

Introduction to Twelfth Century Western European Clothing for Women and Men

About the class

This is intended to be a beginning-level class, however, I hope that what I am presenting will be of interest to any here who are experienced in the study of medieval clothing. We will cover geometric cutting and construction theory; have two in-depth segments on measuring and cutting layouts for both men and women; appropriate fabrics and ornament styles; and touch on the differences between court dress and everyday clothing. You will come away from the class today with an accurate cutting diagram for a basic 12th century tunic or gown.

This class will be presented in six segments of approximately 15 minutes each. I have scheduled a little extra time in case we run over, and you are welcome to stay after and discuss what is presented. The class segments are:

1. **Introduction** and “show and tell” of both contemporary and reproduction items
2. **Geometric construction** and the variety of possible styles using this method
3. **Court dress; Fabrics, ornament, and accessories**
4. **Measuring techniques**; Demonstration and practice
5. **Layout, cutting**, calculating yardage; Demonstration and practice
6. **Review** and question and answer period; Recap of “show and tell” and open discussion

“Syllabus”

There are a total of nine handouts for this class, including this one. Some are multi-page. The list of handouts is as follows:

1. Contemporary artwork and archaeological artefact examples (2p)
2. Geometric construction overview (1p)
3. Geometric construction variations and sample cutting diagrams (4p each, men and women. Please ask if you need both)
4. Court dress overview (1p)
5. Fabrics and ornamentation (1p)
6. Accessories: Shoes, cloaks, jewelry (1p)
7. Measurement worksheet (1p)
8. Graph paper to chart your cutting layout based on your measurements (1p)

Instructor:

This class is taught by Branwyn M. Folsom, known in the SCA as Lady Marguerie de Jauncourt. I've been in the SCA for eight years. I have been studying and re-creating historic clothing for twice that long. My area of special interest in the SCA timeframe is 12th Century clothing, and its evolution from earlier forms, as you may have guessed. I have been tracking the elusive *bliaut* (French court gown) for six years, and will share a few theories with you today, but all the while, I've been making and wearing as much or more everyday 12th Century clothing for myself and my family, and this is the most useful. That everyday clothing will form the core of the information I present today.

Note:

This class is being taught for the first time at Ansteorra's Argent Anniversary. Further copies of the class handouts will be available in an online format and for download as PDF files from my web site at <http://bliautlady.50megs.com> after the event.

Bibliography/Further reading

Web Sites (all sites cited date as of June 20th unless otherwise noted)

- Asplund, Randy Chausses and Braies (men's undergarments and hose)
<http://www.randyasplund.com/browse/medieval/chausse1.html>
- Carlson, I. Marc Some Clothing of the Middle Ages (a survey of archaeological examples)
<http://www.personal.utulsa.edu/~marc-carlson/cloth/bockhome.html>
- Carlson, I. Marc Footwear of the Middle Ages (10th thru 13th century styles)
<http://www.personal.utulsa.edu/~marc-carlson/shoe/SHOEHOME.HTM>
- Doyle, Sarah Clothing of Norman Women in the Late 11th and Early 12th Centuries (Norman English women)
<http://freespace.virgin.net/sarah.doyle/KIT.htm>
- Eustace Light Broom, Emrys Shertes, Trewes & Hosen (parts i, ii, iii, cited as of 6-30-04)
<http://www.greyclaydragon.org/library/underwear1.html>
<http://www.greyclaydragon.org/library/underwear2.html>
<http://www.greyclaydragon.org/library/underwear3.html>
- Folsom, Branwyn The Bliaut Files (instructor's website, detailed information on court and women's dress)
<http://bliautlady.50megs.com>
- Payne, Grace The Beautiful Bliaut (construction of separate-skirt type women's court dress in detail)
http://www.chateau-michel.org/belle_bliaut.htm
- Spies, Nancy Ecclesiastic Pomp and Aristocratic Circumstance (tabletweaving)
<http://weavershand.com/arelatestudio.html>
- Virtue, Cynthia, ed. Extant Clothing of the Middle Ages (extant examples from museums, 11th-12th C pieces)
<http://www.virtue.to/articles/extant.html>
- Virtue, Cynthia Introduction to Garb: A Seminar (overview of basic everyday clothing)
http://www.virtue.to/articles/in_depth_garb.html
- Virtue, Cynthia Practical Worksheet for Tunic Construction (measurement worksheet and construction method)
http://www.virtue.to/articles/tunic_worksheet.html
- Vogt, Kelly Making a Keyhole Neckline (detailed instructions for installing this neckline)
<http://home.gte.net/kmvogt/kkeyhole.html>
- Wymarc, Richard A Stitch Out Of Time (10th-12th century examples and Costume for a 12th Century Lady)
<http://www.wymarc.com>

Books

- Benton, John F. (Ed) Self and Society in Medieval France: The Memoirs of Abbot Guibert of Nogent University of Toronto Press, 1984
- Burnham, Dorothy Cut My Cote Royal Ontario Museum, 1973
- Boucher, Francois 20,000 Years of Fashion - the history of costume and personal adornment Harry N. Abrams, no date
- Bradfield, Nancy Historical Costumes of England 1066-1968 Costume and Fashion Press, 1997
- Carretero, Concha Herrero Museo de Telas Medievales Monasterio de Santa Maria la Real de Huelgas Patrimonio Nacional, 1988
- Cunnington, C Willet and Cunnington, Phillis The History of Underclothes Dover, 1992
- Davis, R.H.C. The Normans and their Myth Thames and Hudson, 1976
- Dodwell, C.R. The Pictorial Arts of the West 800-1200 Yale University Press, 1993
- Egan, Geoff and Pritchard, Frances Medieval Finds from Excavations in London:3 Dress Accessories 1150-1450 HMSO, 1991
- Grew, Francis and de Neergaard, Margarethe Medieval Finds from Excavations in London:2 Shoes and Pattens HMSO, 1988
- Hunnisett, Jean Costume For Stage and Screen Patterns for OWmen's Dress Medieval - 1500 Player's Press, 1996
- Kohler, Carl A History of Costume Dover, 1963
- Piponnier, Francoise and Mane, Perrine Dress In The Middle Ages Yale University Press, 1997
- Stoddard, Whitney S. Sculptors of the West Portraits of Chartres Cathedral: Their Origins in Romanesque and Their Role in Chartrain Sculpture: Including the West portals Norton, 1987
- Tate, Georges The Crusaders: Warriors of God Harry N. Abrams, 1996
- Tilke, Max Costume Patterns and Designs Rizzoli, 1990
- Oriental Costumes, their designs and colors Berlin: E. Wasmuth, 1922 (e-text at <http://www.indiana.edu/~librcsd/etext/tilke/>)
- Time-Life Books (eds.) The Divine Campaigns TimeFrame AD 1100 - 1200 Time-Life, 1988
- Waugh, Christina Frieder Well-Cut through the Body: Fitted Clothing in Twelfth-Century Europe Dress: the journal of the Costume Society of America, vol 26, 1999