

The Collar Canvas

There is more work to be done on the collar at this point. First, you must trim the seam allowance off the canvas at the neck, and shoulder seams. The best way is to measure and draw out the seam allowance with pencil on the canvas, then carefully cut away. On the shoulder seam, you can either rest the scissors 'in the ditch' and cut carefully by feel, or you can fold the canvas under the seam, creasing well. Then just cut along the crease line. Either way, the canvas must end just about right on the seam line. It's probably best if it's a 16th of an inch off, to allow the wool to turn in though.

Using a tailor's ham, press open the collar and neck seam from the wrong side of the coat. This needs to be pressed well, or you will have a collar that pulls up the neck area. Press carefully, as you don't want to shrink or distort the neck area.



Place the canvas flush against the neck and shoulder seams, and baste to hold it in place. Using a cross stitch, secure the canvas from the ends of the collar, to the shoulder seam, across to the armscye. End the stitch just before you get to the inlay that should still be in the armscye.



Recreating a Federal Enlisted Frock Coat

Next, find the collar pattern you drafted without seam allowances. To test the fit, put it inside one half of the collar, underneath the piping. Take note of any adjustments that are needed.

Lay the collar on your canvas, following the grain lines as with the wool collar. It should be placed with the center on the fold. Trace around, but this time, keep the corners square. You'll trim them after to get a perfect fit.



When cutting out the collar canvas, cut on the outside of the chalk lines, to make the canvas slightly larger than necessary. This is to prevent making it too small, which would cause issues with the collar stance.

Mark the center line of the canvas, and insert the canvas into the collar underneath the layers of piping, as well as the trimmed and turned edge of the collar (you trimmed that very close to the piping seam line). Starting from the center, baste to one side, then do the same for the opposite. When basting, you want the bottom side of the canvas to be perfectly flush with the bottom row of piping. This way, you only have to trim the top.



Module Ten — The Lining and Collar Revisited



With your scissors 'in the ditch' of the upper piping seam, carefully trim away the excess canvas, starting at the front, and working your way to the other side. The canvas should end up being 1/16th shorter than the seam line.



Recreating a Federal Enlisted Frock Coat

Using a cross stitch, stitch the lower piping down to the canvas. As you are doing this, try to keep a neutral tension on the canvas and collar. You don't want pulling or pushing of the canvas, or the collar will not stand straight. Also, catch only the canvas, and try not to go through to the wool, or it will be seen.



After the bottom piping is cross stitched, move on to the top piping. It's helpful to flip the piping layers around at the ends so that the upper piping is overlapping the bottom piping. Cross stitch along the top piping, again keeping a neutral tension.



Module Ten — The Lining and Collar Revisited

Bar tack

At either end of the collar, where the piping meets, you may have noticed that the stitching does not meet. You need to sew a bar tack there for extra strength. Knot your thread, insert the needle between the layers of piping, and sew about 5 or 6 stitches in place, catching both layers of piping, and the collar fabric itself. This will be very difficult to see later on, and will be further strengthened when the facing is attached.



Piping Ends

The loose ends of the piping must now be sewn down to the canvas with a cross stitch. Sew down one piping, then the other, catching only the canvas, not the forepart. Again, do not allow any tension to form here, or it will be noticeable on the front and collar.



On the left side of the coat, where the buttonholes will be, you need to leave room for them. I try to cross stitch these ends as close to the collar as possible, and only from the top edge of the piping.

This allows me to move the piping later on if it is in the way of the buttonhole. Sewing buttonholes through multiple layers of piping is not fun to do.



Pocket and Vent Facing

Enlisted frock coats had a strip of cloth covering the tops of the pockets and vent. This served two purposes: one, to cover the untidy areas of the coat, and two, to aid in the drape of the coat back.

Cutting



To begin, measure the distance from the center back seam, to the end of the pocket, then add one inch. In my case, I my measurement was 8 inches. On wool fabric, draw a rectangular piece 1 ½ inch wide, by your measurement in length. These should be cut on the bias if possible, or at least semi bias. Use up those scraps of fabric you indubitably have.



Recreating a Federal Enlisted Frock Coat

Cut out both pieces, and with right sides together, lay both pieces on top of the waist seam. There should be some extra space on the vent side for a seam allowance. Now draw a chalk mark continuing in line with the center back seam, on the facing piece. This is the stitching line, and should be at an angle corresponding with your waist seam.



Sew this seam, trim the seam allowance to $\frac{1}{4}$ inch, and press the seam open.



Module Ten — The Lining and Collar Revisited

Next, lay the facing piece wrong sides together on the coat, centering the center back seams. Starting from the center back, baste one side to the coat. When you get to the end, the lining may be in the way. Remove a few basting stitches from the lining if necessary, and ensure that the facing will lie beneath the lining.



Repeat the basting for the other side.



Recreating a Federal Enlisted Frock Coat

Carefully fell the facing to the coat. When sewing, be sure your stitches do not show on the right side of the coat. Also, when you get to the edge of the pocket facings, it's a good idea to take a few extra stitches in place, for strength. You don't want the stitches tearing open when reaching into your pocket.

If you have any bubbles or loose areas that appear in the facing piece, you can very carefully shrink those away with the iron. Don't use too much pressure, as you don't want to affect the coat body.

Felling the Lining

It's now time to permanently sew down the lining. At the shoulder, baste about 1 inch from the shoulder seam. Then turn the raw edge of the seam allowance over, and baste that down as shown.



Module Ten — The Lining and Collar Revisited

Along the waist line, and diagonally up towards the side piece and armhole, turn the raw seam allowances over as well, and baste. The basting and turning over ends at the armhole, which remains as it was.

Finally, catching only a stitch or two of the lining, fell the lining down using 8 to 10 stitches per inch. The stitches should be almost invisible. Remember not to let the stitches show through to the right side of the coat.

