

It is of a medium weight tabby weave patterned with groups of red and white threads forming checks which are outlined in a third colour (see p. 50). The wrist edge of the sleeve is cut on the straight and neatened with a single top-stitched fold. The side seam edges slope outwards from the wrist to give fullness to the upper arm, but as only 205mm of the lower sleeve survives it is impossible to project the shape of the upper sleeve with any degree of accuracy. The measurement of the wrist is 167mm which suggests that this fragment came from a garment of a slender person. The buttonhole edge is neatly sewn with a carefully applied silk facing to strengthen the fine stitching of the buttonholes, and with a narrow tablet-woven braid worked directly on to the raw edge (Fig 142). No constructional attention was given to the edge to which the buttons are attached. Some 20mm to 25mm of cloth was turned back, and presumably continued up the arm as the seam allowance, and the cloth buttons were firmly attached through the folded edge (Fig 141). There are 12 buttons and buttonholes. A further row of stitch holes can be seen running down the centre of the sleeve and this stitching may have held a lining in place.

Linings are preserved on two edges with tiny buttons (No 38, Fig 143A, and No 392, Fig 162) and another with buttonholes (No 159, Fig 163). The lining of No 392 is a similar worsted fabric to the main garment. The other two examples, which are perhaps from the same tunic, have a red and yellow lining that contrasts with the woollen cloth of the garment. The buttonhole edging here has a narrow silk facing as well as a lining.

Other buttoned edges are fragmentary (see Figs 135–137, 144, 146, 164) but it is probable that many of them are from sleeves.

Bias cutting

There is not a great deal of evidence for the use of bias cutting in the middle ages and the evidence from the London textiles tends to support this finding. This way of achieving maximum effect from woven cloth by utilising the flexible qualities of the bias or diagonal is an eminently satisfactory way of smoothing cloth round the human form as well as achieving elegant and flowing drapes. The use of a circular cut, or of segments of circles (as for skirt gores), certainly demonstrates an appre-

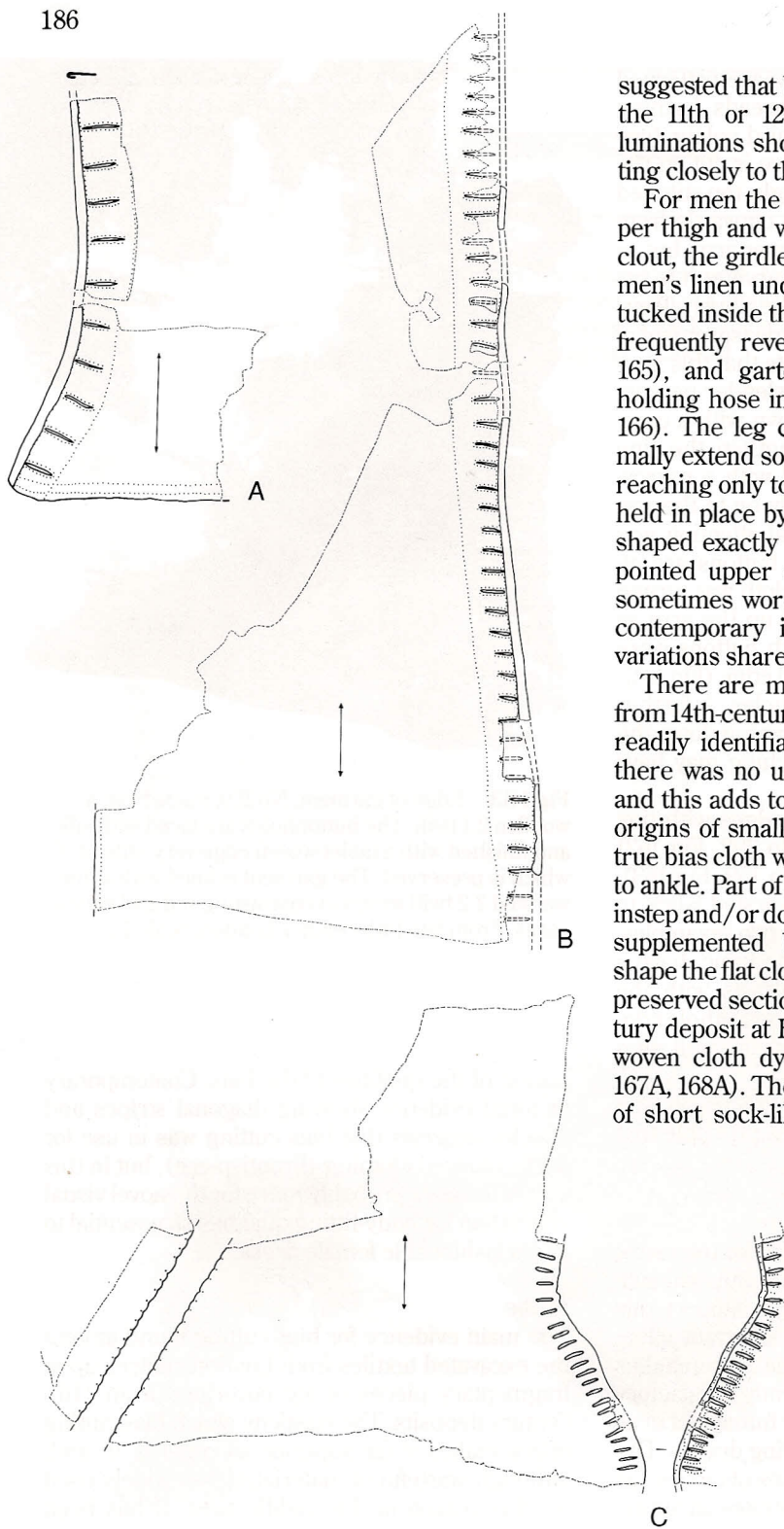


Fig 163 Edge of garment, No 159, made from a woollen 2.1 twill. The buttonholes are faced with silk and finished with a tablet-woven edge very little of which is preserved. The garment is lined with a fine worsted 2.2 twill woven in contrasting red and yellow yarns. From late 14th-century London. Scale 1:1

ciation of the qualities of the bias. Contemporary pictorial evidence showing diagonal stripes and checks suggests that bias cutting was in use for parti-coloured clothing (Frontispiece), but in this sort of instance probably more for the novel visual effect than for body-fitting qualities so essential to 1930s fashionable female dress.

Hose

The main evidence for bias cutting found among the excavated textiles from London centres upon fragmentary pieces of leg coverings from 14th-century deposits. The elasticity which bias cutting offers makes it far superior as regards fit and, although wasteful of material, it was widely used for this reason in the middle ages. It has been



suggested that bias-cut legwear came into use by the 11th or 12th century since manuscript illuminations show diagonally striped legwear fitting closely to the contour of the leg.

For men the hose usually extended to the upper thigh and was attached by laces to a breech clout, the girdle which slotted through the top of men's linen underbreeches. These in turn were tucked inside the hose. Manuscript illuminations frequently reveal just such arrangements (Fig 165), and garters are sometimes represented holding hose in place below the knee (Figs 112, 166). The leg coverings of women did not normally extend so high up the leg, probably usually reaching only to below the knee and having to be held in place by garters. They were presumably shaped exactly like men's hose, but without the pointed upper edge. It is likely that men, too, sometimes wore shorter sock-like hose. Indeed contemporary illustrations reveal a number of variations shared by the sexes.

There are many fragmentary pieces of hose from 14th-century deposits in the City, some more readily identifiable than others. It is likely that there was no uniform approach to construction and this adds to the difficulties of identifying the origins of smaller fragments. Basically a strip of true bias cloth was fitted round the leg from thigh to ankle. Part of this strip might continue over the instep and/or down the sides of the ankles, and be supplemented by additional sections to help shape the flat cloth round the foot. A group of well-preserved sections of hose from the late 14th-century deposit at BC72 is of medium weight tabbywoven cloth dyed with madder (No 235, Figs 167A, 168A). They are perhaps remnants of a pair of short sock-like hose. The two larger pieces

Fig 164 Edges of garments with buttonholes from late 14th-century deposits: (A) and (B) No 221, (C) No 234. Scale 1:3

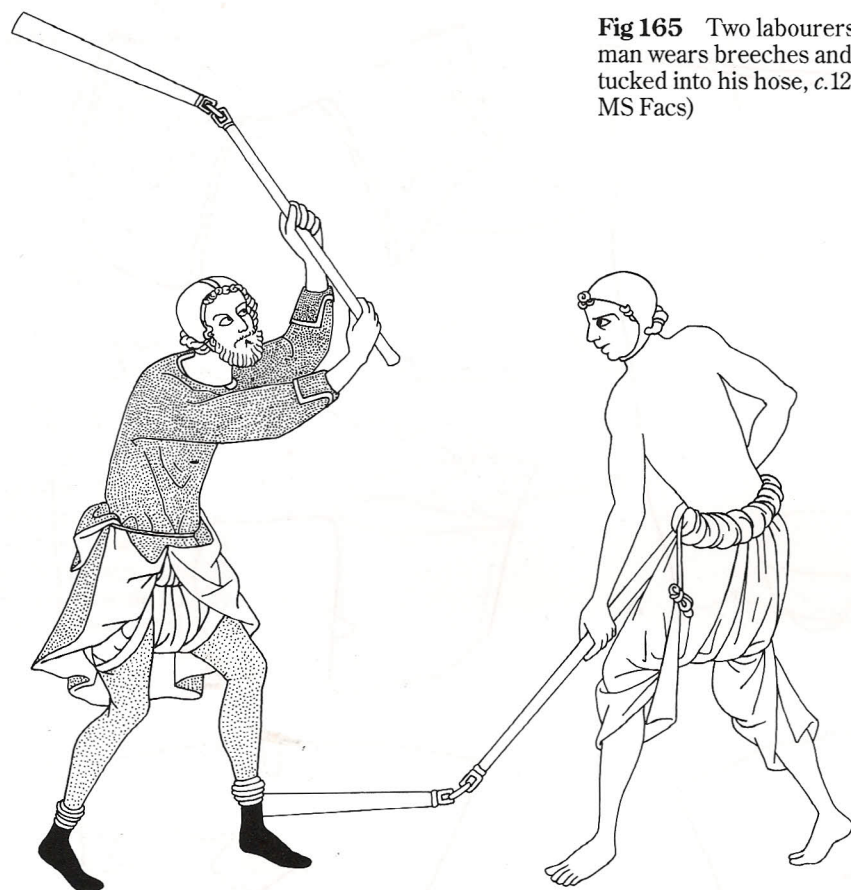


Fig 165 Two labourers threshing with flails, one man wears breeches and the other has his breeches tucked into his hose, c.1250 (after Pierpont Morgan MS Facs)

come from the leg sections. One shows the top edge of the hose, a single-fold horizontal hem which has been top-stitched with back-stitches; the width across this hem is 280mm, a small measurement which suggests that this hose may have belonged to a slim person, perhaps a young girl. The second fragment shows that the section covering the front of the foot was attached at the centre and had additional pieces at the sides. The constructional details contained in these two fragments are typical and help to identify yet smaller pieces. The back seam of the hose was joined by either running or back-stitches. It then appears that the seam allowance on each piece was held in place by tiny running-stitches, worked from the outside, 2–3mm from the seam. This approach to consolidating a seam does not appear to have been used elsewhere on medieval garments, to judge from the evidence of the London textiles. It



Fig 166 Man wearing a garter with his hose, c.1325–35 (after the *Luttrell Psalter*, BL Add MS 42130, f.60)

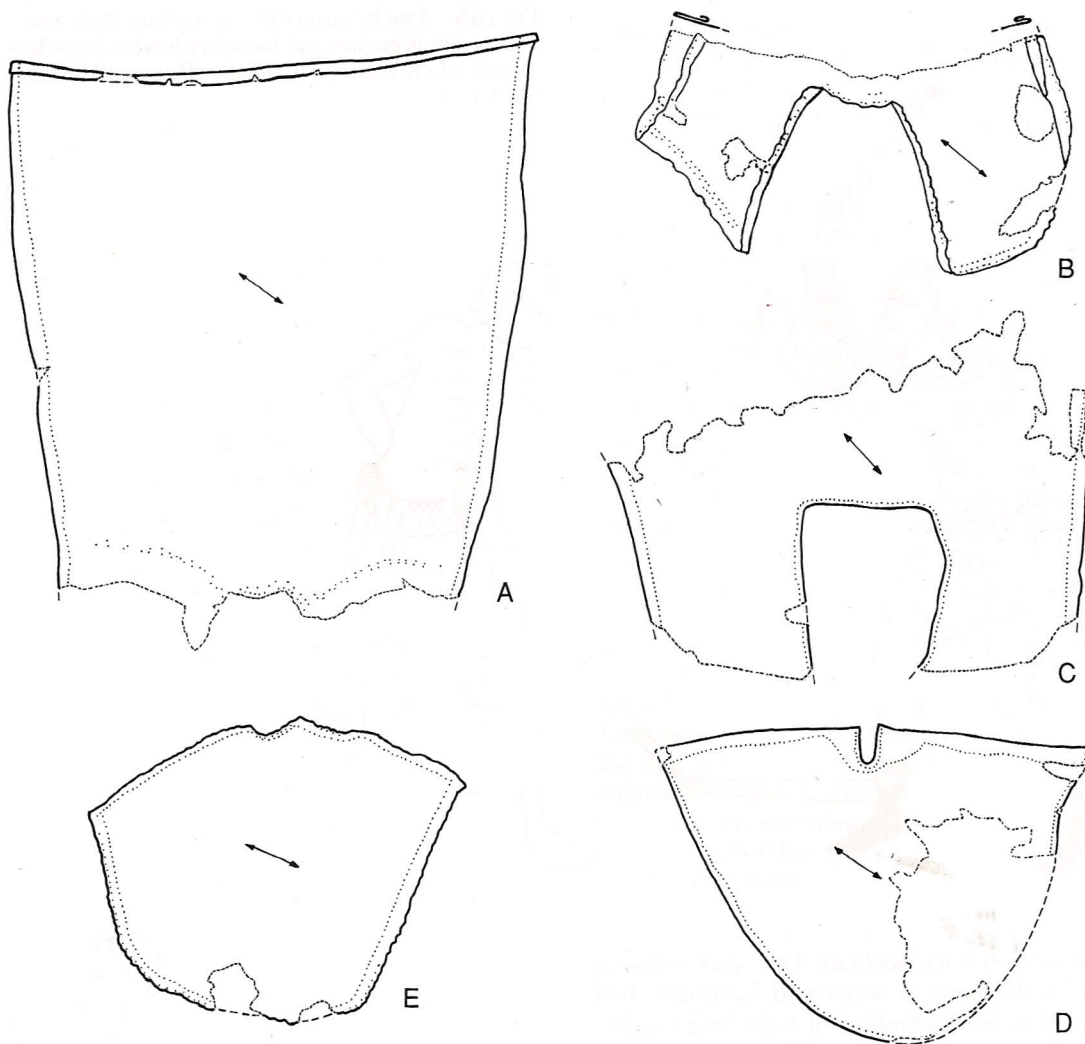


Fig 167 Leg and foot pieces of hose from late 14th-century deposits: (A) No 235, (B) No 236, (C) and (D) No 237, (E) No 238. Scale 1:3

does, however, appear on the seam of the dress associated with Queen Margareta in Uppsala Cathedral, Sweden (Geijer *et al.* 1985, pl 23a), which is variously ascribed to the 14th or 15th century. In this instance the method helps long skirt seams to lie flat. Sixteenth-century hose, excavated from City sites earlier this century and as yet unpublished, exhibit the same treatment of the back seam, although the stitching holes are

less evident in the worsted 2.2 twill from which they were made.

Whereas in these same 16th-century hose the shaping is found to be virtually uniform, cleverly cut in one piece to continue smoothly over the instep, supplemented by triangular sections below the instep and with a sole underneath (Fig 169), the very fragmentary evidence of the 14th-century hose from London seems to indicate that this constructional refinement had not yet been devised. Some 14th-century fragments demonstrate the continuation of wedge-shaped sections over the ankles and heel (e.g. Nos 236 and 237, Fig 167B and C), whilst others, resembling very

Fig 168 Small foot pieces of hose from late 14th-century deposits: (A) No 235, (B) No 236, (C) No 238, (D) reconstruction. Scale 1:3

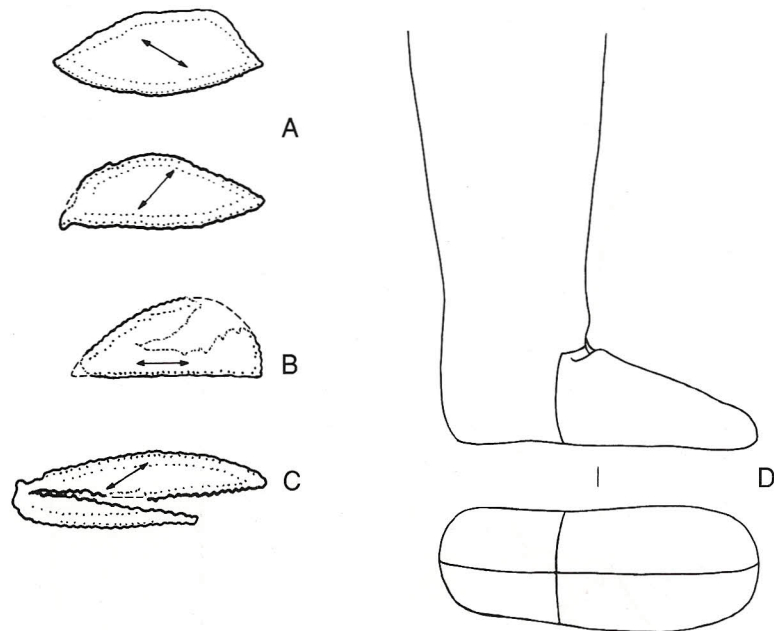
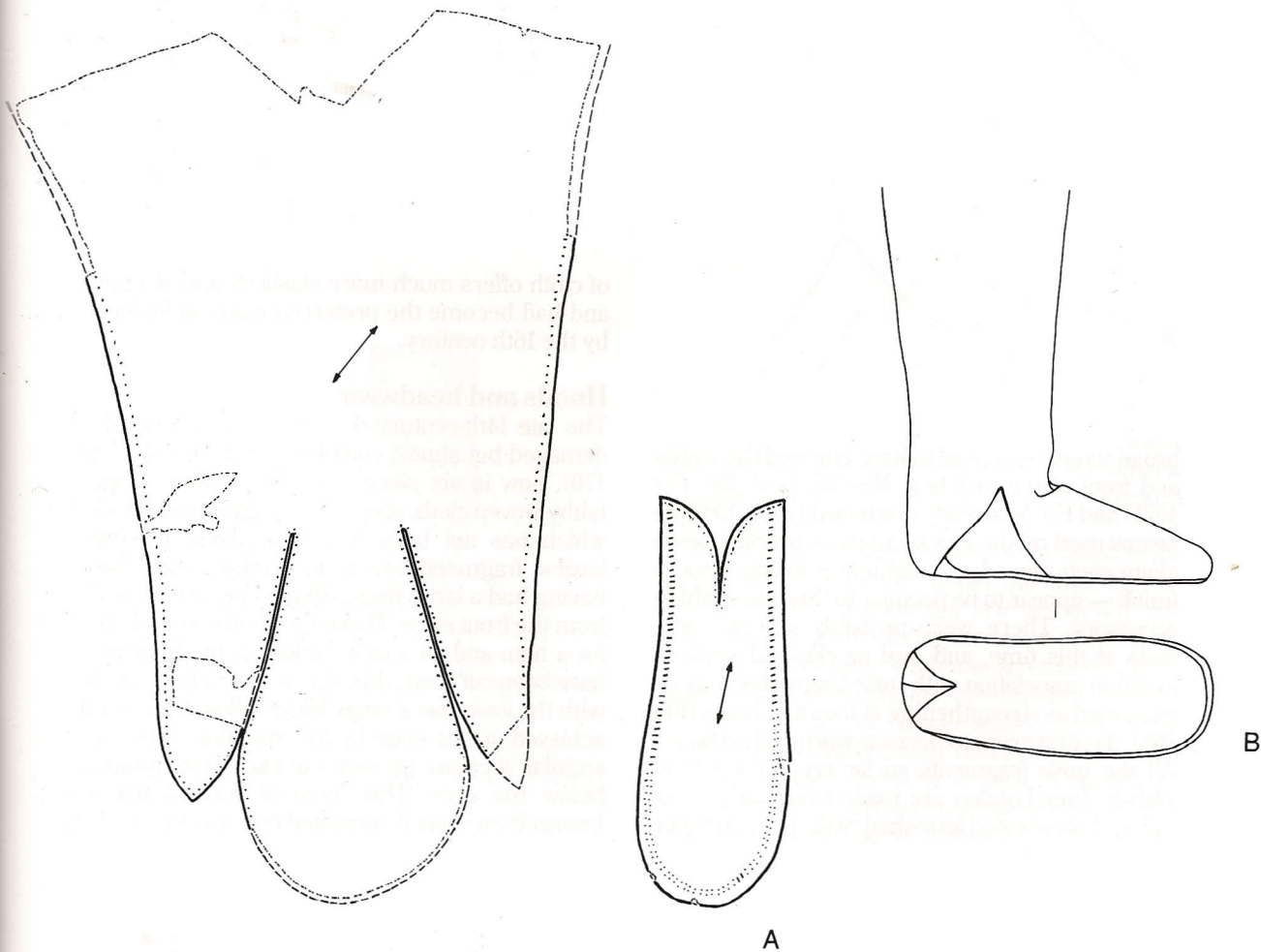


Fig 169 Pattern of 16th-century hose from Finsbury, London, MOL Acc Nos 22404, A26578: (A) layout, scale 1:3, (B) hose reconstructed



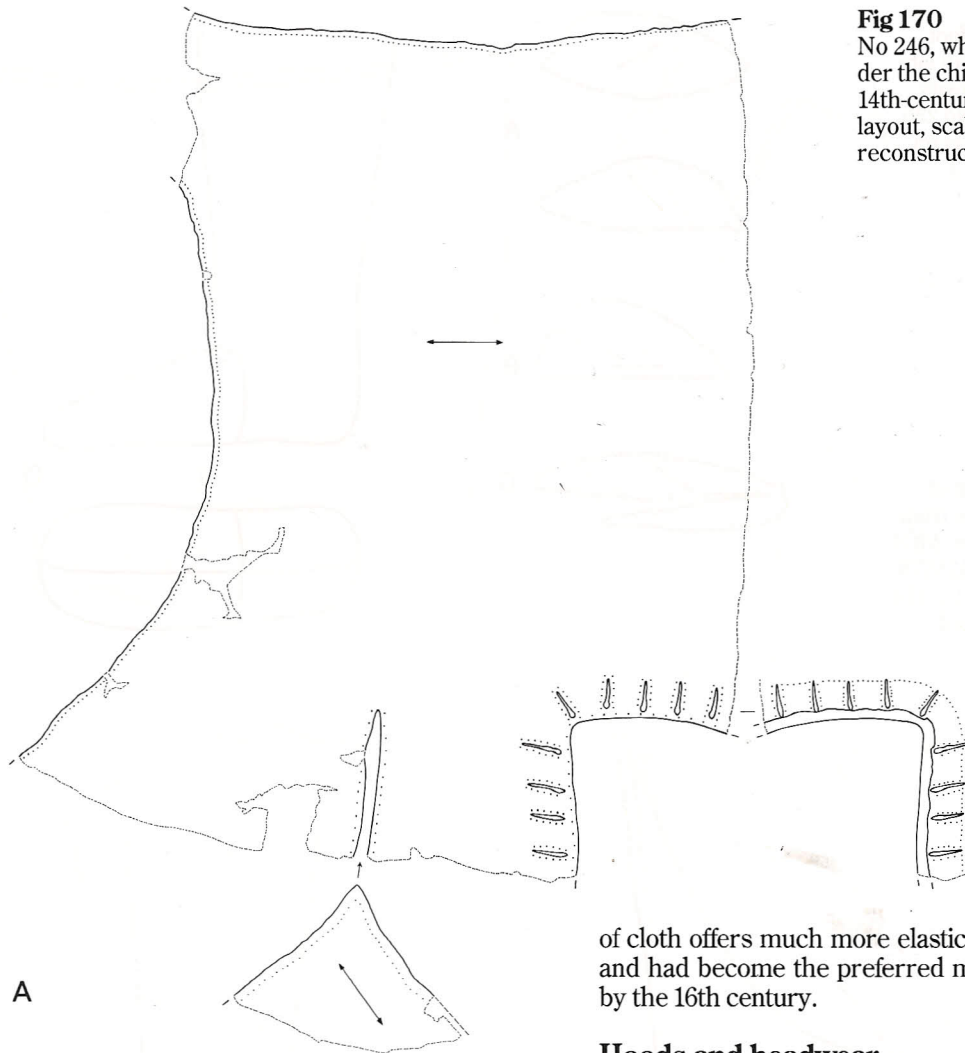


Fig 170 Pattern of hood, No 246, which buttoned under the chin, from a late 14th-century deposit: (A) layout, scale 1:3, (B) reconstruction

broad tongues, appear to have covered the instep and front of the foot (e.g. Nos 237 and 238, Fig 167D and E.) As already discussed (see p 153) the seams used on the foot sections — overlaps sewn along each raw edge to achieve a strong smooth finish — appear to be peculiar to this one clothing accessory. There were probably several variations at this time, and oval or elliptical sections found in association with hose fragments may be explained as strengthening at toes and heels (Fig 168), the first areas to become worn and replaced. All the hose fragments so far recognised from 14th-century London are made from tabby cloth rather than worsted four-shed twill. The latter type

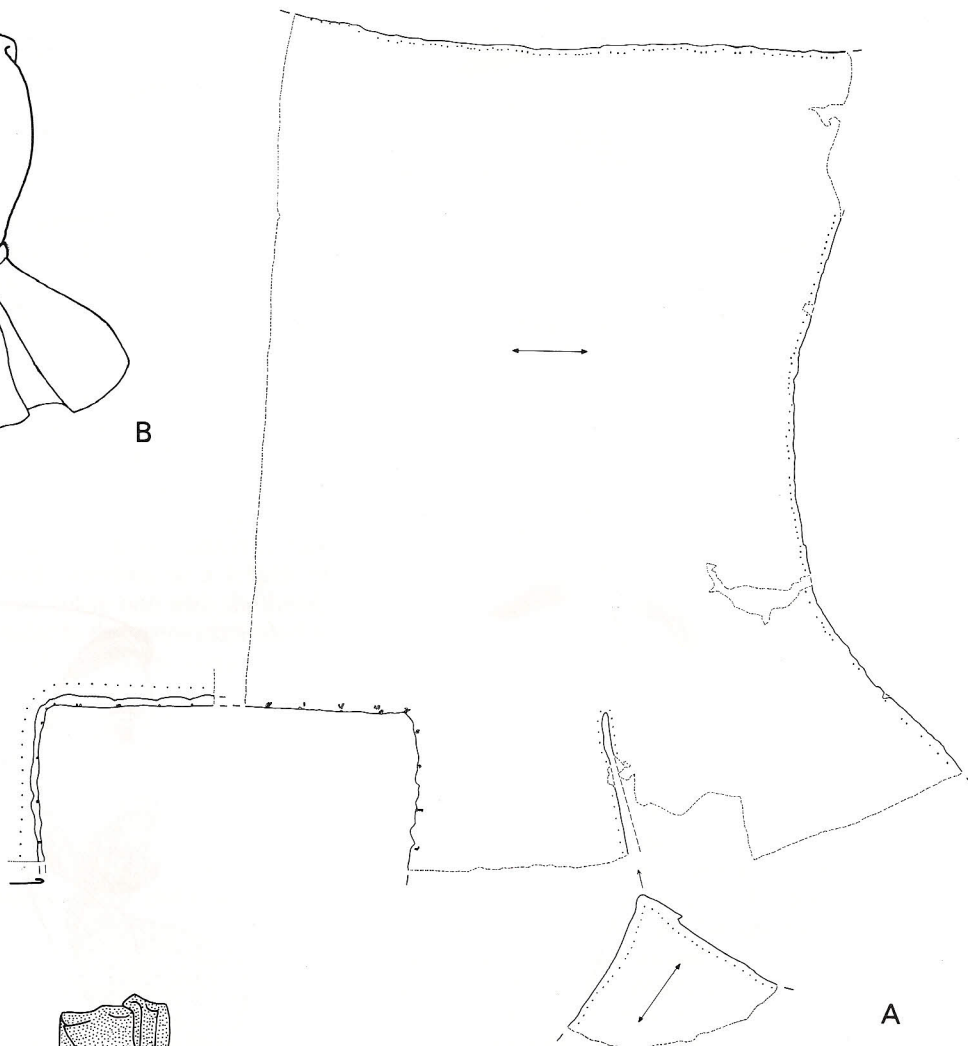
of cloth offers much more elasticity and strength and had become the preferred material for hose by the 16th century.

Hoods and headwear

The late 14th-century deposit at BC72 yielded a damaged but almost complete hood (No 246, Fig 170), now in six pieces. It is of medium weight tabby-woven cloth, stained a dark brownish-black, which has not been tested for dyes. The two largest fragments are head sections, each later having had a large finger-shaped piece torn away from the front edge. This edge shows no evidence for a hem and so a strip including the hem may have been cut away; this also seems to be the case with the lower neck edge. Extra fullness has been achieved at this edge by the insertion of two triangular sections (gussets) at each side, roughly below the ears. This form of construction is known from several excavated hoods dating to the



B



A

Fig 171 Lady wearing a hood with a liripipe, c.1380 (after *The Hours of Milan*, Museo Civico, Turin, f.87)



14th century, most notably two from Greenland, now in the National Museum of Denmark, Copenhagen (Nørlund 1924, fig 102; Nockert 1985, figs 93-4).

The most interesting aspect of the hood is the sequence of buttonholes under the chin. The remains of nine buttonholes are preserved, 12-13mm long. Both the facing and most of the stitching are now missing, while the stretched outside edge of the buttonholes presumably resulted from tension on the button stalks during wear. This type of closely fitting hood is typical of the late 14th century and is to be seen in many manuscript illuminations and sculptural figures (Fig 171). It was worn mainly by women and continued

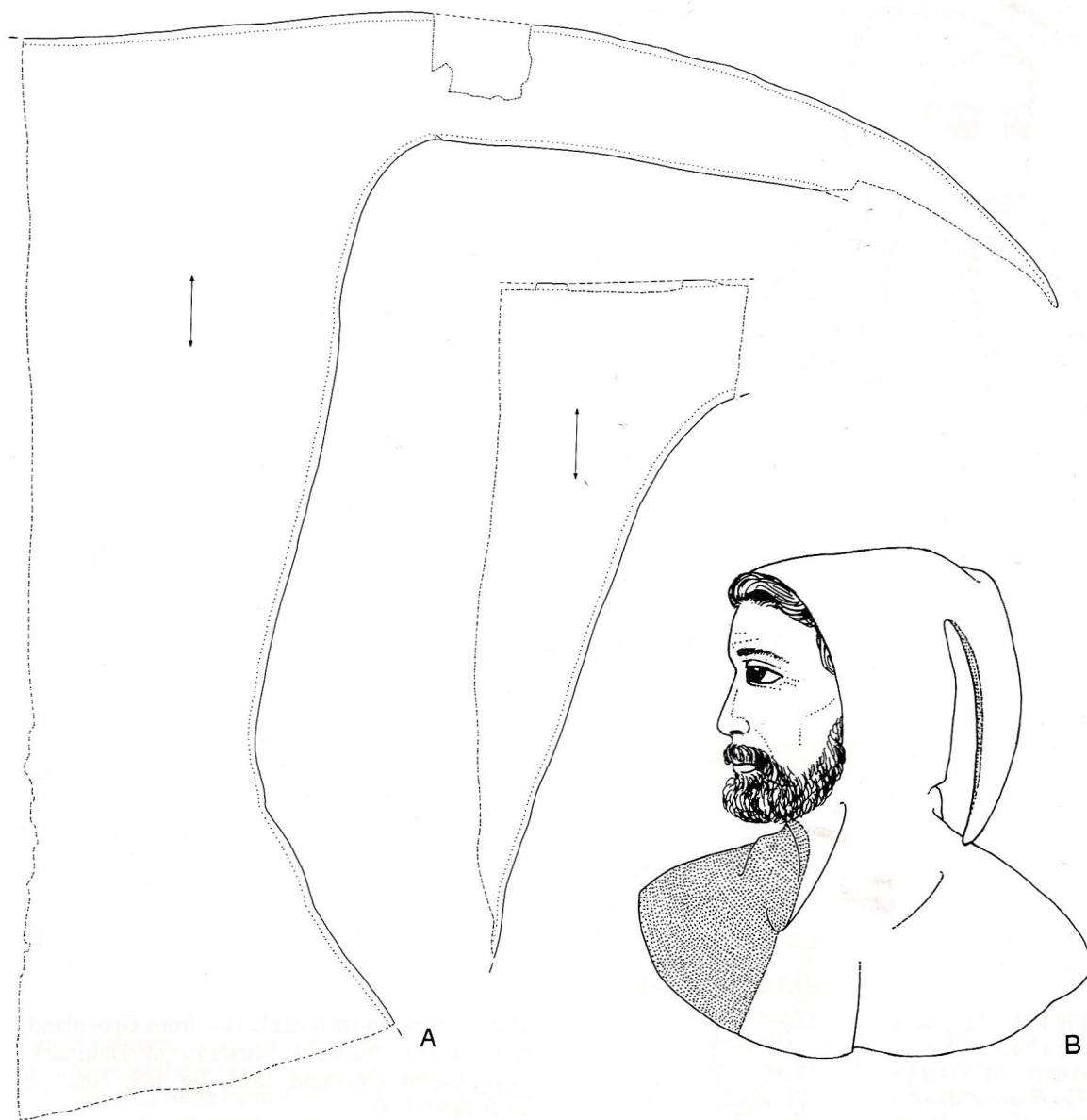


Fig 172 Part of hood with liripipe, No 174, from late 14th-century London: (A) layout – the smaller piece includes part of the backseam, scale 1:3, (B) reconstruction

in use, in varying guises, until well into the 16th century. There are no exactly similar hoods fastened with buttons among the remains of 14th-century clothing from Scandinavia, but part of the lower head and neck section of a buttoned hood

was recovered from a deposit dating to c.1400 in Dordrecht, The Netherlands (Sandra Vons-Comis pers comm). This hood, which was similarly made from a tabby-woven cloth, originally had at least 17 buttons and, like the hood from London, has a slit for a gusset let into the lower edge at the side of the neck below the ears.

In London, there are also fragments of another buttoned hood made from a tabby-woven cloth of medium weight (No 247). It has four buttonholes

Fig 173 Gooseherd attempting to scare a hawk with his striped hood and stick, c.1325–35 (after the *Luttrell Psalter*, BL Add MS 42130, f.169b)

remaining, 13mm in length (the sewing thread and facing are again missing), and a gusset slit with traces of stitching. All these features are in almost exactly the same relationship to each other as on the more complete hood.

A third hood (No 174), which would have fitted a larger head, was also cut in two parts with a seam over the skull, a method which enabled hoods to be made up from two cloths of contrasting colours. Only the back of the head section is preserved, but from this various details of its pattern can be reconstructed (Fig 172). A special feature of this hood is its narrow tapering tail, called a liripipe, which survives to a length of 300mm and which was cut in one with the headpieces. Six hoods similar to this were excavated at Herjolfsnes, Greenland, although some of the liripipes are considerably longer and required the addition of an extra strip of cloth (Nørlund 1924, 101; Nockert 1985, 91–2, 120, figs 90–92). Instead of gussets below the ears, a triangular gore was fitted to the centre front of these hoods at the throat to provide fullness round the shoulders. This hood, like the other London examples, is made from a firm tabby-woven cloth, which has



been filled, shorn and napped. The seam allowances remaining are all extremely narrow, only 3–4mm wide.

Also very tentatively put forward as the remnants of headwear are two layers of a reddish-brown tabby cloth, which appear to have been moulded into the shape of an oval ridged crown with a flat top (No 175, Fig 175); the material appears to extend into a brim and is heavily folded at this point. Although a tempting solution, this hypothesis is weak; the moulding may have taken place during deposition, despite the fact that no

Fig 174 Mock wake showing men wearing hoods with exaggerated liripipes, c.1340 (after *The Romance of Alexander*, MS Bodl 264, f.129v)



Fig 175 Possibly a cloth hat, No 175, from a late 14th-century deposit. Diameter of crown 110mm. Scale 1:2

Fig 176 Labourer sowing seed, wearing a hat with an upturned brim, c.1325–35 (after the *Luttrell Psalter*, BL Add MS 42130, f.170b)



other textile fragment in the same late 14th-century deposit at BC72 seems to have had this experience. It is hoped that other excavations may yield similar material which will clarify the purpose and original form of this item.

Dagges

Since medieval cloth was often well filled, indeed deliberately heavily filled to exclude rain, cut edges could be left without protective over-stitching or binding. Thus grew up the practice of cutting cloth into shapes as ornamental edges or applications. The 14th-century deposits at BC72, particularly that of the late 14th century, have yielded a number of interesting examples of this simple yet decorative technique which was to be elaborated considerably in the three succeeding



centuries. Only a few visual sources record the technique in the 13th century, when it was used to decorate the hems of knights' tabards or musicians' tunics. It seems to have blossomed in the 14th century, coming into use for all edges of garments and, eventually, headwear, as well as for ornamental horse trappings. These pendant ornaments were known as dagges. Decoration of this kind, an extravagant and wasteful fashion which demonstrated the tenet of conspicuous consumption, was even more widespread in the early 15th century.

One such dagge (No 70, Fig 177) from the deposit dating to the second quarter of the 14th century is of a well-filled light brown tabby, a 6mm-long oak leaf, with a curved upper edge suggest-

Fig 177 Dagge, No 70, from a deposit dating to the second quarter of the 14th century. Scale 1:1

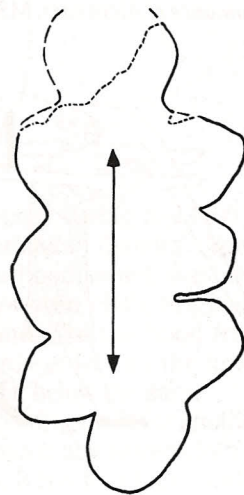




Fig 178 Alabaster effigy of William of Hatfield (died 1344) in York Minster. (Conway Library, Courtauld Institute)

ing that originally it may have hung from the sloping, or curved edge, of a cape or sleeve. Indeed, it has a close parallel in the long loose mantle shown on the virtually contemporary tomb effigy of Edward III's son, William of Hatfield (Fig 178), now in York Minster. The dagge comes from a group of seven fragments in the same material, all probably originating from the same garment.

The usual form of dagge found in 14th-century deposits in London was created from a straight strip of material with regular diagonal slits down each side. Two fragments from a deposit of the second quarter of the 14th century are cut not quite on the grain of the cloth to form a strip 43–44mm wide (No 51, Fig 179). They have narrow, shallow slits, approximately 10mm deep, cut somewhat erratically at intervals of 25–30mm.

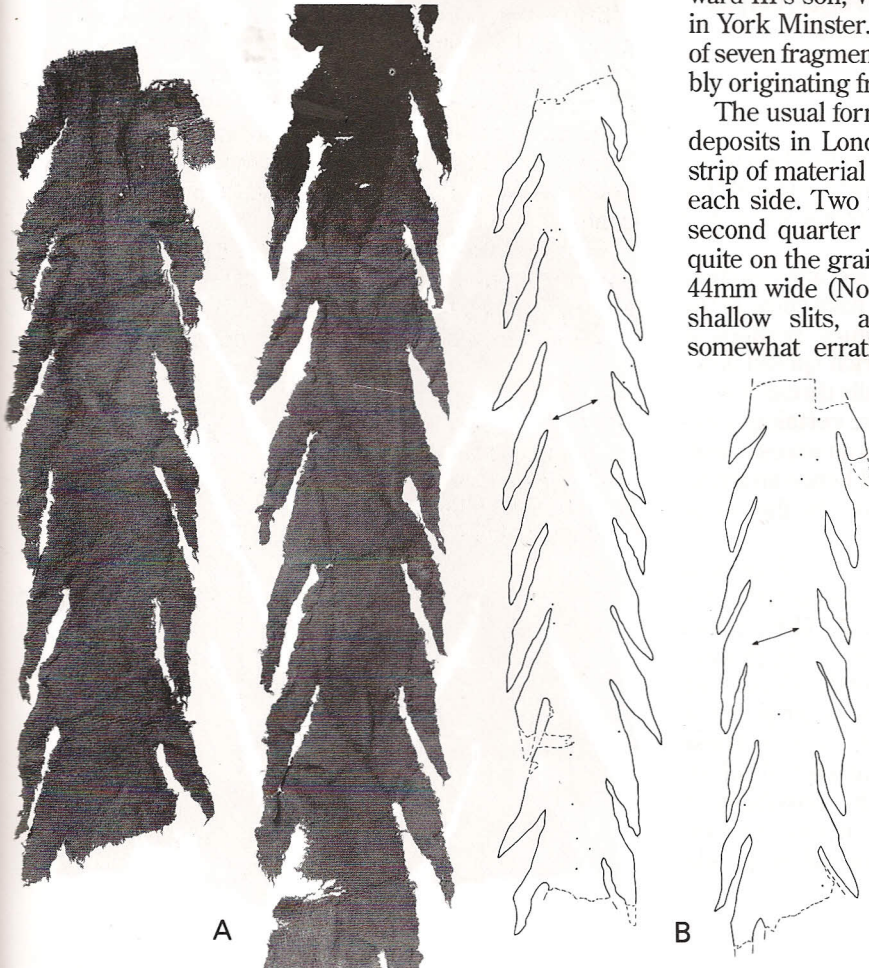


Fig 179 Dagges, No 51, from a deposit dating to the second quarter of the 14th century: (A) photograph, scale 1:2, (B) line drawing, scale 1:3



Fig 180 Man wearing hood with dagged edge, c.1400 (after Chaucer, *Troilus and Criseyde*, Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, MS 61, f.1v)

They may well have been cut from an old garment. Groups of stitch holes on each strip suggest that ornaments, probably made from metal, were once attached to them (see Fig 180).

The main outcry from contemporary commentators regarding dress seems to have come in the middle decades of the 14th century, perhaps as the fashionable excesses of the rich spread down through the social scale, eventually threatening to become ubiquitous. Dagges were certainly a distinctive use of new cloth, but also an excess easily created from an old garment and hence an attractive and attainable fashion lower in the social scale.

Dagges from the late 14th-century deposit at BC72 are, with one exception, constructed in the same manner as the earlier 14th-century examples. A group of six fragmentary dagges in a medium weight tabby, apparently dyed with woad, were created from 60mm wide strips cut on the straight of the grain (No 248, Fig 181). These are larger with slits 47mm deep at intervals of 50–55mm. Stitch holes suggest the possibility of metal ornaments, although this is not so certain as in the earlier examples. Ornamental strips like

these are shown in manuscript illuminations, particularly hanging down from the edges of short shoulder capes or from above the elbow on short tight sleeves. They also appear, though probably rather later than this deposit, as decorative additions to horse trappings. A further group of dagges from the late 14th century are narrower and are constructed with central vertical seams (Nos 249–251, Fig 182). These presumably demonstrate the economical use of older, recycled pieces of cloth.

An item in this late 14th-century assemblage of textiles which, in the absence of any more likely



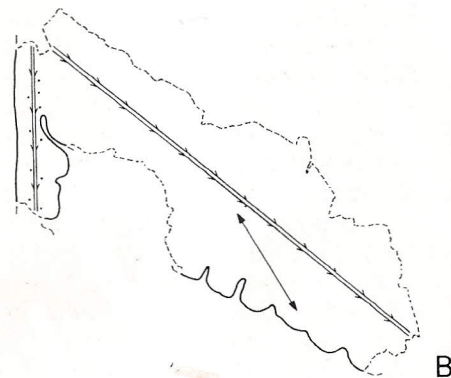
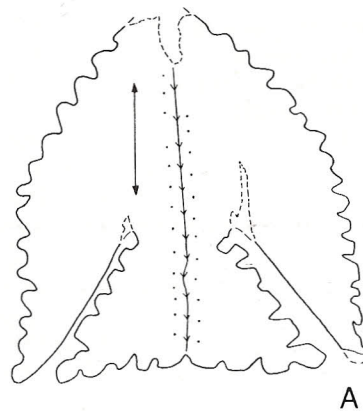


Fig 183 Daggges from late 14th-century deposits:
 (A) No 252, photograph scale 1:1, line drawing scale
 1:2, (B) No 253, scale 1:2

explanation is currently interpreted as being connected with daggges, is of a fine, fulled rich brown cloth (No 252, Fig 183A). It now resembles a headless bird and could have come from a strip of daggges like No 248. It is alone in having almost all of its edges scalloped or pinked, presumably snipped with shears or scissors. Whether this represents an idle doodling on an already discarded scrap or is the only evidence for the most elaborate decorative daggges, is now difficult to as-

sess. The piece would certainly have fluttered attractively in a breeze. Another fragment (No 253, Fig 183B), now far from complete, looks as though it may also be a discarded pendant leaf dagge from a garment or textile accessory. It appears to have some edges intentionally cut into scallops and to have a tiny section of another leaf attached. This dagge seems to be particularly akin to the cut leaf-like edges depicted on garments in manuscript illuminations and monumental effigies.