

HANDBOOK

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BASIC KIT GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

This kit guide is designed to be a basic account of clothing and accessories from 306 to 866AD. It is designed to give new members of Comitatus a simple guide to some of the more common styles and types of clothes of the period. Some of these styles were current for many hundreds of years, and will allow a re-enactor to develop several different impressions through history at minimum outlay. The guide will hopefully act as the basis for further research into the subject, and must not be seen as in any way definitive.

Comitatus aim to create an impression of the common individual from three different periods.

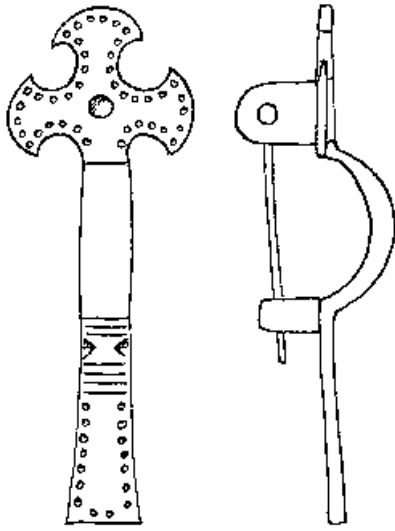
- The Late Roman circa 400 AD
- The Sub-Romano British from around 570 AD
- The pagan Anglian period, generally around the year 627 AD.

We aim to portray a view of the norm of each society, not the extreme. Therefore when developing an impression it is safer to generally portray an example of the masses, rather than of the extreme rich, poor, foreign or exotic. Such extremes can lead the public to develop the wrong impression of the period.

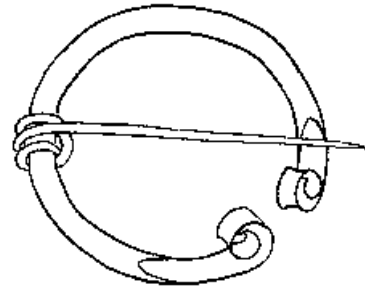
Concentrate on developing an “impression” for these periods. Be clear about who you are, where you are from, in which god you believe. Be clear about your family, your profession and your ambitions. Your clothes should reflect your position in the social order. They are not a costume, but clothes in which you live work and sleep. If the clothing falls apart after only a few weekends, then you need to consider what you are doing wrong.

Comitatus concentrates on “living history.” New members will therefore find it more useful to concentrate on providing themselves with a good set of clothes including a cloak, a knife, spoon, bowl and cup (see Figure 1 below), before purchasing swords or helmets. Most drill and combats are conducted using a spear, knife and axe, so new members can soon participate on a par with “veterans.” Women who wish to fight may do so as long as their male impression is convincing.

BROOCHES



Anglo-Saxon Brooch



Romano-British Penannular Brooch



Anglo-Saxon Saucer Brooch

WOODEN EATING BOWL Wine/Mead

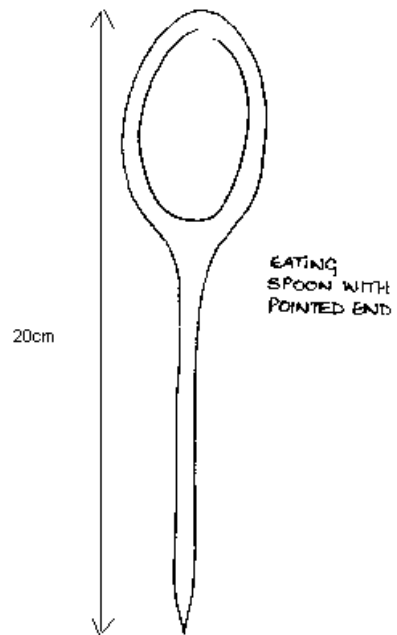
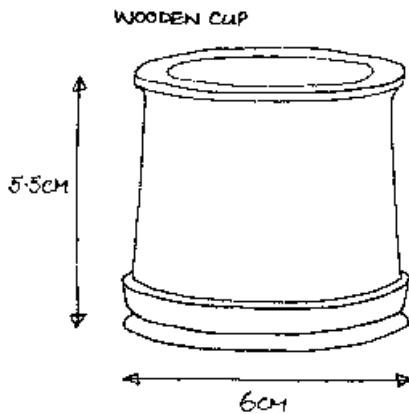
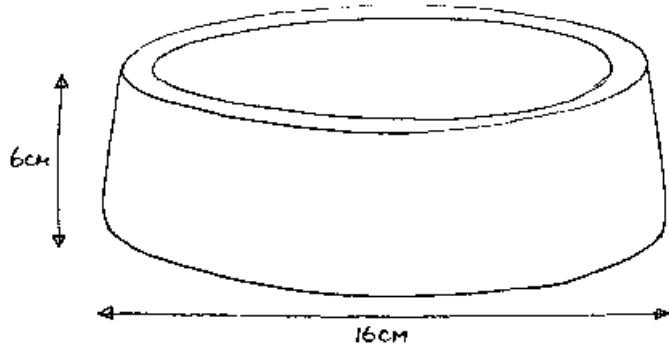


Figure 1 Brooches, Cups, etc.

CLOTH

As a general rule wool was cheaper than linen, which was often imported. Silk, even in the smallest quantities was only for the rich. The Romans certainly imported cotton, but would have been very expensive.

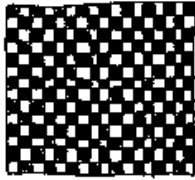
Linen is more difficult to dye than wool. Therefore the use of dyed linen would be limited to those able to afford it. Undyed linen can be used for underwear, under-tunics and for the relatively well off. It is especially useful if wool irritates your skin.

Wool was available in a surprising range of colours. Dark colours such as black and dark blues and purples should be avoided. Preferably, the individual threads in the cloth should be visible. The variety and weight of wool cloth is considerable, enabling the re-enactor to produce light summer tunics, through to thick heavy winter cloaks. Tabby, twill and warp/weft-faced weaves are appropriate for all our periods (see Figure 2 below). Machine sewing is acceptable, with the proviso that visible edges are hand-finished. However, please note that a hand stitched garment does look different to one made on a machine.

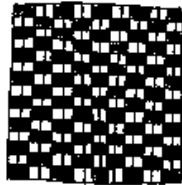
Clothes should look worn, generally clean and carefully mended. If patched, the patch should be sympathetic to the garment.

WEAVE TYPES

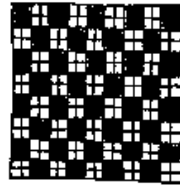
TABBY WEAVES + DERIVATIVES



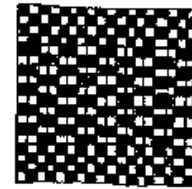
TABBY (PLAIN)



HALF BASKET (REP)

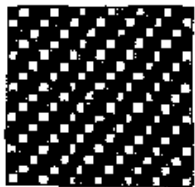


BASKET OR PANAMA



COMPOSITE WEAVE
(TABBY + HALF BASKET)

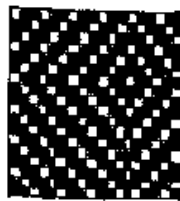
TWILL WEAVE + DERIVATIVES



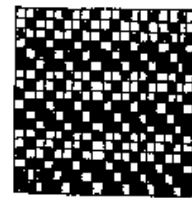
2-OVER-1 TWILL



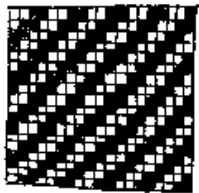
HERRINGBONE



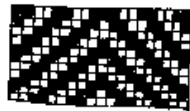
DIAMOND



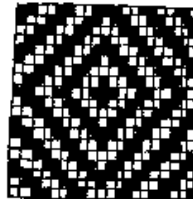
REVERSE TWILL EVERY 3



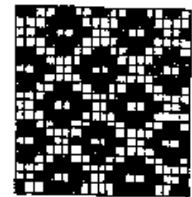
2-OVER-2 TWILL



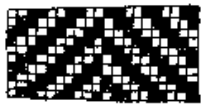
HERRINGBONE



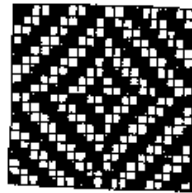
DIAMOND



ROSE PATH



BROKEN HERRINGBONE



DIAMOND

Figure 2 Weave Types

LEATHER

Leather should be vegetable tanned, of a thickness commensurate with its use. It can be decorated by pressing suitable patterns into its surface. Finished items can then be painted, or possibly dyed.

FEMALE DRESS

Several styles are available, especially in the Roman period. For the sake of simplicity Comitatus recommends that the “peplos” or tube dress be adopted initially for new members. It can be used throughout our period.

As with the example from Huldremose in Demark, the dress can be folded down at the top hem. A contrasting piece of cloth can be sewn on the top hem for decoration, and a lower border can be added (See Figure 3 below). Owen-Crocker (1986) also suggests that some peplos-type dresses were cylindrical. They may have been made very simply by sewing up the two short (or cut) edges of the cloth to make a tube shape. One or two brooches would then hold up the dress at the shoulders. The addition of some tablet weaving at the top edge would stop the fabric tearing easily.

The dresses can be sewn at the shoulders for poorer impressions, or pinned using brooches of the appropriate period and region (See Figure 2 above). Penannular brooches can be used for a Roman impression. Annular brooches were especially favoured in Anglian areas along with square-headed and cruciform types. Saucer and disc brooches were more popular in Saxon areas to the south of the country. In the Roman period dresses can be belted under the breast to produce a distinctive look - see Croom (2000) for a discussion on how this might have been fixed.

An apron worn around the waist is useful when working around the fire.

Roman ladies may wish to add a *palla* to create a distinctive Roman impression. This is simply a rectangular piece of material draped around the body like a shawl.

Underdresses may be worn of wool or linen, with long or short sleeves. These should be cut to the same pattern as the male tunics but longer. In Anglian areas some woman used wrist clasps to fasten long sleeves.

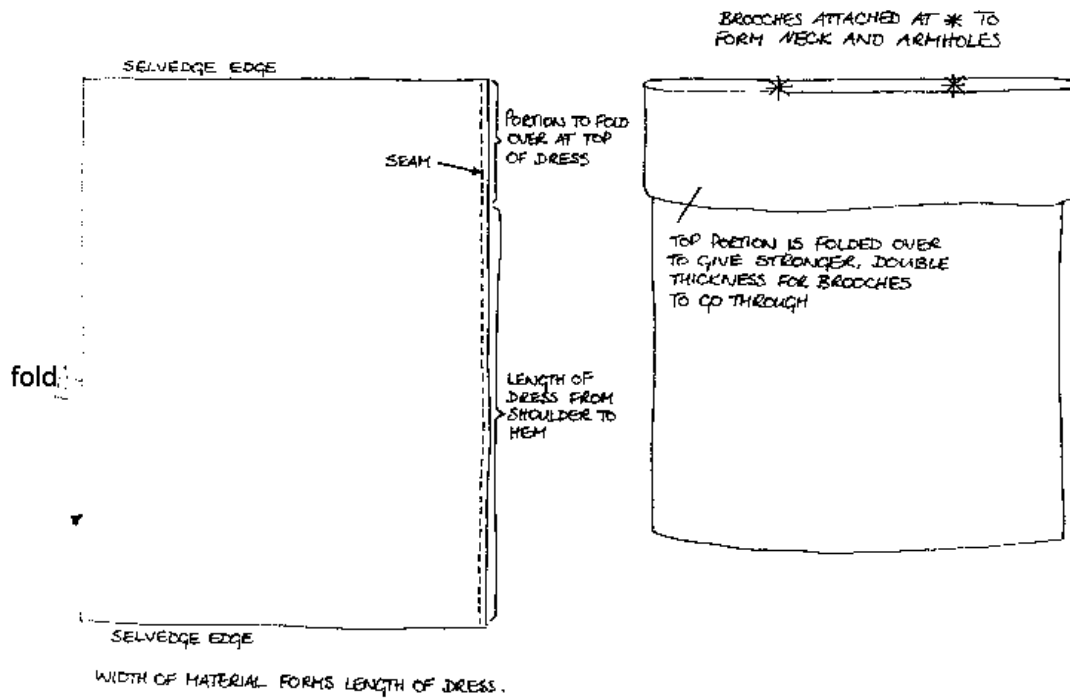
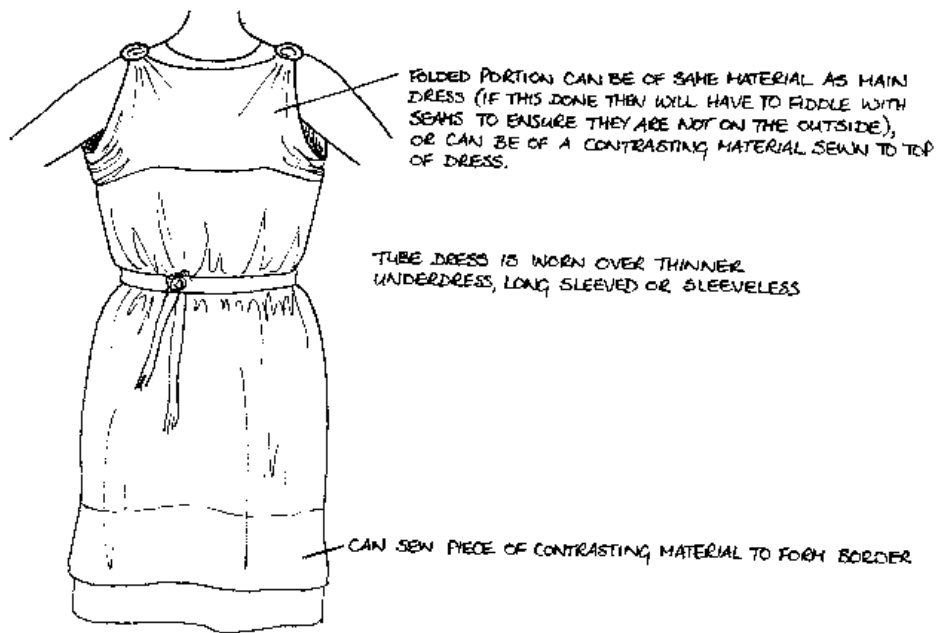


Figure 3 Peplos dress

MALE TUNICS

A *tunece*, *cyrtel* or *pad* in Old English, these can be produced to a simple pattern, minimising the amount of sewing, for all three of our chosen periods. Cloth was produced on a loom, and then simply folded over the body and arms. It is sometimes difficult to get modern cloth wide enough for this method. However, edging the cuffs, and perhaps the bottom and collar of the tunic, ensures that this is not a problem.

Undyed linen under tunics can be worn made to the same pattern, the Latin *subuclas*. Short sleeve linen tunics are applicable to the Late Roman period. However most tunics were of wool, and in the Late Roman period off-white, grey or beige.

Late Roman tunics, *tunica*, were wide in the body, often to the elbow. This negates the need for gussets under the arm. This is also applicable in a lesser degree through to the early Anglian period. Sleeves are loose on the wrist, but becoming tighter at the end of our period. It seems some were slit and folded back over the hand like a modern cuff. When belted, tunics should be knee length. Necklines should be a slit for the Roman period, or could be round after that. In the Late Roman period scarves or thin strips of cloth, *focale*, can add to an impression. Tablet weave or coloured edging can be used to decorate tunics in the Roman and Germanic periods.

Late Roman tunics had clearly defined decoration on the tunic called *clavi*. These include edging, bands of colour over the shoulders and “patches” on the front and shoulders. This can be of any acceptable colour. They seem to be either woven into the wool, or perhaps cut out from old worn garments, and stitched to new ones. Round “patches” seem to be present from the 4th century, while squares appear in the 5th. The latter may have had some significance, such as distinguishing an officer, Medic or NCO. Comitatus uses round “patches” on their tunics (see Figure 4 below).

The undertunic, or *ham*, *smoc* or *under-sec* in Old English are made to the same pattern as the tunic, but generally made of finer material. It is probable that they are slightly shorter than the over tunic.

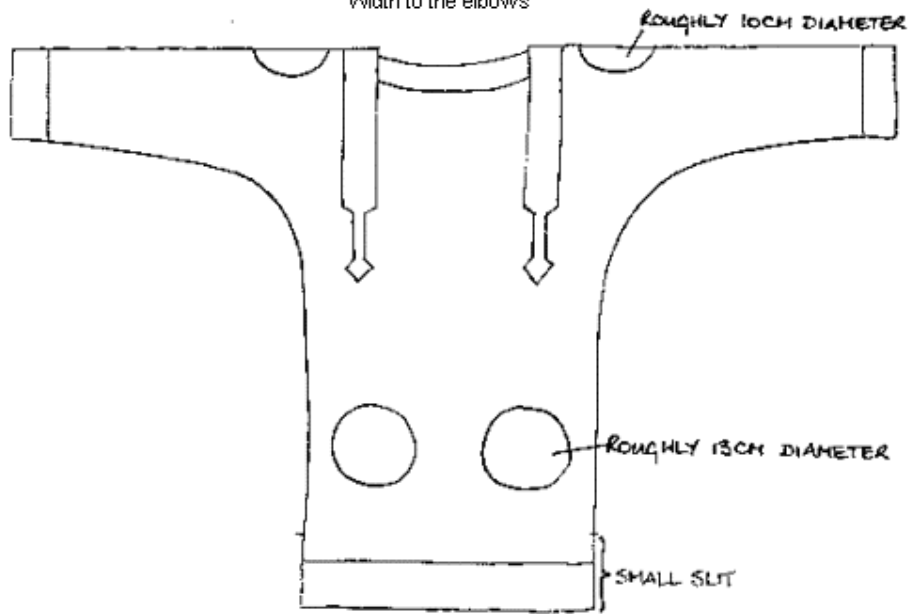
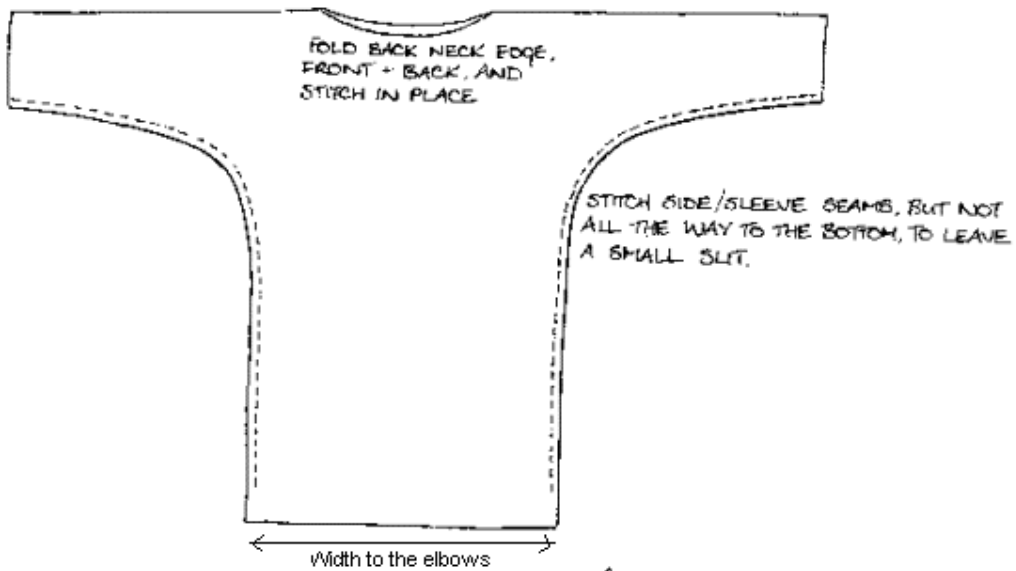
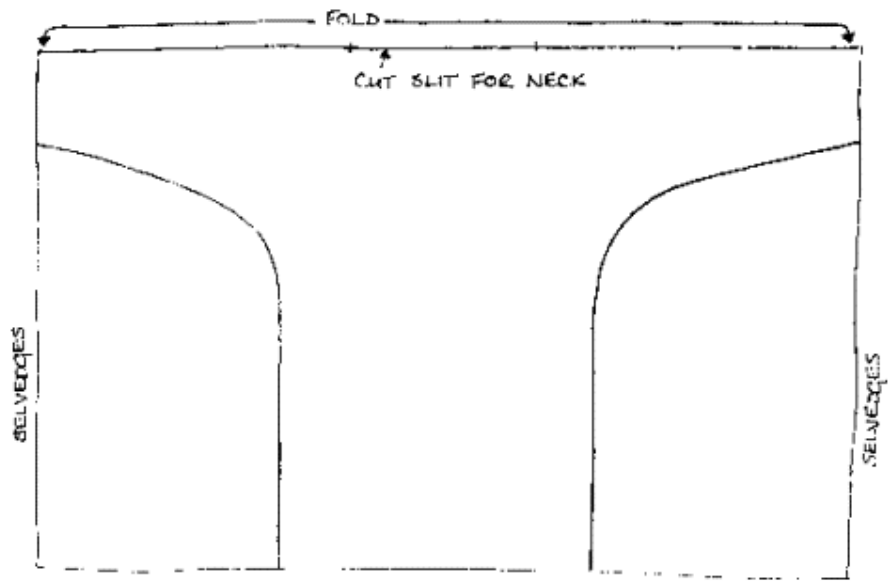


Figure 4 Tunic

UNDERWEAR

This may sound extreme, but if you wear the correct clothes you really do feel you can play the part. Nobody, least of all the public, will be checking to see if you are wearing the correct underwear. But you will know. And for much of our period they are necessary for men to hold up their hose.

There are some drawings of Roman female dancers. They can be possibly used as a basis to construct Roman female underwear. For men, the lower ranks of society probably always favoured a simple loincloth, in Old English *underwraedel*. These are both simple to make and cheap. Linen braies, in Latin *subligariorum*, in old English *waed-braec*, are in some ways safer (see Figure 5 below.) Similar to shorts, they can reach below the knee. The drawstring is exposed at the waist to enable the hose to be fastened. Keys or money were probably also suspended from the braies, safely under the tunic.

JACKETS

In the Anglian period, men may wear a short, belted jacket, and made from several body panels.

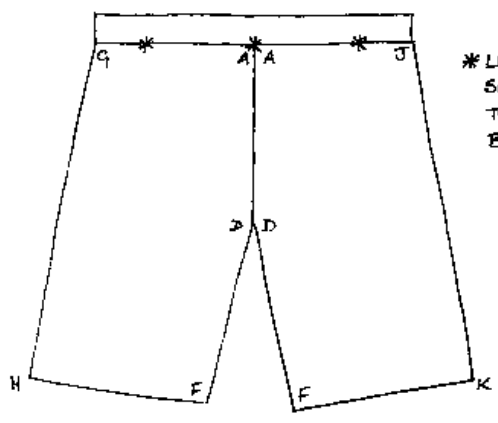
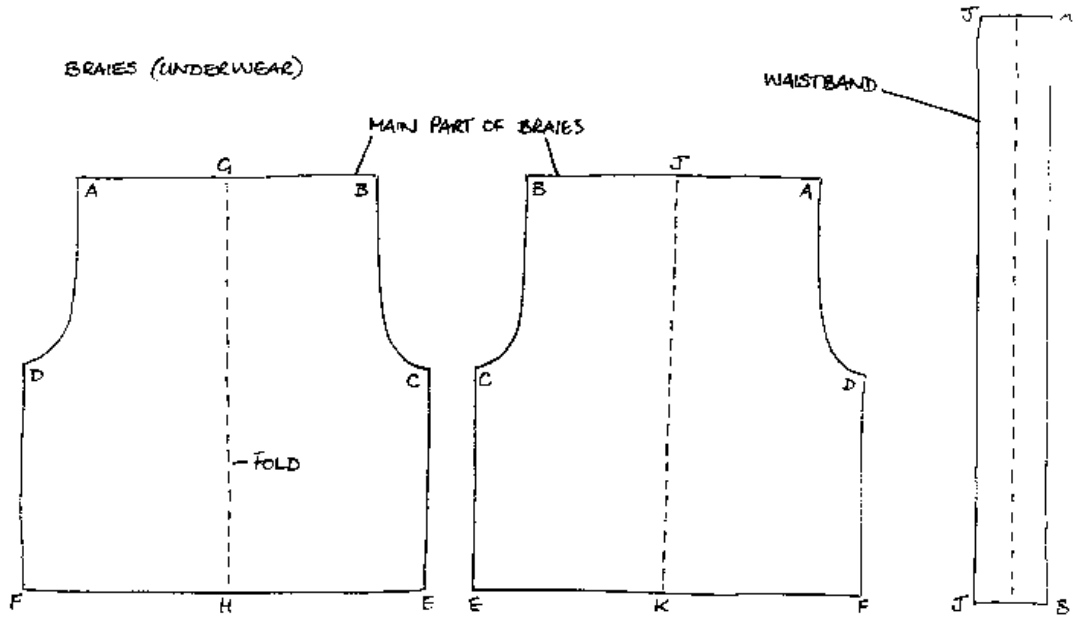
CLOAKS

These should be simple square or rectangular cloaks, folded around the body lengthways and pinned at the right shoulder for men, centrally for women. They are regarded as archetypal of a Roman soldier. The military cloak, the *sagum* and its shorter derivative the *sagulum*, were initially probably of Gaulish origin.

Cloaks found at Thorsbjerg in Denmark and Vehenmoor in Germany use complex weaves and were made of several colours. Such cloaks were edged in tablet weave, The Thorsberg weave used more than 100 tablets to construct, that at Vehenmoor 146. Both cloaks had elaborate fringes. The Thorsberg example is 69" by 93", the Vehenmoor 69" by 112".

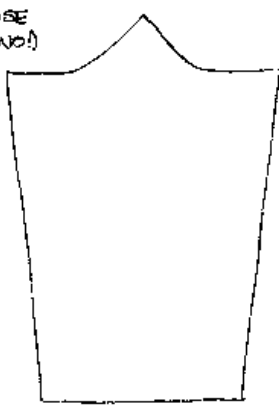
A simple short cloak, unlined, can be worn as a useful addition at any impression. Larger cloaks using a good water repellent weave on the outside, and a soft warm woollen lining are excellent in winter and to use as a blanket. Any excess in depth of the cloak can be folded back over the upper body to form extra layer of material over the shoulders and arms. When wet the excess can be pulled over the head to form a simple hood.

Hooded cloaks also seem to have been worn. Germanic cloaks seem to have sometimes been made from fur or skin.

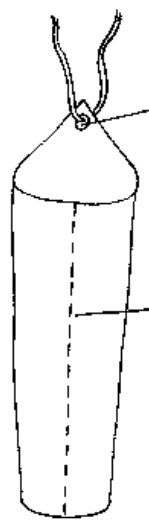


* LEAVE GAPS AT THESE POINTS WHERE WAISTBAND SEWN TO MAIN PART OF BRAIES. THIS LEAVES CORD TO TIE THE BRAIES EXPOSED, SO THAT HOSE CAN BE ATTACHED.

HOSE (MAKE TWO!)



LENGTH OF HOSE NEEDS TO BE LONG ENOUGH TO OVERLAP THE BOTTOM OF THE BRAIES



HOLE FOR CORD TO TIE THE HOSE TO THE BRAIES

SEAM GOES UP BACK OF HOSE

Figure 5 Braies

FOOT COVERINGS

Visible modern socks are not acceptable. While you may go barefoot inside your shoe, some form of foot covering is more comfortable, in Latin *udones*, in Old English, *socc*, *caeles* or *meo*. For our period these can either be sprang or naelbinded socks, forms of knitting, or made from woollen cloth. Socks can be felted for extra warmth. They can be expensive to buy, but an interesting project to make.

Woollen foot coverings are an easy option to adopt. Footed hose are correct for both men and women, and can be rolled down the leg and gartered below the knee.

Strips of cloth round around the instep and ankle can be used to form a simple sock.

LEG COVERINGS

These are either hose, in Old English *hosa* or *strapul*, or for men, trousers - *braccas* or *brec-hraegl*, *bracae* in Latin. Hose seem to have been the most common form of leg wear, usually very tight, cut on the bias, and sometimes with an integral foot. Hose were held up by a strap to the braies. Footed hose, like stockings, were probably worn by women.

Tight Migration period trousers have been found such as the 3rd century AD Thorsbjerg trousers with attached “feet” like medieval footed hose (See Figure 6 below). There is an excellent illustration of a Late Roman slave taking a similar pair of footed trousers to the washhouse from Silistria in Bulgaria. The Emperor Honorius tried to ban such trousers within Rome in 397AD.

Illustrations of Late Romans show rectangles of material, wrapped around the leg and fastened by a long tie. The Angles used strips of material called *hose-bend*, *nostle*, *sceanc-bend* or *sceanc-gegirela*, similar to puttees. These can be initially round around the instep to make a simple “sock”. Either can be worn with or without hose and trousers.

SHOES

Late Roman styles, various versions of the *calceus*, are still applicable for the Anglian period (See Figure 7 below.) However nailed shoes should be limited to Roman impressions. An excellent version of a *calceus* is supplied by Plantangenet Shoes (see Suppliers list below).

Open topped sandals are easy to make, and patterns are available. They are found in Roman contexts, Danish and German peat bogs, and early Germanic graves. They were worn by either sex. Shoes should be made from leather or rawhide.

BELTS

Leather belts may be decorated and painted. Roman soldiers were distinguished by their wide military belts, decorated with “chipped carved” fittings. This is the one piece of equipment that marks a man out as a soldier. Male civilians may use thin belts, or go unbelted. Females from the period can use simple woven belts.

In a Germanic context, things are less certain. Belts were known as *gyrdel*, *belt* or *fetel*. Metal buckles are rare finds. Belts were generally 1.25” and less. Many items can be hung from women’s

belts including knives, shears, keys, toilet implements, cosmetic tools, amulets, spindles and pouches.

Pouches or *fetels* were used to carry fire starting materials, and sometimes have a fire steel attached.

HATS and HEADCOVERINGS

Women did not cover their hair as a matter of course at this time. However when working, especially near fires is a good idea. When the Roman Empire became officially Christian in 380 AD, a more demure look is appropriate. Pagan German women have no such inhibition. Rectangular scarves sometimes fringed have been found. However, modern hairstyles should be disguised.

Roman soldiers should adopt a Pannonian hat, a pillbox hat (see Figure 7 below), worn above the ears, which doubles as a helmet liner. The hat could be made of wool, or more usually leather, sheepskin or fur. Phrygian caps are often shown in illustrations of our period. They can be interpreted as artistic convention, however for early Anglian impressions they are acceptable. In bad weather, hoods are a useful item of dress for both sexes, as are straw hats in sunny weather.

THORSBERG TROUSERS

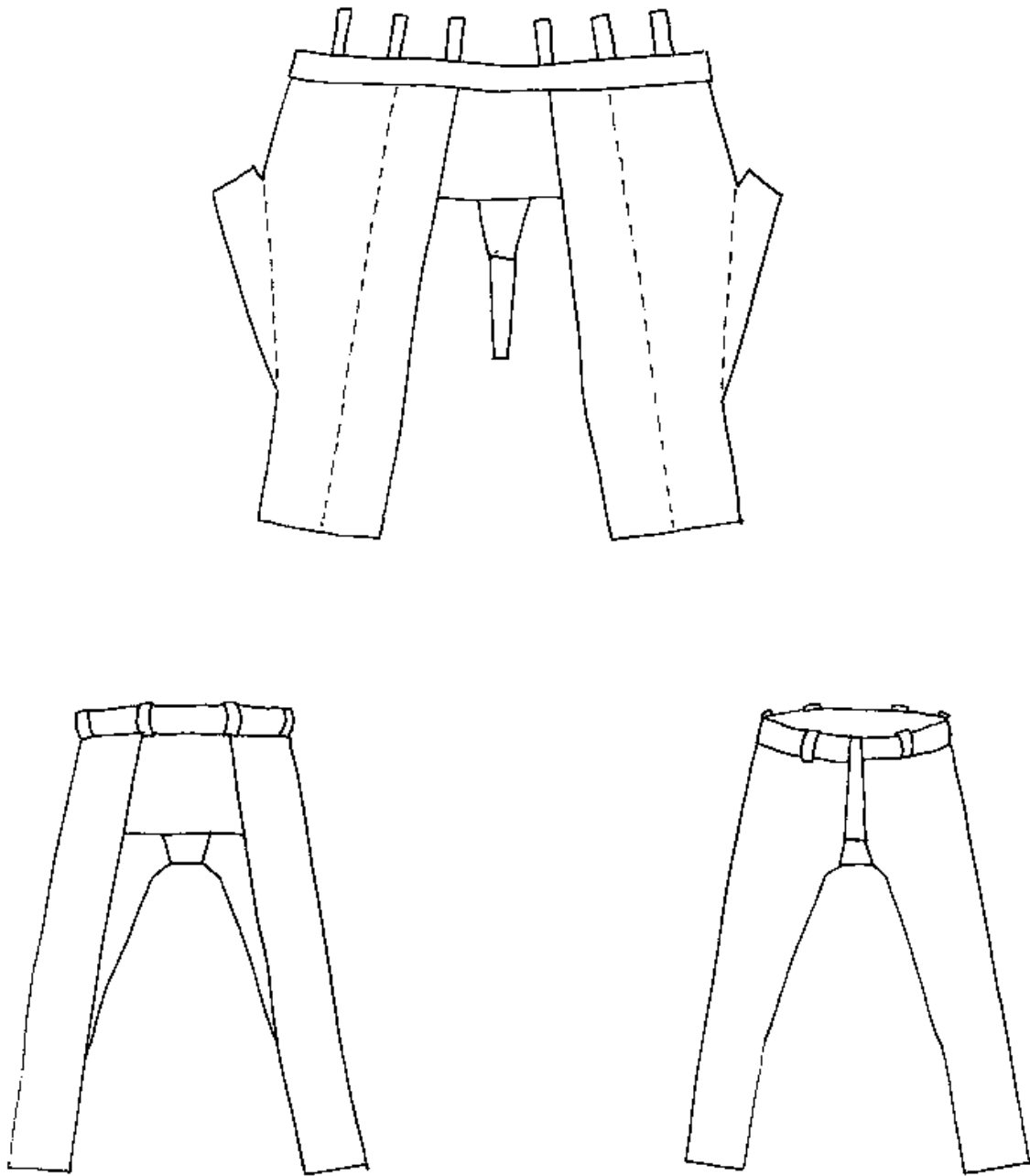


Figure 6 Thorsbjerg Trousers

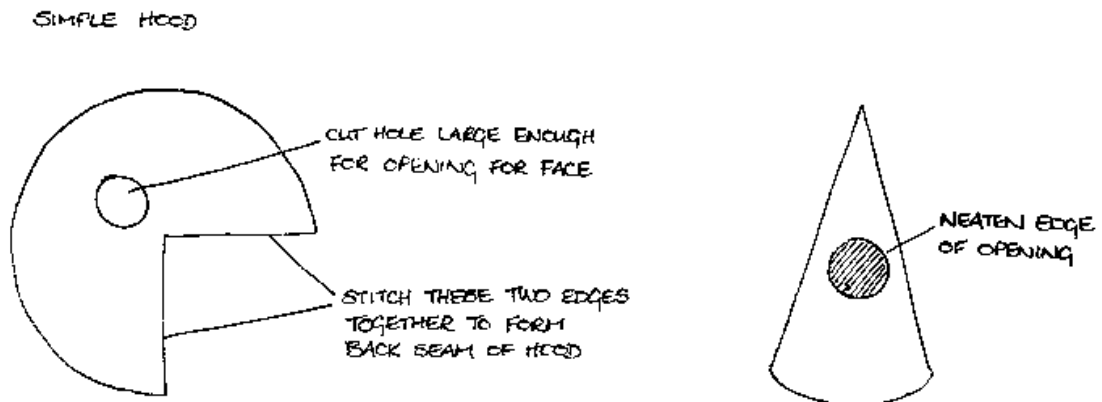
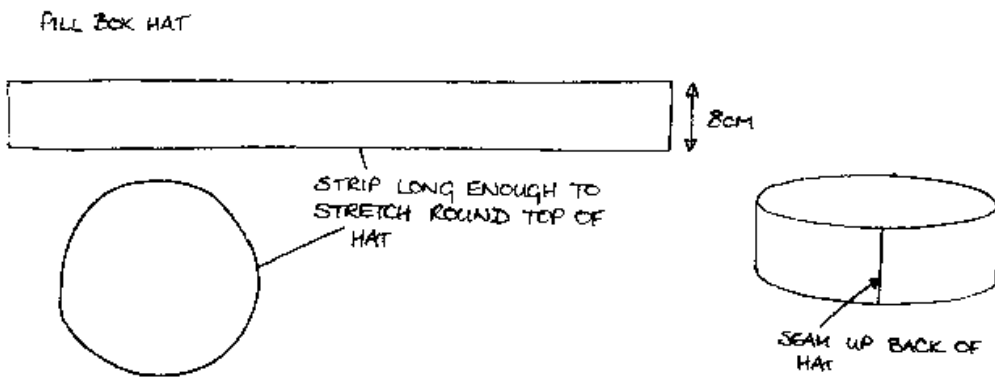
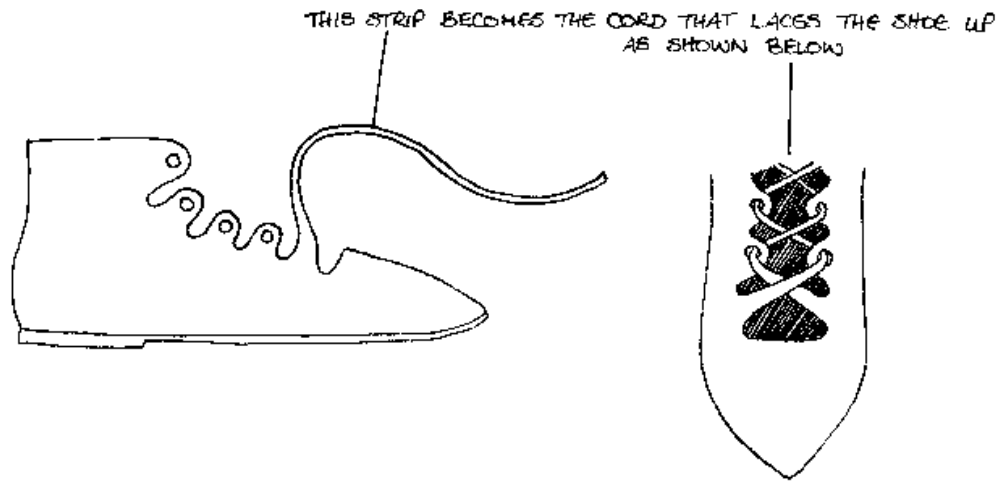


Figure 7 Shoes, Hat and Hood

Reading List

Allason-Jones L, 1989 *Women in Roman Britain*, British Museum Publications

Croom A T, 2000 *Roman Clothing and Fashion*, Tempus

Christine Haughton and Dominic Powlesland, 1999, *West Heslerton: The Anglian Cemetery*, 2 Vols, English Heritage

Laing Jennifer, 2000 *Warriors of the Dark Ages*, Sutton

Lucy Sam, 2000 *The Anglo-Saxon Way of Death*, Sutton (Chapter Two has an excellent overview of artefacts – including brooches, spears, etc – and their dates)

MacDowall Simon & Embleton Gerry, 1994 *Late Roman Infantryman 236-565AD*, Osprey

MacDowall Simon & Hook Christa, 1995 *Late Roman Cavalryman 236-565AD*, Osprey

MacDowall Simon & McBride Angus, 1996 *Germanic Warrior 236-568AD*, Osprey

Owen-Crocker Gale R, 1986 *Dress in Anglo-Saxon England*, Manchester University Press

Southern Pat & Dixon Karen R, 1996 *The Late Roman Army*, Batsford

Underwood R, 1999 *Anglo-Saxon Weapons and Warfare*, Tempus

Suppliers

This is a list of suppliers who have proved useful for providing the type of equipment needed for the Group. Comitatus does not guarantee any of the work carried out by the listed suppliers.

Re-enactors' Markets

Jorvik Viking Festival, York, February – There is normally a Viking Market at Barley Hall, and also one at the Merchant Adventurer's Hall

Living History Fayre – At the Warwickshire Exhibition Centre
<http://www.ewsfairs.com/page4.html> February and November

The Original Re-enactors' Market – At Connexion, Leamington Rd, Ryton on Dunsmore, Coventry. Web: <http://www.sportsconnexion.com/location/maps.asp> March and November

St Nicholas Fayre, York, Barley Hall, November

General

Jelling Dragon, at Past Images, 33 Shambles, York, YO1 7LX, Tel: 01904 676167
07817 560926, 10:15-16:45 Mon-Sat, Email: sales@jelldragon.com, Web:
<http://www.jelldragon.com/>

Keith Matthews - Ceolred Monger (group member) Tel: 01904 783928, 20 Pheasant Drive, Acomb Wood, York, YO24 2YD.

Steve Wagstaff (group member) Tel: 07710 335673. Email: f2@thesluttery.fsnet.co.uk

Time Tarts (John Naylor aka Tinker, and Karen Grover) 6A Doncaster Road, Langold, Notts, S81 9RY, Tel: 01909 540638, Email: timetarts@aol.com, Web: <http://www.timetarts.com/> *Arms and armour in particular. Ring first before travelling to check the shop will be open, as Tinker and Karen may be away at a show*

Belts

Andy Harriss (group member) can help with belts. Tel: 01430 860978, Email: andy@h247.freerve.co.uk

Steve Wagstaff (group member) Tel: 07710 335673. Email: f2@thesluttery.fsnet.co.uk

Leather

Keith Lyon, 146 Balfour Road, Northampton, NN2 6JP, Tel. 01604 717349. *No calls after 8 pm please. Tell him what you are using it for and he will give you a quote for suitable skin.*

Le Prevo Leathers, Dept W1, No.1 Charlotte Square, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 4XF, Tel 0191 232 4179, Fax 0191 261 7648. Shop open Monday - Friday, 9:30 - 5:30. Email: Orders sales@leprevo.co.uk, Enquiries: enquiries@leprevo.co.uk Web: <http://www.leprevo.co.uk/>

Sandals/Shoes

Ana Period Shoes, 54 Ashley Court, Bristol, BS6 5NW Tel: 0117-9558590, Email: sales.ana@btopenworld.com Web: <http://www.anaperiodshoes.co.uk/>

Ken Hakin, 16 Tang Hall Lane, York, YO31 1SG, Tel: 01904 410644 or contact via Barley Hall

Plantagenet Shoes, Morgan Hubbard, 82 Cozens Hardy Road, Sprowston, Norfolk, Norwich, NR7 8QG Email: morgan@plantagenetshoes.freerve.co.uk, Web: <http://www.plantagenetshoes.freerve.co.uk/>,

Shields

Dave Atkin (group member) Tel: 01904 427360, Email: julie.h@macunlimited.net

Tents

Ancient Battle Crafts, 15 Sutherland Avenue, Biggin Hill, Kent TN16 3HE, Tel: 01959 572540 Email: info@ancientbattlecrafts.com, Web: <http://www.ancientbattlecrafts.com/>

Past Tents, John Charles Waterhouse, New Farm, Main Street, Walesby, Newark, Nottinghamshire NG22 9NU, Tel/Fax: 01623 862480, Web: <http://www.past-tents.demon.co.uk/>

Victor James, 427 Anglesey Road, Burton- on-Trent, Staffordshire DE14 3NE Tel/Fax: 01283-510285

Weaponry (eg. spear heads, spicula, plumbata)

Andy Harriss co-ordinates the Group's purchases via the Blacksmith at Murton Park. Tel: 01430 860978, Email: andy@h247.freeseve.co.uk

Wooden Artefacts

Paul Atkin, (group member) Email: carol.atkin@NTLWORLD.COM

Ken Walters, Handcarved Reproduction Wooden Artefacts, 20 Scott Drive, Ormskirk, Lancashire L39 1PP, Tel: 01695 573224, Email: kenwalters1@beeb.net *Mention you're in Comitatus and you might get a discount!*

Web links

The Group's official website is at: <http://www.comitatus.net/>

comitatusuk is the Group's email list at Yahoo Groups, which also has a facility for storing files and images. You will find electronic copies of this document there, as well as other files. To join the email list send a blank email to: comitatusuk-subscribe@yahoogroups.com. Or create a Yahoo account by going to: <http://groups.yahoo.com/> and registering, You can then check out the group's Yahoo webpages, join comitatusuk and access the File and photo store at: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/comitatusuk/> If you have any difficulties, contact John Kinghorn, Email: johnkinghornuk@yahoo.co.uk

Angelcynn website, <http://www.angelcynn.org.uk/> - a good introduction to the Anglo-Saxon era, as well as having useful kit information

Mel Wilson's Anglian Information webpages, including 5th-6th women's dress, female accessories, possible 5th Century Dyes & modern dyes to reproduce them: <http://www.maering.co.uk>

Richard Underwood, The Ravens Warband, Guide to making Anglo-Saxon Weapons and Equipment - particularly helpful and practical guide on how to make male clothing: <http://www.millennia.demon.co.uk/ravens/kitguide.htm>

Comitatus Drill for Beginners

Introduction

Campidoctor	A drill instructor.
Rank	A single line of troops.
File	A single column of troops.
Close Order	Shoulder to shoulder by rank, files closed up.
Order	The normal position. Roughly 3 feet per man by rank, files comfortably spaced.
Open Order	Skirmish position, 6 feet per man by rank, files double spaced.

Dress your position on the senior soldier of the rank, always the right hand marker. The Front right hand marker is always the senior soldier.

Carry out the instruction after the last syllable of the order.

If you make a minor mistake stay still! Do not draw the publics' attention to it if you can possible help it.

For drill purposes shields are always held in the left hand.

Pronunciation Guide

a = as in "ah".

ae = "eye".

c = always hard like K.

g = always hard as in "girl".

i = short as in "pit", or long as in "pizza". When used as a consonant, = Y.

j = not used in proper Latin, represents consonant I and pronounced as Y.

u = as in "doom" when a vowel, or as W when consonant. Properly written v.

v = u.

The Commands

Ad signa	Fall in
Unum Ordinem Facite	Form a single rank
Duos Ordines Facite	Form two ranks
Ordines Aperite	Open ranks. Normally order to open order
Ordines Densate	Close order ranks
Intente	Attention
Pila Demittite	Move to order, spears held vertical with their butts on the ground just forward and right of your right foot. Right elbow held at 90 degrees

Pila Portate	Slope arms. Slide arm down the spear shaft, lift up the spear and rest it on the right shoulder, elbow held at 90 degrees
Mandata Captate	Observe the orders, pay attention
Silentium	Silence!
Dirige Frontem	Dress the ranks and files on the right hand marker
Laxate	Stand at ease, have a rest for a moment
Move	March, always the left foot forward first. We don't have music to march in time, but we still try!
Consiste or State	Halt
Pulsum Pedibus Date	Mark time
Accelera	Speed up
Tarda	Slow down
Ad senestram depone	Wheel to the left. When wheeling march slowly, give the outside of the wheel the opportunity to stay in rank, don't rush forward in the middle of the rank
Ad dextram depone	Wheel to the right. When wheeling march slowly, give the outside of the wheel the opportunity to stay in rank, don't rush forward in the middle of the rank
Signo sequite	Follow the standard or leader
Ad gladium, clina	To the right face. If marching, right face and mark time
Ad scutum, clina	To the left face. If marching, left face and mark time
Transforma	To your right hand, about face. If marching to your right hand about face and mark time
Redi	Return to your original front
Muta locum	To your right hand, countermarch. The file leader marches up to the point indicated by the campidoctor, and does a u turn to the right. He rest of the file march up to the same point and follow the file leader.
Langia ad dextram partes	Open files to right sides
Langia ad senestram partes	Open files to left sides
Langia ad ambas partes	Open files to both sides

Iunge ad dextram	Close files to right
Iunge ad senestram	Close files to left
Exi	Rear half files move up to the left hand side
Intra	Reverse of exi. Half files face about to the right, march forth to their original position.
Ad Testudinem	Form testudo
Ad cuneum	Form wedge
Ad Aciem	Form battle line
Scuta Tollite	Raise shields top battle position
Scuta Demittite	Lower shields
Parati!	Ready (to charge)
Porro!	Charge
Salutate	Salute by raising spears at 45 degree angle
Dimitto	Dismiss. Turn sharply to the right and fall out
Ordenem servate	Keep your position
Expectate	Wait for it
Ut Fuitis	As you were

Common Commands

To start a display:

Unun Ordinem Facite	form a single rank
Intente	attention
Mandata Captate	pay attention
Silentium	silence
Pila Portate	slope arms.

To form a line from a column:

Exi	rear half file moves up to the right
Langia ad dextram	open files to the right.

Exi rear half files move up.
Langia ad dextram
Exi

To reverse the above:

Intra half files about turn to the right and march to their previous position.
Intra
Intra until the file is reconstituted.

To form line of battle:

Ad Aciem close up.
Scuta Tollite raise shields and growl.
Parati! present spears forward with a growl.
Move march forward.
Poro! charge

Late Roman Glossary

<i>Angon</i>	Javelin with long iron head
<i>Arcani</i>	Secret agents
<i>Auxilia</i>	Created at the end of the 3 rd century. All were elite <i>palatini</i> units
<i>Axes</i>	The <i>francisca</i> , a throwing axe, was characteristic of the Franks. It has been suggested the Franks adopted it from the Romans.
<i>Bacaudae</i>	Bandits
<i>Ballistae</i>	Roman artillery: bolt throwers
<i>Barbarians</i>	Draftees could offer the army money, to hire a replacement, often a willing German
<i>Barritus</i>	Roman war-cry adopted from the Germans
<i>Bucellarii</i>	Personal bodyguards, named “biscuit eaters”
<i>Bucellatum.</i>	Hard tack biscuit
<i>Bucinator</i>	Trumpeter
<i>Burgi</i>	Or <i>Terres</i> , tiny watchtowers
<i>Campidoctor</i>	Drill instructor
<i>Cataphracts</i>	Heavily armoured cavalry
<i>Centenarius</i>	In charge of a <i>centuria</i>
<i>Chlamys</i>	Military tunic
<i>Classes</i>	Fleets
<i>Comitatenses</i>	Troops from the mobile field army
<i>Cuneus</i>	A wedge shaped attack column used by Romans and Germans
<i>Cursus Publicus</i>	The Imperial Post Messages travelled at an average of 80 km per day, up to 320 km
<i>Draconarius</i>	Standard bearer carrying the draco (dragon windsock)
Drill	Probably varied from unit to unit. 6th century drill in the <i>Strategikon</i> begins with the command, “ <i>Silentium. Mandata captate. Non vos turbatis. Ordinem Servate. Bando sequite. Nemo demittat bandum et inimicos seque.</i> ” (Silence. Observe orders. Do not worry. Keep your

position. Follow the standard. Do not leave the standard and pursue the enemy.) Soldiers advanced in silence.

Commands were given by voice, hand signal and trumpet.

Drill aimed at increasing or reducing frontage by halving or doubling files, and opening or closing order. It was recommended that officers formed their men into the correct formation, and held them there.

<i>Dromon</i>	Warship
<i>Dux Britanniarum</i>	Commander of the Northern Frontier
<i>Ducenarius</i>	In charge of two <i>centuiae</i> , called an <i>Ordo</i>
<i>Exculatores</i>	Javelin men
<i>Fabricae</i>	State arms factories
<i>Foederati</i>	Foreign troops under their own leaders. Not part of the regular army
<i>Fulcum</i>	A 6th century <i>testudo</i>
<i>Funditores</i>	Slingers
Illyrian Cavalry	Light horse
<i>Lancea</i>	A light spear for throwing or hand-to-hand combat
Leave	The granting of leave was the responsibility of the <i>provincial dux</i> , <i>magister militum</i> or <i>comes rei militaris</i> . Officers did sell leave to their men but were liable to fines if caught
Legions	The traditional Roman citizen infantry. Field Legions were around 1,200; frontier units were around 3,000 strong. Sub units were commanded by a <i>Praefecti</i> . According to <i>Vegetius</i> , legions had heavier arms than <i>auxilia</i> .
<i>Legio VI Victrix</i>	Based in York, acting as a reserve for the Wall
<i>Limes</i>	Frontier zone
<i>Limitanei</i>	Static frontier troops. Commanded by a <i>Tribunus</i> , assisted by a <i>Vicarius</i> . Some units were little better than part-time peasant militia. Food and shelter were provided, and they were tax exempt, as were their families, on retirement to their plot of land
<i>Lorica Hamata</i>	Mail
<i>Lorica Lamellar</i>	Small vertical plates.
<i>Lorica Segmentata</i>	Segmented plate armour (not used in the later period)

<i>Lorica Squamata.</i>	Scale armour.
Height	In 367AD it was recorded there was a minimum height requirement of 5'7". By the 5 th century this was impractical
Identity Discs	Were given to new recruits, in the form of lead discs called <i>signaculum</i> . Sometimes they were tattooed on the hand using leek juice. Recruits would then recite the military oath, the <i>sacramentum</i>
<i>Magister Militum</i>	Master general
Militia	Alaric in 408 AD said "thick grass is easier to mow than thin."
<i>Murci</i>	Draft dodgers, who often cut off their thumbs to avoid service
<i>Notitia Dignitatum</i>	A list of offices and army units including shield designs
<i>Onagri</i>	Roman artillery: stone throwers
<i>Ordo</i>	Two <i>centuiae</i>
<i>Palantini</i>	Elite troops of the field army
<i>Palla</i>	Rectangular woollen mantle worn by women
<i>Pallium</i>	Cloak
Pannonian cap	Typical headwear in the army, often made in fur or leather
Pay	Infantry would be paid 400 <i>denarii</i> annually, probably in three instalments, as a <i>stipendium</i> . Due to inflation this was worth little, and was roughly the same amount for 200 years. Donatives on the ascension of new Emperors and on their birthdays amounted to more
<i>Pedes</i>	Ordinary foot soldier. Soldiers were expected to carry 20 days worth of ration, a blanket, tent quarter, stake, water bottle, and pick axe. Received full pay. Service would be for 20 years
<i>Plumbatae</i>	Lead weighted throwing darts. Also known as <i>martioarbuli</i> .
<i>Praepositus</i>	A unit commander
<i>Praesidienses</i>	A <i>Legio Comitatis</i> . <i>Praesidium</i> was a fortress controlled by the <i>Dux Britanniarum</i> , identified by some as Newton Kyme. Such a unit based in the north, may be in some way connected to the old <i>VI Vitrix</i>
Privileges	If a soldier served for over 20 years he received additional privileges and significant tax exemptions for himself and his family. He would be exempt from the poll tax as well as market and customs dues. He

was excused civic duties, which often led to the ruination of small landholders. Discharged veterans received a land grant

Promotion	Was probably slow, depending on vacancies arising from casualties or retirement. Inter-unit transfers needed imperial authorisation. There is some evidence of purchasing commissions
<i>Pseudocomitatenses</i>	<i>Limitanei</i> transferred to the field army
Rank	For infantry: from <i>Pedes</i> you could be promoted to <i>semissalis</i> (one and a half <i>annonae</i>), a non-supervisory rank. NCOs in ascending order include <i>circitor</i> and <i>biarchus</i> (two <i>annonae</i>), <i>centenarius</i> (two-and-a-half <i>annonae</i>), <i>decenarius</i> (three-and-a-half <i>annonae</i>), <i>senator</i> (four <i>annonae</i>) and <i>primicerius</i> (five <i>annonae</i>)
Rations (<i>annonae</i>)	One account from Egypt gives a ration of 3lb bread, 2lb of meat, 2 pints of wine and 1/8 pint of oil per day. This seems too generous. Wives and children were also issued rations up to around 372 AD. In northern countries beer (<i>cervesa</i>) and butter could have been used. By 406 AD <i>Stellatura</i> allowed tribunes to appropriate rations for 7 days per year per soldier. This they could commute into money. In 443AD the <i>limitanei</i> by law could lose one month rations per year, to be distributed to the <i>dux</i> , the <i>princeps</i> on his staff, and the <i>praeposti</i> of the forts
Recruit	See <i>Tiro</i> . It was hard to find recruits. Sons of soldiers including officers were expected to serve unless physically unfit. Senators, municipal officials and generally slaves were barred from the army. An annual subscription was necessary, with each estate/village expected to provide a quota of soldiers. After 406AD in the west slaves were recruited
Retirement	Men serving in the legions were entitled to a honourable discharge (<i>honesta missio</i>) after 20 years, but were not entitled to full privileges until they had served 24 years. Some men served much longer, 42 years is recorded. Soldiers rendered unfit for service due to age, wounds or illness received a <i>causaria missio</i> . A law dated 325AD states that <i>comitatenses</i> were entitled to <i>emerita missio</i> if they became disabled for any reason during service, but <i>ripenses</i> , after serving 16 years, only qualified for <i>honesta missio</i> if the disability was caused by wounds received in action. Discharge certificates were known as <i>epistolae, testimonia and testimoniales</i> .
Ridge Helmet	Common helmet from 4 th and 5 th centuries
<i>Ripenses</i>	Frontier troops based on rivers
<i>Salgatum</i>	The giving of gifts to soldiers billeted on the public. Soldiers were entitled to just a bare room. Armourers, painters, the clergy, doctors, teachers, synagogues and workshops were exempt
<i>Sagittarii</i>	Specialist archer units

Samian wear	Pottery made in Gaul, before 250 AD
Scholae	Imperial Guard Cavalry units
Scorpiones	Stone thrower
Semissalis	An experienced soldier. Soldiers served for between 20-24 years. The first step up from pedes
Spangenhelm	Conical segmented helmet. There is a fine example from Der-el-Medineh, Egypt
Spatha	Long sword
Spiculum	Heavy javelin with a smaller point than an angon.
Sticharium	A shirt
Strategikon	6 th century military manual
Strophium	The equivalent of a bra
Tiro	A recruit, generally between 19 and 25. Sons of veterans up to the age of 35 could be drafted. Tiros were posted to existing units to receive “on the job” training
Training	Was given in weapon handling and drilled in manoeuvre. Infantry were meant to be trained in the use of lancea, spatha, veruta and plumbatae
Tribuli	Caltrops
Uniform	By the end of the 4 th century uniform issues were beginning to be replaced by a clothing allowance. <i>Limitanei</i> probably bought their uniform from stores attached to their fort.
Vegetius	<i>Flavius Vegetius Renatus</i> . 5 th century military writer
Verutum	A light javelin
Wives	Soldiers were allowed to marry from the early third century

Quick History Guide

Legendary events, or events with uncertain dates, are shown in *italics*

The Roman Empire	Britain, especially the north
Augustus Constantine I “The Great” 306-37	306 Constantine is proclaimed Augustus in York, with the support of Crocus, king of the Alemanni, a Germanic Foederati King.
312 Battle of Milvian Bridge	
313 Edict of Milan	314 British Bishops attend Council of Arles
Augustus Costantine II 337-40	
Augustus Costans 337-50	Constans visits Britain 343
Augustus Constantius II 337-61	350-53 Usurpation of Magnentius. <i>Coel Hen born c. 350</i>
Julian II “the Apostate” Ceasar 355-60, Augustus 360-63	Raiding by Picts and Scots
Valentinian I Augustus 364-75	Ammianus records raids by Picts, Saxons, Scots and Attacotti (364).
Valens Augustus 364-78	367 the barbarica conspiratio, resulting in the death of Count of the Saxon Shore and the capture of the Dux Britanniarum, Fullofaudes. Count Theodosius routs the barbarians and puts down the rebellion of Valentinus 368. The Spaniard Magnus Maximus accompanies him as an officer. Ammianus Marcellinus records a king of the Alemanni called Fraomar, sent to Britain with the rank of Tribune.
Augustus Gratian 375-83	
Augustus Valentinian II 375-92	
Augustus Theodosius I (the Great) 379-95. The last sole ruler of the Empire.	
380 Christianity becomes the official religion of the empire	382 Magnus Maximus defeats the Picts and Scots in the north of Britain St Ceneu born c. 382
	383-388 Magnus Maximus declared emperor of the West. Takes XX Legion and other troops from the NW of Britain to the continent.
	388 Magnus Maximus defeated and killed by Theodosius
	c. 396 Victricius of Rouen visits bishops in Britain
	398 Claudian records that Britain is suffering from “attacks” by Saxons, Picts and Scots.
Augustus Honorius 398-423	Stilicho, possibly in person, restores order by 399, and withdraws troops for the defences of Italy in 401/2
Augustus Arcadius 395-408	
Augustus Constantine III 407-11	Series of usurpers, Marcus possibly Dux Britanniarum, Gratian, a merchant/councillor, and Constantine, a soldier 406-7. Contantine III crosses to Gaul with troops from Britain

	<i>407 Coel Hen (Coelius) may have become ruler of Northern Britain.</i>
Stilicho assassinated 408	Britain is devastated by Saxon incursions in 408 or 410
	409 Britons revolt from the Empire and set up independent rule.
Visigoths and Alaric sack Rome in 410	Honorius sends a letter to the cities of Britain urging them to see to their own defence 410
	<i>c. 420 Coel Hen's army is surprised at Coylton, Ayrshire, and he is drowned in a bog while lost at Coilsfiled, in Tarbolton, Ayrshire. Saint Ceneu becomes King, and is later canonised for upholding Christianity. German mercenaries may have been used to hold back the Picts. His two sons inherit the kingdom, Gwrast from Solway to the Mersey, and Mor the central Kingdom around York. Deira founded sometime in early 5th century</i>
Augustus Valentinian III 425-55	Saint Germanus of Auxerre visits Britain to combat the Pelagian heresy 429.
	Some Britons send a letter to Aetius asking for aid against the barbarians c.430-54.
	<i>Cunedda and the Votadini are transplanted from north east of the Wall to Gwynedd, to expel the Irish.</i>
	Palladius is named the first bishop of Ireland 431, succeeded by Patrick.
	Witnesses in Gaul observe that some part of Britain has fallen into the hands of the Saxons c. 441. Possible revolt of the Foederati. <i>Nennius has Soemil becoming the first Anglian king of Deira.</i>
	Plague infects Britain and much of Europe c. 443-450
	Saint Germanus visits Britain a second time c. 445
	<i>c.450 Einon, son of Mor born. Sometimes called Ebrauc. Supposedly fortified Bamburgh, or Din Guairi.</i>
Odovacer deposes the emperor Romulus Augustulus in 476, and the emperor Julius Nepos is murdered in 480. The official end of the Western Empire.	<i>Einon's son is Eliffer Gosgorddfawr, "of the Great Army". Believed unbeatable when allied with Rheged and Gododdin.</i>
Northumbrian Kings	<i>c.510 Peredyr Aruen Dur "Steel-Arms" and his twin Gwrgi are born. Later they rule York jointly.</i>
	521 Birth of Saint Columba
<i>Decended from Woden, from Ossa (Otha?) and Eobba (Eoppa?), Ida takes Bamburgh (Din Guairi) as his capital (c. 547) of Bernicia.</i>	Gildas writes De Excidio Britanniae
<i>547-59 Ida of Bernicia</i>	
	Bubonic plague devastates Constantinople, reaching Britain 542-49
<i>559-60 Glappa of Bernicia</i>	Saint Columba establishes a monastery on Iona and

	begins his mission among the Picts 563-65
560-68 <i>Adda of Bernicia.</i>	Einon expels his nephew Gwenddoleu, son of his brother Ceidio. Gwenddoleu becomes King of Caer-Wenddoleu, about 10 miles north of Carlisle, at Carwinley, and becomes allied to Prince, later King (c.574) Aedan mac Gabhran of Dalriada.
c. 568-72 Aethelric of Bernicia. c.569-99 Aelle, son of Yffi, king of Deira	<i>Peredyr and Gwrgi rule York jointly</i>
572-9 Theodric of Bernicia.	<i>Dispute over the ownership of Caer-Laverack in 573. King Riderch Hael of Strathclyde, plus Peredyr & Gwrgi of York defeat Gwenddoleu and 2,100 men at Arderydd. Gwenddoleu is killed. Reputedly his bard Merlin goes mad.</i>
579-85 Frithuwald of Bernicia	<i>580 Peredyr and Gwrgi go north to put down the Anglians of Bernicia under King Adda (?). Both are killed at Caer-Greu.</i>
580 <i>Aelle of Deira takes over York.</i>	
584 Edwin born, fostered in Gwynedd by Cadfan, alongside his own son Cadwallon.	
585-92 Husa of Bernicia Aella killed fighting against Bernicia under prince, later king, Aethelfrith.	c.585 Siege of Lindisfarne (the Island of Metcaud) by Urbgen (Urien of Rhegd), Riderch hen, Guallauc (Gwallawg of Elmet) and Morcant. Urien is killed upon the instigation of Morcant..
C.592-604 Aethelfrith of Bernicia? 604-16 king of Northumberland.	c.598 The Battle of Catraeth. The British warband of Din Eidyn is wiped out under Mynydawc and Cynan.
Papal missionaries led by Augustine arrive at Canterbury. Death of Saint Columba at Iona 597	603 Aethelfrith defeats the Scots under Aedan mac-Gabran, at Degsastan. Aethelfrith exiles Edwin, son of Aella, and his brother-in-law, who takes shelter with King Raedwald of the East Angles.
599-604 Aethelric of Deira.	
605 Oswald born	608 Aedan mac-Gabran dies.
614 birth of Hild, from the Deiran dynasty.	613 Aethelfrith “the twister” wins the Battle of Chester, killing Selyf ap Cynan of Powys.
616 Aethelfrith dies in Battle on the river Idle against King Raedwald.	
616-33 Edwin King of Deira and Bretwalda	619 Edwin conquers Elmet and drives out its king Ceretic. Edwin goes on to conquer Anglesey and the Isle of Man c.620
626 Edwin kills five members of the West Saxon royal house.	
627 mission of Paulinus to Northumberland. Edwin baptised, possibly by Rhun, the son of Urien, first church at York. Penda becomes king of Mercia.	
630 Cuthbert born	
633 Edwin defeated and killed by Cadwalla of Gwynedd, and Penda, at Hatfield Chase near Doncaster. Penda kills both sons of Edwin.	Cadwalla further kills Eanfrith and Osric, apostate kings, who set themselves up after Edwin’s death.
634 Oswald, son of Aethelfrith becomes King of Northumbria by winning the Battle of Heavenfield, killing Cadwalla,	Oswald and after him Oswiu control southern Pictland, Dalriada, Strathclyde., Rheged and East Anglia. Around 638 Oswald takes Edinburgh.

with the help of Dalriada. 635 Organises a bishopric at Lindisfarne, or Holy Island under Aidan.	
642 Oswald killed at “Maserfelth”, or Maes Cogwy, traditionally Old Oswestry, by Penda of Mercia, the Britains under Cynddylan, aided by Oswald’s brother Oswiu, and his cousin Oswine. Oswald is buried in Lindidfarne.	641 Owain of Strathclyde wins the Battle of Strathcarron and kills Domall Brecc.
642-70 Oswiu becomes King of Bernica and Oswine of Deira. Oswiu assassinates Oswine in 651, and Oswiu’s son Alhfrith becomes sub-king of Deira.	
651 death of Saint Aidan. Cuthbert enters the monastery at Melrose	
655 Oswiu defeats Mercians at “Winwaed”, and kills Penda. The night before the battle Penda’s ally, Cadafael of Gwynedd withdrew his troops. Penda’s ally king Aethelhere of the East Angles is also killed. Founding of Whitby Abbey under Hild	
664 Synod of Whitby establishes ascendancy of the Roman Catholic Church. Cuthbert made Prior of Lindisfarne	Bishop Colman of Lindisfarne leaves for Iona
670-85 Ecgfrith	
672 Church at Ripon consecrated by bishop Wilfred	
c. 673 Birth of Bede	
674 foundation of the monastery at Wearmouth by Benedict Biscop	
676 Cuthbert leaves Lindisfarne for the seclusion of Inner Farne	
678 Consecration of the church at Hexham. Fall of Bishop Wilfred of York, and elsewhere	
680 Death of Saint Hild. A seven year old Bede entered the monastery of Wearmouth	
685 Benedict Biscop’s foundation of the church at Jarrow.	
685 Ecgfrith killed at the Battle of Nechtansmere.	The Britons of Strathclyde, the Dalriadan Scots and the Picts regain their independence
685-7 Cuthbert becomes bishop of Hexham	
685-705 Aldfrith. The first Northumbrian silver coins are minted.	
687 Death of Saint Cuthbert. Is buried at Lindisfarne, becomes a place of pilgrimage after 698 when the body is	

removed to a shrine.	
690 Death of Benedict Biscop	
698 Possible date for the production of the Lindisfarne Gospels	
c.700-50 production of Franks Casket	
705-16 Osred (murdered)	710 Picts send embassy to Jarrow requesting instruction in the Roman Church
716-18 Coenred	
718-29 Osric	
729-37 Ceolwulf (abdicated to enter religious house)	
731 Bede completes his Ecclesiastical History of the English People	
735 Birth of Alcuin, death of Bede.	
737-58 Eadberht of Bernicia (dies 768). Abdicated to enter religious house.	
744-779 (exiled) and 789-796 Aethelred of Deira	
758 Oswulf of Bernicia. Murdered by household.	
758-765 Aethelwol Moll (deposed)	
765-74 Alhred of Bernicia (exiled)	
767 Aethelberht becomes archbishop of York and Alcuin becomes head of the school. Alcuin becomes archbishop in 780.	
779-88 Aelfwald of Bernicia (murdered). Coins with a higher silver content introduced.	
782 Alcuin becomes head of the palace school at Aachen on the invitation of Charlemagne.	
788-789 Osred II of Bernicia. Was captured, tonsured at York and expelled. (died 792)	
789-796 (killed) Aethelred of Deira. Survives challenges from Eardwulf (exiled) in 790, and Osred (killed) in 792, perhaps with Frankish support. General shortage of silver.	
793 Viking raid on Lindisfarne	
796 Osbald king for 27 days, before exile with the Picts. Alcuin becomes abbot of St. Martin at Tours, where he dies in 804.	
796-806 Eardwulf. Not supported by Alcuin. Wins the Battle of Billington Moor against rebels in 798. Wars with Mercia in 801.	
806 Eardwulf expelled.	
806-808 Aelfwald II	
Eardwulf possibly returned with Frankish	

support 808-12
c. 808-840 Eanred
829 Northumbria submits to Egberht of Wessex, "bretwalda"
840-844 Aethelred II
844 Raedwulf
844-848 Aethelred II (murdered)
848-867 Osbert (expelled)
867 Aella
867 Capture of York by the Vikings
875 Saint Cuthbert's body leaves Lindisfarne, with Saint Oswald's head, and the shrine is re-established at Chester-le Street in 883.