The

CUTTERS' PRACTICAL GUIDE

TO THE

Cutting and Making

ALL KINDS OF

Trousers, Breeches & Knickers,

TO WHICH IS ADDED CHAPTERS

DEALING WITH

The Cutting & Making of Highland Kilts, Leggings, Gaiters, &c.

EIGHTH EDITION.

BY W. D. F. VINCENT,

Editor of the "" Tailor and Cutter," Author of The Cutters' Practical Guide System, and numerous Works on the Science and Art of Cutting.

Originally published by

The John Williamson Company, Limited,

42, Gerrard Street, London, W.

Restored in 2026 by The Humble Editor

LONDON:
PRINTED BY THE JOHN WILLIAMSON COMPANY LIMITED,
42, GERRARD STREET, W.

EDITOR'S PREFACE FOR THE 2026 EDITION

It is with sincere regard for the craft and history of British tailoring that I present this restored and republished edition of *The Cutters' Practical Guide to the Cutting and Making of All Kinds of Trousers, Breeches & Knickers, to which is added chapters dealing with the Cutting & Making of Highland Kilts, Leggings, Gaiters, &c.*, authored by W. D. F. Vincent and published in its eighth edition by The John Williamson Company, Limited, of 42 Gerrard Street, London, W.

Unlike Vincent's volumes on livery, military or undergarments, this guide concerns the garment on which every other part of a gentleman's dress depended for its line: the trouser. Vincent himself acknowledged, in his closing words, that "trousers cutting may not receive the same honour as coat cutting, yet a good trousers cutter is always better than an indifferent coat cutter." This book is his case for that honour.

The volume ranges widely. It opens with a history of legwear, from Greek, Roman and German styles to the "renaissance of trousers" and the controversy that saw pantaloons barred from Almack's assembly rooms. It then sets out the measures and how to take them, a full drafting system, provision for disproportion and corpulency, and a substantial section on fitting faults and their remedies. Beyond trousers it treats riding breeches with whole falls, split falls and frog pockets; knickers for sport; leggings and gaiters, including bishops' gaiters; Highland kilts; naval, livery, court and uniform trousers, with a summary of dress regulations; and practical hints on cleaning buckskin, pigskin and box-cloth garments.

Vincent did not present the system as new-born. In his own preface he traces it to the essay that won the National Federation prize in 1887, revised "as edition after edition was sold out" and, "after a lapse of fourteen years," remodelled into the system given here. That record of continuous refinement, tested by "thousands of successful cutters", runs through the book: older systems are set alongside the new, and the reader is invited to understand principles rather than merely follow points.

This 2026 edition seeks to honour that ambition. It preserves the full structure and technical clarity of the original while benefiting from:

- Optical character recognition with line-by-line verified correction to ensure textual accuracy;
- Retypesetting that keeps each page, column, diagram and caption in its original position;
- Faithful reproduction of Vincent's diagrams, plates and tables;
- A new glossary of period tailoring terms and editorial notes on the principal diagrams and sections.

Corrections have been made judiciously, without imposing modern terminology or sacrificing historical nuance. Archaic spellings and period usage ("sideseam", "&c.", "C.P.G.") have been retained where they do not obscure meaning; plain printer's errors have been silently corrected. The intention is to provide an edition that is both scholarly and usable — suited equally to the working tailor, the costumier, the historian and the curious reader.

Vincent's study of trousers deserves renewed attention. Here the anatomy of the body, the demands of horse and field, and the codes of court, livery and regiment all meet in a single garment, and the book reveals not only how such garments were cut, but why they were cut as they were.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

William D. F. Vincent was a prominent figure in British tailoring, noted for his editorial work at THE TAILOR & CUTTER — the title page of this volume names him "Editor of the 'Tailor and Cutter'" — and for his instructional texts in *The Cutters' Practical Guide* series, of which this book forms one part. As he wrote in his preface, the series was meant to treat "every phase of a cutter's experience" and to place in the hands of "the young man who aspires to a position in the cutting room" a book of practical help "under every circumstance of his professional life."

Vincent combined technical mastery with a teaching style that served generations of craftsmen, and his systems were used in workshops and cutting schools across the trade. Born at Yeovil, Somerset, on 18 June 1860, he joined *The Tailor and Cutter* in 1887, edited it from 1895, was Managing Director of the business from 1912 until he retired in 1924, and died in 1926.

May this edition continue the legacy of *The Cutters' Practical Guide*, and may it serve today's historians, craftspeople, costumiers and enthusiasts as well as it once did the professional cutter.

THE HUMBLE EDITOR.
London, 2026

NCE again we have written our ideas on Trouser Cutting. The system hermit described is so simple that the veriest novice may learn it and cut smart-fitting garments by it after a few hours' study; but at the same time embracing problems so difficult that many of them still remain unsolved.

We trust and believe this work will be found an advance on all our previous efforts. The Essay which won the Federation Prize was our first attempt, and of this lbe Seerctary of the Federation wrote :--" The very exhaustive nature of the firs. part of this elaborate essay is in itself an excellent work upon Trouser Cutting in every shape and form; added to this, the elaborate treatment of objects with so many excellent diagrams completes a work upon cutting that has no rival."

As edition after edition was sold out, we revised and enlarged upon the principals there laid down, and now, after a lapse of fourteen years, we have remodelled the system, greatly improving it in certain directions, simplifying it where possible, and illustrating its application to a large number of styles never before treated in this way.

If the verdict of the trade on our first effort was a favourable one, we have little doubt it will will be equally appreciative of this oue, which not only contains the results of the research and experience of our younger years, but also the fruit of the maturer thoughts of added years and enlarged experience.

:--"

This work, whilst being complete in itself, and thoroughly exhausting its owa theme, forms part of a series of books treating of every phase of a cutter's experience, by the aid of which we hope to place in the hands of the young man who aspires to a positon iv the cutting room, a book which will supply him with information of a practical and helpful character under every circumstance of his professional life.

W. D. F. VINCENT.

INDEX OF CONTENTS.

Introduction 1
Early Breeches and Trousers 1
Greek and Roman Styles 2
Scotch and Irish Styles 2
German Styles 3
18th Century Styles 3
The Renaissance of Trousers 4
Important Features 5
Taking the Order 6
The Finish of the Seams 6
Measures and how to take them 7
Drafting the System 8
Side and Leg Length 9
Point of the Fork Line 9
The Fly and Centre Line 9
Top Knee and Bottom Line 9
Width of Waist, Knee and Bottom 10
The Leg and Side Seams 10
Finish of the Topsides 11
The Seat Angle 11
Side and Seat-seams 11
The Finish of the Undersides 12
The System in Brief 13
The Fish and the Dress 13
The Fly and Catch 14
A Study in Outline 14
Shaping the Knee and Curves 14
The Outline of Underside 14
The Dress Topside 16
Cutting From the Cloth 16
Inlays to Leave on Top and Underside .. 18
Balance Marks 18
Writing the Ticket 18
Trimming 18
Making and Finishing 20
How to Examine Trousers 22
Different Styles of Fronts 22
Fly Fronts 22
French Bearers 24
Inside Finish of Fly Fronts 24
Whole Falls 24
Split Falls 24
Inside Finish of Whole Falls 24
Buckle and Strap 25
Hip Pockets 25
Principles of Trouser Cutting 25
Different Styles of Cut 26
The Smart Fit 28
The Easy Fit 28
Clerical Trousers 28
Riding Trousers 30
Underside of Riding Trousers 32
Making Riding Trousers 32
Bell Bottoms for Working Men's Trousers 33
System for Working Men's Trousers 33
Military Trousers 34
Summary of Dress Regulations 38
Court Trousers 39
Naval Trousers 39
Livery Trousers 39
Sporting Trousers 40
Dress Trousers 40
Club Uniform Trousers 40
Legging Trousers 41
Equestrienne Trousers 41
Trousers with no Side and Leg-seams .. 42
Trousers with no Leg-seam 44
Trousers with no Side-seam 44
Disproportion 46
The System for Corpulency 46
Features on the Underside 48
Advanced and Receding Fronts 48
How to Hide Deformity 50
Bow Legs 50
Knock Knees 50
Erect and Stooping Figures 52
Trousers for a Cripple 52
Manipulation 54
Large Seat 54
Large Hips 54
Large Thighs 55
Waist-band 55
Anatomical Studies 57
Development of the Thigh 58
The Line of Axis 60
Trousers Scaffolding 60
Scale of Proportionate Measures 61
Trouser Grading 61
The Best Method of Grading 61
Another Method 62
How to Take a Pattern 62
The Gem System 64
The Automatic System 65
Simple and Quick System 66
Parisian System 68
American System 68
Dr. Wampen's Model 68
Another Method of Examining Finished Trousers 69
Some Defects and Their Remedies 73
Tightness at the Top Button 74
Looseness at Front 74
Fullness at Fork 74
Creases at Fork 74
Loose Material in Lap 74
Vertical Folds at Fork 74
Tightness at Knee 76
Bagging at Knee 76
Standing Away at Heel 76
Fullness Over the Instep 76
Diagonal Crease from Side-seam 76
Loose Material at Back 77
Horse-shoe Folds 77
Liability to stoop 78
Trousers Riding up Leg when on Horseback 78
Fullness under the Ball of Seat 78
Loose Material at Hips 78
Dress Showing too Prominently 78
One Leg Longer than the Other 78
Dragging on the Upper Edge of Fly 80
Trousers too Short in the Tops 80
Trousers too Short in the Legs 80
Trousers Cutting Between the Legs 80
Dress taken out on Wrong Side 80

BREECHES.

Introduction 81
Evolution of Breeches 81
Requirements of Breeches 81
Taking the Order 82
The Measures 82
Relative Lengths of Leg 83
Scale of Relative Measures 83
Riding Breeches—A Study 84
Riding Breeches, a Side View 84
A Study in Style 84
Riding Breeches System 84
Riding Breeches, the Underside 86
Hints on Making 88
Farmer's Breeches System 88
Farmer's Breeches, the Underside 89
Continuations 89
Split Falls 89
Livery Breeches 89
The Undersides 90
Dress and Clerical Breeches 90
Unofficial Court Breeches 90
Bishop's Breeches 90
The System 90
Knickers 92
Knicker System 92
Knee Bands 94
Spats and Short Gaiters 94
Military Pantaloons 94
System for Ditto 96
Cavalry and Artillery Pantaloons 96
Military Regulations 97
Military Knickers 97
Highland Kilt 98
System for Ditto 98
Hints on Making 98
Gamekeeper's Breeches 99
Leggings and Breeches 100
Farmers's Leggings 100
Coachman's Gaiters 100
Bishop's Gaiters 102
Spat Puttees 102
Gleanings 102
Conclusion 103