

Regimental Coat, Commander In Chief's Guard

Guide for Construction

Compiled by Judith Wicker, Revised May 1989

PLEASE READ ALL DIRECTIONS BEFORE CUTTING FABRIC!

Make the lining first to check proper fit. This is called "making it in the muslin". If you man is sized unusually, first make a cheap muslin full-sized "coat" which can be altered on the man and then used as the pattern from which the true coat and lining can be cut. **PLEASE check with a designated CNCG tailor before continuing past the lining construction.**

SPECIAL CONSTRUCTION AND CUTTING CONSIDERATIONS

PATTERN: These instructions are for the pattern obtained from the Brigade Of The American Revolution (BAR). This pattern is a 42-long and is based on Washington's 1779 Regulations. The pattern has very wide shoulders, a bull-neck opening, and a wasp-waist. Sort of an Arnold Schwarzenegger physique. Revise shape accordingly!

The pattern is too long in the body and arms for most people and will need to be shortened at the waist and sleeves. The neck opening also is too large and will need to be reduced according to the man's neck size. The shoulder width and width across the back at the point where the side seams meet the arm holes is also excessive, and needs to be reduced. Make a cheap muslin pattern, altered as best you can, put it on the man and draw the alterations right on the fabric. When you have a reasonable fit, take the muslin apart and make a good paper or pellon pattern.

ALLOWANCES: Cut the facings, duffs, cape (collar) and coat skirts with extra outer-edge allowances (at least two (2) to three (3) inches. After sewing these items to the coat, **do not trim them** to their final widths or lengths without a designated CNCG tailor present.

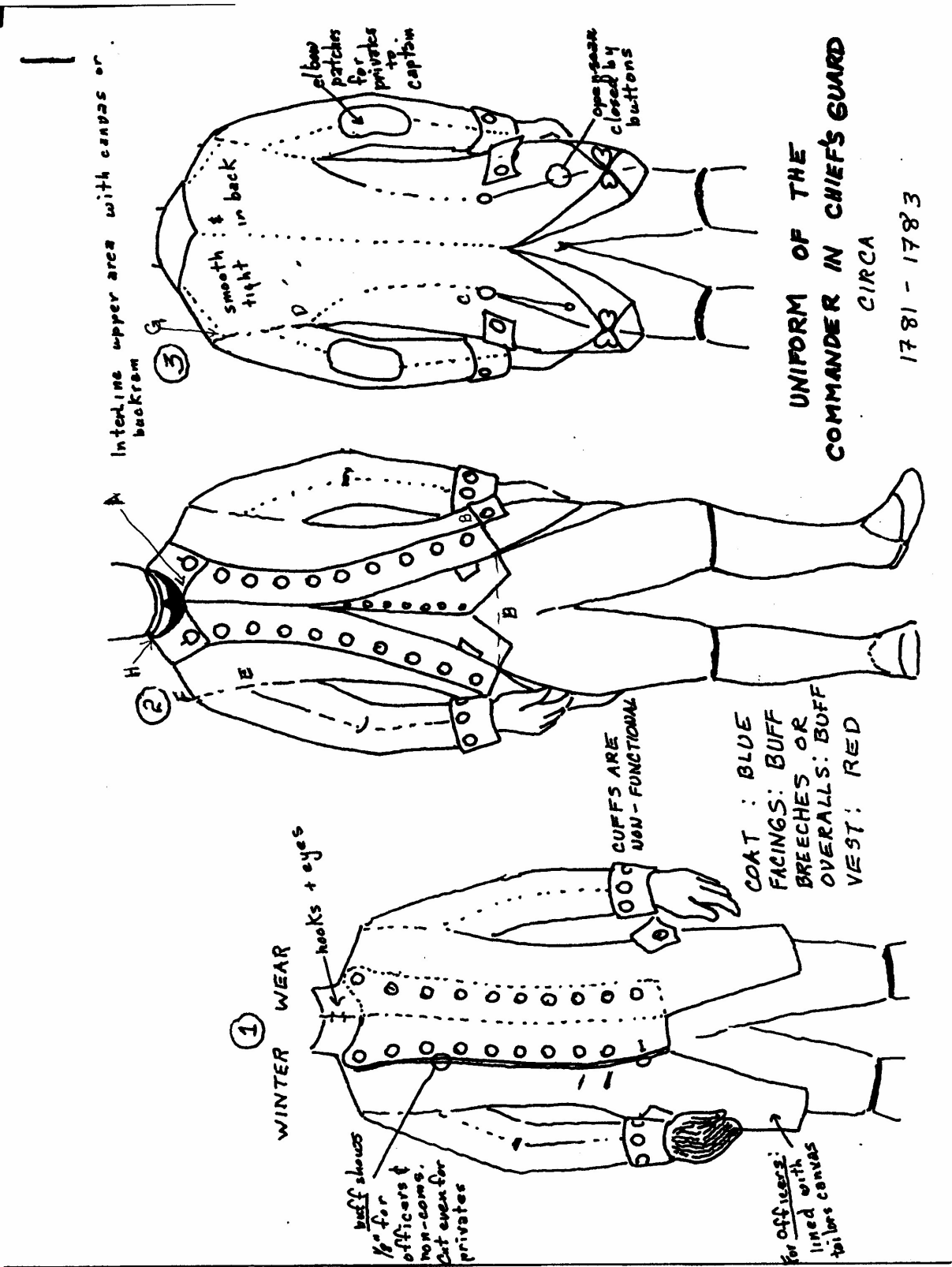
INTERFACING: Use medium to heavy weight tailor's canvas, not pellon or iron-on (fused) interfacing. Interface shoulder area, neck area, along the facings, and facings, collar and cuffs. The commissioned officer's coat is also interfaced in the skirts. Use the pattern you make to create interfacings for the coat front, back, collar, facings and cuffs.

MATERIALS: The outer body is dark blue wool. The facings, cape, cuffs, and inner skirts are buff (tan to yellowish-tan). The body and sleeve linings are white linen, fine wool or cotton. Interfacing material is medium to heavy weight tailor's canvas. Buttonhole thread matches the outer surface fabric. **WASH ALL MATERIALS IN HOT HOT HOT WATER AND TUMBLE COMPLETELY DRY TO SHRINK AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE.** Wet weather will shrink these fabrics at unequal rates and ruin your coat otherwise.

SPECIFICATIONS FOR FIT OF GARMENT, STARTING AT TOP OF THE COAT FRONT AND WORKING IN A CLOCKWISE DIRECTION

See Page 2 for diagram.

- * **Point A** lies between the collar bones.
- ** **Neckline Curve H – A** lies along the collar bone and is trimmed and fitted with a cape after the coat is made up to wear.



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* **Point B** lies on the hip line running through the pubic bone, hip sockets, and end of the spine, and also lines up with the bottom edge of the waistcoat.

** **Dimension A – B** extends from the collar bone to the public bone.

* **Point C** lies on the hip line (see note for Point B) at the junction of the skirt pleats and the flank (side) seam. A button is sewn here.

** **POCKET FLAP:** locate top edge of pocket flap on line B – C with rear top corner of flap within one inch of point C. Stitch flap to coat along indicated dotted lines.

** **TAIL LENGTH:** tails are trimmed according to individual unit specifications. The CNCG uses “mid thigh”, which is a point halfway between the crotch and the floor when the soldier is kneeling.

Point D lies at the top of the flank (side) seam.

** **Seam C – D** lies more to the rear than side seams on modern coats.

* **Point E** is the match point for the front sleeve seam.

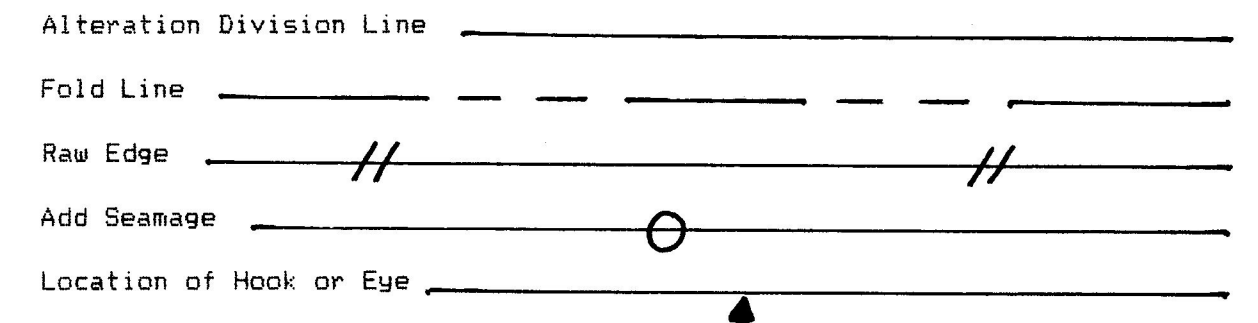
* **Point F** lies at the very point of the shoulder.

* **Point G** lies behind (to the rear) of the shoulder.

* **Point H** lies at the junction of the neck and shoulder.

** **Dimension F – H** is measured along the top of the shoulder.

LEGEND FOR PATTERN



CUTTING AND SEWING GUIDE

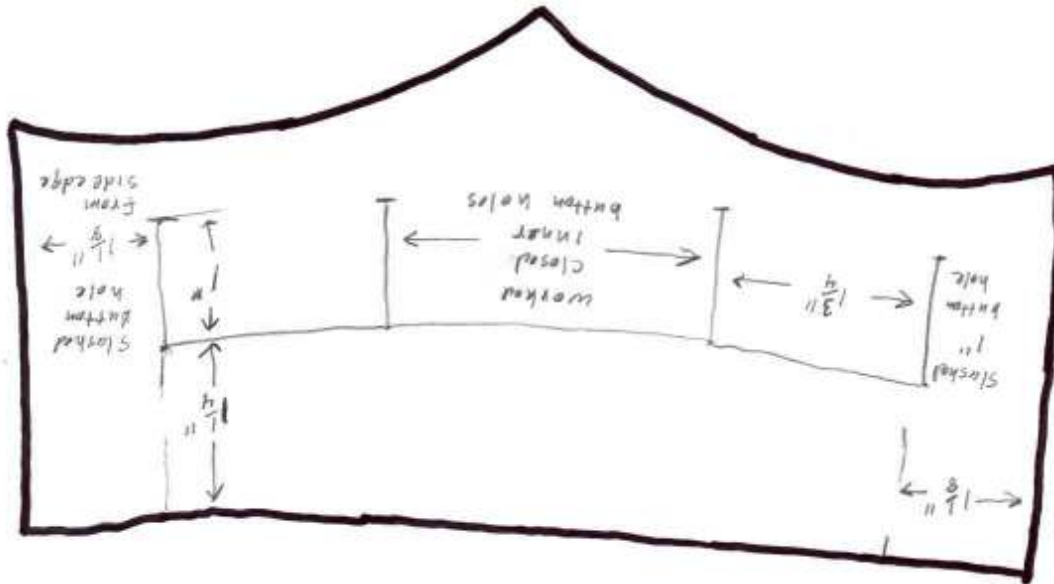
FRONT: Make two of blue cloth and use the same pattern above the “**B – C line**” for white linings. Add generous seamages as indicated and take note of those edges to be left raw. (See legend)

BACK: Make two of blue cloth and use the same pattern above the (imaginary) “**B – C line**” for white lining.

TAIL LININGS: Use patterns for coat tails from hip line (“**B – C line**”) downward to obtain linings for both front and back. Cut tail linings from facing material.

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POCKET FLAPS: Cut four pieces (two outer and two lining pieces). Two outer button holes are sewn and slit open to take buttons. Two inner button holes are stitched, but left uncut. Outer slashed holes 1 1/8" from side. Inner worked holes 1 3/4" from slashed holes. Inner buttons are sewn so that the lower half of each button shows just below the pocket. All free edges of the pocket flaps raw. (See ill. #3 & 5)



INSIDE POCKETS: Two pockets are set inside the front skirts. The openings correspond with the pocket flaps on the outside of the coat. (See Katcher, fig. 117 and BAR pattern guide for further construction details.)

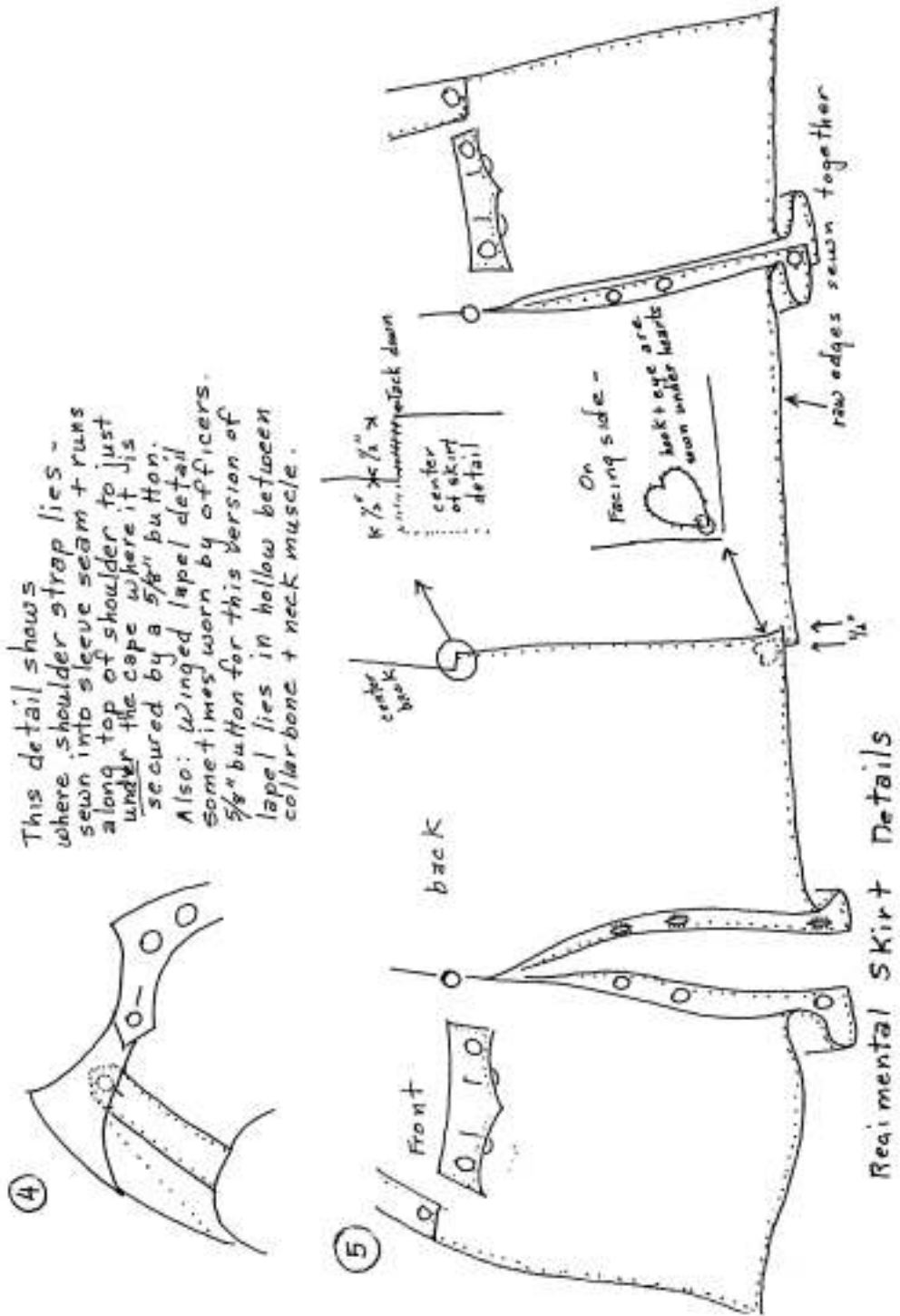
LAPEL FACINGS: Some regiments use facings that taper from top to bottom. CNCG facings taper from three (3) inches at the top to 2-5/16 inches at the bottom. Remember, it is necessary to leave the free edges oversize until the facings are sewn to the coat and turned back. Do not sew the outer edges together until after the CNCG tailor helps you trim them properly. Lower button hole is 1" from the bottom of facing; button holes set 3/4" in from edge of facing; The nine lower button holes are parallel to each other. The top button hole is angled to allow both the lapel and the cape to button on the top-most lapel button. All button holes are slightly longer than the button diameter. All free edges of the lapel facing are raw. Use four sets of large, black hooks and eyes to close the coat. They are mounted inside the coat to correspond with the upper four sets of buttons on the facings.

CAPE (COLLAR): The pattern is a half-pattern. Place folded material with fold on "center back line" of pattern. Cut one piece of facing material and one piece of coating material. Cut one piece of stiffener material to use between the outer and inner layers of the cape. The cape's free edges will remain raw in the finished state. Remember to leave the free edges oversize, and do not trim or sew them together until the CNCG tailor is present to assist you in achieving the "proper" look. The edges of the cape will be trimmed to produce a three (3) inch width, except in the rear where the width increases at a smooth taper to a point on the spine. The cape should "blend" smoothly into the facings. (See Katcher, fig. 2 & 8) You may need to sew a thin lead weight into the back point of the cape to help hold it down. The cape button holes run even with side edge of cape 3/4" from front edge & 1 1/8" from side edge.

SHOULDER STRAPS: Enlisted man had one on each shoulder. The shoulder strap is made of the same wool as the coat body, 1-1/2 inches wide with a raw edge. It is sewn into the shoulder/sleeve seam

and runs along the top of the shoulder to just under the cape, where it is secured by a 5/8-inch, yellow USA button. The sleeve end is blunt. The other end is arrow-shaped. (See Ill. #4)

SKIRTS: The edges are raw. The side edge of each front skirt buttons to the side edge of the corresponding back skirt, using three buttons set into the back skirt and three button holes set into the front skirt. (See ill. #5 and Katcher, fig. 9 & 57.) One button is set at the bottom of the skirt and the other two are set at the same distance apart as the ones on the facings, and equidistant from the center of the skirt edge. Buttonholes correspond. Finally, a fourth button is set at "Point C".

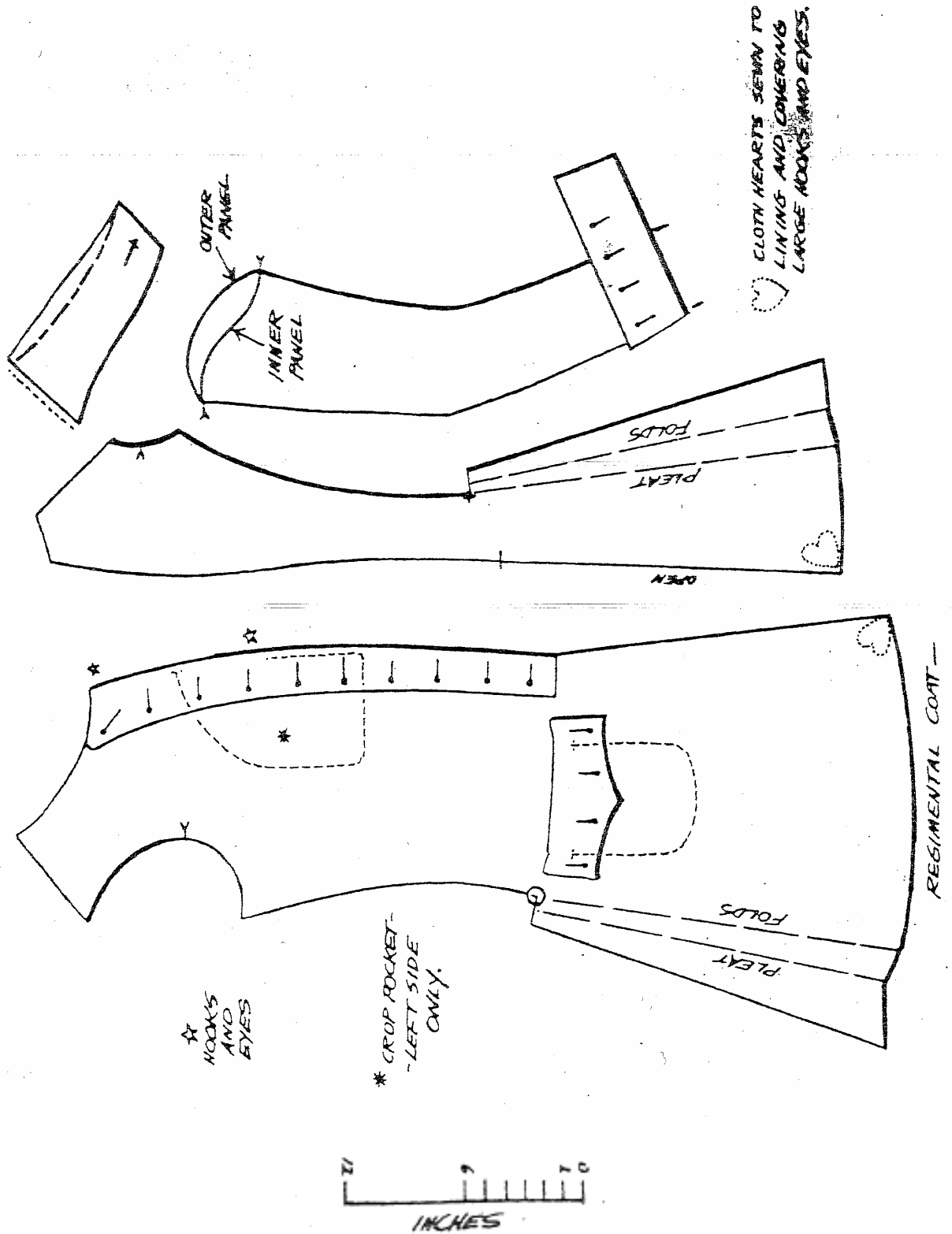


CLOTH HEARTS are used to cover hooks and eyes on tail points. Cut four hearts of coating material and sew them on the facing side of the tail points at front edge and center back. Hooks and eyes are mounted between buff material and the pointed edge of the heart. (See Katcher, fig. 57.)

SLEEVES: The sleeve pattern is a composite of inner and outer sleeves and cuffs. It would be well to immediately make separate patterns of inner sleeves and cuffs. Cut two inner and two outer sleeves from coating material and two each from lining material (not facing material). **NOTE:** Sleeves are set differently from most women's clothing and men's shirts. Seams are set side to side instead of top to bottom as many people are accustomed to placing them. (See ill. #1, 2 & 3 and Katcher, fig. 8 & 9.) The elbow patch is cut of the coating material and is used as a reinforcement to give the coat longer life. The sleeve length is measured from the point of the shoulder to the wrist knuckle (knobs at the sides of the wrist). The sleeve should fit rather closely, but should not be constricting. If it is necessary to alter the sleeves, adjustments usually must be made both above and below the elbow.

CUFFS: Cuff pattern is slightly expanded to show buttonhole positions. Disregard right extended edge when making cuff pattern. This is a half pattern, like the cape pattern. Fold material at the right edge of the cuff pattern. Cut two of coating material and two of facing material. Cuff widths differ in some regiments. CNGC specifications call for cuffs to appear three (3) inches wide to the viewer; therefore remember to cut the width generously and trim (like cape and facings) when turned to show three inches. Cuff length will vary with sleeve width. Cuff seam matched with front sleeve seam. Buttonholes are non-functional; work them closed and sew the buttons through both cuff and sleeve. (See ill. #1, 2 & 3.)

Sketch of Regimental Coat Pattern Pieces



KATCHER, fig. 1 & 2



F. 1



F. 2

FIG. 1-2 The French sculptor Houdon made this statue of George Washington in 1784. It shows the cut of period clothes, the tight sleeves, the length of the coat skirts, etc. Continental Army surgeon Dr. James Thatcher, described Washington in 1775 in the same uniform he wore throughout the war. *His dress is a blue coat with buff-colored facings, a rich epaulette on each shoulder, buff underdress, and an elegant small sword; a black cockade in his hat.*

KATCHER, fig. 8, p. 14



FIG. 8 This regimental coat, although a British officer's coat of the 49th Foot, has a cut typical of the coats preferred by the Continentals. Note the round cuffs, the sewn down pocket flaps, the hearts at the edges of the skirts, and how the narrow lapels button under the collar, or cape. National Army Museum, London

KATCHER, fig. 9, p. 18



FIG. 9 A back of a typical coat of the period, this one worn by an officer of the Sussex Militia. Note how the collar, or cape, comes to a point in the back. In this coat the pocket flaps are functional, with the buttons sewn underneath. Continentals wore coats with all combinations of pocket flaps and buttons, with either three or four buttons. G. A. Embleton

KATCHER, fig. 57, p. 78

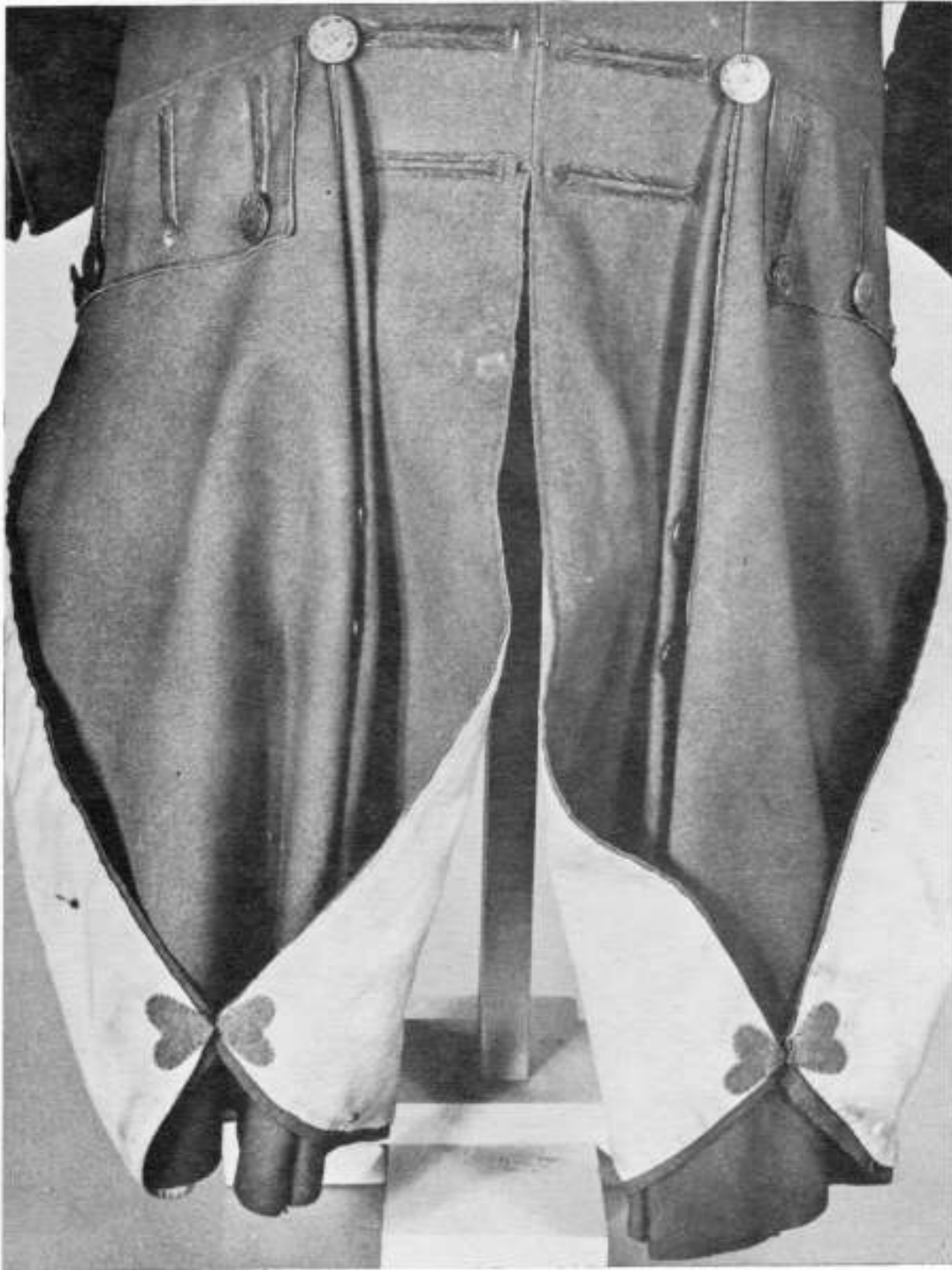


FIG. 57 Details of the turned-back skirts of a typical period regimental coat. Note how the hearts hide the hooks and eyes. Note also the slit cuffs. National Army Museum



FIG. 117. The thin wool lining of a typical period regimental coat. Note the slit pockets on the inside of either skirt, at waist level. National Army Museum.



FIG. 118 This dull-brown knit cap may be typical of the knit caps worn by Continental soldiers. It was found in wet clay, at a site dating between 1760 and 1780. The cap is 10 inches in diameter and 6¼ inches tall. Its 2-inch brim is made in double thickness. Don Troiani: *The Brigade Dispatch*.



FIG. 119 While typical in cut, this cocked hat is unusual in that a cockade button is present on each front flap. It actually was worn by a soldier in the Revolution. Smithsonian Institution.

SERVICE STRIPES (for those entitled to wear them)

