



Editor's Note: In this issue, we begin to explore hats and head coverings in the Medieval and Renaissance period. Future articles will go into depth about other hat styles, for now we will give a general overview. These articles cannot begin to cover all the information and styles that were worn, but rather are intended to highlight some noteworthy and interesting styles to pique interest and stimulate the reader to learn more. Of course – all these kinds of hats were worn by the Middle Classes at work on during leisure.

Medieval and Early Period

Perhaps the most ancient and versatile of head covering is the hood. This garment can be traced as far back as the Etruscans and Romans, and was called the Cucullus. It was worn by shepherds and travellers.

In many cases, it was no more than a square of fabric joined together along the top and back seam, attached to a cape or other garment. Other designs were more elaborate. I have included several sketches of basic designs. These were worn through the ages up through the 15th Century.



Many of these hoods survived the cycles of fashion in the costume of the monastic orders, only to be revived after a few centuries in the public tastes.

The coif is another long-lived yet simple head covering. Cut and sewn along the same plan as the square hood above, it was generally worn by men in addition to their regular headgear. Indeed, my military men, it was referred to as an 'arming cap'.

Women in the 13th century often wore their hair up, padded and netted in a "**crispine**" (hair padded in a net with a headband) with a chinstrap. Also popular was the small cake-pan



shaped hat and a chinstrap called a "Barbette" or with a coif.

During the time of Edward II, the hood was again introduced with a new variation. Instead of wearing it upon one's head regularly, the face hole was put on the head around the brow, then the neckpiece and liripipe were tossed back casually or arranged in folds. Gentlemen and ladies all wore or carried this garment.



We cannot skip the dramatic ladies' headdresses of the late 15th Century. The most memorable is of course the Hennin or "pointy hat". As the 14th Century progressed, ladies *and* gentlemen's hats



began to get tall – seriously TALL... It is generally considered that this type of hat was worn first in France, then adopted in England. The picture here is the Middle Class version of this extravagant hat. Notice that it is still conical, but flat like a can shape with the big veiling that was typical of the style.

Notes:

You can submit articles or stories to the editor for future publication by emailing them to: martina@mlhdesigns.com – we'd love to hear from you! If you think a friend or colleague may be interested in receiving this newsletter, email us and we'll be glad to add them to our list!

- Shameless Plug -

If your interest in hats is piqued, call our office at 858-292-6083! We have a new line of hoods for ladies and men, as well as hats for late period costumes as well! Special orders are welcome anytime – no matter the style or period.