

The Medieval Tailor's Assistant

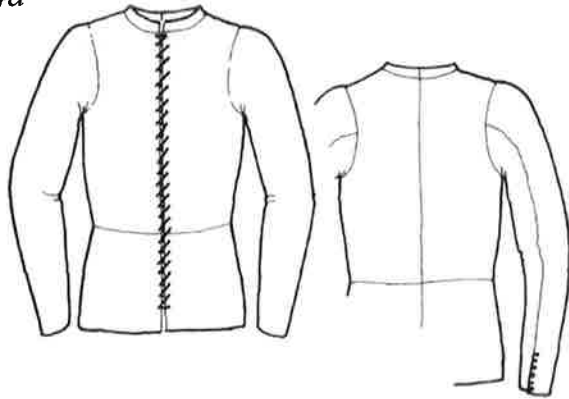


SARAH THURSFIELD

making common garments 1200 -1500

Basic doublet

4a



4. Basic doublet, mid 14th century onwards
 a. The neck can be plain or have a narrow band collar. Hip sections are long, with side vents, and have points stitched inside for separate hose. The sleeves are quite plain and tight at the wrist: in the 14th century they were fastened with a dozen or more buttons. Later they had just one or two. The body is laced closed. The whole garment could be lightly padded and quilted.

Fastenings - see *Methods*, Figs 16-21

Most doublets were laced at the front (Fig 4a) and buttoned at the wrists, but sometimes they were buttoned at the front (Fig 4b). Despite the close fit of the doublet, no extra width needs to be added for fastening, as the buttons and holes are very close to the edge (Pls 2, 3). The number of buttons on each sleeve varied, from a dozen or more in the 14th century to one or two by the middle of the 15th.

For tying a doublet to hose see *Methods*, Fig 18.

b



b. The standing collar with characteristic V back was usual for the 15th century. The front is fastened with buttons, though lacing was still more common. The hip sections might be shortened for joined hose, and have eyelets for trussing.

5. Pattern for Fig 4 →

a. Bodice. Trace round the personal bodice Block. For a sleeveless doublet use the lowered neckline for the round collar and the larger armholes indicated by the broken lines.

Hip section - Add balance marks to the side seams for the vents. The broken line shows a shorter version for wear with joined hose. See Fig 7 for eyelet positions.

Round collar (Fig 4a) - Lower the neck line by 3-4 cm all round. Trace off the back and front neck pieces above the new line and cut them out. Slash each piece in two or three places from the inner curve almost to the outer. On a fresh piece of paper position the back and front pieces together at a. Open out the slashes slightly on the neck edge to lengthen it by 1-2 cm. Draw round the pieces to make a pattern for half the collar, which will have a seam at CB.

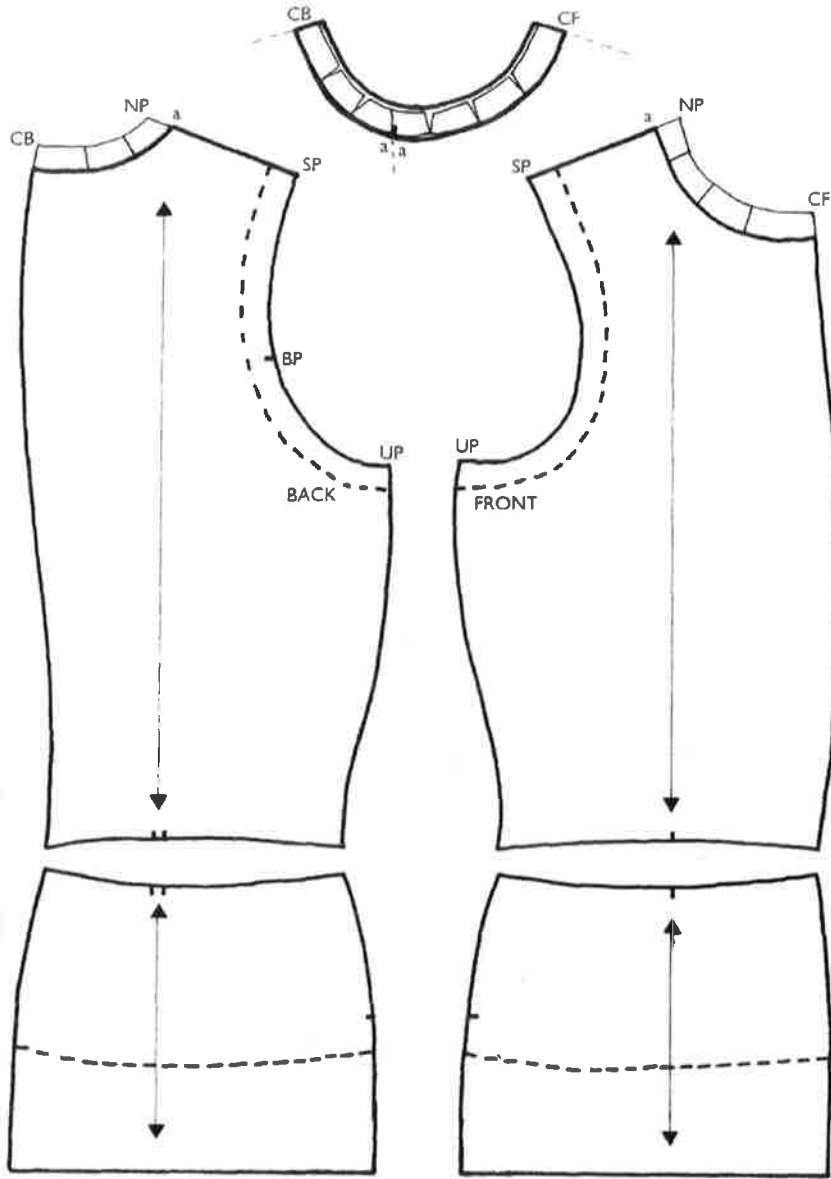
b. Standing collar (Fig 4b). This is a two piece collar, planned on the Block but cut separately. Plan the new neck line. From 5-10 cm down the CB line rule a slanting line to the shoulder, 2-4 cm away from NP. From the corresponding point on the front shoulder draw a curved neck line which can dip slightly to CF. Measure the length of the new neck line.

For the collar itself, draw a CB line initially following the shaping of the back, then running straight to 5 cm above the Block neck line. Mark the SG. Rule another slanting line from CB to about 20 cm beyond the shoulder line, spacing it 0.5 cm from the new neck line at the shoulder. Mark off from CB the total neck line to define the neck edge of the collar to CF. The balance mark shows where it meets the shoulder seam.

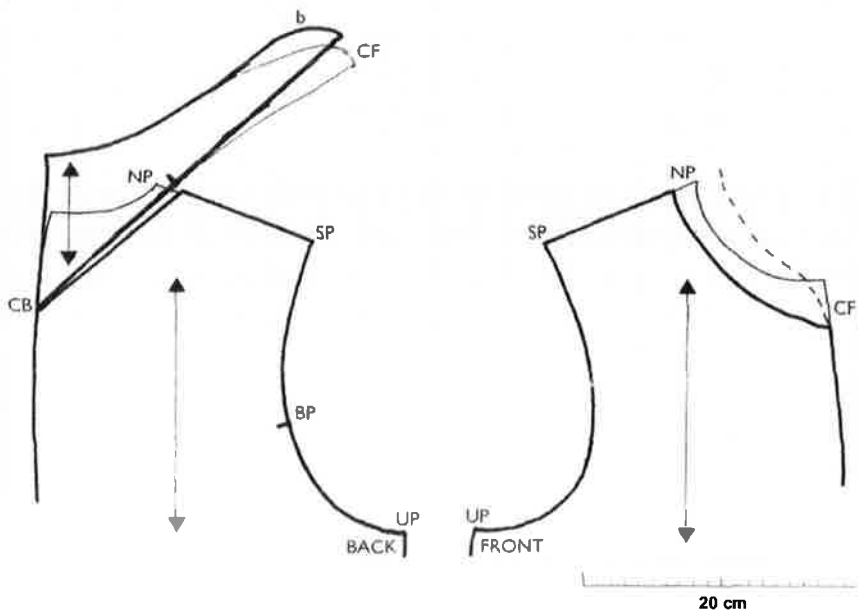
Make a trial sketch of the collar upper edge, trace off the collar pattern and make a calico toile for fitting. If it is too tight, adjust the front collar section as shown by the fine outlines. This lengthens the upper edge while keeping the neck edge the same. Its approximate front shape is outlined by the fine broken line.

Sleeve - Use your sleeve Block unaltered.

5a



b



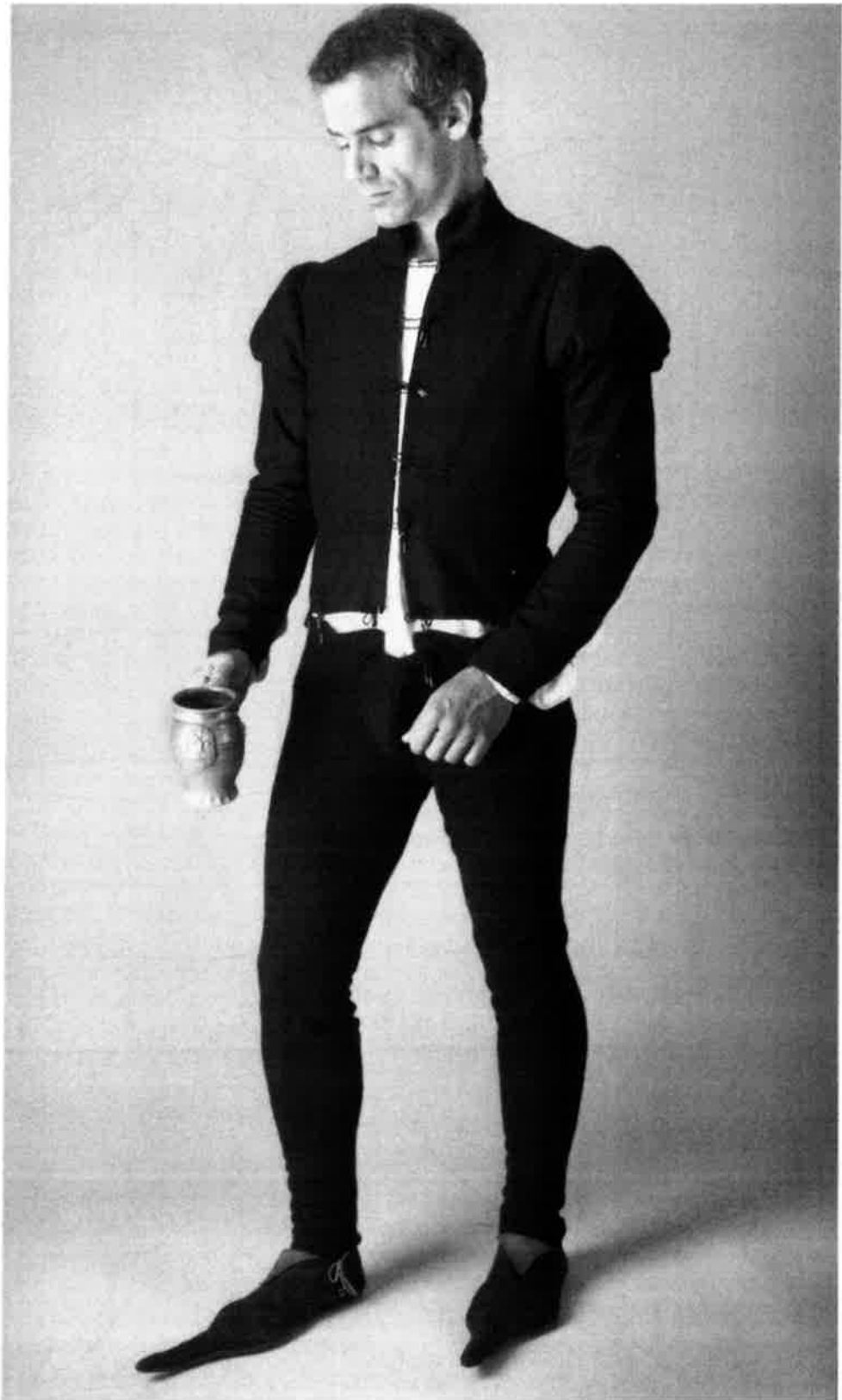


Plate 7 Mid-15th century doublet and hose

A fashionable doublet (Fig 6) with joined hose (*Hose*, Fig 8) in black serge. Note the close fit of both garments, still allowing free movement, but with unavoidable wrinkles at the knees. The doublet is worn over a linen shirt, which would normally have a high collar. The doublet will be fastened close to the hose with the points. The pointed shoes are laced on the inside.

6. Fashionable doublet, mid to late 15th century

The collar was high and stiff. After 1470 it became noticeably lower and its V-shape at the back went out of use. The hip sections are short, with eyelets to support joined hose. The sleeve puffs supported the full sleeves of a gown worn on top.

Left The shirt sleeve protrudes between the latches of the cut-away sleeve (Pls 7, 8).

Right The cut-away front is drawn together with latches. A fine linen breast-kerchief is worn behind them.

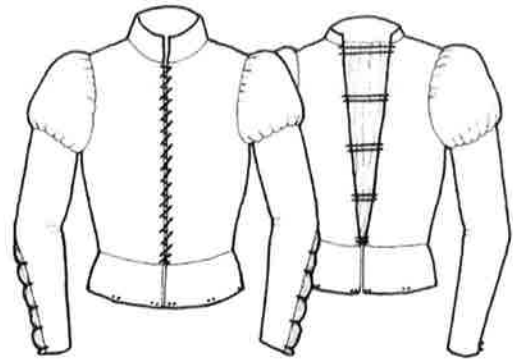
7. Pattern for Fig 6

Trace round the personal bodice Block.

Body and hip section - Shorten the hip sections to 10-12 cm. For a cut-away front use the broken line as a guide: it joins the neck line about 5 cm from CF. Eyelet positions are shown on edges.

Fashionable doublet

6



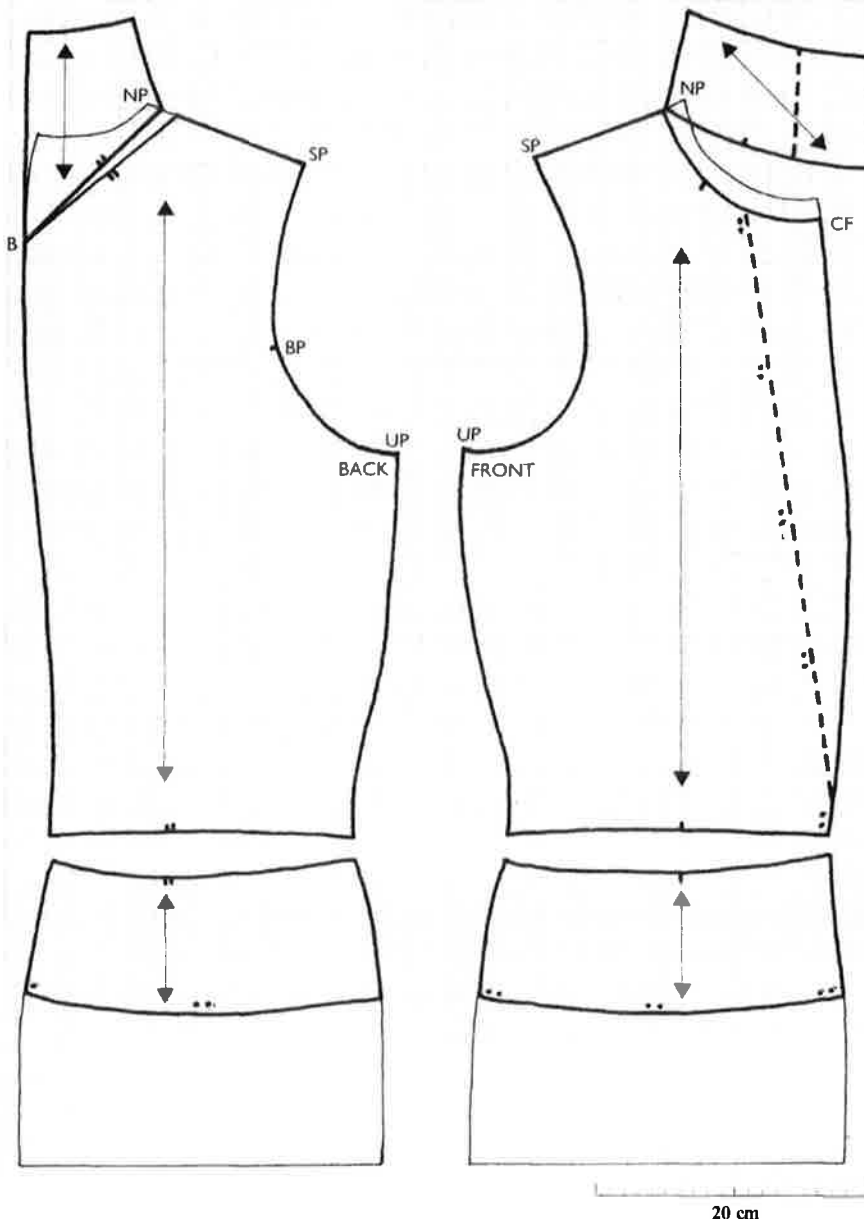
Collar - A higher version of the standing collar in Fig 5b, also planned on the block and cut separately, but in 4 pieces. Lower the neck line as described in Fig 5a.

Back collar - Draw the collar CB slanting in slightly from the vertical, 5-10 cm above the Block neck line. Draw the neck edge, the same length as the body, leaving a 0.5 cm gap at the shoulder. Draw the top edge at least a fifth of the Neck size, and the slanted side seam 5-10 cm long.

Front collar - Draw the neck edge curve shallower than the body neck but equal in length. Rule the vertical CF 5-10 cm high. Plan the side seam and top edge to match the back collar. The combined top edges of back and front collar on the pattern should equal half Neck size plus 1-2 cm ease.

Mark the SG on both sections (the Front is on the bias) and trace off the patterns. Make a calico toile for fitting. For a cut-away front shorten the front collar to match the new neck line (see broken lines). You could also use the round collar from Fig 5a. **Sleeve** - Use your sleeve Block unaltered, or see Fig 8 for a puff sleeve.

7

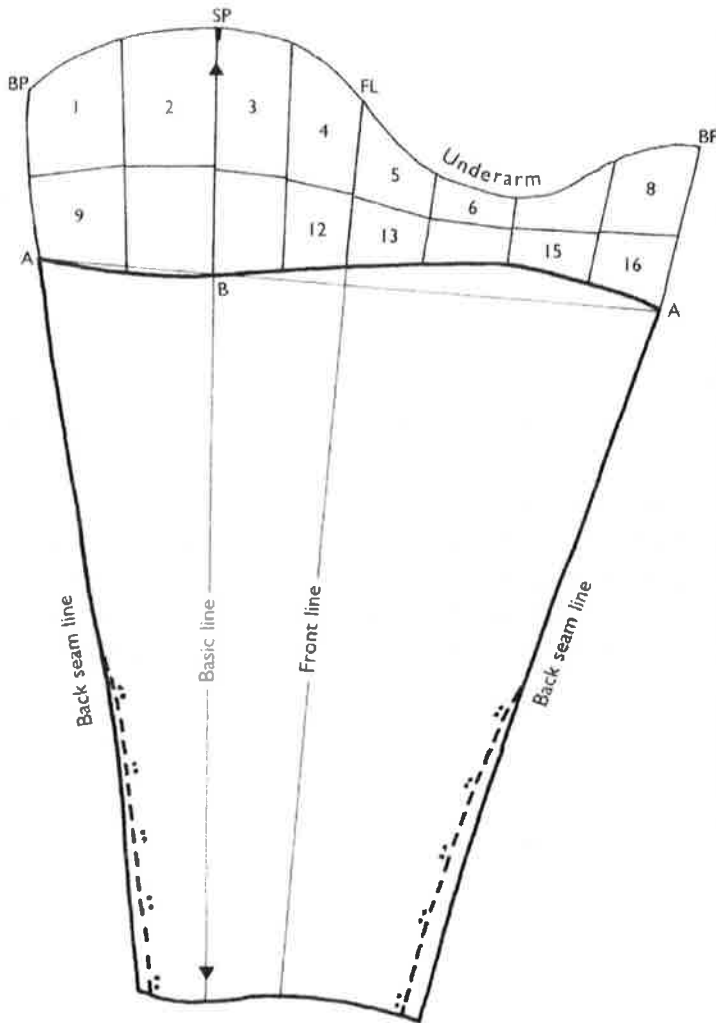


8. Puff sleeve for Fig 6

The sleeve is in two parts: the *lower section*, made up with interlining and lining using the whole pattern; and the *puff* with its interlining, stitched to the made-up lower section.

Lower section - Trace round the personal sleeve Block. Plan the curved seam line as follows: measure 12-15 cm from BP down the Back seam lines and rule a construction line A-A. Plan the curved seam line dipping slightly before the Basic line, and rising to within 4-6 cm of the underarm. Trace off the lower sleeve pattern below the seam line.

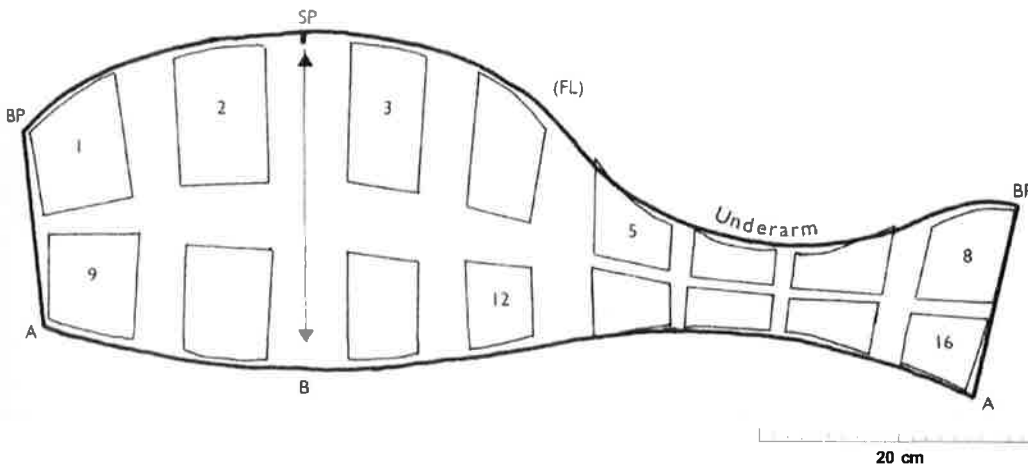
8a

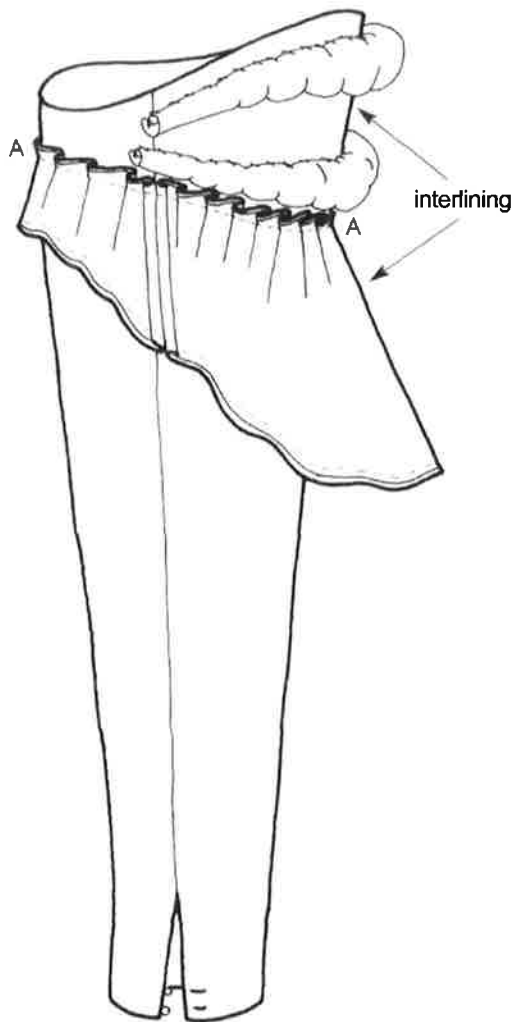


For the cut-away style, which will require eyelets for fastening (*Methods*, Fig 16), follow the broken lines on the lower sleeve. **Puff**- Draw the grid and number the pieces (to keep track!). Trace off, and cut along the grid lines. Spread the pieces as shown in (b), leaving wider gaps at the shoulder than at the underarm, and draw a smooth outline round them to make the puff pattern. The puff should be about 20 cm wider than the Block and up to 10 cm deeper on the Basic Line. A larger puff would be difficult to pad firmly.

Cut the outer fabric only up to the seam line AA (remember seam allowance!), but cut the lining and interlining using the whole sleeve pattern. Cut the puff pattern (b) from the outer fabric, and a firm interlining. See Fig 9 for making up.

b





9. Making up the puff sleeve (Pls 7, 8)

Make up the lower section by combining the interlining and lining for the whole sleeve length with the outer fabric up to AA (Fig 8). Complete the wrist fastening.

Tack the interlining of the puff to its outer fabric and stitch the ends of the puff together. With right sides together pleat the lower edge of the puff onto the top edge of the outer fabric. Tack and stitch through all layers.

Make two firm tapered pads by rolling up soft woollen cloth, or by stuffing cotton wool into a calico tube. The upper roll should be larger. Tack them in position at the base of the puff and over the crown of the sleeve, just below the seam allowance. Draw the puff up over them, stuff with more padding if required, pleat it to fit, and tack it to the top of the sleeve. Set the complete sleeve into the doublet.