MILITARY GREAT-COATS.
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Royal Army Medical Corps.

Most nations carry this article of clothing in addition to the actual clothing worn on the person; there are, however, exceptions to this rule, as the French and Spaniards (in winter) wear their great-coats always as a part of their ordinary clothing. This custom also obtained in Italy until very recently. The Americans do not as a rule carry a great-coat, but replace it with a poncho and a blanket. The Norwegians have actually given up a great-coat altogether and have substituted a thick sweater and sleeping bag in its place.

In designing a great-coat for infantry there are many difficulties to be overcome. At present such a coat must be suitable to wear in peace time as well as on service, and must be a garment that will not hold a man up to ridicule. It is an expensive article and economy has to be studied in choosing the material. There are other difficulties which will be dealt with in turn.

Material.—The garment being carried primarily for warmth, the material should be of wool on account of its well-known properties. The rain-resisting properties apart from any waterproofing process depend on the milling—the heavier milled the cloth the more resistant it is to rain. The old dark blue cloth (4 B) used in the manufacture of Cavalry and Royal Artillery cloaks and great-coats was a very efficient water repellant material.

Waterproofing of the Material.—Great Britain stands alone in making a practice of subjecting the great-coat material to such a process.

The acetate of lead and alum process is the basis of nearly all the methods adopted to render cloth impervious to rain. The solution is said to destroy temporarily the capillary attraction of the wool fibres. The increase in weight caused by this process is very little, being usually estimated at one half per cent, or half an ounce per coat.

Some additions to the solution are made by different firms to increase the value of the process, but the nature of these is not usually divulged. In some cases glue is added, in other cases tannin. Other makers adopt a system of impregnating the fabric.
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with paraffin wax in one way or another, but this cannot be applied satisfactorily to woollen goods.

Some of the Waterproofing Methods.—(1) Hiller [1] describes the acetate of lead and alum process as follows:—

It is best carried out in a shrinking department of a factory, as the hot moist vapours evolved during the hot pressing of the cloth open up the wool fibres and render them more capable of absorbing the chemicals. The cloth is placed still warm in a freshly prepared solution of acetate of alum which is 0.8 to 1.2 per cent strong. This is prepared by dissolving 333 grm. of sulphate of alum and 567 grm. of lead acetate each in 10 litres of water and then mixing them. A white precipitate of the acid sulphate of lead is at once formed which sinks to the bottom. The clear upper fluid is decanted off, giving approximately 20 litres of a 1 per cent solution of acetate of alum. The material is then dipped in this solution for one hour and then removed, the excess of fluid being allowed to drain off. Next the stuff is passed through clean water to remove all the acetate still remaining between the fibres. It is then hung up in a dark, well-ventilated room to dry. A deposit of acetate of alum forms on the wool fibres and adheres firmly to them. During the drying process water and acetic acid are given off and as a result the acid acetate of alum is changed into the basic salt which has a less strong acid smell than the acid salt and gives to the fibres the water-resisting powers. Hot ironing of material thus treated must be avoided as heat will decompose this basic salt, leaving nothing but a fine powder of aluminium oxide. The water-resisting powers of material thus treated can be enhanced by putting it when dry into a solution of isinglass, 5 grm. to the litre, or a solution of gelatine, 6 to 8 grm. to the litre.

(2) Dujardin's [2] solution for waterproofing:—

\[
\begin{align*}
    & \text{Alum} \quad \ldots \quad \ldots \quad \ldots \quad \ldots \quad 10 \text{ grm.} \\
    & \text{Acetate of lead} \quad \ldots \quad \ldots \quad \ldots \quad \ldots \quad 10 " \\
    & \text{Potassium bicarbonate} \quad \ldots \quad \ldots \quad \ldots \quad \ldots \quad 6 " \\
    & \text{Sodium sulphate} \quad \ldots \quad \ldots \quad \ldots \quad \ldots \quad 6 " \\
    & \text{Water} \quad \ldots \quad \ldots \quad \ldots \quad \ldots \quad 1,500 \text{ c.c.} \\
\end{align*}
\]

\( \text{Solution A.} \)

\[
\begin{align*}
    & \text{Sodium sulphate} \quad \ldots \quad \ldots \quad \ldots \quad \ldots \quad 6 " \\
    & \text{Soft soap} \quad \ldots \quad \ldots \quad \ldots \quad \ldots \quad 4.5 \text{ grm.} \\
    & \text{Water} \quad \ldots \quad \ldots \quad \ldots \quad \ldots \quad 1,500 \text{ c.c.} \\
\end{align*}
\]

\( \text{Solution B.} \)

The material is first placed in solution A, then dried and removed to solution B.


(a) The material is placed in a 3 per cent solution of sulphate of alum for ten hours.
(b) Next in a soap solution of the same strength as solution B of Dujardin’s method.

(c) Dried.

(d) Then placed in a solution made up as follows:—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paraffin fusible, at 53° C.</th>
<th>...</th>
<th>...</th>
<th>2 parts.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vaseline</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>1 part.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

25 grm. of this mixture are dissolved in 1 litre of petrol.

It has been suggested that the natural wool fat of wool should not be removed as it is Nature’s protection of animals against rain, and the waterproofing methods using paraffin as part of the process are an imitation of this. In practice it has been found that when natural grease is left in the material cloths cannot be stocked for long owing to the decomposition of the oil which renders the material sour, mouldy, and covered with spots, and gives it an offensive smell.

It should be borne in mind that the great-coat is intended primarily for warmth and that the waterproofing is a comparatively modern idea. Such procedures have been adopted chiefly because when a coat is soaked with water its protective power against cold and its permeability are diminished and its weight considerably increased.

If a material is rendered quite waterproof it loses its permeability completely, which is most undesirable, and all that can be aimed at is to obtain a showerproof great-coat. By treating cloth by Hiller’s process there is very little loss in the permeability; in fact, Munson, quoting Hiller, states that the “unimpregnated fabric allowed in a given time 54 litres of air to pass through, and if the cloth was waterproofed 52·98 litres passed, showing a very slight difference. The same cloth unproofed and saturated with water allowed only 14·9 litres to pass and the saturated treated cloth allowed 39·8 litres to pass.”

However well showerproofed a cloth may be, water will percolate through the seams of the garments, and in heavy rain drops will be driven through the cloth on the shoulders of the coat. If the wearer is marching or riding in rain, friction or movement of any particular place removes the protective substance and allows rain to soak through the cloth. There is no doubt that with wear, coats so treated soon lose their showerproof qualities. The process is, however, very cheap.

Shape.—A certain amount of overlapping in front tends to give more efficient protection, so that some compromise between a double and single-breasted coat is desirable. A short coat after
the style of the British-warm coat so popular in South Africa is
good, but if a long coat is preferred it should not reach below the
centre of the calf and the skirt in front should be made to button
back. Cuffs which turn down are to be avoided as they collect dust,
or water according to the weather conditions. The best way of
affording warmth and protection at the wrist is to have a band which
can be tightened up. A cloth belt round the waist is a useful adjunct,
as by fastening it the belly can be kept warm. Most coats have a
strap and buckle at the back, but a belt is probably better. The
common falling collar buttoning up across the throat by a tongue
need not be too high if a linen hood be added which collapses and
folds in between the two layers of the collar. The Germans have
such a hood, and when it is in position on the head the ordinary
headgear can be worn. Such a hood is worn not only for sleeping
purposes, but also to prevent water from running down the neck.
The coat should fit loosely to avoid impeding the movements of the
body, and should leave between it and the next garment a thin
layer of air which will assist in preventing heat loss.

Great Britain.—We do not hear of great-coats or cloaks being
used in the British Army until the reign of Elizabeth [3].

The fact that these articles are a serious weight for the soldier
to carry has always troubled commanding officers; it is recorded
that General Lord Pembroke [4] ordered the tails of the great­
coats and cavalry cloaks to be cut off to lessen the weight of equip­
ment of the troops under his command in Spain during the reign
of Queen Anne.

Walton [5] says: "There is no evidence to show that what are
now termed great-coats were issued to the infantry soldier earlier
than 1685 or 1689, and there is evidence that they did not form
a regular portion of the equipment although 'centry-gowns,' or in
modern phrase watch-coats, were supplied and kept in repair at
the expense of the Crown for the use of the men in inclement
weather and at night."

The men were not provided with great-coats at the public
expense until 1798 [6], when for the first time the whole of the
troops were given coats, but it was left to the colonels to maintain
them out of the allowance granted for watch-coats. These watch­
coats were supplied gratis to the troops. One shilling a year per
man was allowed to commanding officers for these watch-coats,
but after 1798, by the abolition of lapels, twenty pence were saved
on the price of a soldier's coat and given for the purpose of keeping
up the great-coats provided by the State. It was not until 1855 that
Royal warrants relieved the colonels of regiments from supplying the clothing of the men [7].

In 1858 the first officially manufactured great-coats were issued to the Army; they were made of Irish frieze.

**Military Great-coat (Weights).**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Pattern</th>
<th>Actual weight of College specimen</th>
<th>Other weights given</th>
<th>Authority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Great Britain</td>
<td>1762. Grenadiers</td>
<td>2,346 5 2</td>
<td></td>
<td>Fortescue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Past)</td>
<td>1832</td>
<td>2,346 5 2</td>
<td></td>
<td>Marshall.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1851</td>
<td>2,346 5 2</td>
<td></td>
<td>Napier.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1860 Riflemen</td>
<td>2,346 5 2</td>
<td></td>
<td>Parkes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Present)</td>
<td>Dark grey</td>
<td>2,714 6 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mark iv, drab</td>
<td>2,714 6 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>vi</td>
<td>2,714 6 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>&quot;Mantel&quot;</td>
<td>2,714 6 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Europe, grey</td>
<td>2,714 6 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Asia, grey</td>
<td>2,714 6 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>Capote, blue</td>
<td>2,714 6 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Manteau-pélerine</td>
<td>2,714 6 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Alpine troops)</td>
<td>2,714 6 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>1905, dark blue</td>
<td>2,714 6 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>Old pattern, dark blue</td>
<td>2,714 6 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>Grey, 1906</td>
<td>2,714 6 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S.A.</td>
<td>Olive drab with hood, 1911</td>
<td>2,714 6 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>Dark grey (old)</td>
<td>2,714 6 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brown (new)</td>
<td>2,714 6 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>Blanket coat with hood, 1905</td>
<td>2,714 6 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ordinary, drab</td>
<td>2,714 6 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 The French and Italian great-coats are always carried on the person, though the latter Power is gradually abolishing this system. The American great-coat is not meant to be carried as part of the soldier's kit.
From that date onwards our soldiers have been provided with a great-coat at the public expense, and the life of such a coat is at present laid down as five years.

Dr. Robert Jackson's [8] views on great-coats are interesting. He says: "Besides the fashion of the coat (tunic) here recommended, a cloak or mantle, as better calculated to protect the body against impressions from cold when exercise is suspended and rest commences, is an essential part of a soldier's equipment. It has advantages over the blanket and great-coat (watch-coat), inasmuch as it answers the purpose of both. A soldier in the present times (1804) carries a blanket for the sake of warmth which it affords at night; a great-coat is provided for the protection of himself and his arms from rain when on duty. A great-coat is not held to be sufficient protection against cold at night; a blanket is therefore provided for night covering, and hence two things are provided for a purpose which might be answered by one. A cloak made in the form of the Portugal cloak, the cloth close and duffel and coarse woollen cloth, so as to be both light and warm, and manufactured by incorporating grease or oil with the raw material so as to be little penetrable to wet, sufficiently long to cover the feet when the knees are bent, and provided with buttons and loops that it may be tucked up in marching, is to be considered as sufficient defence against the cold of the night in the common circumstances of service. It defends the body from rain when on duty, and it does not encumber with unnecessary weight in travelling. Such are the properties of the military cloak, and viewed in this light it is evidently a most useful provision to a soldier's equipment."

In another place he complains of the quality of the clothing then supplied. "With a great-coat and boots of the manufacture of 1760, a person might travel for half a day in heavy rain without being wet to the skin. With a coat of the manufacture of the present day he is drenched to the skin by a summer shower, and his feet are wet by the dew which hangs on the grass of a summer's morning."

For many years the dark blue cloth cloaks and great-coats of the mounted services gave every satisfaction.

This cloth (4B) weighed, unwaterproofed, 30\(\frac{1}{4}\) to 31\(\frac{1}{4}\) oz. per yard of 56 in., and cost 6s. a yard. It was a very heavily milled fabric, and even unwaterproofed had very substantial rain-resisting properties.

During the same period the infantry had the "great-coat cloth grey," which was made from waterproofed material weighing 31 to
32 oz. per yard of 56 in. wide. This coat gave satisfaction as regards wear, but its waterproof qualities were, however, not so satisfactory as in the case of the blue coat.

In 1900-1 General Vetch's Committee on Clothing [9], which recommended the adoption of the present field service uniform and aimed at the reduction in the weight of the great-coat, recommended the adoption of a lighter cloth of the general service drab colour.

This cloth, unshrunken and unwaterproofed, only weighed 26 to 27 oz. per yard 56 in. wide; the price of the material was 5s. 4d. a yard, and was softer than the grey cloth of the old infantry coat.

The pattern approved was on the lines of the original "aqua­scutum" coat, loosely made, with great room in the sleeves (leg-of-mutton-shaped) and a slit in the side to allow the hands to gain access to the inner garments, a small cape over the shoulders, and folding 6 in. cuffs.

This coat in later patterns (Mark iv) was shorn of the cape and cuffs and the large sleeves were also discarded.

On account of adverse reports as to the rain-resisting properties and the want of warmth of this material, a return was made to a heavier weight of cloth in the manufacture of great-coats in 1905, cuffs again being added to the sleeves. The cloth which is now being used in the manufacture of the present pattern (Mark vi) of great-coat, shrunk and waterproofed, weighs 33 to 33½ oz. per yard of 56 in. Although by the adoption of the lighter cloth about one pound was saved in weight, its efficiency as a warm garment, the primary object of a great-coat, was impaired, while further, these coats were very absorbent of moisture and at once became sodden in rain.

The present coat, Mark vi, is a warm and showerproof garment, but is heavy. The official weight is 6 lb. 8 oz., but some of the coats weigh even more, a size 6, which is the commonest size obtained from Pimlico, weighing 6 lb. 12 oz. The coats are unlined except for the sleeves.

The coats are manufactured in twelve sizes, the difference in weight between each being 3 or 4 oz. The blue great-coat of the Guards weighs 7 lb., but it is not taken on service.

As the Expeditionary Force is not equipped with blankets, unless especially ordered, the soldier goes on service carrying his great-coat, and with a waterproof sheet in the second line transport as his only means of protection against the elements.

The question arises, could he not be better protected for the
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6 lb. 8 oz., the weight of the great-coat he carries, by cutting off the skirts of the great-coat, which means the saving of 1½ lb., and utilizing this weight for overalls?

The present overcoat is not a practical garment for sleeping in, as during sleep the skirts are very easily displaced. There is always one part of the body uncovered, and even the part covered is not sheltered from the wind, which will penetrate from all directions. It is an impossible garment in which to march. The legs of a man on the march do not feel cold and it is unnecessary to cover them.

With the different equipments the great-coat has been carried in varying positions. With the old square knapsack it was carried in a roll on the top. As the coat had to be rolled up very neatly, a process which required three men, some regiments carried it horseshoe fashion round the knapsack, which was a better plan. Later the coat was carried on the back of the pack, which was an objectionable position, since the weight was thus placed further from the centre of gravity. In the valise equipment, introduced after the Eyre Committee in 1865, the great-coat was carried high up on the back above the valise. In the valise equipment (1888) it was carried rolled tightly attached to the belt. The men of the Royal Army Medical Corps still use the belt and coat straps of this equipment. This method of carrying the great-coat could hardly be worse as it makes it necessary for the belt to be worn tight, and even then the whole bundle tends to sag and bump on the buttocks. The men at the depot are now carrying the coat en banderole which is a better though by no means an ideal way.

In the Bandolier equipment (1903) the great-coat was again carried in web straps high up on the back. With the present web equipment (1908) it is carried inside the pack.

On many occasions great-coats have been carried on transport or actually left behind, and this would relieve the soldier of a very considerable weight. In the Peninsula, when tents were carried for the troops, the Duke of Wellington [10] ordered that the great-coats should be left behind, and in the South African War the Natal Field Force [11] almost always had their coats carried for them in the regimental transport, and an instance of how separation from this article caused distress occurred to the infantry bivouacking on the top of Botha's Pass after its capture on June 8, 1900, when they suffered greatly from cold. The troops with the Tibet Mission (1903-04) carried either a great-coat, posh-teen, or coat, British-warm.
Fig. 1.—French Infantry Great-coat.
France.—The French wear their great-coat on all occasions and are the only people who are consistent in this practice. This practice was in vogue during the Crimean War [12].

Many French writers have argued that it causes unnecessary fatigue. The experiences of an Englishman in Morocco do not bear this out. He writes: "One would have thought that the long great-coat would be the most uncomfortable article of clothing, very ill-suited for campaigning in a hot climate; but the Legionary swears by it, and says it is cool in summer and warm in winter, an easy thing to march in, with its flaps buttoned back, and a warm thing to sleep in, with its flaps let down" [13].

It has been argued that it is better to carry the great-coat actually on the person than rolled on the knapsack, but in the event of rain the coat will take up more water on account of its large surface. Most Continental armies carry the great-coat rolled up in the tent piece, and as a rule do not put on the coat for marching during a march.

The present great-coat is double-breasted and made of blue-grey cloth. It has a stand-up collar fastening by a hook and eye. It used to have detachable red epaulettes, but these have lately been discarded. On the left-hand side of the coat there is a leather-lined loop of cloth which buttons over the belt and maintains it in position. The front corners of the skirts have button-holes and they can be buttoned back to a button at the bottom of the skirt pocket opening. This is the normal way of wearing the coat. The sleeves have no cuffs, but can be buttoned back if desired. There is the usual tightening cloth belt behind. This is the only coat with a stand-up collar, and when the men wearing the kepi are marching in rain there is nothing to prevent water running down their necks. Regulations lay down that the coat should be 330 mm. (13 in.) from the ground.

It is not a heavy garment, weighing 2,160 grm. (4½ lb.), and experiments have lately been made with an even lighter coat, weighing only 1,500 grm. (3½ lb.). This is made of lighter material with a falling collar, cape and bronzed buttons. In place of the epaulettes there are cloth shoulder straps with a small roll of cloth at the outer end. The Austrians have a similar contrivance on the right shoulder only. The great-coat is not waterproofed, and Lemoine states it will take up as much as 2 kilos (4·4 lb.) of water.

Trials have been made with waterproofed coats, but the results were bad. The men complained that the coats were stiff, that
Fig. 2.—German Infantry great-coat.
they wore badly, and that the weight was increased, though such a coat treated by the aluminium acetate process showed only an increase of 16 grm. (0'6 oz.)

FIG. 3.—German Infantry great-coat (cotton hood in position).

Alpine troops (Chasseurs alpins) carry their great-coat (Manteau-pelerine or Manteau à capuchon) rolled horse-shoe shaped round their knapsack. This coat has a detachable hood.
The Zouaves and Tirailleurs of the African troops carry a blue-grey cape with hood (Le collet à capuchon) on their knapsacks.

The men of the Foreign Legion (Regiments étrangers) and the bataillons d'Afrique have the ordinary great-coat (capote), which may be worn or carried as circumstances require.

Germany.—In 1714 the great-coat was abolished in the Prussian army by Frederick William I. and was only re-introduced in 1807 during the reign of Frederick William II., when it took the place of woollen blankets carried on special wagons.

The early great-coat reached below the calf and had a standing collar. By 1871 it had been shortened and provided with a falling collar and hood [14].

The present German great-coat is made from grey cloth 2 mm. thick, with a porosity (Porenvolume) of 63 per cent. It is not waterproofed in any way. The pattern now in use has been considerably lightened. The lining and hood have been abolished and a compromise between double and single breast has been arrived at [15].

There is a falling collar which covers a cotton hood; this hood, in spite of its lightness, affords protection to the head and ears without impeding the hearing and can be worn with the helmet in position; further, it prevents water from running down the neck. There are hooks on the front corners of the skirt which can be utilized as in the French coat. The sleeves have large cuffs which can be turned down to cover the hands. There are two leather-lined openings on each side at the waist level through which the belt passes.

Experiments have shown that this coat dipped in water absorbed six litres, and after wringing still contained four [16].

Austria.—Until 1866 the Austrians used to march in their great-coats; since then they have carried them on their knapsacks [17].

The present great-coat is made of dark blue cloth, double-breasted, with a falling collar and cuffs. There are hooks at the corners of the skirt in front which engage in eyes sewn to the underside of the garment. It is carried wrapped in the tent piece round the knapsack.

Russia.—"An essential part of the Russian soldier's dress is the great-cloak, which in the Battle of Alma so much surprised the English. Made of rough but strong, long-napped, mouse-grey cloth, reaching beyond the knees, it resembles a sac-paletot, or great overcoat. Large enough to fit over a soldier's full equipment,
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it allows of being contracted about the waist from the inside by means of string or tape. In time of war, this paletot serves a great many purposes: as a cloak, a morning coat, a bed cover, and rain protector. In cold weather, it is worn on the march; after rain, when the ordinary uniform is wet through, the paletot alone is worn till the clothes get dry” [18].

Such was the great-coat of the Russians during the Crimean War, and a somewhat similar, though not so voluminous, coat is still in use.

It is a double-breasted coat made of light brown coarse cloth, fastening across the chest by hooks and eyes. There is a turn-down collar and cuffs to the sleeves. It can be gathered in behind by the use of a strap and buttons. (In addition to this, each man has a hood or “bashilk” made of camels’-hair cloth with long ends which can be, rolled round the neck. When the great-coat is worn the hood hangs on the man’s back and the loose ends are crossed on the chest and tucked under the waist-belt.) The coat is carried en banderole, the shelter tent piece and accessories being wrapped in it.

Italy.—Until very recently the Italian soldier always wore his great-coat. The coat was worn over the shirt for all kinds of work. It was made of dark blue cloth, single-breasted, with one row of white metal buttons. There was a small turn-down collar, but no cuffs. Instead of shoulder straps on the point of the shoulder there were small epaulettes in the shape of a roll of cloth. The tails of this coat were turned back from the front and joined by buttoning them together behind the back.

The Alpine regiments clothed with the new grey-green uniform have no great-coat and carry instead a short, wide, green cape.

Sweden.—The Swedes carry a large double-breasted overcoat of grey cloth in a horseshoe-shaped roll round the knapsack. The tent piece forms the outer covering of this roll. The coat is lined for three quarters of its length with the same material. Hooks are sewn on the front corners of the skirt, to allow of them being turned back.

United States.—The new olive-drab great-coat is not carried on the person and is not meant for use on service. It is a double-breasted coat made of cloth, lined throughout with brown twill. There is a detachable hood fastened to five buttons round the base of the collar. The large stand and fall collar fastens across the throat by one large hook and eye. The coat has no shoulder straps, but there is the usual strap behind.
Japan.—The ordinary service coat is a double-breasted garment made of drab-coloured woollen cloth with a non-detachable hood. The free edges of the front of the skirt instead of being cut straight slope outwards below the waist, making the skirts of the coat lap over more completely below, thus preventing them from gaping, and protecting the legs and knees from rain when marching. The
skirts can be buttoned back as in the French coat. The front is fastened up by five buttons placed diagonally. Hooks are provided at the waist level to support the belt when the equipment is worn.

In Manchuria a special unlined khaki-coloured blanket-coat was issued to the troops. This was an excellent garment made of coarse cloth and not meant to last more than about six months. The coat was very roomy with a large vent behind allowing the accoutrements to be worn underneath it. There was a large falling collar lined with sheep's skin in which a cotton hood similar to the German hood collapsed.

All fastenings except that of the large tongue buttoning across the throat were made by hooks and eyes. A detachable waist-belt of the same material enabled the coat to be drawn in at the waist. On each side just below the shoulders there was a cloth loop through which passed the tape to which the mitts were attached. This was an ingenious way of preventing the loss of these articles.

Switzerland.—For some time experiments have been in progress with a poncho (la tente manteau du Dr. Koller), which would replace the great-coat. It consists of a rectangular waterproof piece 2 metres (6 ft.) long and 1.3 metres (4½ ft.) wide. There is a hole or slit in the centre for the head and it is worn over all the accoutrements. So far it has only been adopted officially for the cavalry.

REFERENCES.

[9] “Report of the Committee (General Vetech) on the Clothing for British Soldiers, Peace and War, 1900-01.”