14th Century London Hood
Elen verch Phellip (Courtney Pritchard)

This hood was patterned after a 14th century hood found in Baynard's Castle, London in 1972, but drew inspiration from several manuscripts dating from the same time period. These manuscripts include the *Tres Riches Heures du Duc de Berry*, a French book of hours that dates from1412-1416, the *Codex Manesse*, a German work dating from the 14th century, and *Policraticus*, a 14th century Parisian work. Though none of the manuscripts are English in origin, the widespread nature of both finds and illustrations demonstrates how pervasive this style of hood was in the 14th century. There were also certain missing details of the hood that were drawn from other 14th century finds. Those details will be described in the chart below, with pictures in the pages following.

Baynard's Castle Hood	My Hood Reproduction
Tabby-woven 100% wool cloth, mid-weight, lightly fulled	Tabby-woven 100% wool cloth, mid-weight, lightly fulled.
Stained brown-black. Not tested for dyes.	Pre-dyed black fabric.
No remaining facing or lining; other finds have silk facings on buttonhole side.	Lined in 100% linen for comfort in wearing and buttonhole reinforcement.
Hand-sewn with silk thread.	Hand-sewn with silk thread.
Top back corner of hood is missing; unable to determine whether there was a liripipe (a long thin tube of fabric sewn to the top corner of the hood, forming a "tail")	Pieced liripipe. Another hood found at Baynard's Castle has a liripipe, as well as hoods on several women in *Trés Heures* (see plates 1 and 7)
Buttonholes edged in buttonhole stitch, with silk thread.	Buttonholes edged in buttonhole stitch, with silk thread.
No buttons left on the hood. Presence of buttonholes indicates some form of buttons.	Buttons made from circles of wool, turned in and gathered to form small balls. Similar buttons are present on other 14th C London finds (see plate 8).
Triangular gusset inserted underneath the ear.	Triangular gusset inserted underneath the ear.

I decided to take advantage of a small, relatively simple project to indulge in the use of period materials and hand-sewing technique. To make sure that the hood would actually fit me, I used the diagram found in *The Medieval Tailor's Assistant*, a book full of patterns derived from extant finds, scaled up to match my head measurements (see Plate 9).

All of the seams were sewn by hand with silk thread. The seams of the linen lining were flat-felled, or turned under and sewn down so there are no raw edges, to keep them from unraveling, but the slightly felted wool seams needed no such treatment. The edges of the hood were finished with a running stitch to make the linen lie flat against the wool.

It surprised me how quickly the hood came together, in spite of it being hand sewn, and made me revise my estimation of how long it would take to make a bigger, more complex garment, like a gown. I also learned how much easier it is to insert gussets when sewing them by hand.

If I were to make another hood, I think I'd choose to make it longer. The hoods shown in the Book of Hours are all short and I like the look, but I found that when wearing it for warmth (as opposed to aesthetics), it was just short enough to let in a draft between the edge of the hood and the neckline of my gown. A longer skirt to the hood would negate that problem.

Plate 1: Detail of Trés Riches Heures du Duc de Berry: September

Plate 2: Detail of Codex Manesse, fol. 192v.

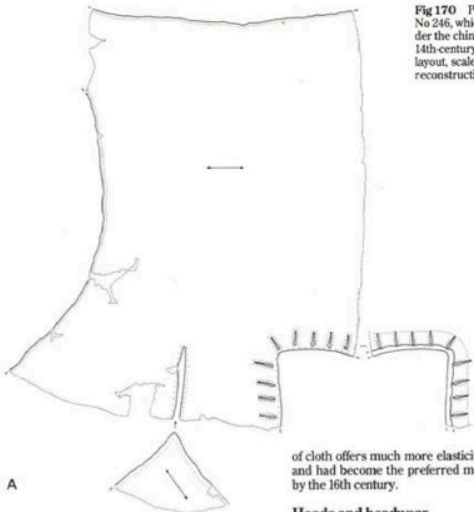Plate 3: Detail of Policraticus, fol. 31v.

Plate 4: Detail of Romance of Alexander, fol. 59r. Her hood is buttoned behind her head.

Plate 5: Detail of Roman de la Rose, c. 1350, France

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
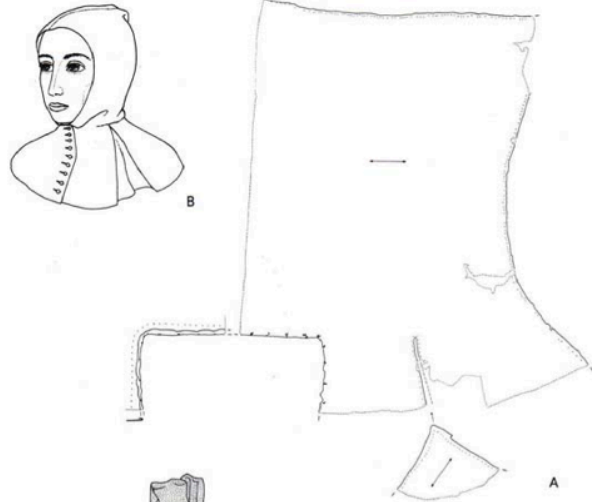
A

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

Hoods and headwear

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

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 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

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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. 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

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Plate 6 (above): drawing of the Baynard's Castle Hood.

Plate 7 (right): drawing of 2nd Baynard's Castle Hood, showing liripipe.

Plate 8 (below): drawing of a 14th c. sleeve showing buttonholes and buttons.

A

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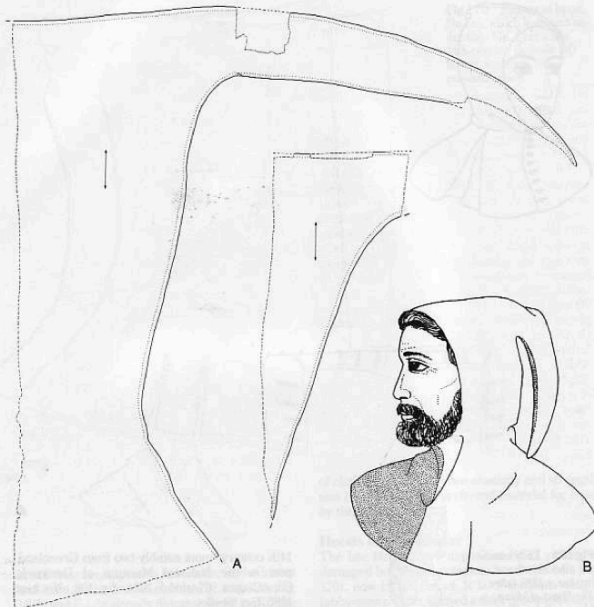
Fig 172 Part of hood with liripipe, No 174, from late 14th-century London: (A) layout – the smaller piece includes part of the backseam, scale 1:3, (B) reconstruction

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

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Fig 160 The lower edge of a garment, possibly a cloak, with a double-folded hem, No 44, from a late 14th-century deposit. Scale 1:3 (detail 1:1)
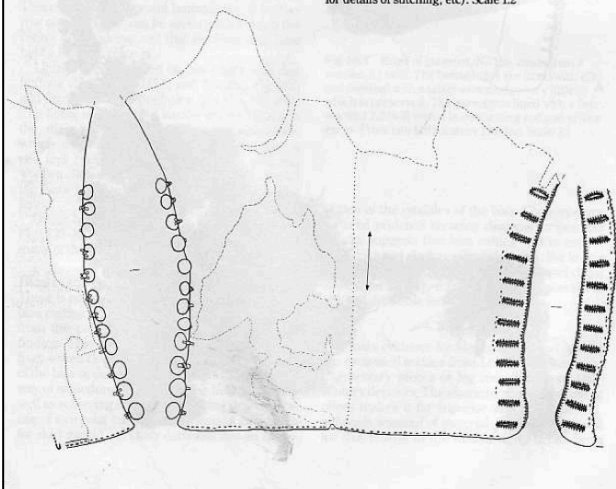
Fig 161 Lower edge of buttoned sleeve cut with a straight cuff, No 64, from a deposit dating to the second quarter of the 14th century (see Figs 141, 142 for details of stitching, etc). Scale 1:2
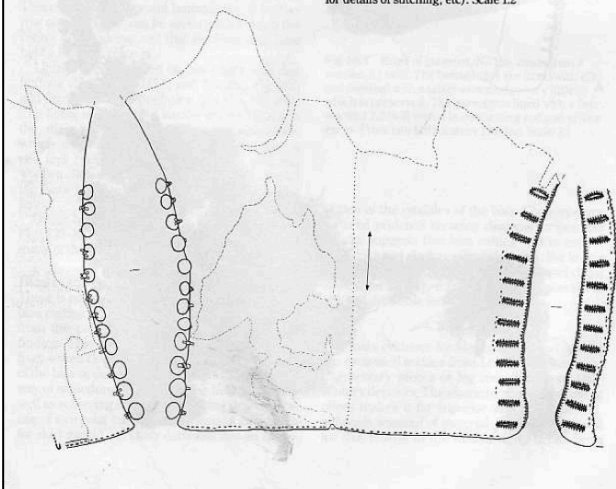
Plate 9: Pattern Diagram from
*The Medieval Tailor's
Assistant.*

3. Hood with front opening – pattern
This open hood is buttoned under the chin, and
side gores are used to widen the small cape.

Plan the pattern from a square as for Fig 2, or
scale up the drawing and adjust it to the wearer.
Insert the quarter circle gore at A. Cut the liripipe
as a separate strip, make it into a tube and stitch
it to the point of the hood.

For buttons and buttonholes see *Methods*,
Figs 19-21.

3

Liripipe

A

A

20 cm
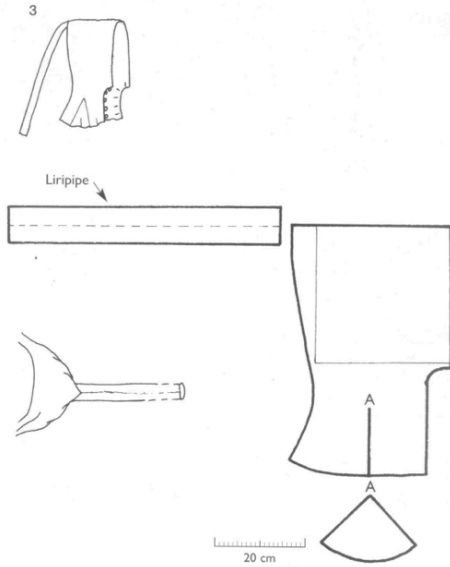
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Hood reproduction pieces cut out (below left) and the finished hood being worn (below right).

Bibliography

Crowfoot, Elisabeth, Francis Pritchard, and Kay Staniland. *Textiles and Clothing c1150-c1450.* The Boydell Press, 1992.

Thursfeld, Sarah. *The Medieval Tailor's Assistant.* Costume and Fashion Press, 2001.

Illustrations

Plate 1: *Trés Heures du Duc de Berry*, September, 1412-1416. Musée Condé, Chantilly, France.

Plate 2: *Codex Manesse*, fol. 192v, 1304-1340. University of Heidelberg Library, Germany.

Plate 3: *Policraticus*, fol.31v, 1372. Bibliothéque Nationale, France.

Plate 4: *Romance of Alexander*, finished 1344. Bodleian Library, Oxford, England.

Plate 5: *Roman de la Rose*, c.1350. Bibliothéque Nationale, France.