The Cutters' Practical Guide

To the Cutting and Making all Kinds of

LOUNGE JACKETS,

ALSO

ROBES, HOODS, AND GOWNS.

EDITOR'S NOTE

FOR THIS EDITION

I offer this restored edition of *The Cutter's Practical Guide to Jacket Cutting & Making* out of real regard for the craft and history of British tailoring. W. D. F. Vincent wrote it, and The John Williamson Company of 93 & 94 Drury Lane, London, published it as the ninth part of *The Cutter's Practical Guide*. Its publishers did not undersell it. In their preface they called the series "the Magnum opus of our trade literature" and said the System had been "subjected to every imaginable kind of test during a decade or more."

This part covers the jacket in all its forms. Vincent opens by saying he was surprised the subject had been left so long, because, apart from trousers, few everyday garments "meet with a larger demand, or find a wider range of customers." He notes that the lounge was favoured by "the Heir-Apparent to the Throne" and worn "in both peer and peasant throughout the length and breadth of Great Britain." He also points out that it could be single- or double-breasted, with a roll, step, Prussian or stand collar, and made "with yokes, aye, and even skirts."

The book has a lot of ground to cover. After the measures and the main lounge system, it moves through studies in style, whole-back lounges and reefers. Then come the corpulent figure, the dress lounge and the new dinner jacket, and the Norfolk and yoked shooting jackets. Garments for cycling, golf, cricket, tennis and boating follow, and then the clerical lounge, the footman's pantry jacket, the jockey's jacket, smoking and dressing gowns, and pyjamas. The military section, from page 44, gives the patrol jackets of the cavalry, artillery, engineers and infantry, with the official regulations and a scale of sizes. The Highland pages take in dress jackets and the cutting and making of the kilt, from page 62. A supplementary section, from page 69, gives systems for university, legal, municipal and clerical robes, gowns and hoods. It covers Oxford, Cambridge, Durham, London, Manchester, Lampeter and Dublin. It also covers the alderman's robe, the cassock, the surplice and the chasuble. A few of these pages have not survived, as the note below explains.

The publishers point to one feature in particular: "each diagram being shown facing the explanatory matter relating to it; this being found a great convenience in studying the systems." This edition keeps that arrangement. Every diagram plate still faces the page of text that explains it.

This 2026 edition aims to keep the original's full structure and technical clarity while adding:

- Optical character recognition with line-by-line verified correction, for an accurate text;
- Retypesetting that keeps every page, column, diagram and caption where it was in the original, so the diagrams still face their text;
- Faithful reproduction of Vincent's diagrams, plates, tables and the publisher's original list of works;
- A new glossary of period tailoring terms, and editorial notes on the principal sections and diagrams.

Corrections have been made with care, without bringing in modern terms or losing historical

nuance. Archaic spellings and period usage ("sideseam", "scye", "&c.", "C.P.G.", "do." for ditto) are kept wherever they do not obscure the meaning. Plain printer's errors have been corrected silently. The aim is an edition that works for the scholar and the user alike: the working tailor, the costume historian and the student of men's dress.

A NOTE ON MISSING PAGES

The only surviving scan of the 1897 edition, from which this edition is made, lacks a few leaves. The same scan is held by the Internet Archive, cuttersguide.com and siamcostumes.com, and I have found no fuller copy. Rather than fill the gaps with text from Vincent's later books, this edition reproduces the original as it survives. By the publishers' Index of Contents, the lost pages held:

- **Folios 39–40:** the rest of Cycling Garments (begun on p. 38), with Plate 17, and the Golfing Jacket (p. 40).
- **Folios 47–48:** the end of the Engineers Patrol Jacket regulations (begun on p. 46); the Military Cadets Patrol Jackets (p. 47); and the Pimlico System, the Scale of Sizes for Military and the text of The Infantry Service Patrol Jackets (p. 48), whose diagrams survive on Plate 22 (p. 49).
- **Folios 51–52:** the Illustration of Clerical Lounge and Footman's Pantry Jacket, Plate 23 (p. 51); and the Engineers Service Fatigue Jackets, the Clerical Lounge Diagram text and Hints on Making (p. 52). Plate 24 survives (p. 53).
- **Folios 57–60:** the Illustration of Dressing Gown and Smoking Jackets, Plate 26 (p. 57); Pyjama Jackets and the Diagram of Dressing Gown (p. 58); the Illustration of Highland Jackets, Plate 27 (p. 59); and Highland Dress Jackets and Sporting Costume (p. 60), whose diagrams survive on Plate 28 (p. 61).

The surviving pages keep their original folios, so each gap shows where it falls. I would be glad to hear of a more complete copy.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

William D. F. Vincent was a leading figure in British tailoring. The title page of this volume calls him "Editor of the 'Tailor and Cutter'". He is best known for his work at that journal and for the instructional volumes of *The Cutter's Practical Guide*, of which this book is the ninth part. He was born at Yeovil, Somerset, on 18 June 1860 and served his apprenticeship there. He joined *The Tailor and Cutter* in 1887 and edited it for twenty-nine years from 1895. He also headed its cutting academy and was Managing Director of the business from 1912 until he retired in 1924. He died in 1926.

May this edition carry on the legacy of *The Cutter's Practical Guide*, and serve today's historians, craftspeople, costumiers and enthusiasts as well as it once served the professional cutter.

THE HUMBLE EDITOR.

London, 2026

HOW TO MEASURE.

The measures referred to on the preceding page are taken with the view of finding out the balance required by the customer, the location and size of scye, the slope of the shoulder, &c., so that if the cutter only acquires the ability of taking these measures accurately he will find the system make all or nearly all the provision necessary for stooping or erect figures, square and sloping shoulders, long and short necks, advanced or backward scye, &c. The only parts where judgment is required being the suppression of the waist and the balance of the sleeve, and of these we shall have something to say later on.

The taking of these measures necessitates the cutter, or someone equally capable, taking the measures, and as this is not always possible we herewith give the

Proportions of the Breast Measure.

So that if the cutter has to work from self measurement forms he may be able to work the system out independently of the four direct measures which are over and above those almost universally taken.

The across breast measure equals one-fourth breast, minus 1 inch.

The scye depth equals one-fourth breast, with a slight addition to the small sizes and a little reduction in the large sizes; or one-third the scye circumference plus one-sixth of the natural waist.

The front shoulder measure equals one-third breast, plus half an inch, with a slight addition to the small sizes, and a little reduction in the large sizes.

The over shoulder measure equals one-half of the breast, minus ½ to 1 inch.

The hip measure is from 1 to 2 inches more than the chest.

A safer plan than either is to use a

Scale of Sectional Measures.

Chest	Waist	Scye Depth	Lounge. Nat. Waist	Lounge. Length	Across Back	Full length Sleeve	Across Chest	Front Shoulder	Over Shoulder
24	24	6¼	11¾	20	5⅛	19	5¼	9	12¾
26	25	6¾	13	22	5½	22	5¾	10	13⅜
28	26	7¼	14	24	5⅞	25	6¼	10½	14¼
30	27	7¾	15	26	6⅛	27	6¾	11	14¾
32	28	8¼	16	28	6½	30	7¼	11½	15¼
34	30	8⅜	16½	28½	6⅞	31	7⅜	12	16
36	32	9	17	29	7¼	32	8	12½	17
38	34	9⅜	17¼	29½	7⅜	33	8½	13	17½
40	37	9¾	17¾	30	8	33	9	13½	18½
42	39½	10⅛	18	30½	8⅜	33	9½	14	19¼
44	42	10½	18¼	31	8¾	34	10	14½	20
46	46	10¾	18½	31½	9	34	10½	15¼	21
48	50	11	18½	32	9¼	34	11	16	22
50	54	11¼	18½	32	9½	34	11½	16¾	23

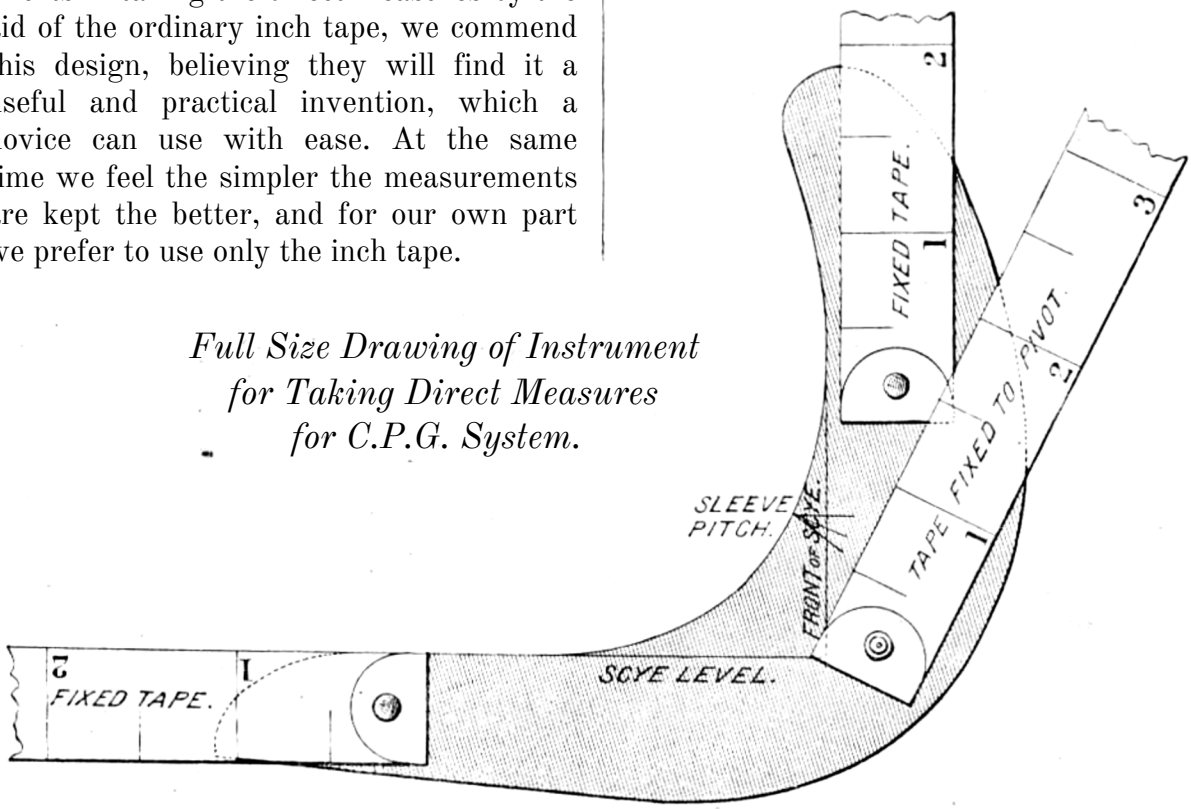
The way to use this is to take the various quantities opposite a given chest measure, to supply what your customer does not supply. Thus, suppose the following measures are sent: 36, 32, 17, 29, 7, 21, 32; now the measures wanting are across chest, depth of scye, front shoulder, and over shoulder. Take the above scale and note the quantities opposite 36, in the columns bearing these headings, thus : across chest 8, scye depth 9, front shoulder 12½, over shoulder 17, and so on with the other sizes.

This scale has been arranged in harmony with the teaching of hundreds of measures taken on customers of all sizes.

In order to facilitate the taking of the measures, some of the users of the C. P. G. have resorted to mechanical assistance, and we herewith give an illustration of one of the best of these. By its aid the measures are taken from the front of scye to nape of neck, and over shoulder to depth of scye. To a crescent of metal or leather two tapes are firmly secured, the one is carried across the back and under the opposite arm, where it meets the other tape which has been taken round the shoulders and neck. The two tapes are then fastened together by the aid of a buckle, and the cutter is free to take any measurements he desires. There is a third tape working on a pivot, secured

to the level of bottom of scye, and this is the tape used for taking the measures by. The idea is a good one, though not altogether new. We have had similar arrangements submitted to us before, though not quite so completely worked out as this is. For those who are not satisfied with their efforts in taking the direct measures by the aid of the ordinary inch tape, we commend this design, believing they will find it a useful and practical invention, which a novice can use with ease. At the same time we feel the simpler the measurements are kept the better, and for our own part we prefer to use only the inch tape.

Full Size Drawing of Instrument for Taking Direct Measures for C.P.G. System.



The majority of customers do not fancy the buckling up process, it savours too much of the straight jacket, and after all we have not only to fit the body but also the head. The measures necessary for the former we have always been able to take without special apparatus, the latter cannot be obtained by even the most elaborate instrument.

The best means of finding out the customer's wishes in this way are a few judicious questions, and if the cutter only masters this part of taking the order, the actual measuring should be a very simple matter.

THE SYSTEM. PLATE 3.

We now proceed to show the application of the measures to the production of the draft, and for our purpose we require a square with arms at right angles, an inch tape, a piece of crayon, and a sheet of paper or cloth.

Commence by drawing a straight line from right to left on the paper or cloth, at least 24 inches from the edge nearest you, and on this mark off the depths thus : .

O to 3 one-third of scye.

O to 9 the depth of scye.

O to 17 the natural waist.

O to 28½ the full length of Lounge, plus ½ inch.

Thus the points of depth are marked on the first construction line, and as our readers will see they are nearly all located in harmony with measures taken on the customer direct.

We next proceed to mark off

STUDIES IN STYLE.

On the opposite page we have endeavoured to illustrate a few of the varieties that may be introduced into the working of the system without in any very great way affecting the fit.

Style someone has said is "The Clothes of the Mind." The manner in which it gives expression to itself, and when we come to consider this matter in relation to the cut of garments, it is astonishing the variety that can be introduced altogether apart from the style of garment upon which we have to consult our customers' views.

We show our clients Fashion Plates for them to see the difference between a square cut front and one that is smartly rounded away. They make their selection of garments from Fashion Plates representing Frock coats, Morning coats, Lounges, and Reefers ; but it is not often that a series of illustrations is placed before the cutter to suggest to him where there is a possibility for him to infuse good style, and avoid that which has long since gone out of date.

The Style of Backs. Diagrams 5 to 9.

The variety that offers itself in the outlines of the back is very considerable, the back neck may be wide or narrow, the shoulder seam may be high or low, the back scye shallow or deep, the back at waist may be wide or narrow, and the back itself may be cut whole or with a seam.

In Diagram 5 we have an illustration of the style of back most often used for Patrol jackets, uniforms, &c. It is cut with a back neck 3½ wide, and with a shoulder seam brought well on to the top of the shoulder. The back scye and the back waist are both kept about two inches wide, and the centre is cut on the crease. These backs are generally used in conjunction with a separate sidebody, but this is not absolutely necessary. It admirably illustrates the variations in these particulars.

Diagram 6 shows a whole back cut with a very square shoulder and a hollow sideseam, the back being kept narrow at waist.

When the Lounge is desired to fit closely and still retain the whole-back, this is the best style; but it savours rather of the extreme, and for our part we prefer the style shown on Diagram 7, which is cut with a shoulder slope of 3 inches, and a back width at waist of 5 inches. It is quite possible to make it define the figure moderately with this cut, and as it is moderate in outline, meets with more favour than Diagram 6.

Diagram 8 shows the favourite outline for a three-seamer; the shoulder is cut with a slope of 3 inches, and the width at waist made equal to one-sixth breast, thus bringing the sideseam well to the side, and enabling it to be kept moderately straight, both features being advantageous for the present style.

On Diagram 9 we have the old style illustrated; the shoulder slope is placed at 4 inches, and the width of waist over 7 ; this is more extreme than Diagram 6, and is merely given here as an example of what to avoid. Our readers will do well to avoid all extremes of style, and for this reason we commend Diagrams 7 and 8 as worthy of imitation. These alterations in style do not necessarily affect the fit, as in the system given in this work any alteration in the back is compensated for in the forepart.

A Study in the Style of Fronts.

In Diagrams 10, 11, and 12 we have a few of the variations that can be made in the foreparts. Thus, in Diagram 10 we have an example of the alterations made at sideseam when the back is cut wider or narrower; this, however, is dependent on the back, but in the other details here illustrated the front is quite independent of the other parts.

wedge to prevent it going back. In all this be careful not to press the fulness back over the blades, as the fulness is not required over back scye, and the whole aim of these suggestions is to make it fit snug at that part.

The marks on Diagram 14 are pretty much the same as on 13; you will see we approve of shrinking the backs of three-seamers as well as whole-backs.

From 12 to 13 may be slightly strained out to prevent any loose material forming across the back waist.

On Diagram 15 we illustrate the manipulation of the forepart, if there is no fish under the arm shrink the waist at 18, 19; and even if there is a fish it will be well to do so if the fish is more than 3 inches from the sideseam.

If there is much round on the hip from 20 to 21, draw it in and press forward on to the hip.

The round of breast should be drawn in from 31 to 32, and pressed back to the centre of fronts, carefully avoiding to carry it too far back. A little drawing in from 22 to 23 will facilitate the fit at that part, especially if the figure is at all prominent at the breast.

Im making up the shoulders shrink it from 26 to 27, so that it may fit smoothly in the hollow; stretch it slightly between 29 and 30, as well as at 28 and 29, and at 24, 25. The position of this making up is clearly illustrated in the diagram, so we need not dwell further on this topic.

We will not stay to describe the canvas, the staying of the pockets, edges, &c., as we believe that it will be understood; we will, however, direct attention to the shoulder pad, Diagram 16. This is made of canvas and horsehair stitched together as indicated, and is cut to fit snugly right round the scye, and keep the garment firm at that part; it differs from most in that it goes round the back scye, always a difficult part to fit in Lounges, hence we commend it.

If this is objected to on account of a tendency to stiffness, our readers will do well to put a half ply of wadding (more in the case of stooping figures or those with prominent blades) round the back scye.

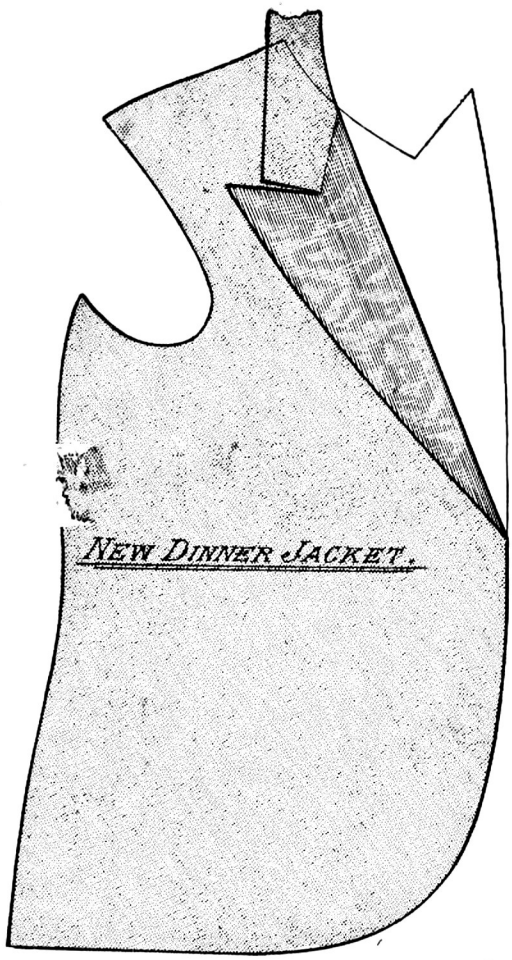
Facings, Linings, &c.

In the next three Diagrams we give illustrations of the finish of facings, linings, &c. On Diagram 17 we have facings only extending to neck point A and kept narrow all down the front to H; this may be necessary from shortness of material or to keep the garment as light as possible for tropical climates. If the former is the reason, we should advocate putting a piece of extra padding through the shoulder, serging it on to the facing so as to avoid the break which would otherwise occur.

In all cases see that there is more width given to the facing at A B than to the outside, as the shoulder being hollow requires more width for the inside than the outside. In this illustration the lining is put in plain, and carried right to the bottom, and altogether it is not what we should consider good form.

Diagram 18 is more our ideal, in this the facings are carried right through the shoulder, and extend wide enough at breast to take in the breast pocket. About 2½ inches above the bottom of scye a V has been inserted, that being the position most, favoured to give ease to the facing at that part; the greatest shaping, however, is at the top of shoulder, and there is no doubt those who advocate the insertion of V as P, Diagram 19, have a good deal on the side. On Diagram 19 we have illustrated two Vs, this, however, is only necessary when the material is very stubborn, indeed in the majority of materials sufficient form may be infused without any Vs.

in nearly the same way as an ordinary Lounge, but as they are not worn buttoned, they are cut to come only to the breast line, the roll collar being arranged in the style indicated on the diagram, curving down from F to about 3 inches above the turning point.



There is one point, however, in which it will be noticed a difference exists in the diagram from former ones of ordinary Lounges, viz., that only 2 inches is allowed over the breast measure for making up instead of 2½. This makes them somewhat smaller, but as they are usually made from rather thin material, and generally desired fairly close-fitting, it will be found advantageous to treat them in this way.

It may be as well, whilst we are dealing with this subject of allowance for making, to again remind our readers that this should really be fixed by judgment in all cases; as for thin materials, 2 inches will be found ample for any kind of Three Seamer. whilst if made from a heavy pilot with thick woollen linings, &c., 2½ or even 3 inches will not be found too much. We will now pass on to deal with the

Pointed Lapel Style

This has more of the D B. style about it, this lapel being more often associated with D.B. garments. he only real difference is in the outline.of the lapel, and the diagram we here give will supply a guide in what must always be looked upon as a matter of style. A good plan is to chalk the outline of the lapel and turn it back on the pattern, and carefully consider whether it is the best style,

The Fish under the Arm

May be omitted if it is not desired to make the garment fit close at the side; but as most people like their Dress Lounges to fit close at the side, it is desirable to take out the fish under the arm, as it is by far the best method of producing that effect, as, if more than 1½ inch is taken out at the sideseam, it throws too much fulness at the top of that seam, a part always difficult to keep close-fitting in Lounges, whilst if the size of waist is reduced at the front, it makes the breast line too round, and consequently a too long front edge, which, if worked up sufficiently to get it to fit nicely at that part, the probability is, there would not be sufficient room for the pockets at hips. Hence we believe the judicious use of cuts under the arm greatly facilitates the fit, making it cling to the sides, and providing room over the hips for the pockets—both valuable features when the waist is at all slender.