

Man's Suit

Italy, c. 1770

Silk plain weave with silk supplementary warp- and weft-float patterning

Costume Council Fund

M.83.200.1a, c

Influenced by continental styles, the *macaroni*—named after the Italian pasta dish enjoyed by well-to-do young Englishmen on Grand Tour—dressed to assert his cosmopolitan outlook. At a time when the British wore looser silhouettes with a long, full-skirted coat and deeply cuffed sleeves, the macaroni wore a much more form-fitting and conspicuous suit, immortalized in numerous caricatures and accounts from the period. Consistent in many of these visual representations are slender silhouettes with coats that feature fold-down collars and truncated tails.

This macaroni-style ensemble from the 1770s comprises a shorter, tight-fitting green coat with high fold-down collar and matching tight-fitting breeches. Although the provenance of the suit is not English, its Italian history is compelling, as men on Grand Tour were known to have suits made for them abroad to bring back home. The coat is tailored with extremely truncated tails; evidence of previous folds in the tails suggests that they were re-pleated to be less ample and more streamlined. Interestingly, the collar fall similarly shows evidence of a previous fold. This suggests that the coat was formally longer and that extra fabric cut from the tails was used to make the collar to update its fashionability; the previous fold was most likely from a pleat in the removed tails. Furthermore, the collar stand and fall are oriented on the grain, unusual because collars are typically oriented on the cross-grain. An orange waistcoat with exaggerated wig and accessories completes this macaronian ensemble.

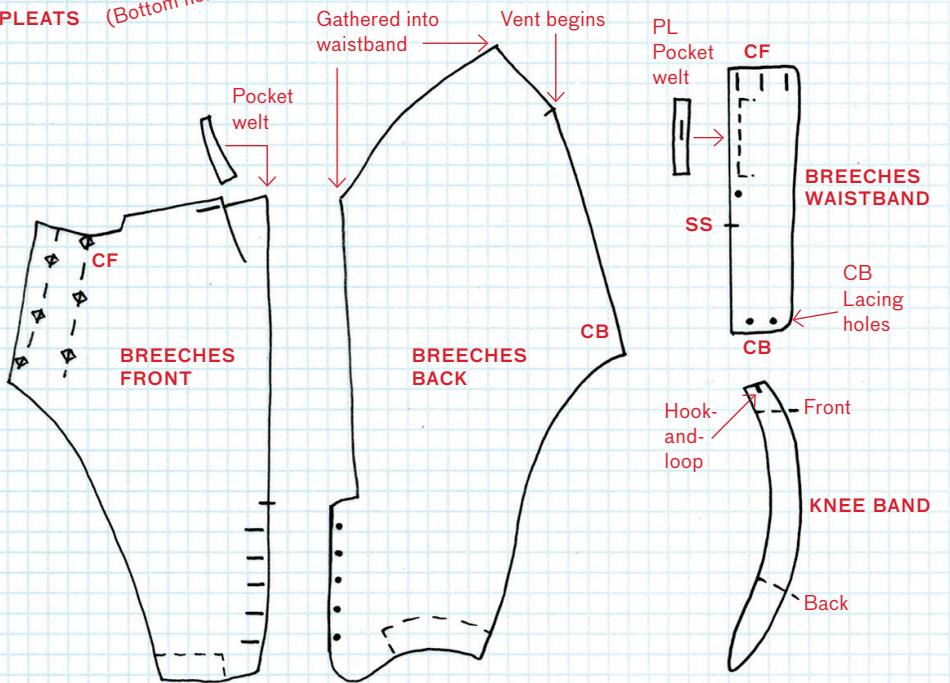
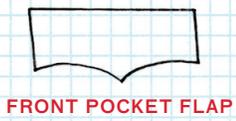
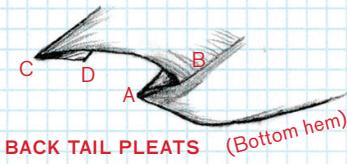
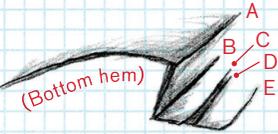
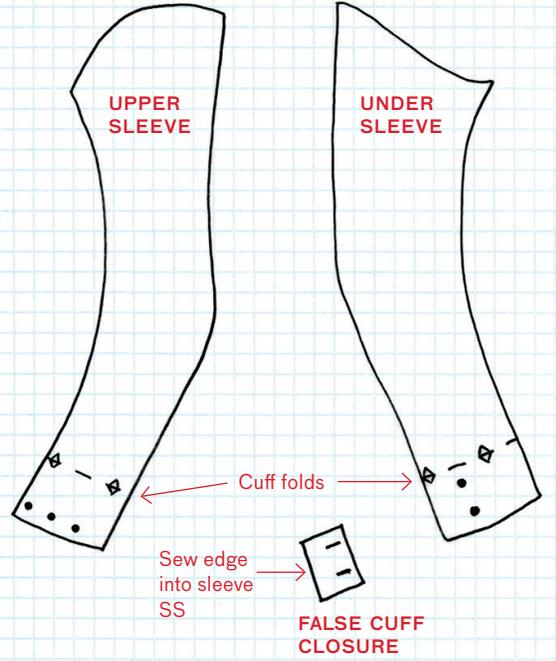
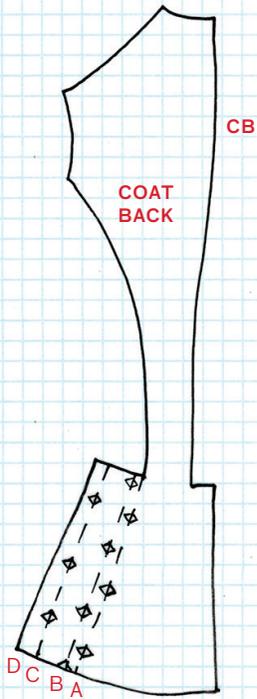
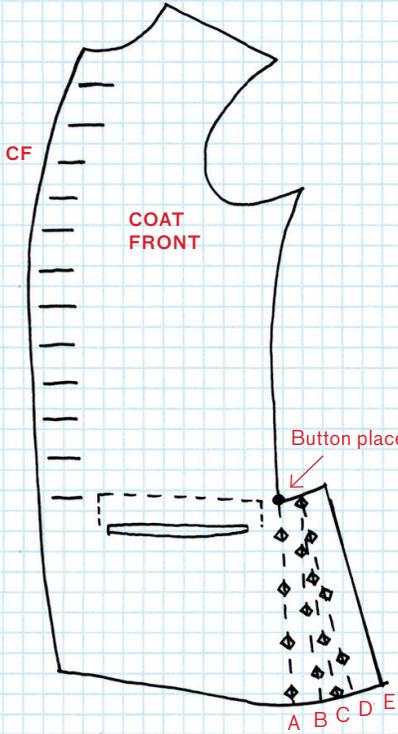
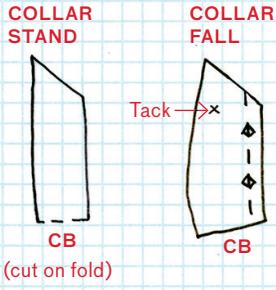
NOTES:

1. Fabric grain follows vertical lines of graph paper.
2. Pattern pieces are drawn without seam allowance.
3. The center-front coat closes with twelve $\frac{9}{8}$ -inch-diameter self-covered buttons; the third through fifth buttons from the top are functional (with three $1\frac{3}{4}$ -inch-long buttonholes) while all others are decorative (with $1\frac{1}{2}$ -inch-long non-functioning, uncut buttonholes).
4. The collar stand is cut on the center-back fold while the collar fall has a seam at the center back. Previous fold lines suggest that the collar fall was remade from the lower portion of the tails, now made short. The collar fall is tacked down at each side front.
5. The two-piece sleeve shows signs of alteration along the back where the seam was previously let out. A narrow decorative cuff is folded up and adorned with three $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch-diameter self-covered buttons along the upper top cuff and two matching buttons along the under cuff seam at a false cuff closure.

6. The back of the coat has short tails that show signs of being cut and re-pleated. One $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch-diameter self-covered decorative button is sewn to the top of each of the tail pleats. The tail pleats are tacked in place.
7. The center front breeches close with three $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch-diameter self-covered buttons and 1-inch-long buttonholes at the waistband and a series of folds at the center front. Two pairs of lacing holes are along the center back waistband above a center back vent.
8. A small welt pocket is sewn into the proper left breeches waistband; two larger slit pockets are at each side and secured at the top with a $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch-diameter self-covered button and 1-inch-long buttonhole.
9. The breeches close at each knee with five $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch-diameter self-covered buttons and five $1\frac{1}{2}$ -inch-long buttonholes along the lower outer seam; a knee band closes with a hook-and-loop.



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Key:

- = 1:1 inch
- CF = Center Front
- CB = Center Back
- SS = Side Seam
- = Button placement
- - - = Fold line
- - - - - = Stitches