound.
- K. A narrow collar worn round the top of an oval necked bodice, c.1650. This collar pattern can be made in the same way as a cuff pattern.

- L. A small fichu worn round the oval necked bodice of the 1670s. Fold in half and herringbone into the bodice as far as x. Tuck in the surplus or tie in a knot.
- Falling bands which were also worn in the 17th century can be made in very fine lawn muslin or batiste and antique pleated.

Watch point

To pleat, either send to a commercial pleaters or do it yourself by wetting and twisting the fabric, wrap it in strips of muslin and hang it until dry, or put on a very low light in an oven. (This can be dangerous and care must be taken if the oven is heated by gas.)

Modern knife pleating looks too formal and the original falling band was very long. When making one today cut the fabric double width and the length needs to be at least 7.5cm (3in) per 2.5cm (1in). If the fabric is very fine 38cm (15in) per 7cm (3in) looks very good.

Making up

The fabric can be pleated either before or after edging.

1. Cut the fabric 30cm (12in) wide and, for a 33cm (13in) neck, 163cm (65in) long.
2. Finish both edges — either plain or with lace.
3. Press a crease into the length of the fabric 1cm (½in) off centre — this makes the top frill a fraction shorter.
4. Put two gathering threads down the crease, a machine foot's width apart.
5. Make a band, as for a ruff and machine the gathered up fabric to the top of the band. Lay

the top edge of the band between the rows of gathering and with a narrow zig-zag stitch machine over the edge of the neckband.

Remember to get the gathering even by quartering the band and the frill.

6. Put hooks and loops onto the band, and fine ties with tassels to add interest, the ties do not need to be practical but give an authentic look.

The frill must come from the top of the collar band and between mid or edge of the shoulder. Many paintings by Rembrandt show good examples of the falling band.

**Front and back views of the Sack dress together with
a characteristically decorated 18th-century
theatrical costume.**



PART FOUR:

Period Patterns — 18th century



18. 18th-CENTURY CORSETS

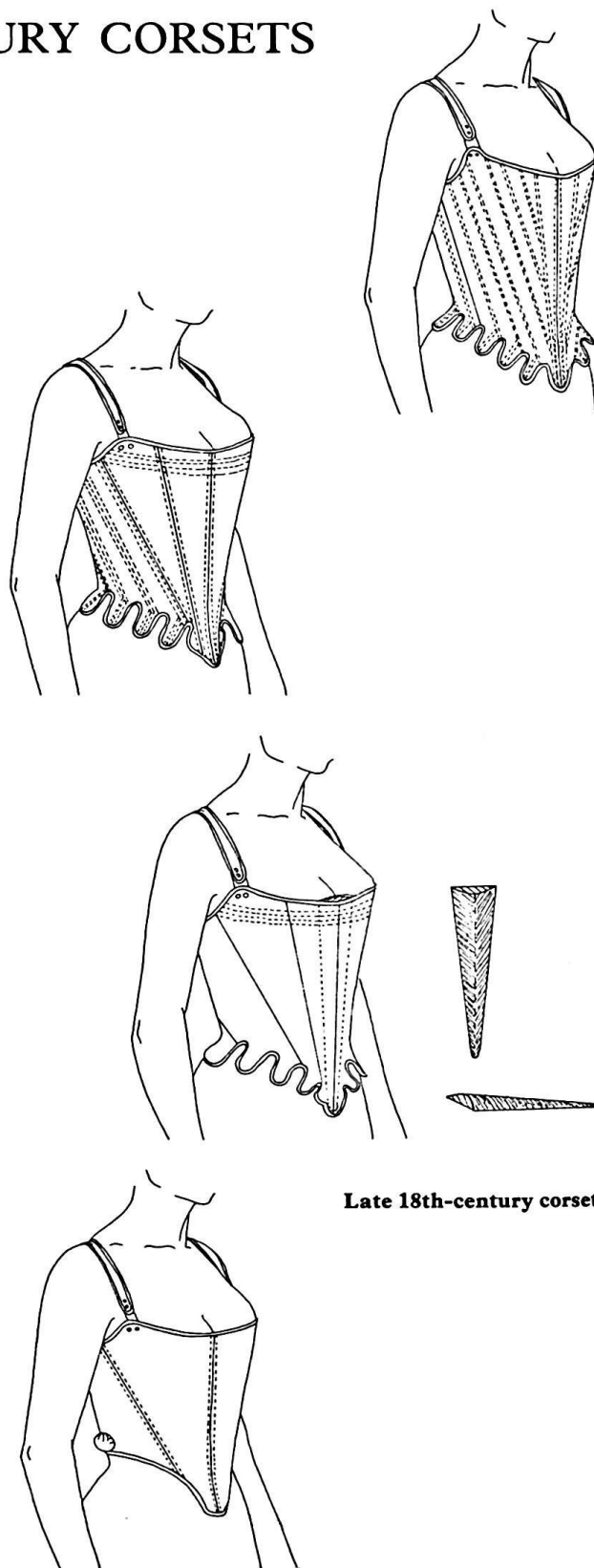
THE 18th-century corset shape is more rounded or bowed at the front than in earlier periods, and as the century progresses the corset becomes even more bowed. During the second half of the century bones are placed across the top of the front as well as the rigid busk down the centre. To emphasise the shape even further, a triangular wooden busk can be inserted into a pocket incorporated into the CF.

The tassets round the bottom, instead of being separate as in earlier stays, are now cut as part of the body — the pieces of pattern are split at the waist to allow them to spread over the hip. The bones in the early part of the century come straight through from the top into the tassets, but as the century progresses they are set at an angle. By the end of the century, the bodice of the dress becomes shorter and there is no longer a need for the tassets at the side although the points at the front and back are still retained.

When using patterns from original sources you must remember that it has been taken from an original garment, made for a woman who would have been used to wearing stays since a child. You will need to check the shape and the measurements of the original pattern.

The flat fronted corset is easier than the Victorian type of corset for a modern woman to wear as the busk, which extends from the bust to the tummy, takes the pressure off both the diaphragm and the waist at the CF. All corsets change the shape of the body — the natural shape in cross section is oval, but when any type of corset is worn the body is made round, giving the illusion of a smaller waist. If you corset yourself and look in a mirror, from the side you will appear thicker than in modern underwear. The effect of the narrower appearance of the body from the front is enhanced by the pointed stomacher on the dress or the robings which carry the eye from shoulder to hem. It is the old trick of making a glittering stomacher and petticoat and a dark dress to make large ladies appear quite slim.

The corsets or stays of the 18th century, when being made for the theatre or television, are constructed as for the earlier periods. The difference lies in the cut and the position of the bones.



Late 18th-century corset.

18th-century corset

A Front (cut 1 to fold or cut 2 to selvedge)
Join to H and lace to top

--- Alternative line for extra allowance if stomacher is made removable
B Side front (cut 2). Make without eyelets if stomacher is fixed.

K Band of bones can be used to make the corset a later date

C Side (cut 2)

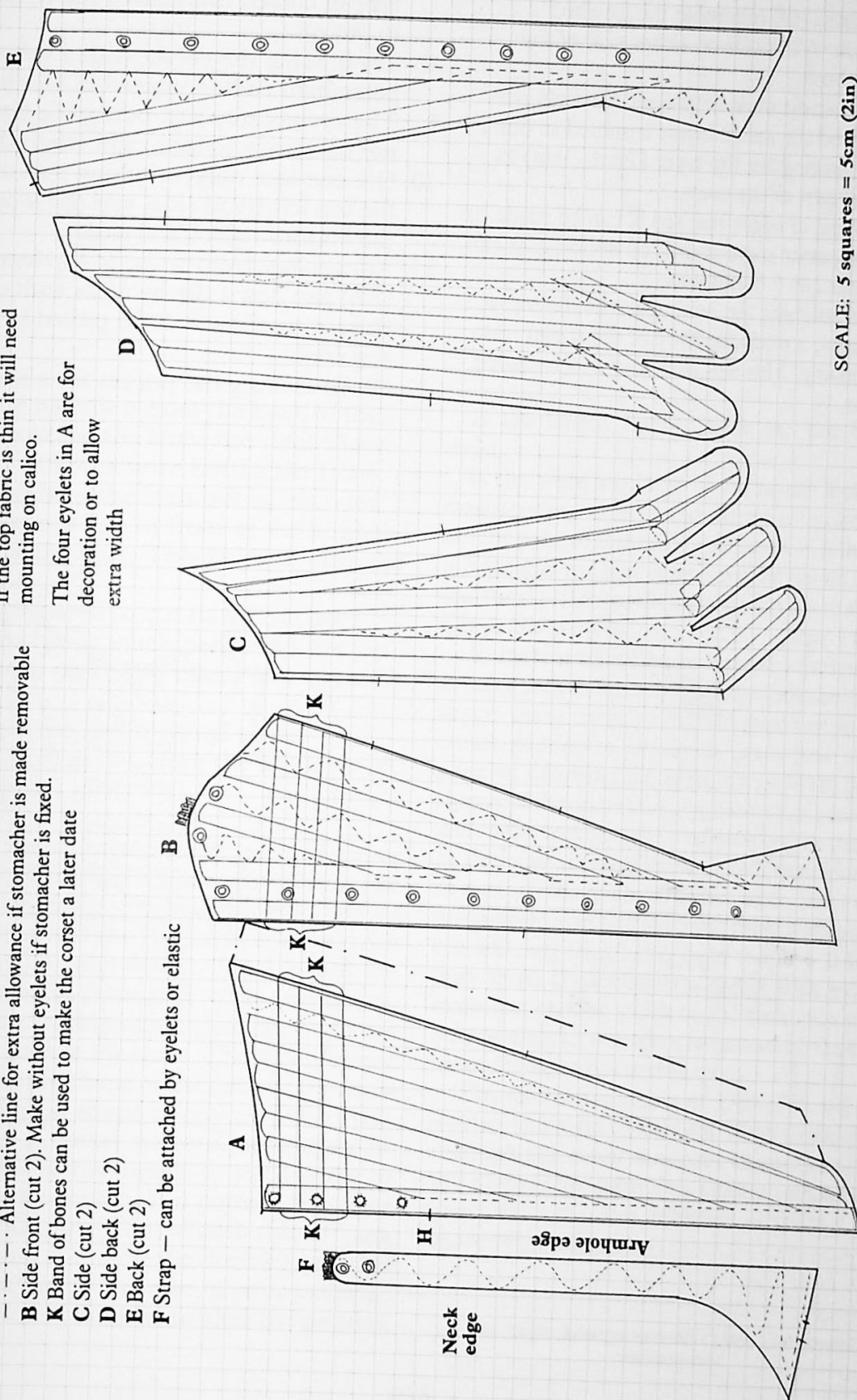
D Side back (cut 2)

E Back (cut 2)

F Strap — can be attached by eyelets or elastic

All pieces are cut in drill, canvas and top fabric.
If the top fabric is thin it will need mounting on calico.

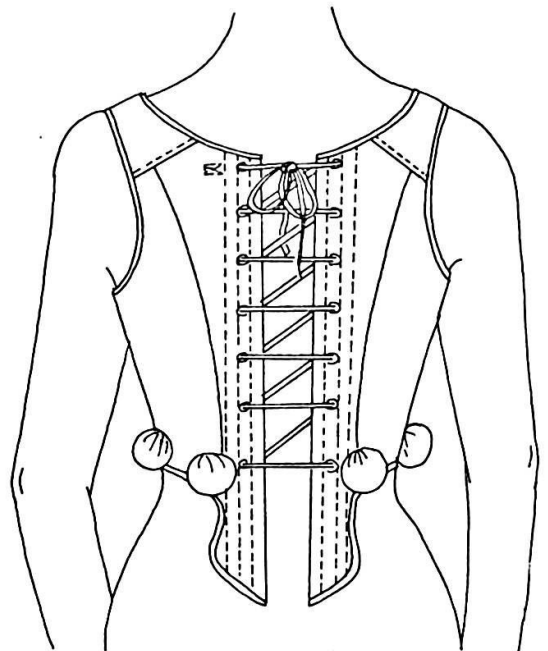
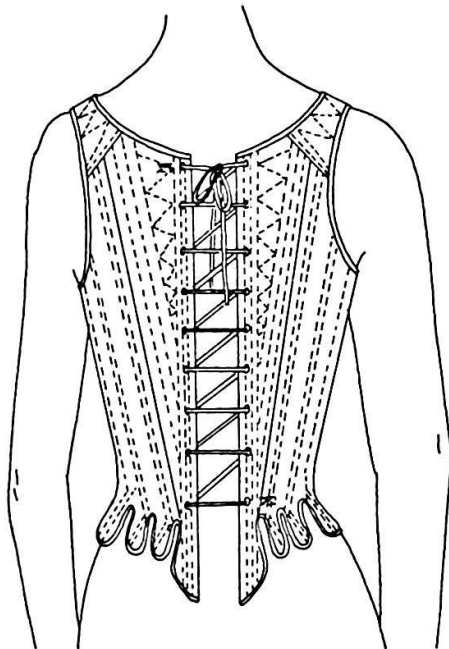
The four eyelets in A are for decoration or to allow extra width



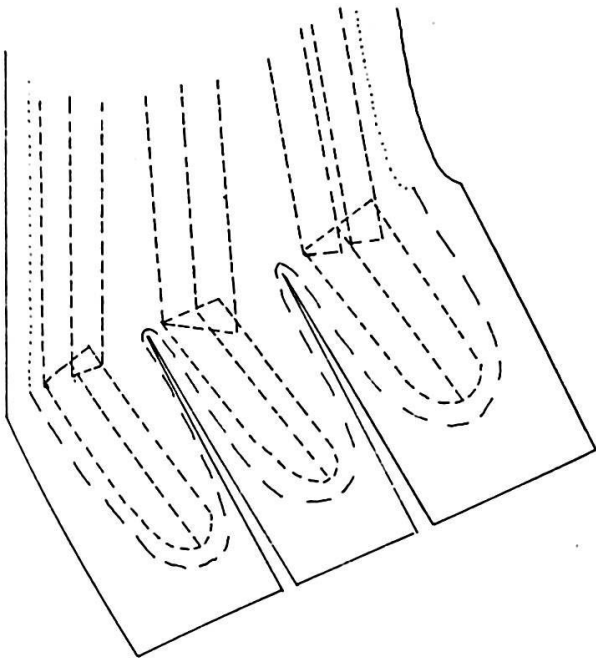
SCALE: 5 squares = 5cm (2in)

Making tips to remember:

1. The boning and the top fabric must be finished on each piece of the corset before they are joined together.
2. Each piece will need canvas all through to keep them stiff otherwise the finished garment will buckle on either side of the centre busk.
3. All the seams must be pressed towards the back, and the inside layers trimmed to 6mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in) leaving the top layer 12mm ($\frac{1}{2}$ in) as the lap part of the seam.
4. The band of bones marked K can be made up on a separate piece of drill or webbing. It can be from 2 to 5 bones wide.
5. When stitching the boning across the top at the front, stretch the body of the corset onto the boning. This will then stay in a rounded shape.
6. Keep the back of the corset narrow as this helps to keep the straps on the shoulders which must also be kept narrow.
7. Trim off the tassets at the bottom. Although it is never easy to bind the bottom of this type of corset, this makes the binding easier to put on.
8. Try binding the corset with a soft, narrow petersham ribbon instead of bias binding.
9. The eyelets stop just below the waist as it is not necessary to lace right from the bottom.
10. Use one lace only, stitching a short length to the top left hand side, and the long lace on the bottom right hand side.
11. Always lace from waist to top leaving a 5cm (2in) gap down the back, as with the earlier corsets, to allow it to be pulled in tighter as required.
12. When making the pocket for a triangular



Corsets: left: basic 18th-century and, right: late 18th-century.



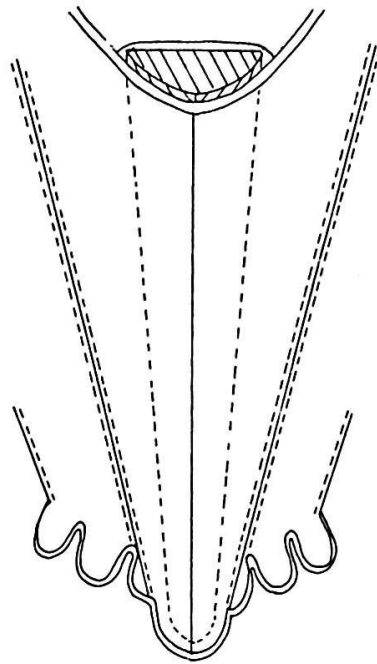
busk, keep it narrow across the back of the pocket. This keeps the front the right shape. The pocket will otherwise flatten the front instead of pushing the bust out as intended.

13. Attach the straps just in front of the armhole at the side of the bust. This helps to push the bust forward.
14. Always be prepared to cut down the front neck. Remember to machine just off the top of the bones to make this easier (see appendix 1).
15. Machine tack the half finished corset together and try to fit before the top layer of fabric is applied.

In my pattern the stomacher can be used either separately or fixed, using the alternative lines. The construction is of Rigilene onto drill, with canvas between the bones and the drill and covered with calico and then the top fabric. Steel bones are placed down the back, front and, where necessary, in the sides. If the steels are too rigid they will not curve round the body at the sides. The way the bone lines lie, as well as the shape of the pattern pieces, is the secret to the good shape of any period corset.

When altering a corset pattern, care must be taken not to add on too much to each seam or decrease the size too much. If a pattern has eight seams and you add 3mm ($\frac{1}{8}$ in) to both sides of each pattern piece (3mm ($\frac{1}{8}$ in) on the double), you will have added 5cm (2in) to the size of your pattern.

To work out where you need to alter the pattern, ask yourself:



Is the length right? Check the side bust to waist.

Is the waist too large or too small? If the bust measurement is right and the waist too small, let out the pattern at the side waist and CF. If the waist is right and the bust is too small let out on the CF and the side front at the top only. Try not to alter the CB at all.

To make a toile, pad up a stand which is a size smaller than the measurement you require. Make a shape using card, corrugated paper or a Tudor corset padded to the right shape, and make a pattern, following the grain lines and the pattern shapes of the original. Alter the shape of your stand and make another toile, and compare the patterns. In this way you will begin to understand how the shapes of the pattern pieces alter. They must resemble the pattern shapes in the available books, but will vary slightly from size to size — the grain lines must always stay the same. With practice, instead of making a toile on the stand, you will be able to alter an average size pattern on the flat to make the right size and shape.

The alternative corset of 1785-1795 will fit a woman of 106cm (44in) bust, 90cm (35in) waist, although the corset measures 103cm (41in) bust and 82cm (32in) waist. It is a pattern taken from a corset from my own collection — it fits a large figure very well.

Large Corset (Bust 100cm (41in), waist 80cm (32in))

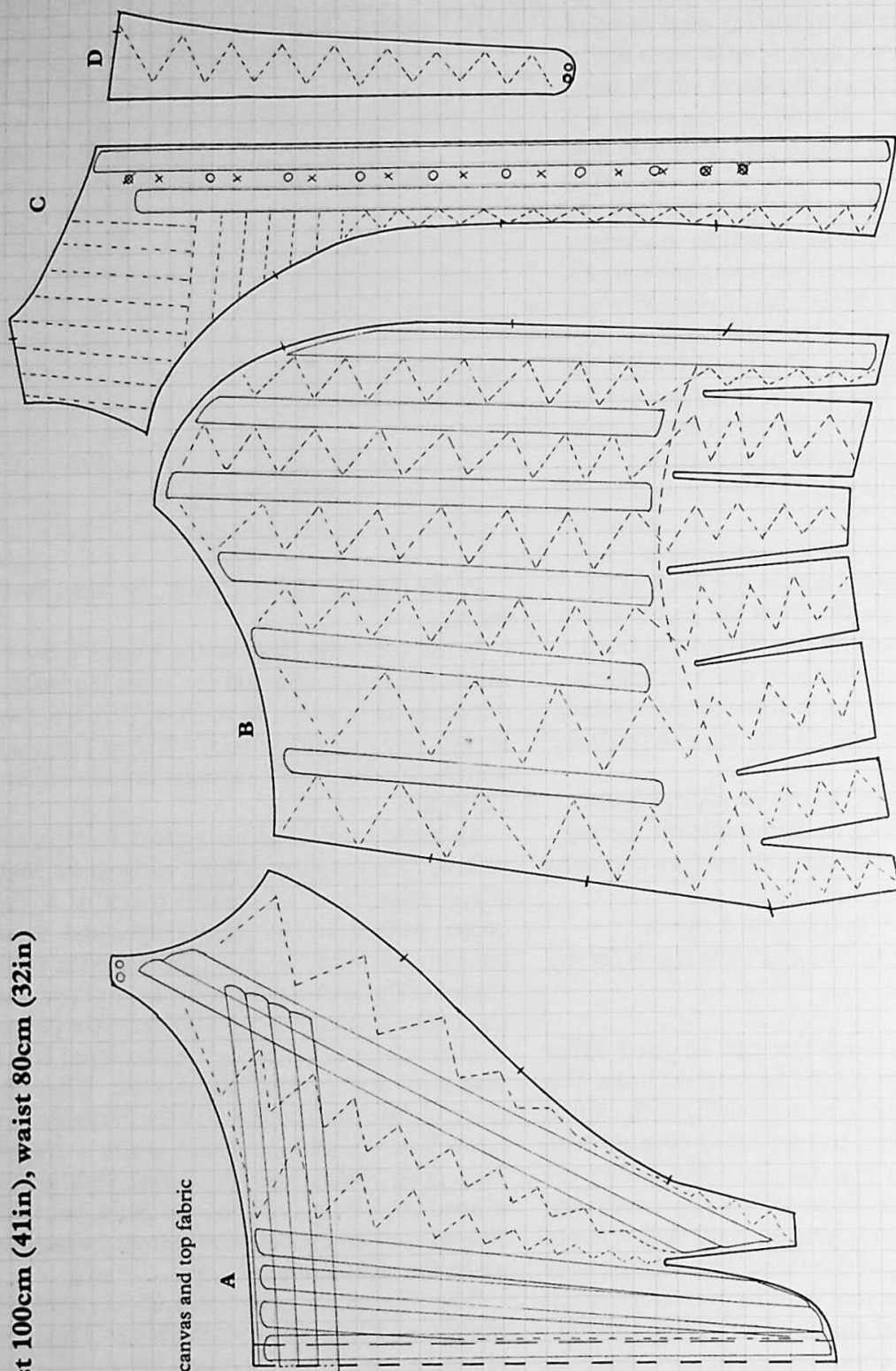
A Front (cut 1 to fold)

B Side (cut 2)

C Back (cut 2)

D Strap (cut 2)

All pieces are cut in drill, canvas and top fabric

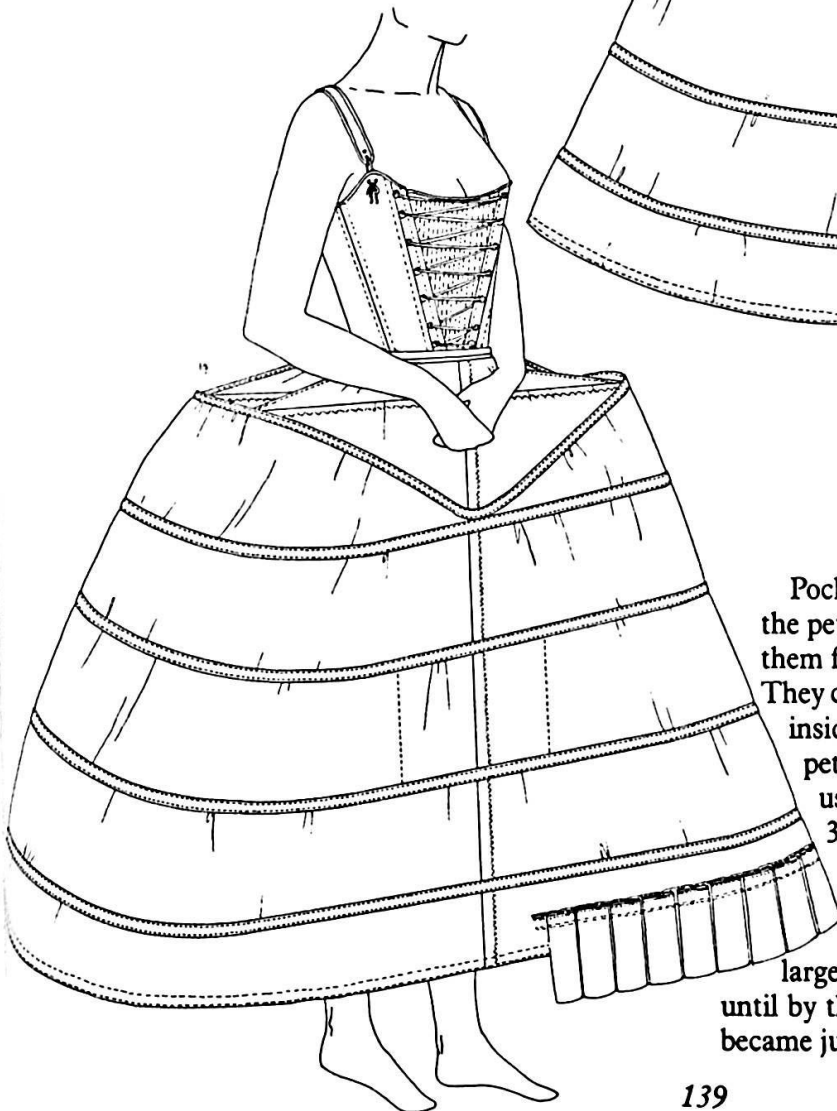
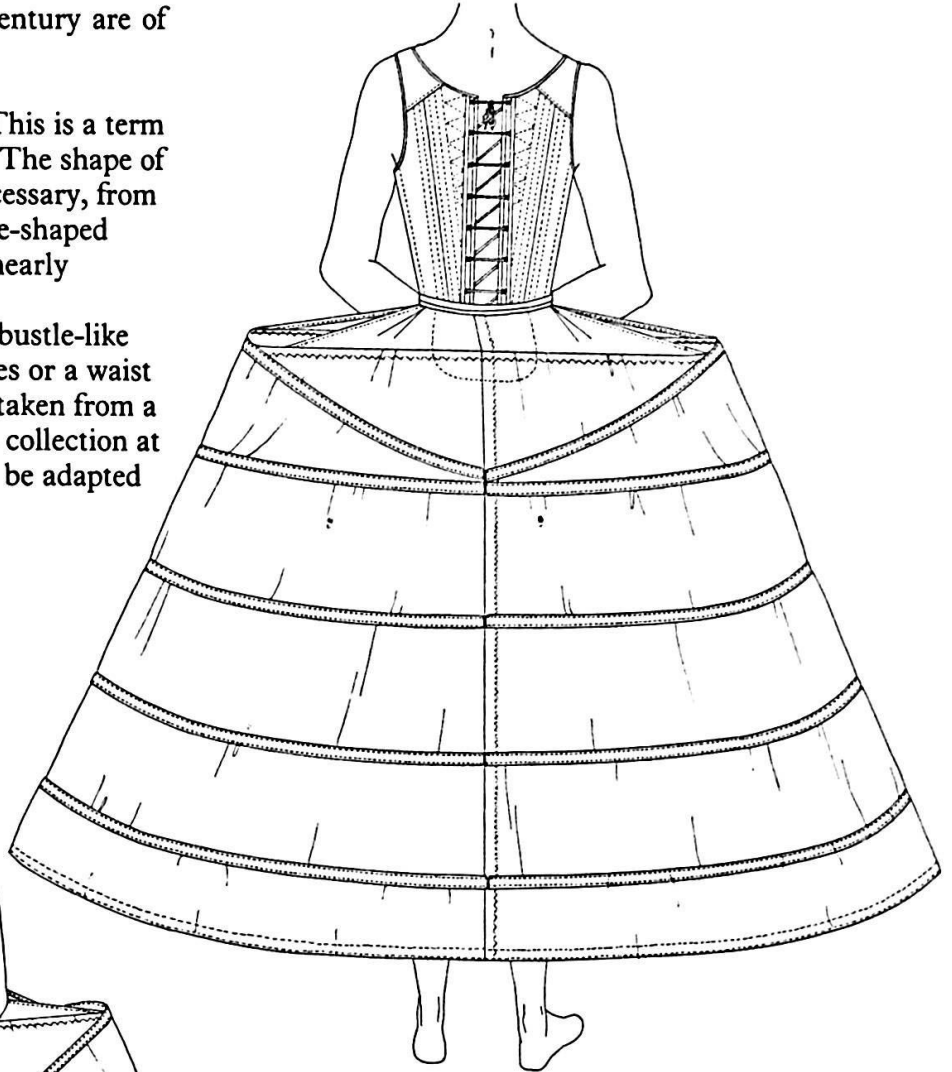


SCALE: 5 squares = 5cm (2in)

19. SKIRT SUPPORTS

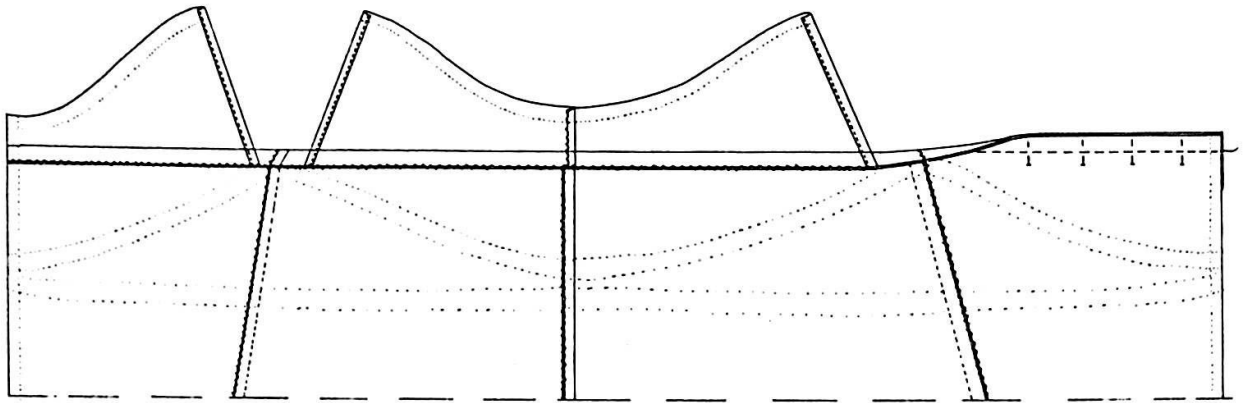
SKIRT supports for the 18th century are of three types:

1. **The Large Hoop, or Panier.** This is a term widely used in costume making. The shape of my pattern is easy to alter, if necessary, from a kidney-shaped hoop to a square-shaped hoop, which can be straight, or nearly straight, at the sides.
2. **Pocket hoops.** These are small bustle-like hip cages mounted either on tapes or a waist petersham. The basic pattern is taken from a pink and white check pair in the collection at the Museum of London and can be adapted to various shapes and sizes.



Pocket hoops need to be cross stitched into the petticoat for use in performance to keep them from collapsing or swinging round. They can also be kept stable by wearing pockets inside the hoops. If splits are left in the petticoat and dress, the pockets can then be used for props.

3. **Pads.** Hip pads make the same shape as pocket hoops but are smaller. By the mid 1770s the shape is more rounded and the sausage pad can be used. Quite large at first, hip pads gradually became small until by the mid 1790s, as the waist rose, the pad became just a small half moon pad at the back.

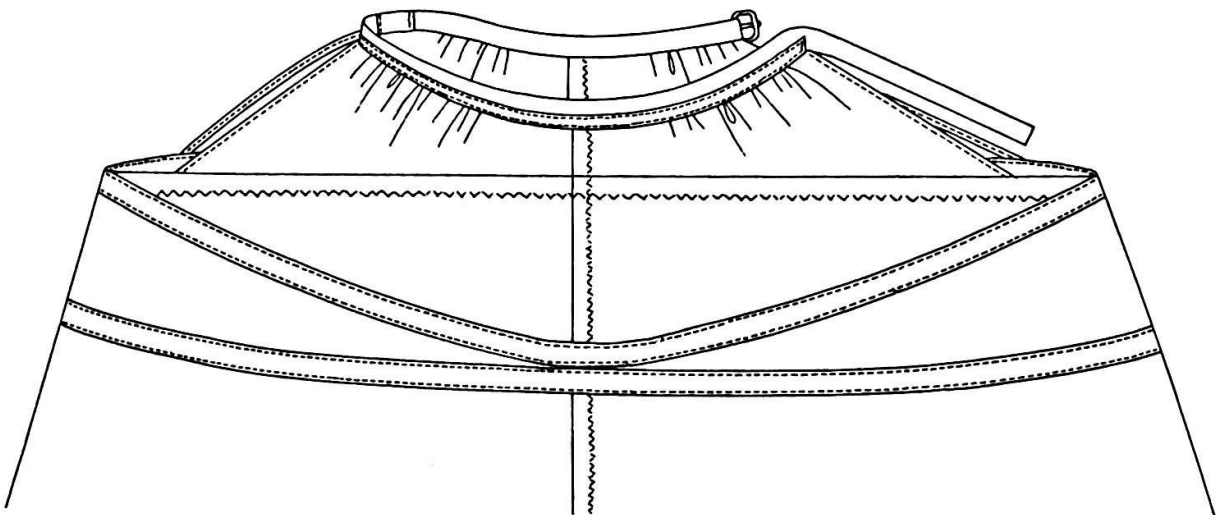


THE PANIER

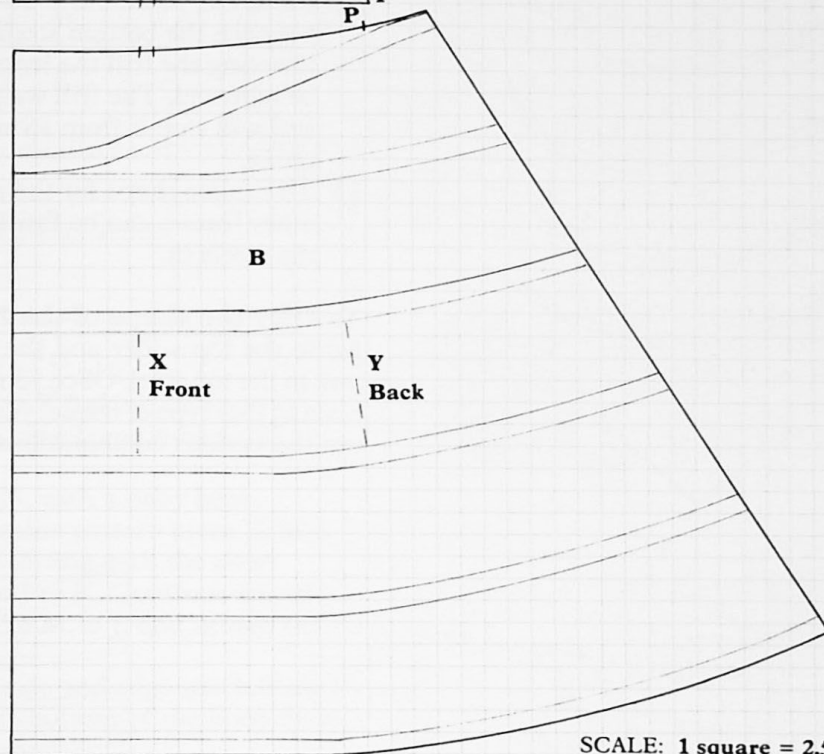
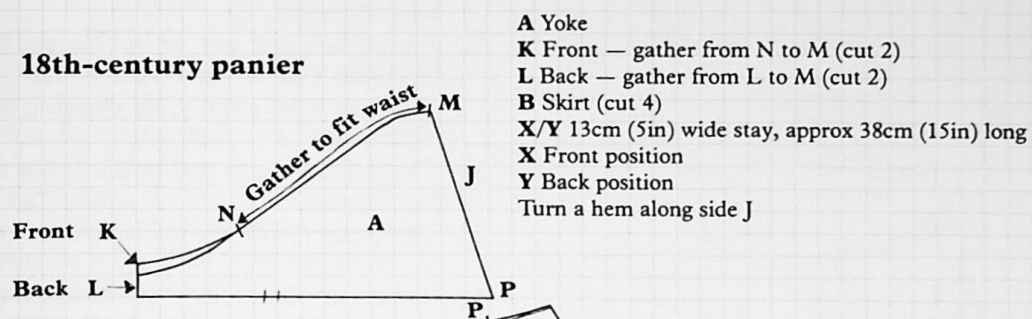
Cut, mark and make up the panier in the same way as the farthingale.

Making up

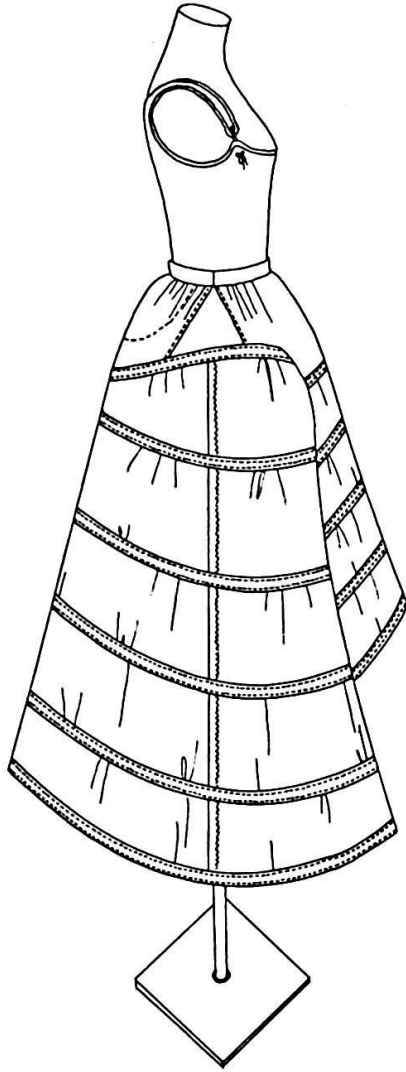
1. Join all four of the large pattern pieces together, matching the balance marks. Finish flat, leaving the back seam open.
2. Take the four small pieces and on the side marked (J) turn a narrow hem. Join the CF seam only, marked (K), and finish flat. The CB (L) is 13mm ($\frac{1}{2}$ in) narrower than the front.
3. Pin the small top pieces to the large bottom pieces and finish flat by edge stitching the top and turning in or zig-zagging the bottom edge of the seam. Starting at the CB, go across the side, the fronts and continue round to the back. You will have a gap of about 15cm (6in) at both sides which will now have been neatened.
4. Apply all the tapes as for the farthingale.
5. Join the back and flatten the seam.
6. Put a hem on the bottom, which both neatens the hem and holds the bottom steel.
7. Put in the stay pieces which fit across the inside of the panier 12.5cm (5in) from the CF, and or 37.5cm (15in) from the CB. Attach the pieces between steel numbers 3 and 4, thereby keeping the kidney shape of this type of cage.



18th-century panier



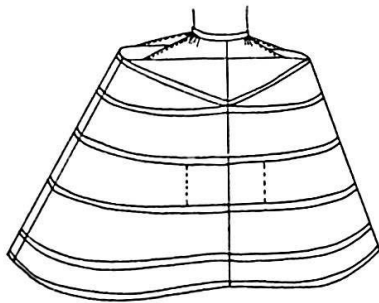
SCALE: 1 square = 2.5cm (1in)



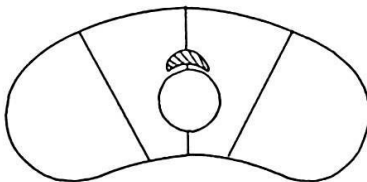
8. Gather or pleat the top and put on the waistband. Finish the front and back on separate petershams leaving an inlay on both sides of the back. Then join the right side by lapping the front over the back and stitch very strongly.
9. Put a hook and bar, or buckle and end on the left side. This method means that you can let out both sides evenly, by opening up the right side.
10. Thread the steels and stitch as for the farthingale.
11. The panier, like the farthingale, needs a pad in the back.
12. Put a box pleated frill about 22cm (9in) deep between the bottom steels. By lifting or lowering the frill the length of the panier can be adjusted. The frill weighs the panier down and will stop it from swinging around too much.
13. The calico shape for the panier, as with the other frames can be finished before you put the steels in.

To alter the shape of the frame

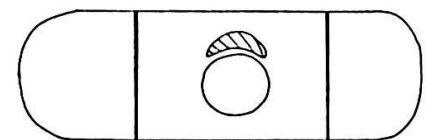
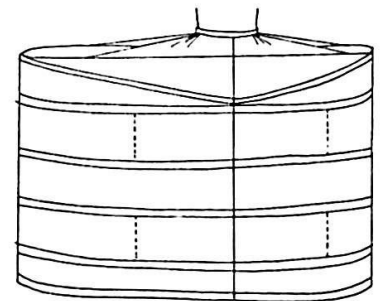
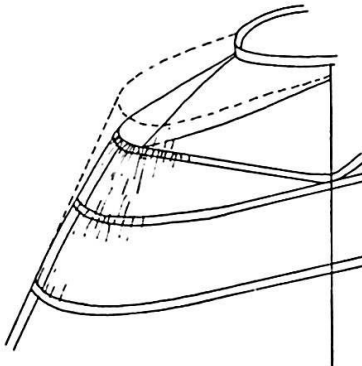
Make the top wider and the bottom narrower or pull in the top steel. Once you have the principle of making this type of frame, you will be able to work out the various combinations.



Pulled in. Top Steel.



As pattern.



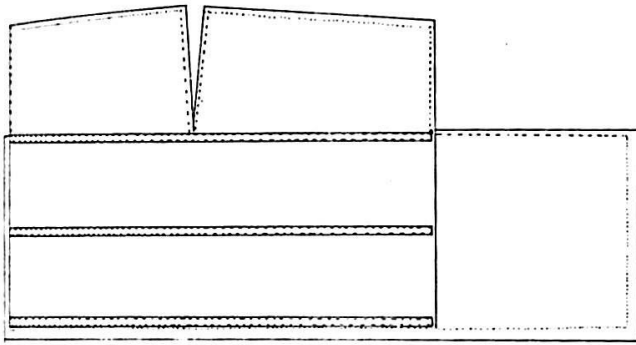
Square hoop.

POCKET HOOPS

The pocket hoop pattern was taken from a delightful pair in the collection at The Museum of London made from pink and white checked linen stiffened with cane.

Making up

1. Cut and mark all the pieces as for other skirt supports.
2. Split down the centre as far as the top tape line and hem both edges.
3. Put the tapes onto the main part of the hoop (as pattern), but just short of the allowance on the outside edge. The tape will also strengthen the bottom of the pocket hole.



4. Baby hem from X to Y to Z.
5. Make up seam K to Z (taking care not to catch in the loose tapes), and neaten the seam.
6. Finish from Z to N, with a baby hem.
7. Pin, tack and machine pattern piece B, into the bottom of A, starting with the short straight edge from J to K. Continue round the curve from K to M to J, and neaten the seam.
8. Turn to the right side and edge stitch from Y to J, and round the bottom of the hoop from J to K to M to J.
9. Cut the steels to 1) 50cm (19½in)
2) 54.5cm (21½in)
3) 60cm (23½in)

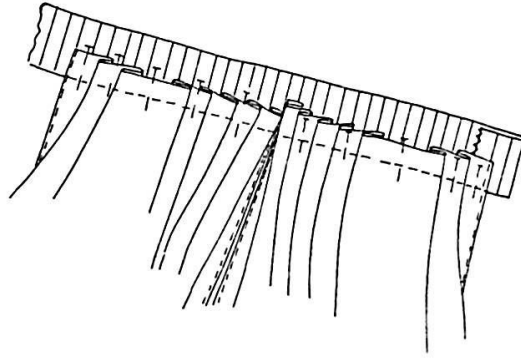
Thread the steels, pushing them into the casings as far as possible. Pin across the end, with the pins on the right side of the hoop, to hold them in place.

10. Hand stitch the ends of the steels and then edge stitch by machine from K to Z making sure the ends of the tapes are secured.
11. Cross stitch the steels to the tapes at both ends, distributing the fullness on the top steel evenly.

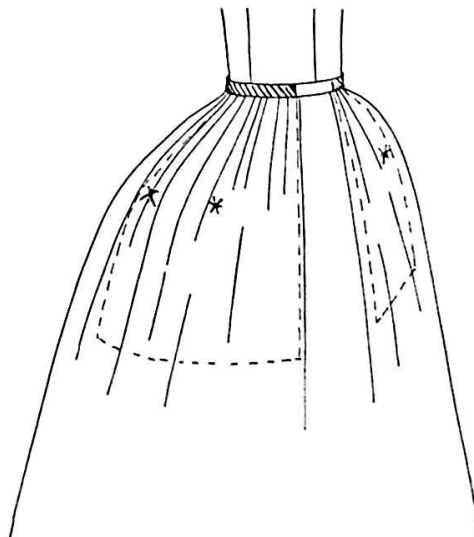
Watch point

If you leave the steels 4mm (¼in) short and push the steels back into the casings far enough, you will, with help, be able to machine down the edge of the seam. Machining is stronger than hand sewing in this situation.

12. Pleat *both* tops into about 12cm (5in), N-P and P-X. After making the second hoop, put hoops onto the side marks of a tape or petersham. Fasten with a hook and bar or buckle at the CF.



Alternatively, put each pocket onto a short piece of petersham or tape and stitch directly into the sides of the petticoat, matching the quarters. Stitch the petticoat to each of the hoops with cross stitches.



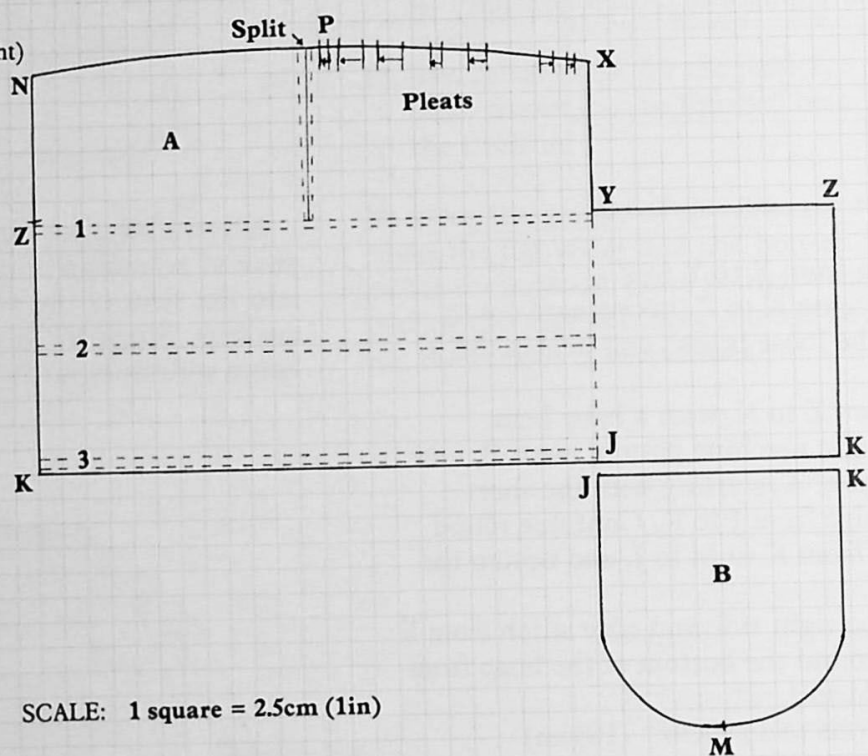
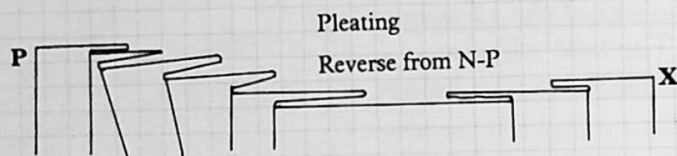
For a decorative effect, the steels can be put onto the outside of the hoop using a tape of a contrasting colour, which, if they are to be seen can look very attractive.

1, 2, 3 Tapes

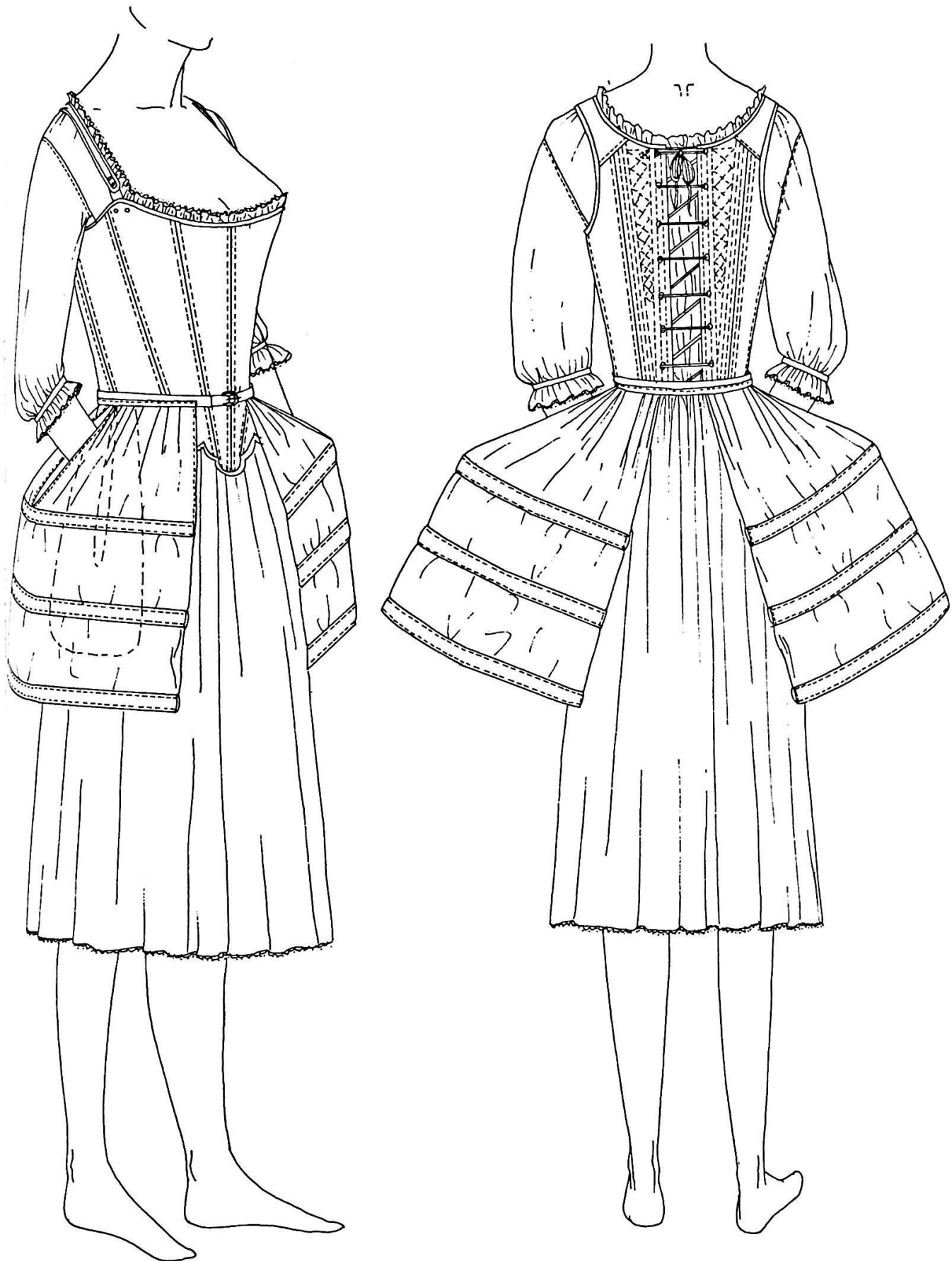
1. 50cm (19½in)
2. 54.5 (21½in)
3. 60cm (23½in)

A Main body of hoop
(cut 1 left and 1 right)

B Base (cut 2)



SCALE: 1 square = 2.5cm (1in)



20. PETTICOATS AND SKIRTS

PETTICOATS

PETTICOATS for this period can be made of either quilting or calico. The quilted petticoat can be made of commercial quilting to be found in most large stores or it can be especially quilted in an 18th-century quilt pattern. Many petticoats of this type can be seen in museums or in books on costume and it is fascinating and quite easy, after a little research, to put together your own 18th-century quilting design. This type of petticoat is usually worn over pocket hoops or pads, and material that is 2.05m (2.27yd) wide is quite wide enough. Commercial quilting can be used to good effect when you wish to stabilize a large hoop and smooth out the pattern of the wires. The wires can sometimes be seen when a fine silk is used over a large hoop with an insubstantial petticoat.

Whether you use quilting or calico the hem needs to be 30cm (12in) larger than the hem of the panier. Over large hoops the sides too will need shaping, so that as little bulk as possible has to be pleated into the waist. With all petticoats and skirts made over paniers, if there is too much fabric in the sides, the skirt will slip off the hoops and it will be impossible to get a level hem. The hem should be on the straight and the skirt shaped from the top. If you keep an eye on the grain at the level of the first or second wires, you will find it easier than trying to look at the hem while pleating. A good deep frill on both the panier and the petticoat will help to keep the skirt stable.

SKIRTS

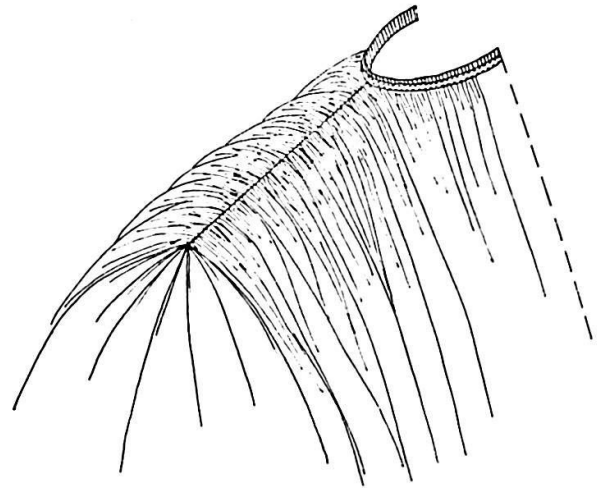
The skirts for this period usually comprise a decorated petticoat, and an over skirt attached to the bodice, opening in an 'A' line at the front. After c. 1750 both edges are decorated, but become plain again by 1780. However, skirts throughout the period could be pleated all the way round in small, flat pleats.

There are four ways to pleat a skirt over a panier or pocket hoops.

1. A skirt over pocket hoops or pads (which are usually much smaller in size than a panier) can be cartridge pleated or pleated with small

flat pleats. The latter is the way 18th-century skirts of this type were pleated. The pleating is sometimes from front to back meeting with an inverted pleat, but it can also be from back to front, or even both back and front pleated to meet in an inverted pleat at the side. When made today, however, the fabric is often too thick to flat pleat into a small waist.

2. The theatrical way is to chevron pleat the fabric into the side waist but this is difficult until you acquire the knack. The most successful way is, as when making petticoats, by shaping out the sides, so leaving much less fabric to pleat into the waist. I always use this method when pleating over a large panier (see page 153).
3. If the panier is of the wide, square type, after pleating the waist, you can either gather or make tiny pleats along the top of the panier making a small fan of pleats at the end.



4. For a large, square hoop, take the fabric flat along the top of the panier and make a fan of pleats at the end. With this method you will need a very splendid piece of material (see page 168).

Examples of this type of skirt on the Court Mantua are on display in many museums — notably in the Metropolitan in New York and the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam. There are two beautiful examples in the collection at the Victoria and Albert Museum

and the Museum of London and the Court Costume Museum also have specimens.

In the theatre it is the class or character of the person in the piece that determines whether a panier, pocket hoops or pads will be worn. The grand lady wears the panier, the merchant's wife

the pocket hoops and the pads are worn by the maid.

If a skirt of this period moves well and is controlled it is very elegant. But if the skirt either hangs badly or moves like a tank it can look ugly and ungainly.

21. 18th-CENTURY DRESS

DRESS for most 18th-century productions for stage and screen are based on three basic shapes. Many designs are apt to be '18th-century Theatrical' using ideas drawn from various styles of dress in the same garment. The elegance and versatility of the shapes that allows designers to get away with mixing and matching the shapes, cannot be done so successfully with any other century.

The three main shapes of dress in use during the 18th century are the Sack or Robe à la Francaise; the Robe à l'Anglaise which is cut through at the back and fits close to the body, 'en fourreau' and a dress made as a bodice and skirt, which can be as grand as a Court Mantua or as simple as a peasant dress. The back of both the Sack and the Robe à l'Anglaise can be draped up in the fashion of a polonaise.

When cutting from patterns taken from original dresses, it is as well to start by checking the size. It is the grain of the fabric and the shape of the pattern pieces that is important. The pattern taken from the original will give you, for example, the width of the back pleats of a Sack that you can see from the outside, but inside the pleat can be made much deeper. It will also help you to understand the construction and method of setting the sleeve. These details will make your costume more real if this is the designer's wish, or help you to cheat on the original and to give a more theatrical flavour.

THE SACK DRESS

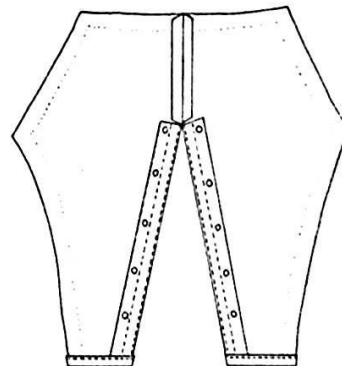
The Sack dress was made with a box pleated back falling loosely from just below the shoulder to the floor. At first the front was fitted to the body by

pleating the fabric which was then stab stitched through to a linen lining like a Mantua. By the mid 1750s, however, dresses can be found with the front bodice cut separately. The Sack dress was usually worn open in front to show a decorated stomacher and petticoat, and was fashionable from 1740 to the 1770s. It was worn over stays and paniers or pocket hoop or pads.

In the theatre the designer will decide what size and shape the skirt will be, and how the dress will be decorated. On the stage this type of dress makes even large ladies look doll like, and in a big theatre, the costume will require more fabric in the sack and the skirt than the real thing, to make it larger than life. The 'daylight' between the body and arms is important, so that the artiste does not look as if she is drowning in the length of fabric that the dress will take.

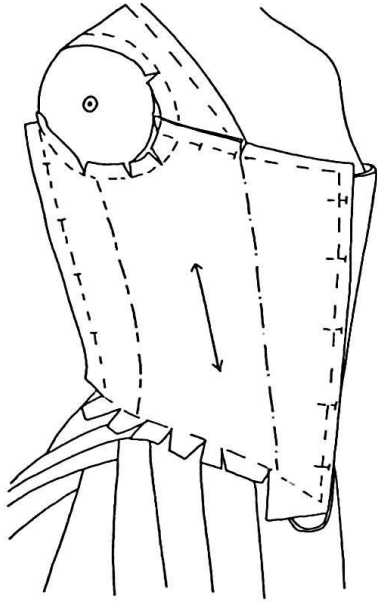
Making up

1. Cut and make up the back lining. The top 5cm (2in) of the seam being joined, the rest is left open and boned, leaving a gap of approximately 5cm (2in) at the bottom. If you know that the N-W-B measurement is correct, bone and eyelet the opening and then



turn a hem at the waist. It can be finished either by lacing with a corset lace or by putting in 6mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in) elastic. If you use elastic this can be pulled up quite tight, tied off for the fitting and stitched permanently after the fitting.

2. Cut the front bodice toile and pin it, with the seams on the outside, to the shoulder and side seams, and to the stand or corset down the front.



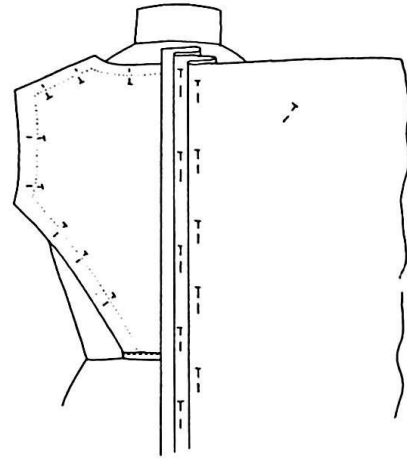
Watch points

I always use a Sack pattern with a separate bodice front, unless the designer specifically wants it pleated through to the skirt, as the end product is much neater, and easier to fit and alter.

After practice if you feel confidence in your cutting ability, the sack and skirt can be draped in the fabric, rather than making a toile.

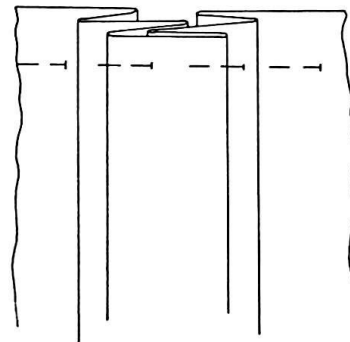
Whether you use the selvedge or the fold at the CB will depend on the fabric.

3. Pin the centre of the fabric 2.5cm (1in) down from the neck edge at the CB of the lining, and make a 7.5cm (3in) deep inverted pleat. Make a second pleat on top of the first, leaving 1.5cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in) of the first pleat showing. Make the box pleat, leaving about 7.5cm (3in) flat, and the pleat 7.5cm (3in) deep.



Before turning in the next pleat, leave 1.5cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in) flat. This pleat can be as deep as 12.5cm (5in) or you can make two smaller pleats. An extra pleat can also be hidden in the CB. If you are making a 'walk down' dress and a long train is required, this is the ideal way to get more fabric into the Sack.

When you are pleating make sure that the leading edges of the pleats are on the straight grain. As you make each pleat pull it into line by giving the fabric a little tug at about hip level. This is important, otherwise the fabric will not hang straight down to the ground. When you have finished, draw a line across the pleating, then take it apart — you will find that the pleat line is uneven as indicated in the pattern. It may not be exactly the same on both sides, but as long as the back looks right and hangs well, do not worry about slight discrepancies.



4. When the pleating is completed on both sides, tack or machine the pleats across the top, attaching them down onto the lining.

18th-century skirts

A Robe à l'Anglaise — cut from 4 widths of 91cm (36in)

The CB skirt is cut in one with the bodice (see page 158)

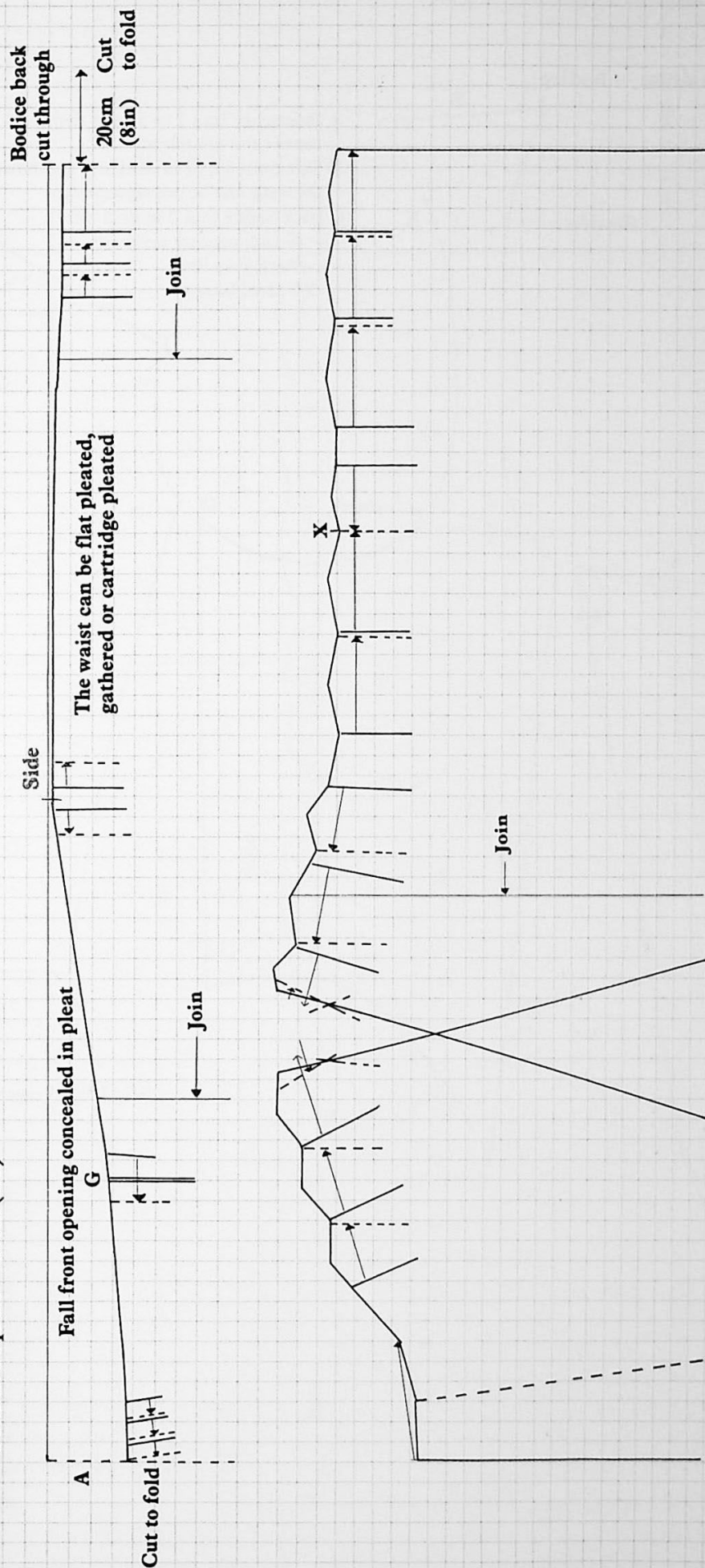
Cut from G if the skirt is to be open

B The harvest festival skirt — cut from 5 widths of 91cm (36in) (see page 162)

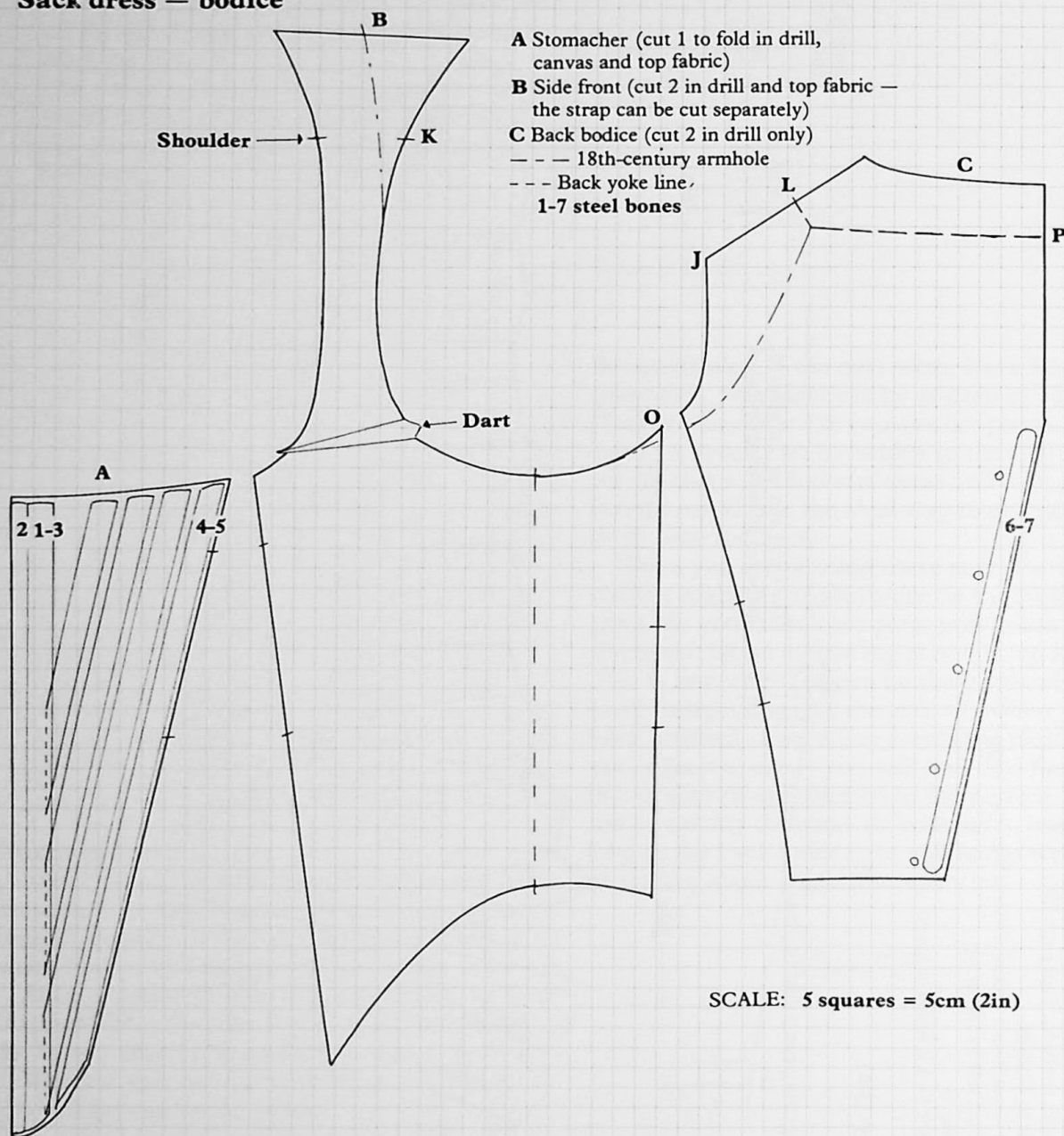
The side back pieces can be cut side by side or top and tailed if the fabric allows.

If this skirt is used with a sack back it would be joined to the back of the sack at X

SCALE: 1 square = 2.5cm (1in)



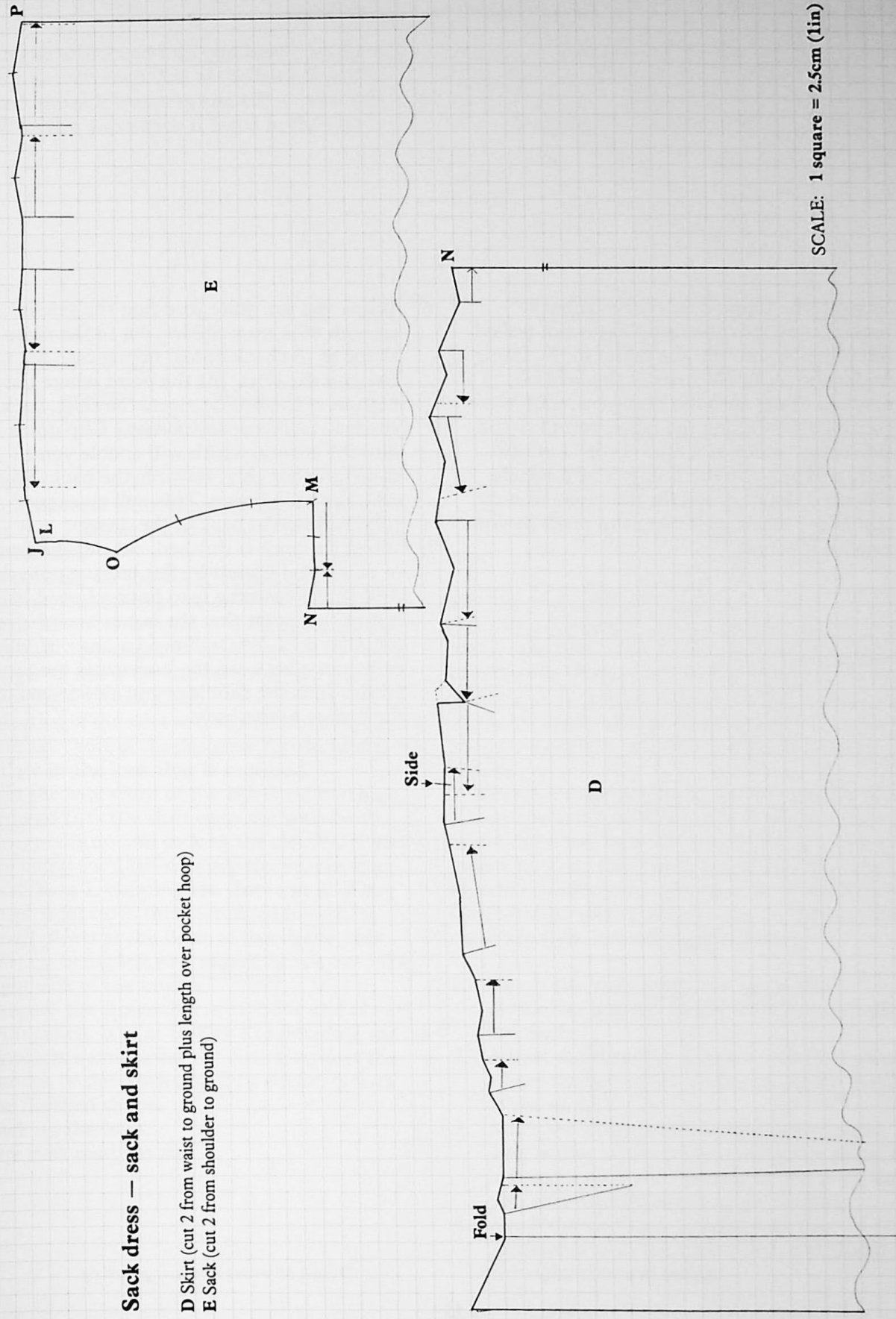
Sack dress — bodice



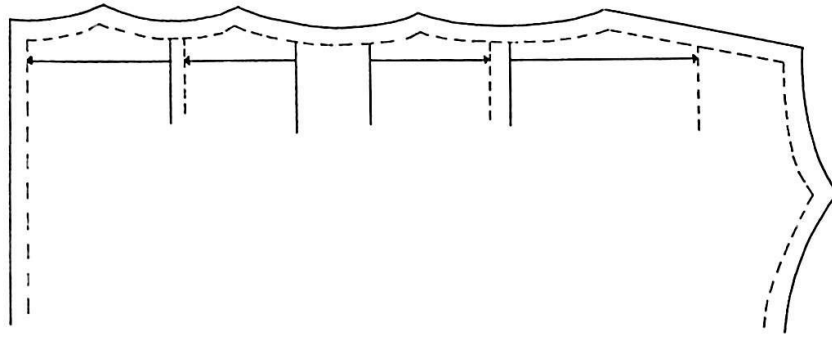
Sack dress — sack and skirt

D Skirt (cut 2 from waist to ground plus length over pocket hoop)

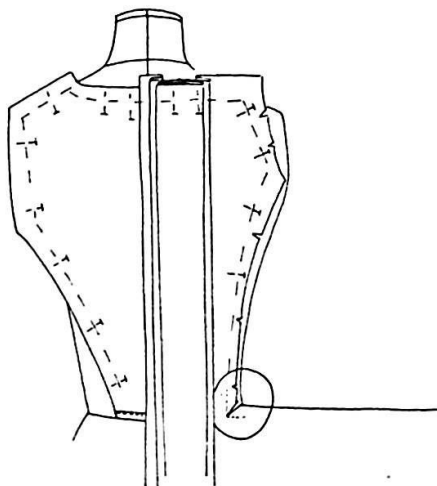
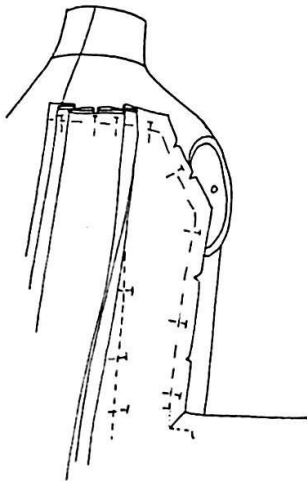
E Sack (cut 2 from shoulder to ground)



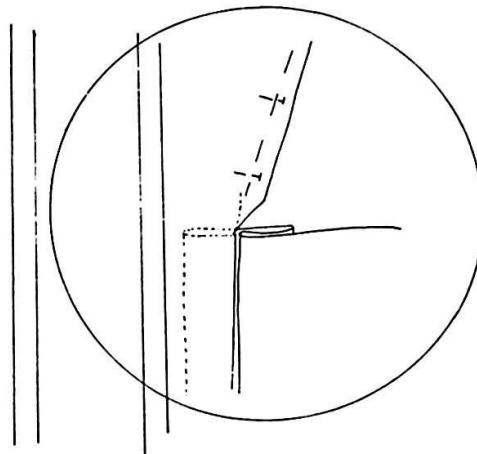
SCALE: 1 square = 2.5cm (1in)



5. Smooth the fabric down the side back making sure that the last pleat is not pulled out of place, and pin the fabric to the lining under the pleat. Eventually this will be stitched down onto the lining by hand. Now continue smoothing the fabric round to the side seam, which is 3.8cm (1½in) back of side, and pin it to the lining. The armhole will need shaping, but for the moment only clip in the fabric as it begins to resist as you smooth it round.

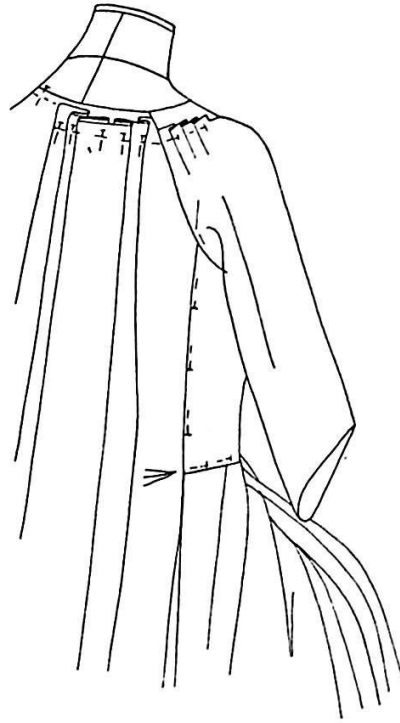
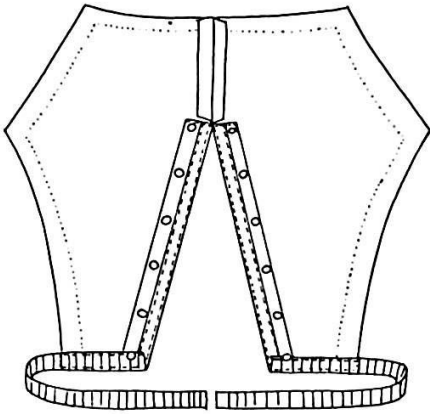


6. When you are quite sure that the side is smooth with no wrinkles, cut to the same shape as the back lining, taking care not to cut into the skirt. [At the point where the bottom of the bodice meets the skirt, back stitch to reinforce the corner.] Clip down into the corner, which will enable you to make another pleat towards the back. Stitch onto the back lining. This will give more fullness into the back of the dress.
7. When the back is finished, cut out the front in fabric and mount by flat tacking onto the drill. If the costume is to have a boned bodice it is at this point that the bones must be put onto the drill. You will need a layer of calico or domette between the bones and the top fabric. Tack the shoulder and side seams of the bodice to the back.



Detail of waist to show pleating.

8. Cut the waistband into two halves and put them one on each side of the back lining. Mark the side quarters and CF — you will still have a gap which is laced in the CB.



9. Cut the front skirt allowing large turnings at the top. Pleat as far as the side mark on the pettersham.
10. Depending on the width of the fabric you will need another piece on the width of the back skirt at this point — remember that at the side, the length of the skirt will be much longer to allow for the hoop or pad. Finish pleating the back skirt.

The pleating of the skirt will depend on the type and shape of skirt you, or the designer, has decided is the right date or the look that is required.

11. Join the side seam of the skirt and machine or hand tack the skirt onto the waistband.
 12. Cut, make up and tack in the sleeves. If you are using the 18th-century sleeve, pin it in from K to L clipping the sleeve at K. The surplus fabric is then arranged into three small pleats at the back of the sleeve, this portion being left raw edged. Stitch onto the right side of the bodice.
 13. Prepare the stomacher, cut, bone and cover with calico. It is as well not to decorate the stomacher until after the fitting so that the pattern or decoration will fit perfectly into the finished shape.
 14. Tack up the hem.
- You are now ready to fit.

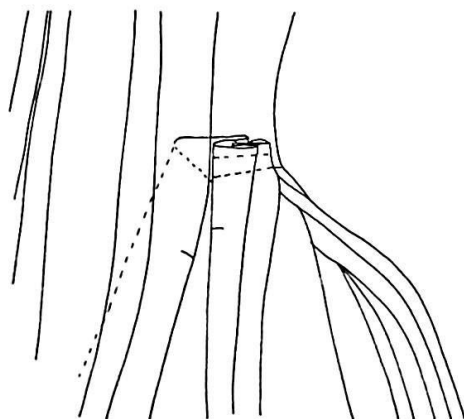
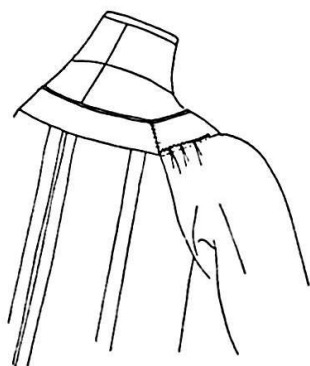
Fitting (see fitting chapter)

Put on the chemise, corset, panier and petticoat. Make sure that the under pinnings fit and are comfortable. The straps on the corset need to be quite tight. If you are using a boned bodice in the dress, the whole of the dress goes over the pocket hoops or panier and the petticoat (see pocket hoops).

The advantage of working over a separate corset is that it is much easier to make the dress, and the fabric does not look so 'stretched' as when on a boned bodice. Also, once an artiste has worn a separate corset, she will find it is much more comfortable, and a corset can be washed more regularly than a dress can be cleaned.

1. Do up the waistband, and pin in the stomacher and adjust the back lacing, under the Sack.
2. Adjust the shoulder straps — the best place is where the top of the bodice meets the bottom of the strap.
3. Mark the front bodice length at the waist. The bodice is always better slightly short. If it is too long it will wrinkle up the body and you may have to clip it to get it right.
4. Mark the neckline, making sure the stomacher is in the right place, and that it is the right size and shape.

5. Check the sleeve fitting. The sleeve in this period fits well onto the shoulder. Make sure it does not wrinkle at the front and that the back pleats do not poke. If they do, rearrange them. Also check the length of the sleeve.
6. Check that the skirt and petticoat hang well and that the hems are level. Make sure that where the Sack meets the skirt at the back, they are at the same level. If they aren't, lift or drop the Sack.



After the fitting, mark all alterations with thread marks and transfer to the other side.

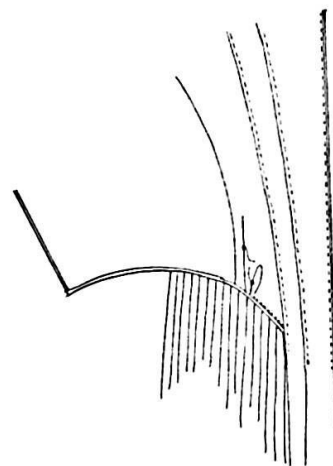
Finishing

1. Work through all the alterations, and finish shoulder and side seams.
2. Put the facing on the back neck to cover the raw edges of the pleating.
3. Finish the side fronts. These can either be faced or piped or, if the stomacher is to fasten down the CF, put in the finished stomacher.

The stomacher can either be stitched in down the right hand side of the bodice, and hooked and looped on the left, or split down the centre. Both sides are attached to the bodice, and the front

hooked and looped or fastened in some way that the design may suggest, eg by lacing, buttons and holes or ties.

4. To finish the stomacher, pipe or face the top and bottom and zig-zag the sides. Put on the bars. If it is to fasten down the CF put on the hooks and loops, and the inlay. Apply the decoration.
5. Pipe or face the neck. If you think it may gap, piping will be better as it can be drawn up to grip the neck edge (see detail on illustrations).
6. Machine in the sleeves from K to L in the normal way. Finish the armhole edge and lay the pleated section onto the right side and machine across. Zig-zag the raw edge flat onto the bodice — when the decoration is put round the neck this will be covered.
7. When the skirt pleating is right, tape the top of the skirt to cover the raw edges, and put on a trouser hook and bar, or two no.3 hooks and bars.
8. Stab stitch the bodice to the skirt, stopping as soon as the bodice begins to curve down to the point.



9. Decorate the bodice and skirt edges — which should disguise the side stomacher fastenings — and the sleeve head.

If the decorations at the bottom of the bodice and the top of the skirt are independently finished, the dress will move better on the body than if they are joined. Care must be taken to align them correctly.

Make up the cuffs or sleeves and attach them to the ends of the sleeves. If cuffs are used, work out the size you need to balance the design.

It is important to remember when making a costume to press the seams at each stage.

ROBE A L'ANGLAISE

This style of dress — 'The English Gown' — is made with a fitted back called 'en fourreau'. It was worn during the same period as the Sack and during the 1770s both styles developed a closed bodice, cut with a wide, low neck, and fastened with lacing, hooks and loops or, quite often, pinned together at the front. The bottom of the bodice ended in a squared off point. The decoration continued round the neck in the form of a narrow, pleated or ruched band but by 1780 the neck was left plain, and a large handkerchief or, when it became even larger, a

neckerchief, was worn round the neck and shoulders. We now call this a fichu.

During the 1780s the fabric on the bodice can meet at the neck edge and is cut back to the side front waist. The skirt falls straight down and the centre of the bodice is filled in with a wide stomacher called a 'zone'. This was sometimes made to look like a waistcoat, or it could fasten across with straps and buttons. During the late 80s and early 90s the side bodice can be pleated, the top of the pleats being shallow and deeper at the waist thus drawing the fabric towards the side. The Museum of London has two very fine examples of

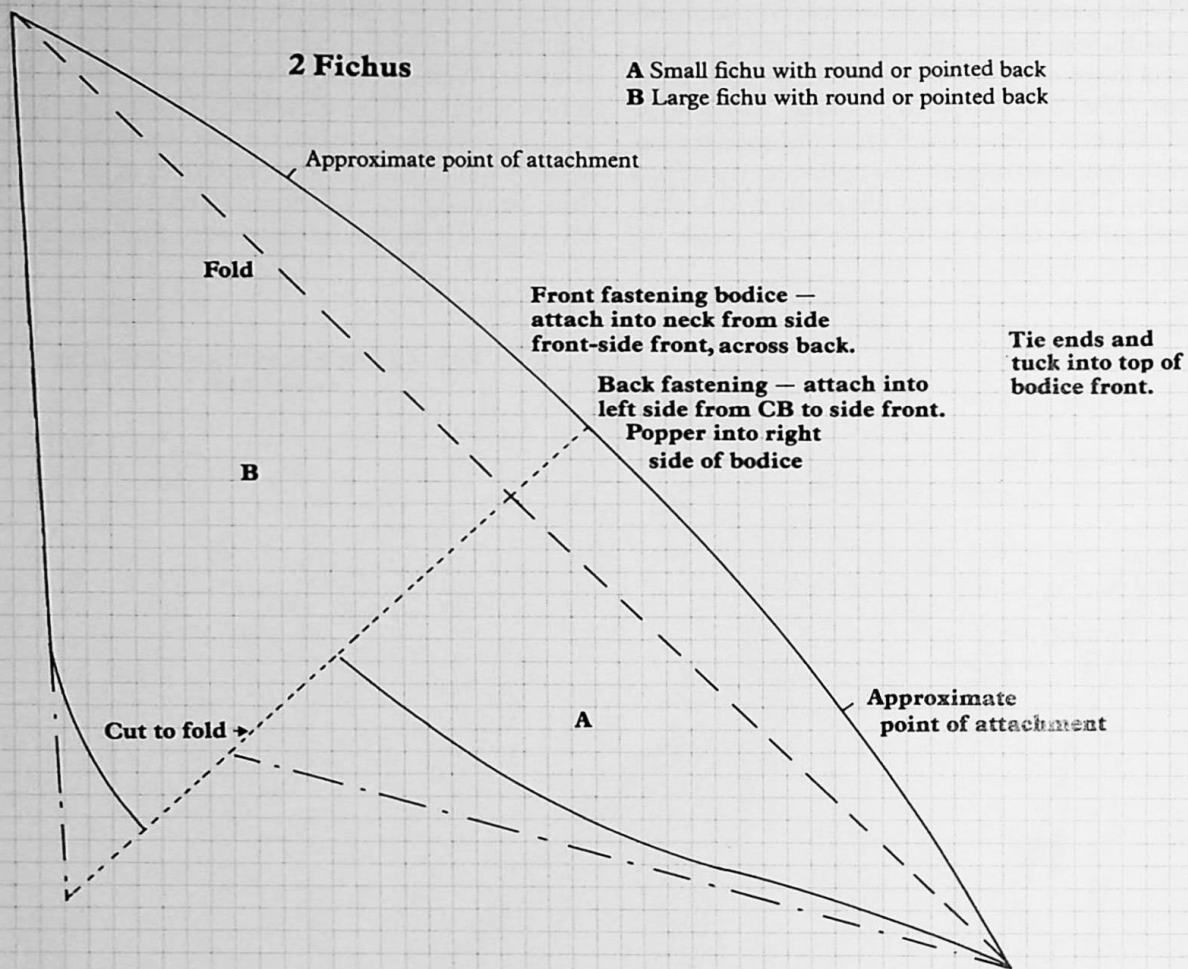


Robe à l'Anglaise with zone and large neckerchief.

2 Fichus

A Small fichu with round or pointed back

B Large fichu with round or pointed back



SCALE: 1 square = 2.5cm (1in)

this type of dress. The cutting and making skills of both garments is exquisite, in great contrast to the garments at the beginning of the century.

The skirt had become dome shaped again by 1775, although hoops were worn until 1780, and for court wear until 1820. When the closed bodice is worn, the skirt can either be left with a gap starting at the side of the point or it can be closed using a fall front opening. The skirt of the Open Robe can also be draped up in a polonaise, which is done either as the Mantua, by buttons and loops, or by attaching strings which run through rings on the inside of the



Left: dress with pleated bodice and tight curved sleeves and, above: pulled up with buttons and loops.

Robe à l'Anglaise — bodice

A Front (cut 2 in drill and fabric)

B Side/Side back (cut 2 in drill and fabric)

C Side back (cut 2 in lining only)

D Back (cut 2 in lining only)

E Cut in top fabric from shoulder to hem

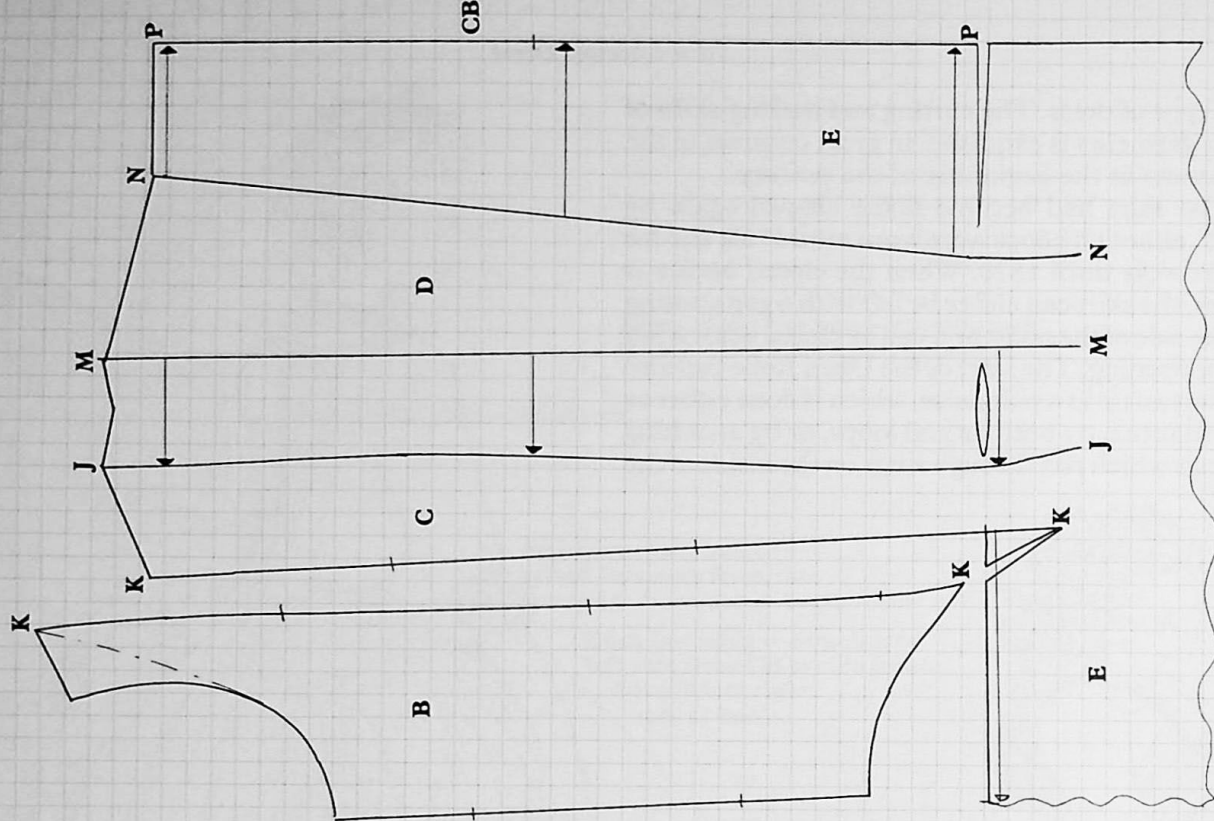
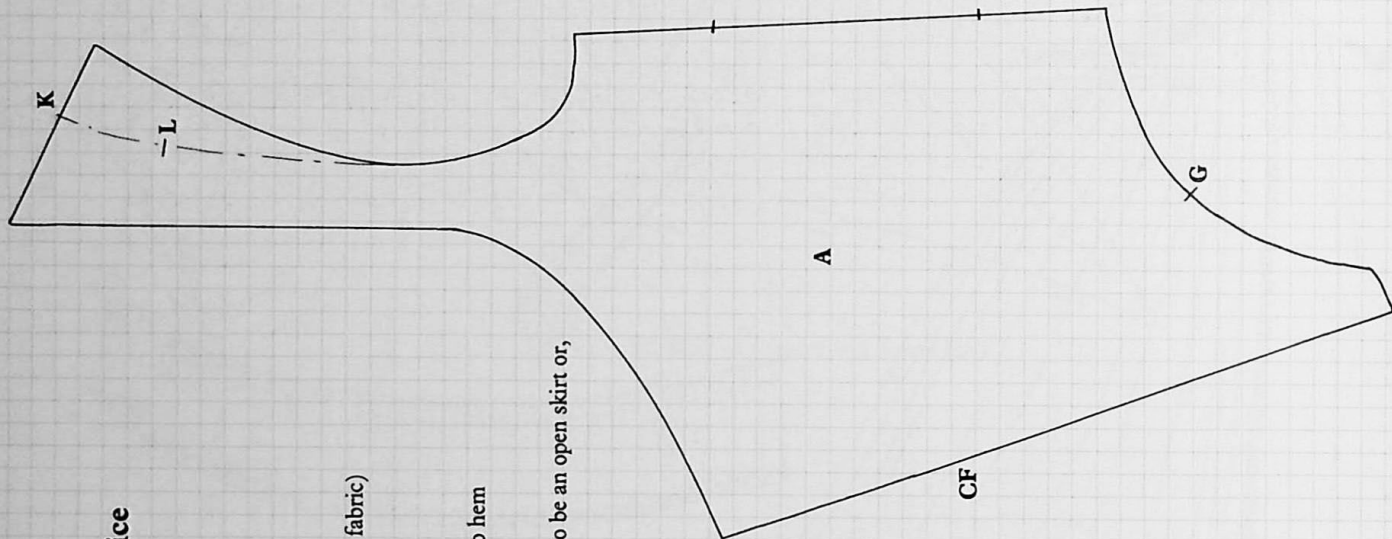
— · — · — · Alternative armhole

G Skirt is fixed at this point if it is to be an open skirt or,

if a round gown, placket position

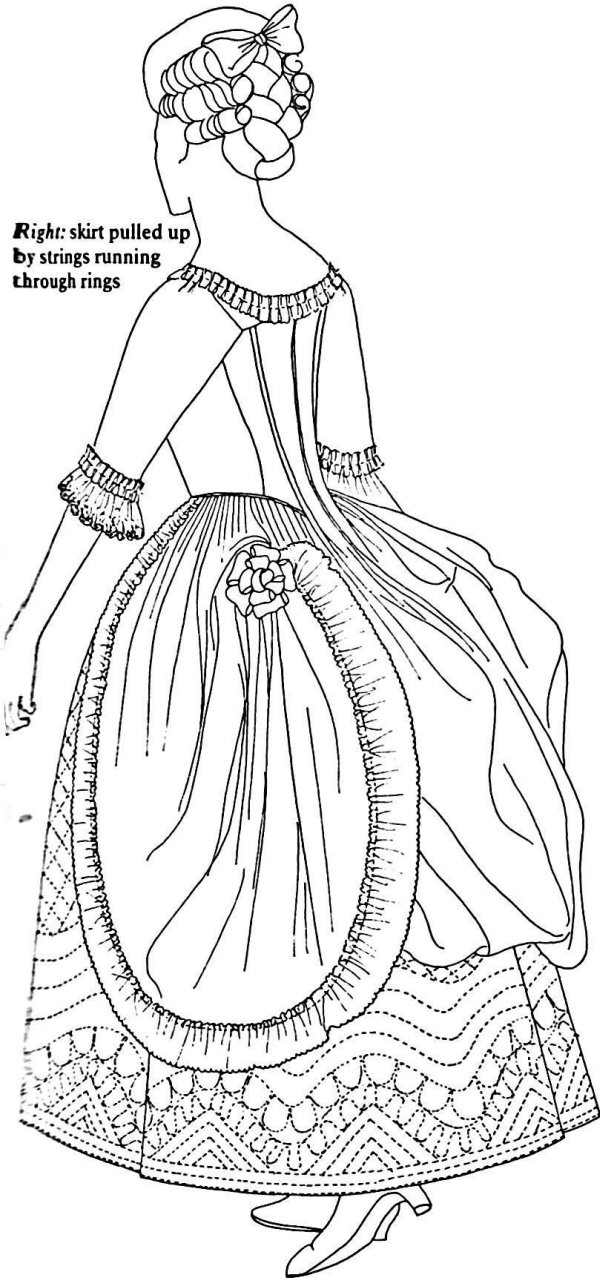
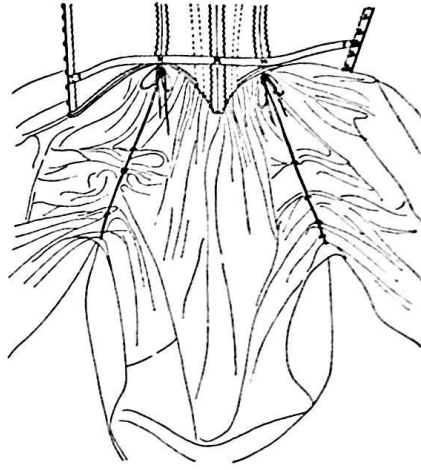
Sleeve is stitched from **K-L**

SCALE: 5 squares = 5cm (2in)



skirt. Alternatively it can be stitched into puffs and decorated with loops and bows.

The sleeves for both the Robe à l'Anglaise and the Sack developed throughout the century. The ends are finished with either cuffs which pass through many styles, or flounces both simple and elaborate. During the late 1770s the long, tight sleeve became fashionable. This sleeve is extremely curved and usually buttons at the wrist.

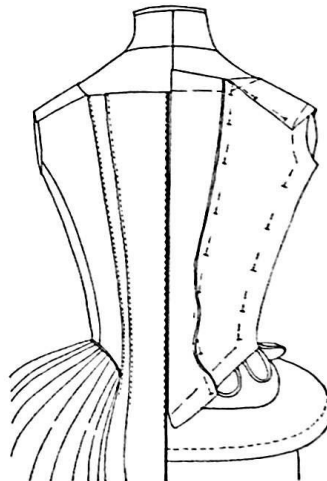


Right: skirt pulled up by strings running through rings

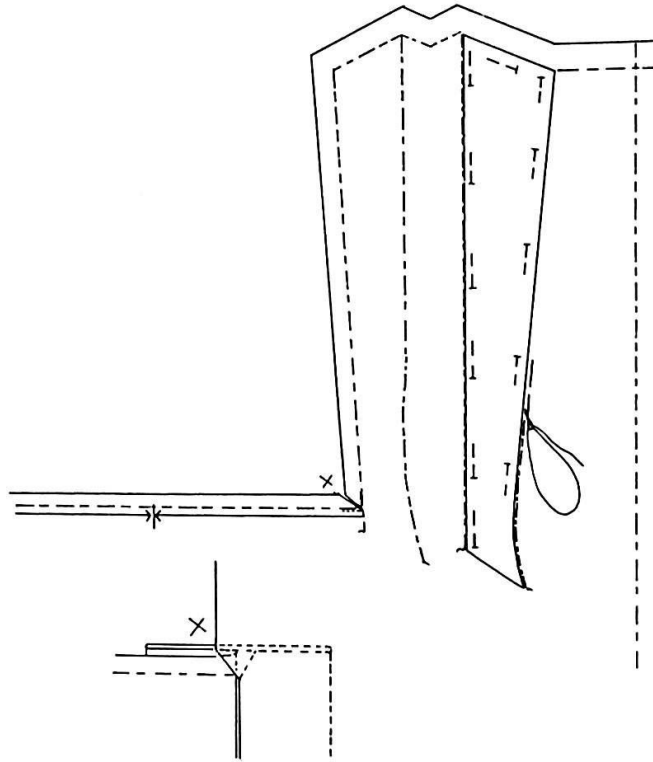
Making up with a cut through back

1. Cut a toile for the bodice in panels as for the bodice and skirt, but leaving the back and side backs 7.5cm (3in) longer. This will help to support the fabric as it goes into the skirt. On a small bodice the CB and side back can be cut as one and the top fabric pleated down from the shoulder through the middle of the back where a seam might have been placed.

The front of this dress is made in the same way as the Sack. If it is to be made as a boned bodice, the boning must be done now and a calico or domette layer used between the bones and the top fabric. There is usually no side seam in an 18th-century bodice. The seam is 5cm (2in) towards the back, but when making for the theatre, it is as well to put in a side seam, if you know the costume may have to be altered.



Skirt decorated with rosettes and bows.



2. Mount and make up the fronts and side-side-backs ready for fitting.
3. Cut a piece of fabric long enough to go from shoulder to hem, and mark the centre with a piece of thread. Mount the four back pieces onto the fabric, leaving enough space between the pieces to allow for the pleats in the back skirt.
4. After tacking the back pieces together, reinforce the corner at the bottom of the outer edge of the side back marked X, trim the spare fabric from the backs and clip into the corner X. The two panels in either side of the CB form box pleats, which then form an inverted pleat as it meets the skirt.

Make sure that when the pieces are joined together the pleats hang straight. It is as well to check the whole bodice on the stand while it is still pinned, and before it is machined or tacked together. This should work if the balance marks on the bodice are on the same grain.

5. Tack the front bodice to the shoulders and side seams of the back. Cut the waist petersham and tack it to the CB seam.
6. Work out how many pleats you will need

from side front to side back, how deep each pleat is to be and how much of each pleat is to show. This last governs the number of pleats. Add enough fabric onto the skirt width, remembering that it must be longer at the sides if it is to be made over a hoop.

7. Working over the appropriate pad or hoop and the petticoat, start to pleat from the front. I like to turn about 10cm (4in) of fabric in to face the front of the skirt, especially if the skirt is plain. Press the turn back lightly to crease it and put a 2.5cm (1in) strip of vylene or stayflex down the full length of the skirt on the facing side of the crease — this will help the front edge to stay crisp and stop it from rolling. Pleat the skirt round to where the front pleating meets the back; which will make an inverted pleat. Machine or hand tack onto the waist petersham, taking care not to twist the back pleats.
8. Tack up the hem.
9. Cut and make a sleeve and tack it in for the fitting.

You are now ready to fit.

Fitting

At the fitting make sure the waist petersham is in the correct place and that all the pleats hang straight. It is better to fit this type of dress through the shoulders if the bodice is too long. When possible, fit the underwear and bodice toile and mark the exact waistline before you cut the dress.

Finishing

1. Pipe the neck and both halves of the waist. Finish the skirt waist by putting a tape over the raw edges of the pleats. Stab stitch the bodice onto the skirt as for the Sack dress.
2. Finish the sleeve. Set-in and finish by machining from K to L, trim to 1cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in) and zig-zag. Lay the pleats, as fitted, onto the

head of the sleeve. Back stitch and overhand them down to the bodice. Make and apply the sleeve end decoration.

3. Hand fell the hem and the front facings if necessary.
4. Decorate the neck edge and skirt front if required.

BODICE AND SKIRT

The shape of the bodice and skirt go through the same changes as both the Sack and the Robe à l'Anglaise. The bodice can have a point at the back or be straight. By the mid 1780s the front bodice dips to just below the waist and usually has a sash, which can be seen in the later paintings of Gainsborough and Reynolds. Throughout the 1790s the waist rises. In the Museum of London



'Harvest Dress' — boned bodice

A Front (1-5 steel bones)

B Side — N-O a good place for alteration

C Side back

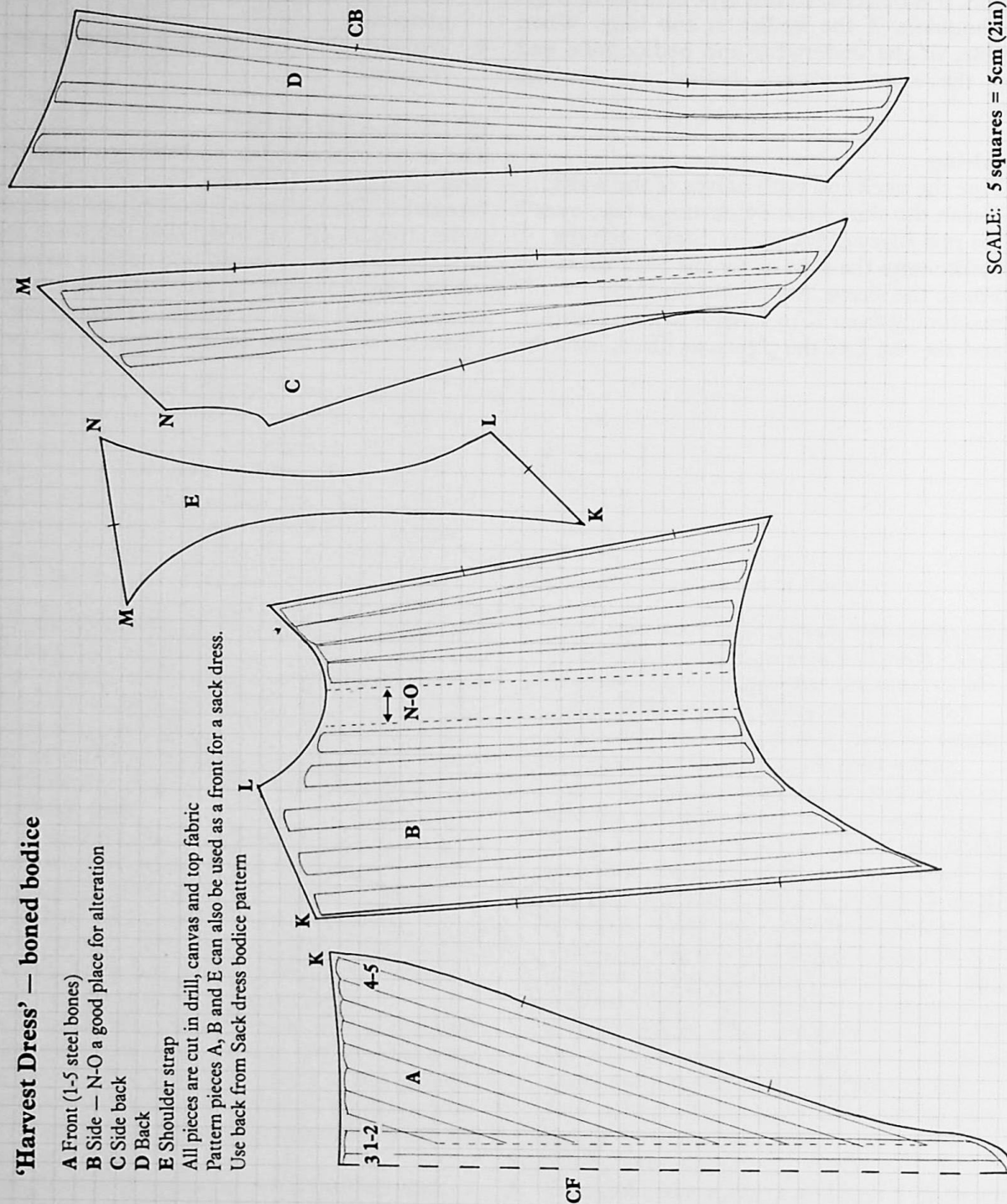
D Back

E Shoulder strap

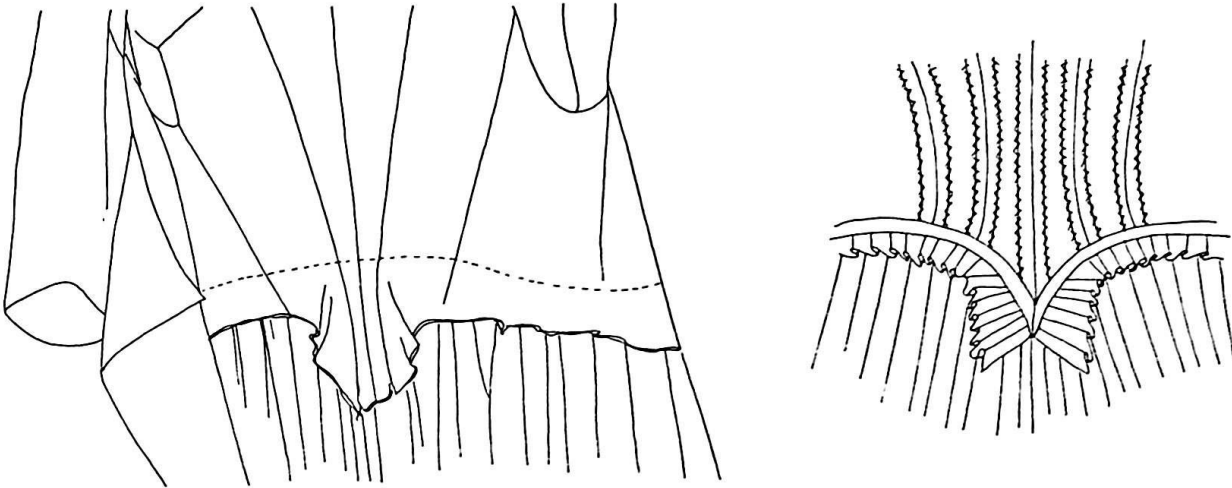
All pieces are cut in drill, canvas and top fabric

Pattern pieces A, B and E can also be used as a front for a sack dress.

Use back from Sack dress bodice pattern



SCALE: 5 squares = 5cm (2in)



Left: raised waist. Right: pointed back of bodice with clipped skirt.

collection, there are dresses dated to within the last five years of the century that have been altered — the skirt has been raised, leaving the original bodice still hanging below the new waistline.

In the 18th century, when a bodice had a point at the back, it should be laid onto the skirt, stitched down and the skirt clipped down into the point, leaving the surplus fabric hanging on either side.

For use in the theatre, this type of 18th-century dress can be made in many forms, from a grand ball dress to a humble maid. I have chosen to describe a dress made for Ann-Margret in the film *Joseph Andrews*, designed by Michael Annals and directed by Tony Richardson. It was designed for a scene in the church at a Harvest Festival, and was made in a slub silk. The skirt was mounted onto lawn and decorated with rust and gold acetate poult taffeta which was accordian pleated and gathered as the design into rosettes and fans. The taffeta was also ruched on both edges and went round the neck and down the fronts to the hem. The stomacher and the front skirt were embroidered and the sleeves were finished with flounces to match the dress and lace falls.

It was worn over a drill and calico corset and a panier made in cream and brown striped mattress-ticking, slightly larger than the pattern in the book. There was also a calico petticoat. Both had 25cm (10in) box pleated frills to stop the skirt from swinging. The bodice had a pointed back which was boned on each of the three back seams to keep down the point. It fastened down the left side of the stomacher which was also boned. [If the dress had been made for the opera it would be boned as in the pattern and laced down the CB. This would allow more flexibility if the dress had to be worn by a different artiste in an emergency.]

When worn over a corset it would be made as for an ordinary bodice, but if made as a boned bodice then make as for the basic boned bodice.

Ann-Margret had six dresses in the film — three Sacks, one wrapper and two bodice and skirt types. They were all cut from the same toile which had two fittings on consecutive days in London. When Ann-Margret arrived in Bath to start filming, all the costumes, hats, wigs and make-up were fitted in a three hour period, and all had to be finished and be back in Bath four days later.

18th-century sleeves, falls and cuffs

A Cuff flounce — 1, 2, 3: proposed length for lace flounces

B 2-piece sleeve (B1 front and B2 back — cut 2 in top fabric and lining)

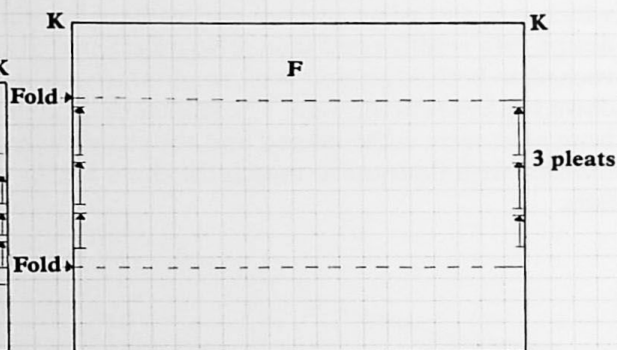
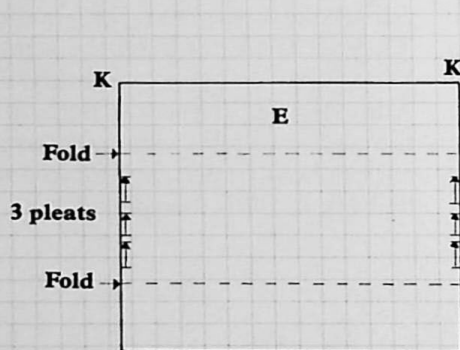
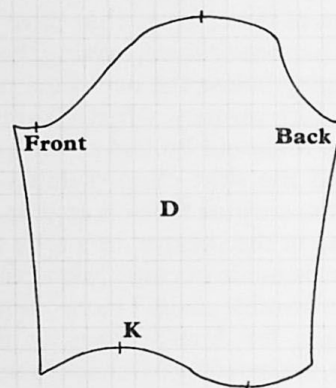
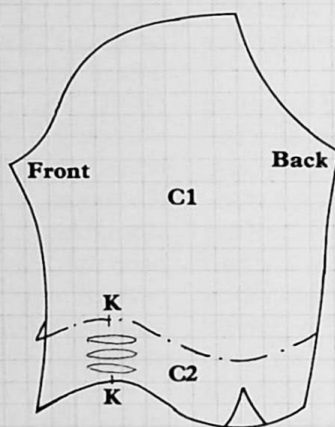
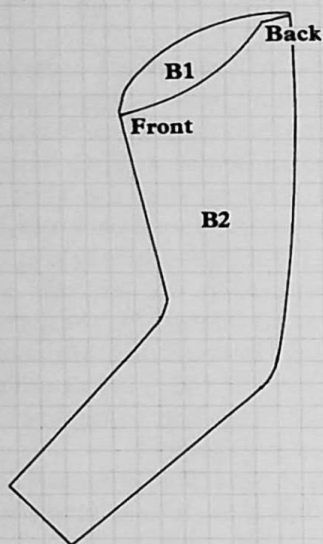
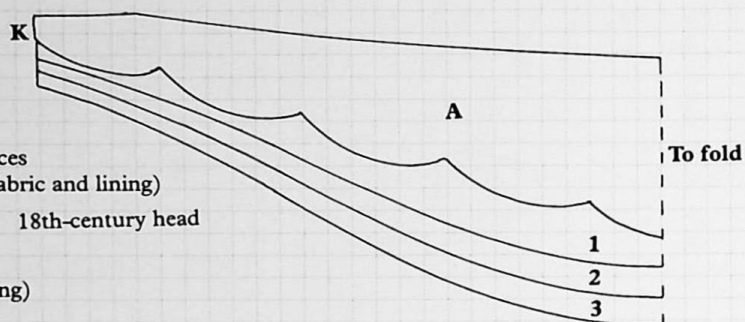
C1 Elbow length sleeve (cut 2 in top fabric and lining) 18th-century head

C2 Longer version

D Sleeve with modern head (cut 2 in top fabric and lining)

E & F Small and large cuffs

K is at the nick of the elbow



SCALE: 1 square = 2.5cm (1in)

Making up cuffs

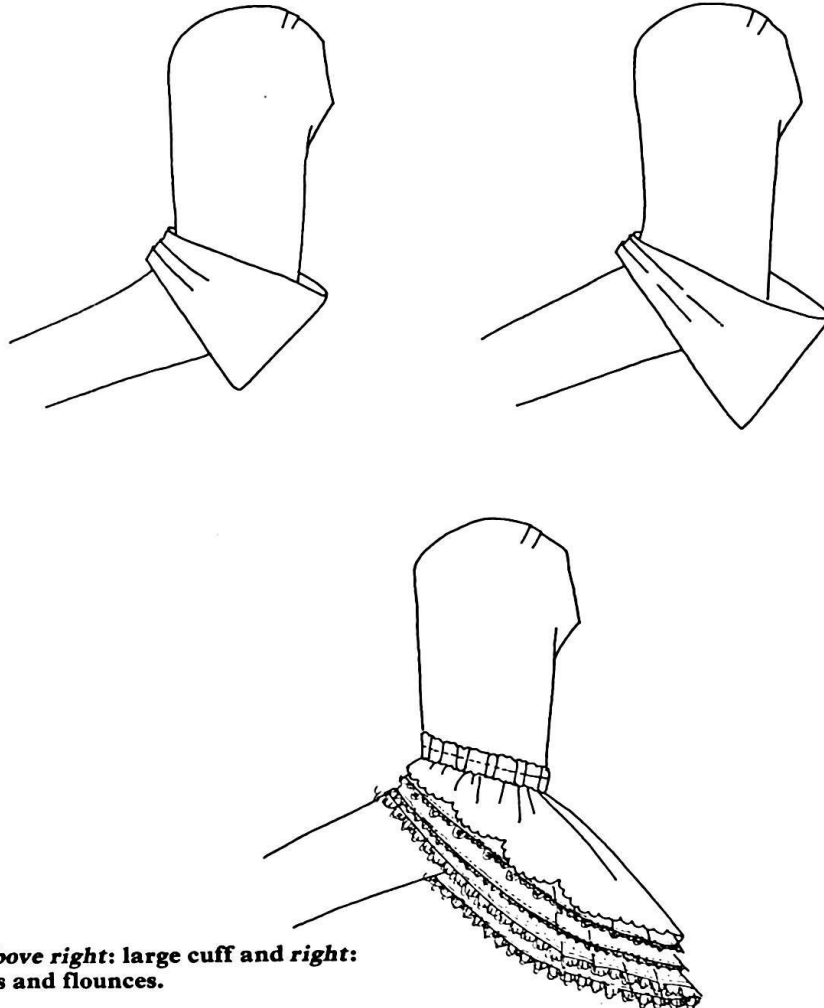
If cuffs are used, work out the size you need to balance the design. Cut them the length required plus 2.5cm (1in) turnings, and twice the finished depth plus turnings.

Machine along the length of the cuff. Press and turn to the right side. Then starting 2.5cm (1in) from the seam, machine the two ends of the tube together, until the machine can get no further and finish by hand. Put the seam along the length of the cuff on the inside. Place the seam on the width of the cuff on the bend of the arm and put in 2 or 3 pleats.

Sleeve falls can be either one frill of lace or lawn, which goes into a sleeve end which has a cuff; or an arrangement of up to 3 layers of fabric and one of lace making an elaborate arrangement of frills.

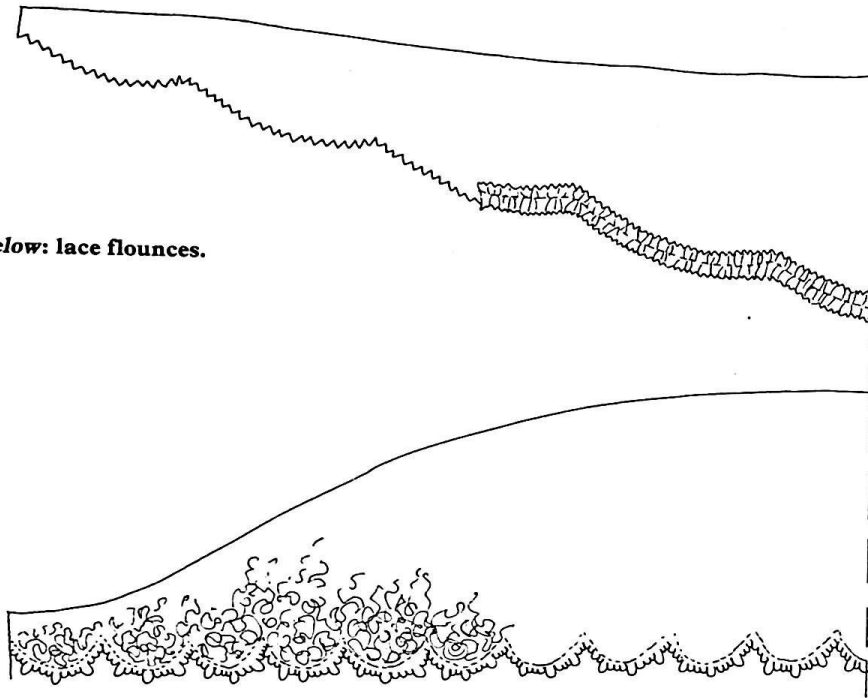
For use in the theatre use one layer of the fabric, plus an organza layer with lace on the edge, a net with a narrow lace edge (the lace must be eased onto the edges), and inside this a lace flounce. This makes a very fluffy sleeve fall — the net in the middle helps to keep the whole looking fresh.

The inside of the frill should have a shallow curve which makes the outside edge longer. When possible the outside curve looks good when cut in large scallops using pinking shears. In turn this can be decorated with a ruche made in pinked net or fabric no more than 18mm ($\frac{3}{4}$ in) wide. If the frills are of lace with a scallop on the edge it will not be possible for them to be shaped as the pattern, so be very careful to put in enough fullness at the back to compensate for this. The curved inside edge helps to push the whole arrangement out. If cut straight, the fall will just hang down, or what must not happen, hang in towards the arm.



Above: small cuff, above right: large cuff and right: falls and flounces.

Above: fall and below: lace flounces.



Making up sleeve falls

1. After cutting all the layers, decorate the edges.
2. Put two rows of machine gathering along the top of each piece. Do not gather them all together.
3. Pull up the threads using buttonhole thread (or strong cotton on the bobbin) to the size of the outside of the sleeve.
4. Mount all the fabric fills onto band, each one slightly above the other.
5. Stitch this onto the outside of the sleeve, and decorate.
6. Draw up the inside frills, to the size of the inside of the sleeve, and bind them over with a piece of bias binding or strip of cotton.
7. Herringbone into the sleeve end.

22. 18th-CENTURY DECORATION

DECORATION for 18th-century costume was made by hand like the gowns themselves. The fabric, which is ruched, puffed, frilled or pleated round the open necks, the edge of the bodices and down the front edges of the skirt, as well as on the stomachers and petticoats, show the great variety and ingenuity of the trimmings that were made and can be seen and copied, by looking at paintings and original costume of the period in museums.

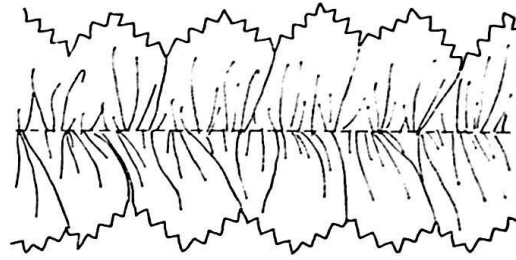
The bands were often pinked with scalloped or vandyke edges. Braids were also applied to the edge, which look like very narrow modern lampshade braid, as well as a very pretty trim called fly fringe. Fabric made into a rouleau or a tube was often padded and gathered into puffs. The decoration could be made in the fabric of the dress or fine white gauze, lace, also gold or silver braids and laces were used.

Today, pinking is still a good way to finish decoration, as it looks light and delicate, very narrow ribbon or braid such as rosebud trim can also be used on the edges. Or as for the sleeve frills a narrow ruche on the edge of a pinked scallop can look very pretty. Another favourite way is to fray taffeta. This must be cut on the cross and if the fabric is loosely woven such as a cheap acetate lining it will fray very easily. To fray fabric:

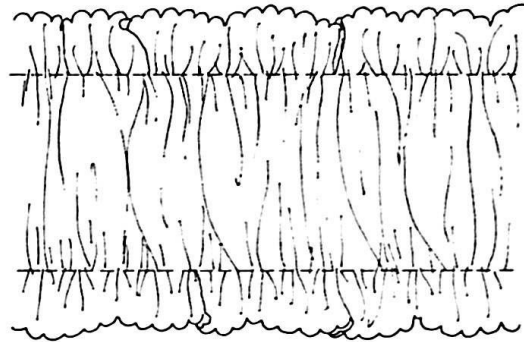
1. Cut strips of fabric on the bias to the width required.
2. Pin the end to a stand or the ironing board, pull tight and draw a metal nail file along the edge. Fabric often frays better one way than the other, so if it is difficult, turn it over or upside down and try again.

Work out the quantity you will need, this is important if the decoration is to be graded. Pin tape onto the dress in the chosen design, from waist to hem and round the neck of the bodice. Do not make the ruche too full — twice the length, or with thick fabrics one and a half times the finished length, is usually enough. If you wish to disguise the texture of the trimming fabric completely, the ruche must be very full with a second, narrower ruche placed on top. The easy way to gather most fabrics that do not need to be an exact length, is with the gatherer on the machine. When adjusted properly this gives a very neat and even gather. To grade the decoration:

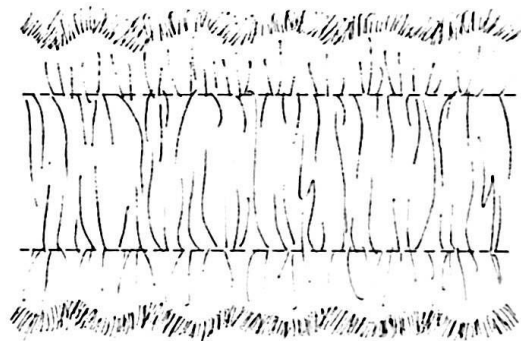
1. When you have worked out the length of trimming you require, make a sample about 15cm (6in) long.
2. Pull out the gathers and work out the length of fabric needed by dividing the length required by 15cm (6in) and multiply by the length of the pulled-out frill.
3. If the trim is 5cm (2in) at the waist and 15cm (6in) at the bottom, it will be 10cm (4in) in the middle. Add a little extra on both ends. Using the length of fabric needed, measure the widest width at one end and the narrowest at the other. The middle measurement will act as a check that the slope is correct. Draw a line along the length and cut — if the fabric is plain it can be topped and tailed. When this is gathered up it should widen gradually from top to bottom, and there should be sufficient length for miscalculations, and turnings at the top and bottom.



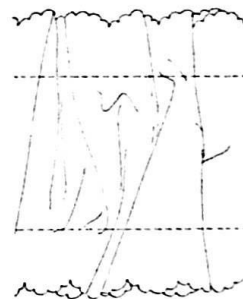
Vandyke edge



Scallop



Fray



Twisted pleat

Watch point

It is not necessary to cut the fabric in one long length but join short lengths by overlapping them, turning in the top layer. Do not machine together before gathering as this makes the decoration look heavy.

18th-century decorations.



Pin the finished decoration onto the dress or, if the decoration is elaborate, onto a piece of net in a colour which will disappear when placed over the dress fabric. This makes for easier handling when a role is played by more than one person or when the dress may have to be re-made frequently — it enables the decoration to be transferred from one dress to another easily.

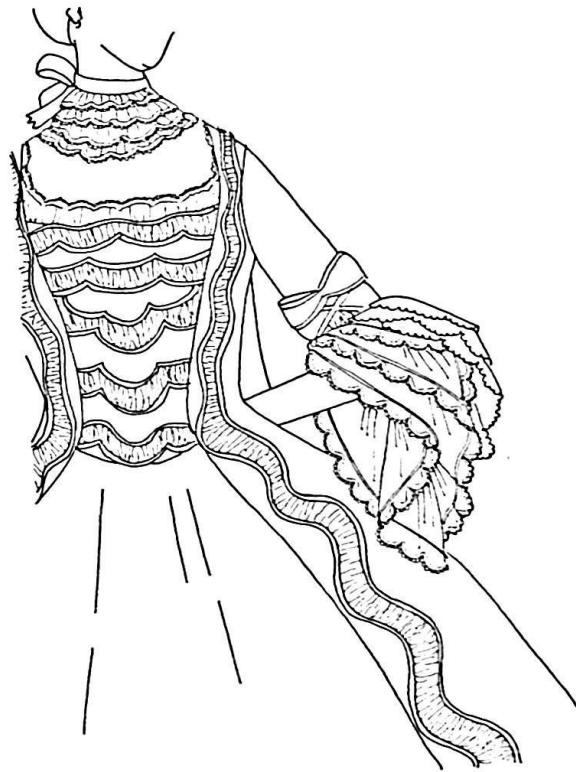
Layers of different fabrics work well such as lace or chiffon over gold mesh, or black net over a brightly coloured taffeta. Organza, accordin pleated and edged with a braid or gold zig-zag edge ruched about 2.5cm (1in) from the edge, down both sides, also works. Ribbons can be made by overlocking or zig-zagging the edge with coloured thread. Often the coloured edges do not show as colour, but just intensify the main colour.

If the decoration is gathered on the machine, and time allows, apply it by hand and it will have a lighter look. When machined on, the two rows of machining give the decoration a hammered down look and it will look better if a coloured or glitter wool or a fine braid is applied with a narrow zig-zag into the nick.

For the stomacher of, say, an opera or pantomime 'walk down' dress, pieces of lace, fabric and braids as well as sequins and beads, can be used in a collage effect by laying brightly coloured fabric behind the lace. When one fabric is placed over another, the colour of the under fabric must be very bright, otherwise it makes the top fabric appear dirty. It is very easy to make both the stomacher and front petticoat look like a sample card from a trimming shop so beware. Most designers want a rich, crusty look to the finished appearance, that defies the eye to know what it is made of, or how it has been achieved.

Pinked, self-coloured ruches are also effective for the plainer dress, and can be applied in various designs. Bows were very popular, too, as in Boucher's painting of Madame de Pompadour to be found in the Wallace Collection.

These are just a few ideas for decorating 18th-century clothes. It is important that the decoration must not become too dense — the spaces between the decoration are just as important as the decoration itself.



APPENDICES

1. Making terms and techniques

Aiglet The metal tag on the end of a lace.

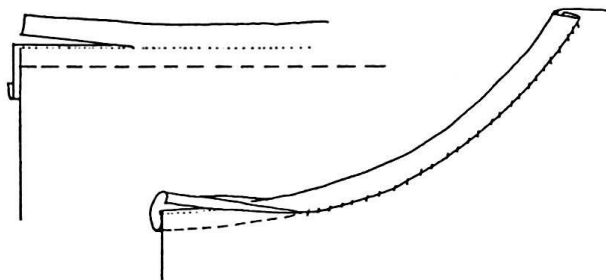
Bag out or Turn out A method of making collar, cuffs or pads, etc. Put two pieces of fabric together right sides facing, machine, trim to 6mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in), clip off the corners, turn and press.

Basting Another term for tack, in either straight even stitches, or:

Diagonal Basting Taking small stitches at right angles to the line being tacked, this is used for attaching linings, facings or canvas to the main work for fittings.

Bias — or fabric cut on the cross. To find the true bias, fold the selvedge (the warp), diagonally along the width of the fabric (the weft), making sure that the threads are at right angles to the fold.

Bind in To finish the edge with a bias strip with no binding showing. With the right sides facing machine onto the seamline, trim (clip if you are binding a curve) and press. Fell to the lining and do not let the stitches show on the right side.



Bind over To finish the edge by binding over the edge, either for decoration or to neaten in the flattest way. Put together, with right sides facing, placing the edge of the turning of the bias to the seamline of the garment, stitch and trim down to the seamline. Turn the bias over the edge and fell to just above the stitchline on

the wrong side. Or nick stitch on the machine from the right side.

Candle the ends The filaments of Rigilene when cut, fray away. Cut to the right length and pass the cut end through a candle flame — a nightlight is safer — this melts the nylon and welds them together.

Cartridge pleat This is the most effective way to get a large amount of fabric into a small space. Skirts, yokes, sleeve heads, etc. The pleating can be deep or shallow as required, or graduating from the front to the back of a skirt. The aim must be to get the pleats looking even on top and without gaps between the pleats.

1. After joining and finishing all the seams, overlock or zig-zag the top.
2. Turn down at least 2.5cm (1in) and edge stitch. If the top of the pleating needs body, turn down 10-15cm (4-6in).
3. Mark across the top at 1.2cm ($\frac{1}{2}$ in) intervals for 1.2cm ($\frac{1}{2}$ in) deep pleats. The spacing will depend on the thickness and quantity of the fabric which is to be fitted into the finished measurement.
4. Using two needles and double waxed threads with firm knots on the ends (the threads must be as long as the finished measurement or divided at the CF or CB), start on the right side of the fabric. Stitch as for even tacking along the length of the work, using the thread from the first needle then the second needle about 1.2cm ($\frac{1}{2}$ in) below the first, drawing the whole up when you get to the end of the length of both threads. Continue until you get to the end of the length of fabric bringing the needle out onto the right side.
5. Pull up the threads evenly from both ends, to the correct measurements, and tie off with a slip knot.
6. Prepare the waistband by quartering it and putting on the hooks and loops.
7. Quarter the pleating, taking care to get the pleating even on both sides.
8. Pin the band onto the right side of the pleating and stitch with double thread about three times into each pleat.
9. Bring the gathering threads through to the wrong side and either stitch or tie off the threads into a secure knot.

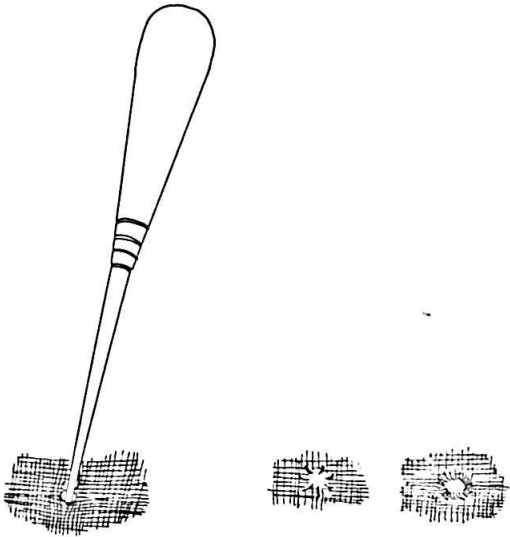
The procedure is the same whatever part of the garment is involved. For a variation on the back yoke of a Tudor surcoat you could put in as many as 12 threads, making shallow tightly packed pleats as for an academic or legal gown. When using cartridge pleating for this purpose start and finish on the wrong side.

Chevron pleating Used in the theatre for pleating 18th-century skirts over paniers or pocket hoops. Pleat from back to side, and front to side, overlapping alternate pleats.

Cross-stitch This is a useful stitch for holding layers together, e.g. petticoats to cages, or drapes to tapes or linings. Secure the cotton on the left bottom corner, put in the needle 1.2cm (½in) to the right and out 1.2cm (½in) below. Repeat the stitch on the left. Repeat three times on each side, forming a cross and fasten off well.

Edge Stitch Used to stop an edge rolling when used for bones or elastic channels and on the edge of the hook side of a placket. Machine stitch 2mm (⅛in) from the folded edge.

Eyelets Metal eyelets with washers are the quickest and strongest way to eyelet a costume. But eyelets can be made by hand — first pierce the cloth with a stiletto, spreading the weave of the cloth to make a hole. Working from the right side, whip stitch roughly round the hole, take the needle to the wrong side and carefully whip stitch round the hole again. Finish off well, and then push the stiletto through the hole, again pushing the stitched edge through. If you are eyeleting anything that is to receive a lot of wear, lace a ribbon or corset lace from top to bottom and then to the top again, lacing each side separately. This will take the strain off the eyelet holes.



Felling or Hemming Used for stitching down bias bindings, etc. With the wrong side facing, pick up one thread of the body of the garment and a small stitch in the hem or binding. Repeat every 1.2cm (½in), or to suit fabric.

Foot's width To machine a row of machine stitching half the foot's width — from the needle to the left-hand side of the foot — from the edge or last row of machining.

Gathering This can be achieved in three ways:

1. On the machine by using a long stitch and not too tight a tension, and with buttonhole or strong thread on the bobbin of the machine. Always put in two rows a foot's width apart, and pull up the strong thread.
2. Zig-zag over a piping cord and pull up the cord, this is good for heavy fabrics.
3. Pushing the fabric with a pin, point of the scissors or quick-un-pick under the foot of the machine as you sew — mainly used for net.

Herringbone A progressive cross-stitch which is worked from left to right. Used for putting in neck fill-ins and cuffs, etc.

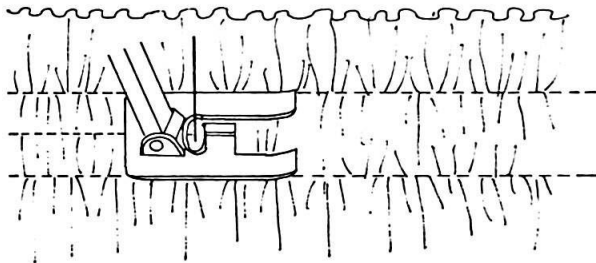
Hooks and Loops/Bars Hooks must always be set well back from the edge — 2mm (⅛in). Loops are used for edge to edge fastening, and bars for lap fastening. They must always be sewn on very firmly. This can be done either by hand using buttonhole stitch to attach the loop end and to catch down the heads, or by machine. This can be done by using a button foot on the machine, dropping the feed and zig-zagging both to the side and back of each loop. This method is very strong and quick and has the added advantage of being able to be removed easily by cutting through the bunch of stitches. The hook end is caught by hand. Hooks and eyes or loops must always be finished very firmly.

Inlay This is the placket back or the strip that runs behind a hook and loop or laced fastening. It is stitched first to the edge of the turnings on the loop side and then prick stitched through just behind the loops. It must extend beyond the holes or hooks on the other side.

Interlining This is another term for mounting, the lining and top fabric being treated as one.

Lining Usually a lightweight, slippery fabric which is felled into a jacket or dropped into a skirt.

Machine between two rows Putting together a gathered skirt or sleeve to a bodice, or gathering to a yoke, etc. Machine between the two rows of gathering leaving one exposed on the right side. This can either be left or removed.



Mounting Interlining the top fabric, as when used to make a bodice, treating the two fabrics as one. First pin mount from the wrong side keeping the work flat on the table. Turn to the right side to make sure the top fabric is smooth, flat tack together just outside the seamline, and then treat the two layers as one. Get into the habit of always pinning and tacking into the seam allowance only, so you will not mark the top fabric or catch the tacking into the top fabric.

Nick Stitch To machine in the crack between the body and the binding or piping.

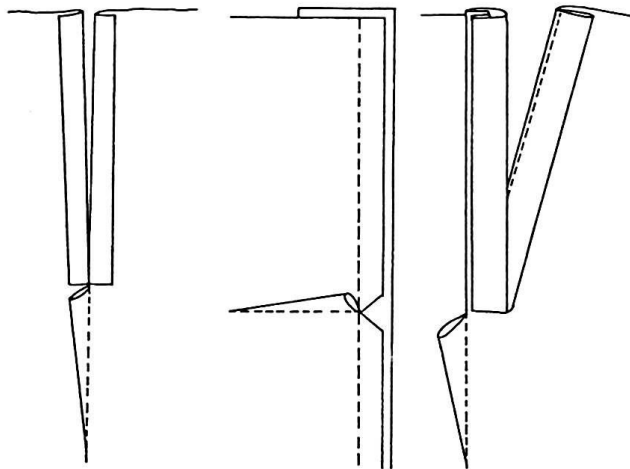
Overlock, Overhand or Zig-zag To finish the raw edges of the seam by machine. An overlocker is a machine that cuts off the edge as it overcasts to finish a seam.

Overhand or overcast is to whip stitch over the raw edge by hand to finish it.

Zig-zag is to finish the raw edge by a zig-zag stitch on a machine. Put the edge of the cloth to the middle or needle position of the foot, and use the widest bight on the machine so that half the stitch drops over the edge. The length of the stitch will depend on the type of fabric.

Piping Piping cord comes in various sizes from size 00 to 6. It is used to pipe the edge of a bodice. Cut a length of bias 2.5cm (1in) wide and fold over one-third. Putting two-thirds of the cord into the fold, stitch in or machine as near to the cord as possible. Working from the right side, put the wrong side of the piping onto the right side of the bodice and machine stitch as close to piping as possible. Trim inside layers of bodice and piping, turn in the edge and fell to the inside of the bodice.

Placket This is the opening in a seam or split. To make a running or continuous placket cut a strip of fabric twice the length of the opening and twice as wide as you wish the finished placket to be, plus add 1.25cm (½in) on each side for turnings. If the placket is in a seam, clip the seam allowance at the bottom, or if it is a split make a small dart at the end of the split, and clip at the top of the dart. Lay the right sides together, with the garment on top. Machine along, going backwards and forwards at the bottom to strengthen it and continue to the top. Trim and press the seam flat towards the placket, turning in the outer edge. Fold the strip in half, turn in and either fell by hand or nick stitch.



Pleating Flat pleating can be from 6mm (¼in) to any depth required, all the pleats being pressed in the same direction.

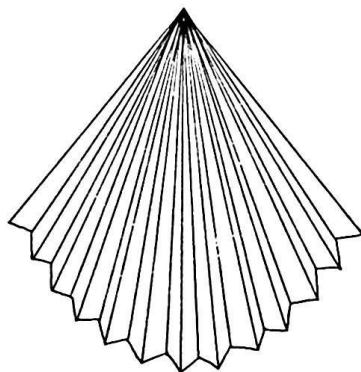
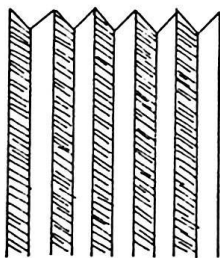
Box pleating consists of pleats facing away from each other.

Inverted pleats face towards each other.

Accordian pleating is pleats set on end, as an accordian.

Sunray pleating is cut from a circle and is formed as for accordian pleats.

When a garment has a quantity of pleating it is as well to send it to a commercial pleaters, and a good rule of thumb is that you will need a length of fabric three times the finished length. If you want a fluted edge finish it after it has been pleated.



Pleating for frills: if sent to the pleaters, the cost is always more economic if the maximum width of the machine, usually 120cm (48in) is sent. The fabric can be cut into strips on its return.

Pressing Press flat means pressing all the seam allowances one way only. Press open means pressing the seam allowances open. When pressing fine or plain fabric it is best to use the toe of the iron.

Prick Stitch Taking very tiny stitches along an edge, approximately 6mm (¼in) apart and over one thread on the right side.

Quarter Divide the waistband or fabric into equal halves, quarters or eighths. Mark both band and the fabric that is to be gathered. This will enable you to arrange the fabric evenly along the band.

Reinforcing a corner This stops fray when clipping into a corner. Machine or backstitch by hand 1.6cm (⅙in) on both angles of the corner.

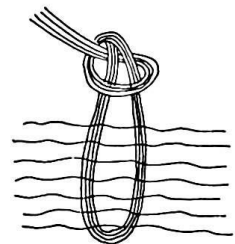
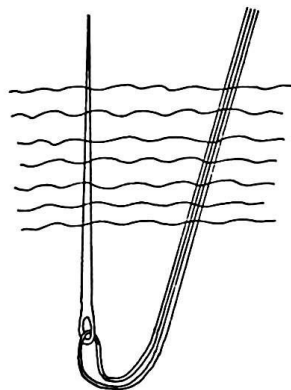
Run and fell or flat seam Machine the seam, trim one side, then press flat and turn the other side in and fell or machine over the raw edge.

Stab stitch Stab stitching is used when putting a bodice and skirt together, or thick bunches of pleats. Stab straight through from the base of the waistband, through the skirt and the nick of the piping at the bottom of the bodice to the right side of the bodice. Take a small back stitch and go through to the back. Take a stitch between 6mm and 1.25cm (¼in and ½in) long, and bring the needle through to the front again. Continue along to the end. Use strong waxed cotton and fasten on and off very well.

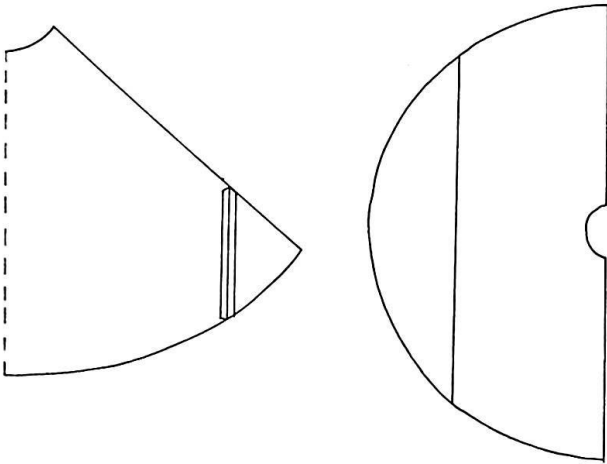
Stay stitching This is a row of straight stitching round a curve or along a bias edge to prevent the fabric from stretching.

Straight of grain The warp is the length along the selvedge, and the weft is the cross grain across the fabric from selvedge to selvedge. It is the straight of grain that shapes and supports the body.

Tutu catch Used to catch layers of fabrics together. Thread two threads through the needle and knot off with the other ends (four threads in all). From the wrong side, push the needle through the layers (a darning needle is ideal for this job), take a small stitch on the right side and pass the needle back to the wrong side. Knot off both groups of thread together — eight in all. You need to start by taking a very long thread off the reel.



Appendices



Wheel piece This is a theatre term for the fabric added to a skirt or cloak to complete a circle or large skirt piece. It is joined on the straight of the grain, as opposed to a godet which is a three-cornered piece cut with the sides on a flair.

Generic names for the more common man-made fibres

GENERIC NAME TRADE NAMES (Examples)

Cupro	Bemberg, Cuprama
Viscose	Fibro, Sarille, Avisco
Modal	Vincel, Avril, Zantrel
Acetate	Dicel, Lansil, Celfibre
Triacetate	Tricel, Arnel
Nylon or Polyamide	Bri-Nylon, Celon, Enkalon
Polyester	Terylene, Trevira, Dacron
Acrylic	Acrilan, Courtelle, Orlon
Modacrylic	Dynel, Teklan
Elastane	Lycra, Enkaswing, Spandex
Chlorofibre	Clevyl Rhovyl Thermovyl

There are 38 permitted generic names, 22 refer to man-made fibres, the others are for natural fibres.

Estimating fabric lengths

Fabric today is expensive, gone are the days when a yard was added for luck. For those who still work in inches and yards, a rough and ready way to calculate how many metres you will require is by working out how many inches you require and divide by 40. You will lose approximately 1cm on each metre.

I will just give a rough guide of how to estimate the amount of fabric required when making a costume. The most common widths in which fabric is made are 91cm (36in), 101cm (40in), 122cm (48in), 137cm (54in) and 162cm (60in).

A bodice to the waist takes about 45-51cm (18-20in), unless the shoulder strap goes beyond the shoulder measurement. This in turn makes the back shorter. Also add the length of any part of the bodice which goes below the waist.

When estimating for sleeves, the length and width must be considered. For tight sleeves, if they are short, 30cm (12in), elbow length 46cm (18in) or long 69cm (27in). The width of puffs or bishop sleeves vary with the period/grandeur of the character. A puff sleeve can be between 50-75cm (20-30in) and a bishop type can be anything from 40-100cm (16-40in).

For the skirt, take the length of the drop over the widest part of the skirt support, add 2.5cm (1in) at the top and 7cm (3in) for the hem. If the fabric has a pattern the length of the drop and the placing of the pattern must be taken into account.

The following table shows the yardage needed for a dress in plain fabric with a 40cm (16in) nape to waist length bodice, long tight sleeves and a skirt that is 114cm (50in) at its longest point. The fabric is 91cm (36in) and 137cm (54in) wide.

Width of fabric	91cm (36in)	137cm (54in)
Bodice	105cm (41in)	50cm (20in)
Sleeves: 1 piece	70cm (27in)	70cm (27in)
2 piece	140cm (54in)	70cm (27in)
	1m (40in) — if the 2 piece sleeve is topped and tailed	
Skirt	6.35m (7yd)	5m (5yd)

When the skirt is 5m (5yd) wide and if you are using 137cm (54in) fabric a 2m (78in) strip will be left. This should be enough to cut either the sleeves or the bodice and will leave enough to cut bias strips for piping. All the skirt lengths will not need to be cut 1.2m (50in) long, but it is better to estimate all pieces at that length.

Skirt Widths

The width of a skirt is dependent on the size of the skirt support and the artiste, the style of the dress and the type of fabric. A fine silk can be quite full but a thick wool or quilted skirt is made to be nearly flat all round. These measurements are a rough guide to the amount of fabric needed in a skirt. If the theatre is large, another 30-45cm (12-18in) in the skirt would probably help to make the dress move and look better in a large space.

1500-1550. Make the forepart 91cm (36in) across the bottom, although only 68cm (27in) will show. Width of dress skirt is 3m (3½yd).

1550-1600. The skirt gradually gets fuller throughout the rest of the century, and is at its widest over the wheel farthingale. The decorative front skirt that shows, varies in width as the styles change and can be mounted onto the calico petticoat:

The skirt for *The Phoenix* (1575) is about 3.65m (4yd).

The skirt for a closed dress, as the *Darnley* is about 4.34m (4¾yd).

The *Armada* (1588) will show about 76cm (30in) and the skirt will need about 4.57m (5yd).

A closed dress of the same date would be 5.03m (5½yd).

A dress over a wheel or French farthingale 30cm (12in) wide would be about the same.

1600-1700. At the beginning of the century the skirt continues as above, and by 1615 the amount of fabric in the skirts has started to decline. The skirts often fasten down the front or with a front fall, and brightly coloured petticoats can sometimes be seen in the split down the front. Throughout the century the over skirts are between 3.2m (3yd) and 4.11m (4½yd).

1700-1800. The skirts vary according to the width of the skirt support, and whether or not the skirt is closed or open over a petticoat:

A quilted petticoat over a pad needs to be no more than 2.5m (2¾yd).

An ordinary petticoat over pocket hoops varies between 2.2m

(3yd) and 3.65m (4yd).

Over a panier the width varies from 4.11 to 4.57m (4½ to 5yd).

The overskirt again varies with the skirt support and the style of dress, and whether it is an open or a closed dress. For an open dress between 3.65 and 4.11m (4 and 4½yd) and for a closed dress between 4.57 and 5.03m (5 and 5½yd).

Watch point

My motto is: 'It just depends.' This more so with skirts than any other part of a dress. The best advice is, when in doubt cut one drop of the skirt fabric, put it on the stand over the appropriate foundation and pull it through an elastic round the waist to see how it behaves. You will then know how it will hang, whether or not it needs mounting and the amount of fabric needed to achieve the affect you and the designer want.

2. Equipment and suppliers

Baby Hemmer This attachment is available for most makes of machine. It will turn a 3mm (¼in) hem on most thicknesses of fabrics from organza to calico.

Bias binding Used for binding edges 1.25cm (½in) wide and made from cotton. There are three qualities — soft, closely woven; stiffer but coarser, and a very firm bias available from a corset sundries supplier.

Bodkin A blunt needle with a large eye used for threading ribbon or elastic.

Bones and boning Steel bones come in various widths from 8mm (¼in) to 14mm (½in) are used for back lacing and stiffening corsets, particularly the CF.

Spiral bones used for Victorian corsets or any type of boning which need to be curved.

Rigilene is the trade name for a nylon boning, and is the best substitute for whale bone. It cannot be used as other boning, but must be stitched onto the fabric.

Rigid steels can be used as busks for corsets covered in this book. They are made for surgical corsets. Wooden busks can be made by shaving down a piece of wood.

Buckle Used for fastening skirt supports and can be obtained with one or two prongs.

Busks A rigid and thick steel whalebone or wooden stay bone. These were often triangular in shape, used to stiffen the CF of the corset. They were often pushed into a pocket in the CF of the corset and can be seen in many museums.

Button foot Made for attaching buttons on a zig-zag machine. Very useful for stitching on hooks and bars, etc. It is usually necessary to drop this feed on the machine.

Button Hole This is usually incorporated into the machine and a machine with this facility is invaluable in costume making.

Chalk Used for marking fabric. Comes in white, yellow, blue and red.

Cane Used for wheel farthingales and needs to be between 8mm

and 1.25cm (¼ and ½in) thick.

Crinoline steel (steel tape) Used for making Spanish farthingales, paniers and pocket hoops and comes in three widths: 6mm (¼in), 9mm (¾in) and 16mm (¾in). The 9mm (¾in) width is best. Steel tape has a white cotton cover and comes on 25m (30yd) rolls.

Domette Used for interlining, quilting, etc. There are two types — flat and fluffy. The latter is used for quilting.

Drill Used for bodice lining, and is a twill woven cotton.

Eyelets and washers Used for corset and bodice lacing holes. They come in various sizes and can also be used for decoration.

Gathering foot Usually a small square foot with a hole in the centre. Useful for gather trimming — the larger the stitch the greater the gather.

Hooks and eyes/loops Comes in sizes from 0 to 3 hooks and bars. Used for lap fastenings. Loops are used for edge to edge fastenings.

Mantle or military hooks and loops are very useful when a strong fastening is required.

Trouser hooks and bars are useful for skirts.

Fur hooks and loops are useful for bulky jobs or when thick cords need to be used as laces and they can be quite decorative.

Lacing Corset laces — in various lengths. It is possible to buy lace on a roll about 200yds.

Piping or zip foot A foot with only one side, allowing a machine row to be stitched very close to the cord or zip.

Piping cord Used for piping necks, etc. or gathering, and comes in sizes 00/1/2 fine, 3/4/5 medium and 6 thick.

Poppers or snap fasteners Used for placket openings or back fastenings for light fabrics, etc. They come in seven sizes.

Petersham Used for waistbands and is woven with a ribbed weave.

Pins For general use. 3mm (3/16in) are a good length for costume making.

Stiletto A small sharp pointed tool with a round shaft, used for poking or pricking holes when making eyelets.

Scissors Three pairs of scissors are ideal: a small pair for snipping and unpicking; a pair for cutting fabric (the orange handled, lightweight scissors are very good and not tiring to use, especially if you have a small hand, or the black handled tailors shears — so long the status symbol of the cutter, but these can be heavy) and a pair of paper scissors.

Tape India tape. Used for general use, eg hanging loops covering waist bands, etc. A woven tape in widths from 1.3-2.5cm (½-1in), in 25m rolls.

Twill Tape Used when making corsets, or when a strong tape is required. It is woven with a herringbone twill weave.

Stay tape. 6mm (¼in) wide and made in linen. India tape can also be used for the same purpose.

All tapes come in black and white.

Bibliography

Tracing paper This comes in packets containing three colours and can be used flat on the table. It is more economic, however, when glued onto a piece of cardboard, folded in half, or using two pieces glued together. Use it between the two pieces of fabric, tracing both left and right sides at the same time.

Tracing wheel Used for tracing a dotted line when using tracing paper. The more expensive spike wheels are the best and are a good investment.

Tucking foot This has grooves on the underside which pull the fabric into pin tucks. Very useful when tucking fine fabrics.

Waistband (see Petersham)

Wax (bees) Used for waxing cotton. This deters the cotton from knotting and breaking.

Webbing Used for a job that has to be very strong, eg waistbands of skirt supports. It is used in surgical corsets and can be used with a pronged buckle fastening.

Yard sticks and squares A yard or metre stick, a 48cm (18in) ruler and a square (Morplan) producer. A very good plastic square incorporating a curve into the 3rd side with holes used for swinging the curve for grading.

Useful addresses

Eyelets and Washers:

Berbo Buckles Ltd
155 Balls Pond Road
London N1 4BG

Fabrics of all kinds:

Borovick Ltd
Berwick Street
London W1

Cane:

The Cane Store
377 Seven Sisters Road
London N15

Fabrics good for taffetas, both silk and man made:

L.I. Davis
94-96 Seymour Place
London W1

Haberdashery and Fabrics (the only source for crinoline steel):

MacCulloch and Wallis
25-26 Dering Street
London W1

Equipment:

Morplan
Great Titchfield St
London W1

Corset fabrics and bones:

Radcliffe Son & Crockford
Foresters Hall
Hamond Hill
12a New Road Avenue
Chatham
Kent ME4 6BB

Stands and other workroom equipment

Seigle and Stockman
Old Street
London

All these firms are longstanding suppliers to the theatre at the time of going to press, 1986.

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PERIOD COSTUME FOR STAGE AND SCREEN is a comprehensive guide to creating women's dress through three centuries.

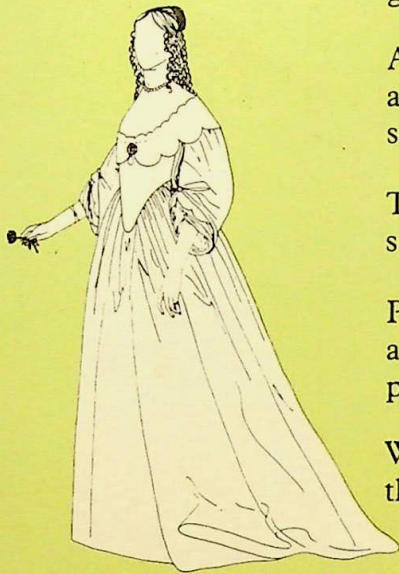
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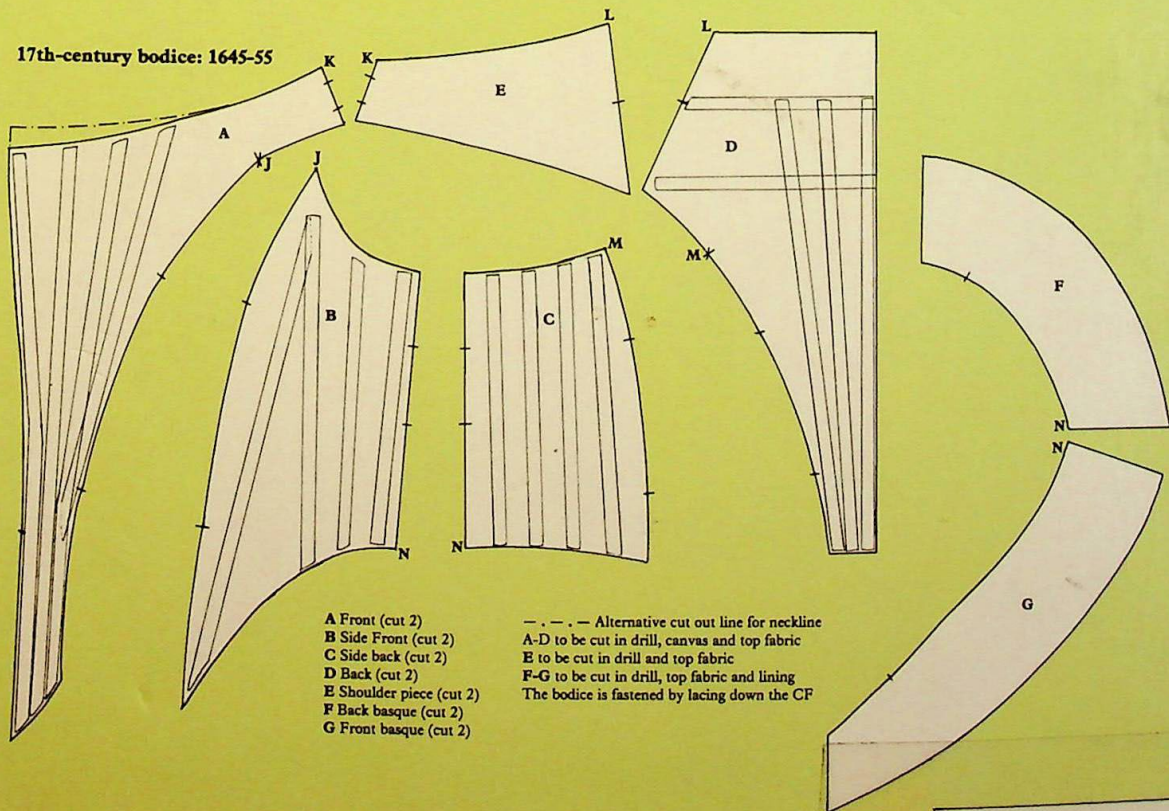
Patterns are also included for all the correctly shaped corsets, petticoats and pads which are essential to make each costume look right for its period.

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Jean Hunnisett has a lifetime's experience of professional costume making, including working for the Old Vic, Sadlers Wells, Covent Garden and the BBC. She has also taught period costume cutting at the London College of Fashion and is now Principal Cutter at the Glyndebourne Festival Opera.



17th-century bodice: 1645-55



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