Nineteenth-Century Costume Treasures

Nineteenth-Century
Costume Treasures
of the
Fashion Archives and Museum
1800 - 1900

Karin J. Bohleke

Shippensburg University
Fashion Archives and Museum

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From the Director

The Fashion Archives and Museum has now graced the Shippensburg University campus for thirty years. What began as rack of historical clothing in Dr. Elizabeth Thompson's basement—realia used to enhance her sociology lectures and to bring her students closer to their cultural past—is now a comprehensive collection of approximately 15,000 items dating from the late eighteenth century through the twentieth. The journey from single rack to major collection has not always been an easy one: the Fashion Archives and Museum has survived the possibility of closure and a needless man-made flood. The collection would not have overcome these difficulties and others if it had not been for the dedicated staff, volunteers, students and faculty who have invested their time and talents in the facility. With them lies the finest moments in the history of the Fashion Archives. The donors, too, have an equal share: they have gone into their attics, closets and trunks and generously given tangible pieces of their own past and that of their forebears for all to enjoy and to study. Nothing brings us closer to our ancestors—their aesthetics, fads, values, technology and skills, luxury and poverty, pastimes and entertainments—than the clothing they wore.

In celebration of our thirtieth anniversary, I am pleased to present this sampling of our finest and most important garments representing the evolution of nineteenth-century fashion, decade by decade. Some of these items are now displayed for the first time. Several local pieces are on display, illustrating that high fashion was not just limited to Philadelphia, Boston and New York. Many of them belonged to families in Shippensburg and nearby towns. Still others belonged to Dr. Thompson and were an important part of her personal collection; even in death she continues to give to the museum that she founded, nurtured, fought for, and loved. I never had the pleasure of meeting her—I certainly wish I had. The generous support in the form of a grant from the William and Esther Richmond Foundation made possible the important purchase of new mannequins for this show—ones that could be customized to fit the clothing on exhibit. The same grant also made possible archival wet cleaning and conservation of several objects. I believe Dr. Thompson would be thrilled to see the care that these garments have received and how they are now displayed. It is to this indomitable and determined woman that this exhibit and this catalog are fondly and appreciatively dedicated.

Karin J. Bohleke

A Tribute to Dr. Elizabeth Thompson

By Gary Willhide

Liz Thompson was a Renaissance woman. Her interests encompassed a wide array of topics: advertising, women's roles in society, travel, jazz, needlepoint, photography, theatre, walking her schipperkes and tending her day lilies at her summer home on Cayuga Lake near Ithaca, New York. She had well-defined goals for personal and professional achievement and pursued them relentlessly. Everything she did, she did with her "damn the torpedoes, full steam ahead" energy.

The Shippensburg University Fashion Archives and Museum started as a rack of vintage clothes in Liz's basement, a collection that she accumulated in the 1970s through purchases at auctions, estate sales and antique shops. Studying fashion as one way to help her sociology students understand the evolution of American society seemed perfectly logical to Liz, although many of her professional colleagues at Shippensburg University did not share that view. She worked tirelessly to establish the academic legitimacy of such an endeavor and to assemble the resources to make it happen. Those early struggles call to mind of one of Liz's favorite lines, found in cartoonist Bob Thaves' 1982 "Frank and Ernest" strip about Fred Astaire. It said, "Sure he [Fred] was great, but don't forget that Ginger Rogers did everything Fred Astaire did, but backwards and in high heels."

Liz was not fond of high heels (unless she was studying popular culture!) and she did few things backwards, but she did dance through her life with skill and determination. In advancing the Fashion Archives, she could be persuasive, gentle, cajoling or arm-twisting. She could network with the best of us and, on more than one occasion, she would break down in frustrated sobs over the obstacles thrown in her path. But she never gave up. The passion she brought to this effort converted many of her adversaries (but, admittedly, it just annoyed others!).

Liz was one of the most motivated, interesting and industrious people I have ever met. When she retired and wanted to travel, we coordinated our plans to meet in interesting places. We once met for a burger at a Wimpy's just off Piccadilly Circus in London prior to a trip that took us to Bath and up the Thames to Greenwich and to London museums and theatres. Another time, we met at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center in Cody, Wyoming, just prior to a trip to Yellowstone (where I took the photo of Liz that was featured at her memorial service), to Glacier National Park in Montana and to the Wolf Education Research Center in Winchester, Idaho, where she met Lakota, a wolf she was sponsoring—that was another of her passions. There were other trips through Native-American country in Arizona and New Mexico.

The Fashion Archives was just one of the accomplishments of this remarkable woman. Her first professional priority was her teaching. While she considered the Fashion Archives as an important resource for her teaching, her finest hours were those spent interacting with the thousands of students, on many of whose lives she had a profound impact, during her tenure at Shippensburg. They were, far and away, her greatest joy.

In the spring of 2003, as her illness progressed, she told me she wanted to go the annual Indian Market at the Eiteljorg Museum in Indianapolis,

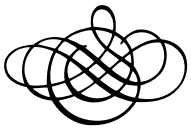
but was not sure she had the strength to do it. The event was in June. I told her I would fly to Pennsylvania and, if she were able, we would drive to Indianapolis. It worked out, and I think that trip was the greatest gift she ever gave me. She took a week-long vacation from her illness and reveled in the journey. She was not eating well, but she became uncharacteristically fond of the comfort food served at Cracker Barrel, so we searched for one nearly every mealtime, and usually found one.

She explored the Eiteljorg Museum, one of the finest collections of Native American and American West memorabilia anywhere. We spent two days at the Indian Market and Liz bought a painting from one of her favorite Navajo painters. It barely fit into her small SUV that we were driving. We giggled and rested and stood in line for fry bread and paid our respects to artists we had met and patronized at other Indian Markets. For a week, the illness was put on the back burner, but we both knew it would be our last trip. Liz died four months later.

The Fashion Archives and Museum stands as an enduring memorial to Liz. It would not have come into being without her commitment. It is fitting that those of us who continue to support and enjoy the Fashion Archives pause from time to time to acknowledge her contribution. And, in our own lives, it sometimes pays to reflect on one of Liz's favorite bumper stickers: "Well-behaved women rarely make history" (Laurel Thatcher Ulrich).

Gary Willhide met Liz in 1971, when he rented an apartment next to hers in Shippensburg. He was her neighbor, her friend, her colleague, her shoulder and her traveling companion for more than 30 years, even though his work eventually took him to Oregon. Willhide was the public relations director at Shippensburg University from 1971 to 1988 and the director of public affairs at the Oregon Institute of Technology from 1988 to 2005. He currently works as a magazine editor in Palm Springs, California.

La mode! c'est la vie d'une femme:
elle n'existe, ne respire,
que pour se rendre belle!



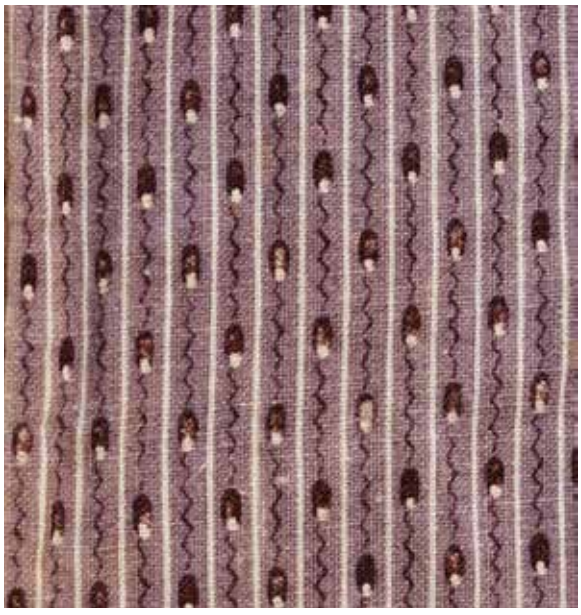
Fashion! It is the life of a woman:
she exists and breathes only to make
herself beautiful!

Lady's Magazine and Museum, August 1837

Cotton Work Dress, 1790-1810

This simple cotton dress descended through a Pennsylvania family with a small label that reads "Aunt Margaret's Dress." Subsequent research revealed that the Aunt Margaret in question was an owner of the dress at one point, but that it had been made long before she was born. The stout figure who wore it originally was most likely well past the first blush of youth and even beyond her childbearing years. Ordinary work attire has rarely survived, which makes this unevenly faded cotton dress far more important than its unassuming appearance. The dress contains a number of features that make it difficult to date with precision. The bodice construction shares a number of characteristics with its eighteenth-century counterparts in that it has no bust or shaping darts, and the bodice pieces have more in common with those of the 1770s than with subsequent decades. The obsolete base pattern may have been determined in part by the time period in which the original wearer learned to sew, for the dress is certainly not that old. The shoulder pieces, constructed and finished separately, were another eighteenth-century feature that continued to appear well into the early nineteenth century. The apron-front construction was also in use towards the end of the eighteenth century and into the first quarter of the nineteenth. To make matters more complicated, the dress was also updated at least once: a section was removed from the skirt and possibly used to create the more fashionable loose sleeves that appeared on such dresses around 1809 and continued into the 1820s. The bodice was constructed with a slightly raised waistline and also subsequently shortened in the back, thereby raising the waistline in keeping with the changing silhouette of the 1790s and the Napoleonic era. Bodices of the eighteenth century feature a very narrow back construction: this dress has back seams whose placement is comparatively wide, but then the wearer's back was not exactly slender. In terms of how the bodice fits on the body, it seems that the original wearer retained her eighteenth-century stays, her figure most likely having been so molded to that particular shape that any other would be uncomfortable, even when such stays were no longer fashionable in the early years of the nineteenth century, particularly with the advent of Empire fashions.

S2008-05-001 Lewis



Above: *The bodice lining was recycled from a feed sack or heavy household linen with the monogram AF stamped on it.* Left: *Fabric detail showing the pattern.*

Wedding Shawl, 1803

Family oral history misidentified this sheer cotton neckerchief as a wedding veil. The embroidery in the two opposing corners was done so that the flowers would both be on the right side once it was folded on the bias, and this placement determines that it was indeed a neckerchief or small shawl. Signs of wear and irreversible stretching along the bias fold line show that it was used as a best item for occasional, but not frequent, use. It was worn by Betsy Shellito (1785-1863) for her wedding to John House (1783-1872, veteran of the War of 1812) on December 13, 1803 at the Big Spring Presbyterian Church in Newville, PA. It is hand embroidered on sheer muslin with in-woven stripes on the edges. Sheer accessories such as this shawl became particularly popular in the eighteenth century and continued to be worn, in the shape dictated by the current fashions, throughout the nineteenth century for their beauty alone, since they provided little in the way of actual warmth.
S1988-10-001 Filbert

The embroidery is not of the finest quality, having been quickly executed by hand in rather coarse thread.

Silk Taffeta Evening Dress, 1810

The natural dyes that originally colored this dress from Chambersburg, PA, are unstable or fugitive; it may have been darker pink or even lavender when new. The dress fastens in the center front by means of an inner layer of plain brown linen that requires pinning, and then the silk taffeta is pinned over it separately. The linen lining and the taffeta are connected to the dress and to each other at the side seams. Stains and multiple pinholes show that the dress saw fairly regular wear. The sleeves are the most interesting design feature: a series of knife pleats controls the generous amount of fabric used, and the pleats are held in place by an arrow-shaped strip of the taffeta trimmed with a simple line of spaced running stitches in matching silk floss. While the style of the sleeves in particular represents the fashions of 1810, the extent to which the back of the sleeve was set into the bodice *(see right for full-length back view)* was becoming an outmoded technique, although certainly still in use. The unknown woman who wore the dress was rather tall: in its current size, the wearer was approximately 5'7". But the hem of the dress was shortened by three inches at one point—had she, or another wearer, actually been taller?

S1989-37-003 Yoh

Detail of the sleeve showing the pointed band that both controls and ornaments the pleats.

Silk-Satin Dress, 1815-1820

This bronze-colored dress came from the estate of S. McClean Rhea (1855-1925) and his wife Sarah Rhodes Rhea (1855-1926) of Mercersburg, PA. The Rhea brothers operated a clothing and dry goods shop in Mercersburg in the early twentieth century. This high-fashion Empire dress represents beautifully the neo-Classical fashion extreme that characterized women's dresses commencing in the late 1790s. It was only during the 1820s that the waist seam began to drop progressively from just below the bust towards the natural waist in an evolution that would culminate in the opposite extreme in the early 1840s. Although it is not the case with this dress, quite often the long sleeves were lightly basted into the armscye to allow for easy removal, thus transforming a day dress into a short-sleeved evening gown. The triangular sleeve tabs, the most interesting feature of an otherwise simple and understated dress, are an example of the Gothic influences that entered the fashion lexicon in the wake of Walter Scott's wildly popular historical novels.

S2003-02-001 Gift

Two hand-colored fashion plates from the French journal Costume Parisien *dated 1818 show the importance of decorative effects on the upper sleeves. Also note that skirts are slightly gored and that the hems are starting to be held out by more petticoats than earlier in the century, creating a definite A-line effect. Both plates clearly show that the sleeves extend to the wearer's knuckles, which is the case with the bronze silk-satin dress. The above caption translates as follows: "Dress of merino trimmed with narrow bands of velvet. Satin hat." The caption below reads: "Hat of Gros de Naples. Spencer of Levantine."*

Close-up of decorative triangular tabs and trim on sleeve.

Silk Cape, 1820-1825

This is a rare surviving example of a woman's full-length shot or changeable silk taffeta cape with double collar and arm slits. The collars are lined with mint green silk, and the neckline is pleated all around to control the fullness of the fabric. The cape is wadded throughout with wool batting, with extra wadding down the center fronts and in the hem. The economical lining is nowhere near as luxurious as the outer layer: it consists of several different types of brown cotton pieced together, and there are random pieces of green cotton near the hem. This garment descended through the same family as the 1810 pink silk taffeta evening dress (S1989-37-003 Yoh) and was most likely worn by the same woman since the length, or perhaps one should say height, is nearly identical.
S1989-37-010 Yoh

These 1820s fashion plates illustrate a very similar style of cape to the one on display. Note that the capes in each illustration are slightly shorter than the dresses; the measurements of this cape and the silk dress from the previous page are proportioned in the same manner. Also, the linings in the fashion plates are as beautiful as the outer fabric; the owner of the Chambersburg cape economized in this regard.

Brown Silk Dress, 1825

In its present incarnation, the simple lines of this silk taffeta dress follow the silhouette of 1820s fashions, but dispense entirely with the trims that were prevalent at that time, particularly on the skirts and bodice fronts. The very simplicity of the garment suggests a woman of conservative tastes, and potentially even of Quaker background. The dress, which could originally date to the 1790s, underwent a major alteration in which the center back closure was changed to one in the center front, perhaps to facilitate nursing a child. In addition, the hem was lowered and faced, most likely to accommodate either the increasing number of petticoats worn during the 1820s and 1830s or a different, taller wearer, or both. The bodice is fitted with single bust darts, and both the sleeves and bodice fronts have been cut on the bias and consequently pieced. The illusion of curved side back pieces is created through lines of silk chain stitching on the bodice back. The shoulders, armscyes, neckline and waistline of the bodice are all self-fabric piped.
S2004-01-018 Thompson
Reproduction chemisette

Rectangular paisley scarf, early 1820s, draw loom woven. This scarf, most likely a treasured European import, came from Pittsburgh, PA, according to family history. The lean, columnar lines of Empire fashions made such stoles very popular since their long drape echoed the shape of contemporary women's dresses. As is the common fate for nineteenth-century paisley pieces, the original function of the scarf was lost at some point, and it had been donated to the Fashion Archives as a table runner.
S1982-07-047 Nickles

Day cap, 1820-1825, of sheer cotton lawn, from Chambersburg, PA. The cap was designed to frame the wearer's face with soft, feminine frills, in this case, a triple frill. Fashionable hairstyles determine the evolution of fashionable headgear; the crown of the cap is shaped to accommodate the loops and rolls of hair that were positioned high on the back of the head at that time. This cap was clearly a favorite item: several period repairs are evident on the stress points under the jaw and chin.
S1989-37-002 Yoh

Top left: *Hand-colored fashion plate for a morning dress from the February 1, 1824, issue of* The Ladies' Pocket Magazine*, a London-based magazine. The cap depicted in the plate is very similar to the one from Chambersburg. The descriptive text accompanying the illustration specifies that the cap "is in the Parisian style," illustrating that the French capital's influence extended into small Pennsylvania towns.* Bottom left: *Close-up showing the chain-stitching that creates the illusion of side back seams.*

Batiste Wedding Dress, 1825

Louisa Stokes (1802-1886) wore this sheer white cotton dress for her marriage to John Sager Cash (ca. 1803-1885) on November 17, 1825, at Philadelphia. Local scandal must surely have accompanied this couple: their first child, a son named George Stow Cash who appears not to have survived birth or infancy, was born in 1817 when she was 15 and he was 14. Their passion for each other clearly outlasted their stormy adolescence and their youthful indiscretion since they eventually married and had six more children together between 1826 and 1842. Period repairs show that Louisa wore her dress after the wedding. Only the bodice, which is fitted with two darts, is lined with cotton; the rest of the dress is sheer. The dress fastens at the center back: first the lining is pinned into place, and then narrow drawstrings at the waistband and neckline adjust the outer layer to fit.

The inset band on the skirt, known as Swiss lace, was common at this time period and did not fall out of favor until the 1860s. However, by the Civil War years, the quality of such work had declined considerably. The construction method is time-consuming, but not particularly complicated. The pattern was drawn on muslin, and then the muslin was basted onto a cotton net layer. In the case of this dress, the net was basted over the muslin layer. Period manuals recommended that the two layers then be basted onto a layer of *toile cirée*, or fine oilcloth, for support. Next, the pattern was embroidered, both top layers being treated as one and the oilcloth kept free from the work. Larger pieces were stretched in an embroidery frame; smaller pieces were worked in the hand. Upon completion of the embroidery, the oilcloth was removed and the muslin layer only was very carefully cut away everywhere but inside the various flowers and leaves of the pattern, leaving solid areas against a fine net background. Swiss lace could be completed far more rapidly than real lace, whose designs formed the inspiration for this particular technique. In the 1850s and 1860s, a short-cut, namely the more rapid tambour work, eliminated the embroidery except on the edges of items such as collars.

S2004-01-017 Thompson

Hand-colored fashion plates (left) from the Ladies' Pocket Magazine from 1825 and 1826 show the enduring popularity and versatility of these sheer muslin dresses, the vogue for which dated to the mid-1770s when Marie-Antoinette played milkmaid at Le Hameau de la Reine in her light white chemise dresses. The rise of Empire fashions and their classical inspiration only increased the popularity of white dresses, which could be genuinely simple or intricately embroidered and trimmed. To the modern mind, the fact that these dresses were cotton would lead one to suppose that they were cheap and easy to maintain and therefore a desirable alternative to silk. In fact, the opposite is the case: the fine muslin required very careful laundering and pressing, and their cost per yard could nearly equal that of silk.

Wool Frock Coat, 1830s

Close-up of the tiny heart-printed lining used in the sleeves and pockets.

This particular coat came from a farm near Ovid Center, NY. The wool from which it was constructed was fulled to the point where it would not fray when cut. It is this stable raw edge that allows the pronounced points on the lapels: the top and bottom layers are cut to shape and simply top-stitched together, no seam allowance or turning required. Only the sleeves have a lining consisting of brown cotton with a pattern of tiny white hearts. The same cotton is used for the tail pockets. Because the body of the coat is unlined, the red wool flannel and tailor's canvas that stiffen the very high collar, a characteristic of fashionable men's clothing of the decade, are easily seen under the neck facings, as are the tailor's scribbled notations on the fabrics. While the tailor appeared to know his business extremely well—for the coat is beautifully constructed—he did make an important mistake: he trimmed away nearly all the seam allowance in the armscye at the back of the arm. There was not enough fabric in that area to withstand the stress of donning, doffing and moving in the coat, and the fabric tore. Very crude period repairs show an attempt to rectify the situation, but whoever darned the area did not have much fabric with which to work, even though it was all essentially extant. It would also appear that the man for whom this coat was tailored may have felt that art was needed to correct nature's deficiencies: the tails are padded in the area corresponding to the wearer's posterior.

S1986-54-061 Terry

The coat is double-breasted with sharply-notched lapels.

Voided Silk-Velvet Vest, 1830-1832

View of the vest back showing the fabric piecing at the neck and lack of adjustment straps. While it is entirely possible that the vest was initially constructed in this manner, it also possible that fine wifely cooking resulted in the following alteration: the small fabric square was inserted to increase the neck size and a new broader back replaced one of pre-marital size. This could explain the different lining fabrics inside the vest. However, short of taking the vest apart to check for a change in thread colors and in sewing techniques in the varying seams, such interpretations of the garment must remain speculative.

Samuel Boher (1808-1895) of Shippensburg, PA, wore this bold waistcoat at his wedding to Mary Magdalena Pague (1814-1903), also of Shippensburg. The exact date is unknown, but the first of their thirteen children (of which only seven survived to adulthood) was born in 1832. It was clearly used as a best vest on many occasions afterwards, and a number of the original buttons are unfortunately no longer extant. The back is constructed of one piece of plain brown glazed cotton and has no laced straps for adjusting the fit. Even on a special occasion garment such as this one, the sides and back of the high collar are made from scraps of two different materials that would not be visible when worn with the accompanying frock coat. Such discreet economies were prevalent during this time period which regarded clever thriftiness as a virtue. In an additional fabric-saving or recycling measure, the back is lined with coarse cream-colored linen, while the vest fronts are lined with scratchy tobacco-colored wool. As is typical of vests of this decade and the next, there are only two pockets on the lower vest fronts—breast pockets on men's vests appeared in the 1850s. Samuel Boher was the future father-in-law of Sara Rees Boher *née* Hogan, whose clothing also appears in this catalog.

S1981-14-049 Boher-Hosfeld

Silk Brocade Dress, 1837-1839

"There is a truce, an armistice at the moment between the dressmakers of straight sleeves and those of wide sleeves; negotiations have taken place. We will have soon a decision to announce; but will it be a victory? Because, after all, the dressmakers want this or that, but will the ladies put up with it?"

Le Follet, Courrier des Salons. Journal des Modes,
1 October 1837, in translation

During the late 1820s and early 1830s, women's sleeves became progressively larger to the point where ladies wore sleeve supports on their upper arms in order to maintain the broad shoulder line. At the same time, hemlines also widened to counter-balance the exaggerated upper silhouette. This dress represents the latest fashion as the oversized sleeve began to disappear while retaining a mixture of narrow and puffed aspects. All the upper-arm fullness has been carefully pleated down to fit smoothly, and the pleats are held in place by a fine line of chain-stitches in silk thread. The sleeve is still oversized in many respects, but one can easily envision the forthcoming narrow sleeves of the 1840s. It is a typical fashion reaction for one extreme to be eventually replaced by its opposite. The skirt is no longer as wide as in previous years, again as a balancing function in relation to the shoulder line and the sleeve, but it is still nevertheless wadded with light wool batting to weight it and to help hold the skirt away from the wearer's body. Also during the 1830s, the waistline of the dresses finally returned to the natural waist; fashions of the 1840s on the other hand emphasized a very long-waisted look. This dress underwent a minor alteration at an unknown date: the skirt was lengthened one inch by lowering the turn-down at the waist. Using a technique that would reappear in the mid to late 1860s, gauging, now known as cartridge pleating, appears on the skirt at the center back waistline, but the rest is pleated to fit. In this case, box-pleating creates a crisp and tailored effect. Other noteworthy construction details include the self-fabric piping at the center front, side seams and armscyes. The neckline is both self-fabric piped and then bound with a bias strip.

S2004-01-019 Thompson

Detailed view of the self-fabric trim on the bodice and upper sleeve.

Striped Silk Taffeta Dress, 1845-1847

Daguerreotype, 1/6-plate, of a woman identified simply as "Judith." She wears a very similar striped silk taffeta dress, although one could say that the bias cutting on her sleeves was not quite as carefully executed. She is a woman of some prosperity, as evidenced by her long gold earrings, watch chain, and brooch. The finely pleated cuffs are a high-maintenance item requiring careful laundering and even more careful pressing. For her portrait, Judith also wanted posterity to know through the props in her hands that she was fully literate and could both read and write.

In the nineteenth century, gold and brown were considered perfect harmonizing contrasts to purple, and thus the combination seen on this striped dress was quite common. The apparent loose, comfortable fit of the tucked fan-front bodice is only an optical illusion: the fabric is draped over a closely-fitted lining. The tight sleeves were cut on the bias to allow more ease of movement, and the separate short sleeves on the upper arm, known as jockeys, were also cut in the same way. The pieces were carefully positioned in order to maximize visual interest: the diagonal lines of the stripes on the sleeves direct the eye to the wearer's waist, and in contrast, the stripes of the jockeys point in the opposite direction. The same holds true for the narrow bands of self-fabric trim on the jockeys: they are positioned to mirror and balance one another. The dress bodice is cut in a slight V at the center front and therefore forms its key dating feature, as the exaggerated long lines of the earlier 1840s have disappeared. The neckline, waistline, armscyes and shoulder seams are all self-fabric piped. The skirt has a deep facing of brown cotton, and there are remains of a silk tape hem saver. The dress underwent a major alteration to accommodate a pregnancy: the side front darts in the bodice lining were let out, and the skirt was lengthened 6.75 inches at the center front tapering to 1.5 inches at the back.

S1988-13-002 Friends of the Fashion Archives Shown with black silk shawl, 1830s-1840s, S1986-15-003 Ritchie

Imported Hand-Embroidered Shawl, 1845-1855

As was the case with the 1820s scarf shown earlier, the original function of this embroidered silk crepe shawl was lost over time: it had been catalogued as a tablecloth. Imported shawls like this one were originally from Canton, China, and were covered with increasingly lavish embroidery. They were a sought-after luxury item largely during the first half of the nineteenth century. Other period documents aid in understanding just how expensive embroidered shawls could be. In her account book on July 13, 1852, Mary E. Morgan (1821-1883) of Rochester, NY, recorded having purchased a cashmere long shawl for $8. In contrast, a receipt dated 1850 for a richly embroidered imported shawl shows that the devoted husband paid $86 for his wife's white-on-white treasure. To have these prices make sense in approximate modern dollars, a conversion based upon historic price indices yields the following results: the plain cashmere shawl would cost $207, and the embroidered shawl would cost $2,229. A market like this would not remain lining the pockets of the Chinese alone: the April 10, 1847 issue of the *Albion, A Journal of News, Politics and Literature* described the shawl factories of Paisley, Scotland, and commented upon the ". . . rich *White Crape Shawls*, woven plain, but subsequently embroidered by the hand in the adjacent county. . . . It is about twenty-five years since the making of these crapes was first introduced into Paisley. . . ." The article also mentions French imitations of the Chinese shawls, which—in the opinion of the biased author—were nowhere near as good as the ones from Paisley.

Shawl S1990-14-001 Morrell
Personal Account Book of Mary E. Morgan 1851-1860, S2004-01-071 Thompson

Silk Taffeta Transformation Dress, 1855-1857

"Dresses with low bodies [bodices] and pelerines [small capes] are now very much in vogue. This is a very useful and economical way of making a dress, as it can be worn either for morning or evening toilet. The pelerine should be made of the same material as the dress, for morning wear; and one of black net, trimmed with black velvet, or of white lace, for evening. The sleeves should be made demi-long—that is to say, just coming below the elbow."

Peterson's Magazine, February 1861

"Low bodies are very desirable for summer, with capes of the same material as the dress."

Peterson's Magazine, July 1861

Hand-colored fashion plate from Godey's Lady's Book*, October 1859. The second figure from the right wears a transformation silk dress, painted purple in this copy: "Carriage or dinner-dress of peach-colored taffeta, reps, or corded with black; the upper skirt and* bèrthe *[sic] are edged with a very rich fleece and chenille fringe. The corsage itself is low, and the long sleeves can be removed from the deep jockey, so as to form an elegant and appropriate dinner-dress." Note that* Godey's *painters did not always use the colors specified in the text.*

A warp-printed pattern consisting of green roses is combined with abstract arabesques and narrow striped bands to create a rich and subtle effect. This Hagerstown, MD, dress is an excellent example of a careful design that allowed maximal use of the dress through clever transformations, another characteristic of better nineteenth-century gowns. Worn with the pelerine and the full pagoda sleeves, it was a fine day dress. The pagoda sleeves were sewn to a narrow band and lightly basted into the armscye for easy removal. Thus, without the long sleeves and the pelerine, the dress becomes an evening gown *(see left)*. In addition, the combination of long sleeves and a low neckline was also acceptable for dinner and evening parties. Worn with the pagoda sleeves and a chemisette during warmer months, the dress could function as a fine summer dress. Like an evening gown, the bodice fastens in the center back with hooks and eyes. The skirt is lined with white tarlatan, faced at the hem with glazed green cotton, and then further protected with a wool hem braid. White silk faces the pagoda sleeves and white silk box-pleated ribbon trims the inside edge, a standard finishing practice for the large sleeve openings of the 1850s.

S2008-08-003 Young
Shown with pagoda undersleeves, 1855-1860, S1981-14-143 Boher-Hosfeld. Embroidered collar, mid-1850s, S1983-47-024 Lynch. Hair Comb, 1850s-1860s, hand-carved horn dyed to resemble tortoise shell, S1998-01-022 Anonymous.

Wool Mantle, 1857-1860

Gored panels allow this mantle to fall with graceful ease over the cage crinoline (patented at the end of 1856) that characterized the fashionable woman's silhouette beginning in 1857. The sides and fronts are also cut to shape for both the wearer's arms and again to accommodate the steel hoopskirts. The false capelet is beautifully trimmed with a self-fabric edging arranged in spaced box pleats. A corded trim arranged in circular designs forms a balanced meandering design. The wool was cut away from inside the circles, and the subsequent openings have been covered with a coarse brown net. A single hook and eye closure fastens the mantle at the throat. This garment is largely machine sewn, with the seams top-stitched on the outside. There is minimal hand finishing and no lining. Thus, it most likely represents a ready-made item. The demands of Victorian fashion made it necessary to customize the fit on most dresses; however, the simpler shapes of outerwear and underwear allowed for rapid development in the domain of ready-to-wear as of the Industrial Revolution. In contrast to the modern era, nineteenth-century consumers could still expect to find fine trims and elegant finishes, considered too labor-intensive and expensive today, on their factory-produced items.

S1982-64-023 Wm. Penn

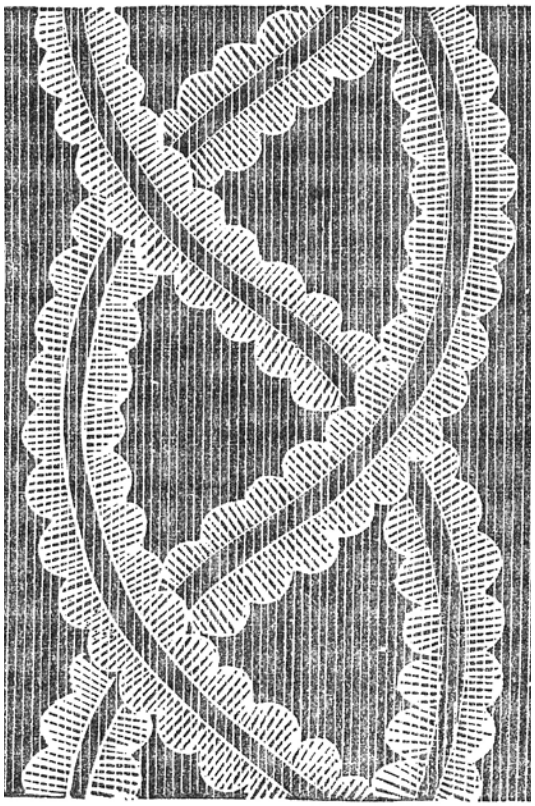
Upper left: *Detail of the trim on the false capelet.* Lower left: *The "Jenny Bell," which is similar in style, appeared in the November 1856 issue of* Godey's Lady's Book. *It is described as "A travelling mantle of dark gray beaver cloth, which requires no lining. It is at once graceful, and comfortable in form, and is plainly trimmed by a mixed gray and black galloon, of satin and velvet."*

Wedding Vest, 1857


WAISTCOAT PATTERN.

John N. Ferber wore this hand-embroidered silk waistcoat at his wedding in 1857. Since white was one of two colors a gentleman was permitted to wear on formal occasions—the other color being black—the vest was suitable for evening wear afterwards. The embroidery, perhaps a loving gift from his fiancée, was done in twisted silk thread using satin stitch, French knots and stem stitches. There are two lower front pockets and one upper left breast pocket. The vest fronts are fitted with darts below the pockets. There are tan leather facings on the lower vest fronts to prevent wear from Ferber's braces, and the vest is lined throughout with ivory glazed cotton. A brass buckle bearing the date 1853 in raised numbers allows the wearer to adjust the fit in the back. The vest back was cut with a center back seam. Ferber's signature appears on the inner side of the right adjustment strap and on a paper label pasted to the lining. The label confirms that the item is indeed a wedding vest.

S2004-01-074 Thompson



Ladies' magazines of the era provided patterns for making fancy items for gentlemen. This waistcoat pattern appeared in the April 1857 issue of Peterson's Magazine *with no accompanying instructions; it had appeared earlier in the journal* The Ladies' Cabinet of Fashion *in July 1852 with basic directions. Copyright infringements were par for the course at this time, and The* Ladies' Cabinet *had probably copied the pattern from an earlier French source as did most journals. Providing another example of such projects, the gentleman's shirt front pattern appeared in* Peterson's Magazine *in July 1858, from which issue this image was taken, and* Godey's Lady's Book *published it in May 1859. Peterson's gave no directions;* Godey's *provided no instructions either, but explained "In evening parties these embroidered fronts are very fashionable, that which we give being very highly approved. When bounded on each side by a broad tuck, it appears as a manly simple relief, and yet gives an air of finish quite within the bounds of the strictest moderation." Waistcoats, shirtfronts, fancy buttonholes on shirt plackets, suspenders, smoking caps and slippers are just a few of the typical sewing projects for men promoted in the ladies' journals of this time period.*

Porkpie Hat, Early 1860s

Sara Rees Boher *née* Hogan (ca. 1852-1917) wore this stylish little velvet hat. The hat is trimmed with a combination of copper-colored and clear glass beads as well as copper-colored spangles. To reduce the amount of sewing onto the hat itself, the spangles and beads were mounted on cotton net. Curling brown ostrich feathers and shot silk taffeta rosettes trim the front and back. The rosettes were initially mounted on remnants of black wool felt before being sewn to the hat.

Sara was born in Philadelphia and obtained a degree from the Pennsylvania Art Institute. She joined the faculty of the Cumberland Valley State Normal School (now Shippensburg University) in 1875 and taught free-hand drawing, reading, penmanship, geography, elocution and etymology. She resigned in 1882 and wed John Elliot Boher (1850-1931) of Shippensburg on March 8, 1883, in Philadelphia. Throughout her adult life in Shippensburg, she was a leader in both society and civic activities. Her other extant garments reveal a woman of excellent fashion sense and taste.
S1981-14-004 Boher-Hosfeld

Upper left: *Daguerreotype of Sara with her parents David and Sara Hogan.* Middle left: Carte de visite *photograph of Sara at approximately the age at which she would have worn her porkpie.* Bottom left: *A penciled note on the back of Ada Wood's 1/6-plate tintype tells us that she was 9 years and 5 months old at the time of her photo, and Sara would have been about the same age when she wore her hat. Her little velvet porkpie and fur victorine make Ada quite the fashionable young miss. As was common for little girls in the mid-nineteenth century, both Sara and Ada have simple hairstyles: the hair was cut straight around the head at approximately the jaw level and parted in the center.*

Semi-Sheer Cotton Dress, early 1860s

The fabric of this dress was printed in imitation of warp-printed or *ikat* patterns. The woman who created it had bold design sense, but rather mediocre sewing skills. Her originality manifests itself in the one-piece structure of the bodice: the bodice back was laid on the straight grain of the fabric, and she then draped the bodice over the shoulders, with the stripes now meeting at the center front on the bias. In a remarkable departure from typical dress construction of the Civil War era, this garment has no shoulder seam. Instead, the combination of the lightweight fabric and the bias drape over the shoulders allows the bodice to fit properly. Careful piecing on the fronts allowed her to enlarge her fabric sufficiently to cut the bodice in one piece and then simply seam it together at the sides. Placement of the narrow ruffle around the neckline indicates that the dress was worn with the right side over the left. The dressmaker did not employ hooks or fastenings of any sort, and thus the bodice would have been pinned into place, and cufflinks closed the sleeves at the wrists. The absence of such fastenings would facilitate ironing and raise no concerns about anything rusting or discoloring in the wash. The skirt is beautifully gauged to fit the waist. Unfortunately, the positive aspects of her skills end here. Being of an economical turn of mind, the dressmaker used very heavy—in fact, too heavy—white cotton to face the bottom of the skirt; it was probably what she had on hand. Not having enough cotton to line the bodice, she made up the difference with pieces of striped dish towels, and there is a visible pink stain at the top of one sleeve where the dye ran. Fine fitting was not exactly her forte, and the armscyes are of two different sizes and one sleeve has been awkwardly manipulated to fit the smaller of the two. This flaw, however, is not evident when worn, and it is only upon careful measurement and observation that the problem becomes visible. Additional trouble manifests itself when attempting to pin the dress at the waist: while the bodice's right side needs to cross over the left, the skirt was attached to the dress in a manner that would make crossing the left side over the right much easier to manipulate. The dressmaker compensated for this design flaw by leaving some excess fabric free at the skirt center front which allowed the left bodice front to be sandwiched between the skirt and the bodice right front. This is a prime example of frequent short-cuts and sloppy construction evident in many extant nineteenth-century garments. Often home and even professional dressmakers worked according to the precept that if it did not show, it did not matter. Thus many garments, such as this one, are beautiful and eye-catching when everything is in place, but examination of their inner workings reveals many hidden problems.

S2009-06-002 Fashion Archives Foundation Funds

Silk Evening Dress, 1865-1867

"Skirts are all made with a train and very full at the hem, the fullness, however, decreasing at the hips."

Godey's Lady's Book, February 1866

"Crinoline is far from being abandoned, but is by no means carried to the same excess in Paris as in this country. For evening wear, unless very many stuff skirts are worn, large hoops are required to sustain gracefully the long trains and fully-trimmed skirts."

Godey's Lady's Book, July 1866

"Long trains, for the house, are still worn; in fact, they are larger than ever. Nothing can be more graceful than this style of dress; but in small crowded rooms they are difficult to manage."

Peterson's Magazine, January 1867

"Evening dresses of silk are made perfectly plain in front and at the sides, and are gathered in at the back in a bunch, instead of the large, flat fold so long worn."

Peterson's Magazine, June 1867

"For street dresses, the skirt must be short; and for the house, particularly afternoon or evening dresses, it is just as necessary that the skirt should be long, for evening wear, very long. Crinoline must be small, some even wear none at all; but with a long dress it is almost indispensable, for not one woman in a thousand knows how to wear yards of silk or muslin around her feet gracefully; it is like going about in a perpetual riding habit."

Peterson's Magazine, November 1867

This blue evening or dinner dress with a low square neck is trimmed with dyed-to-match silk-satin ruching on the bodice and features two-piece coat sleeves. The silk and silk-satin are also combined to form a bow trimmed with gold silk fringe on the lower right skirt front. This bow was definitely an afterthought: it covers a large coffee or tea stain. Hoops in an exaggerated elliptical shape were still essential for a fashionable silhouette. The skirt is a classic example of the construction techniques in use during the mid-1860s: the center front panel fits smoothly into the waistband, and the skirt is cut with gores in order to create the curves that allow the skirt and train to drape gracefully. In addition, the pleats at the skirt's sides transition to deep gauging, known as cartridge pleating today, at the center back. It is interesting to note that this expensive silk skirt features the expected matching wool hem braid and a hem facing of brown glazed cotton, but it is otherwise entirely unlined.

S1982-64-281 Wm. Penn

To make her dress more suitable for daytime wear, this young lady from Wellingborough, England, filled in the neckline with a white chemisette, an option that the wearer of the blue dress may also have exercised. It is even possible that her dress is another transformation gown: the striped pieces passing over the shoulder may be removable, as is the case for the long sleeve underneath the puff at the upper arm. Removing those sections would create a low-necked evening dress with short puffed sleeves. However, without the original gown, one cannot tell for certain. Twists of hair paralleling the front center part became a very popular hairstyle as of 1864; in this instance, one might say that the adoption of fashion extremes can be an unfortunate, even unflattering, decision.

Muslin Three-Piece Dress, 1869-1871

"So elaborate are white dresses made, that scarcely a vestige of their old-time simplicity remains."

Godey's Lady's Book, July 1869

"As the intense heat of August falls upon us, our only desire is for cool and thin articles of attire. Dresses of organdy, and grenadine, and the many new fabrics before spoken of, with lace shawls, sacks, or fichus, and an airy nothing as a bonnet forms the costume for this season. . . . White is the favorite with both young ladies and those more advanced."

Godey's Lady's Book, August 1869

"There is nothing particularly new in the way of making dresses. For the street, the lower-skirt is trimmed with either one deep ruffle, or several narrower ones, or with puffings, quillings, etc., as the fancy may dictate. The upper-skirt is usually a good deal puffed at the back, draped at the sides, and should always be trimmed to correspond, in some measure, with the under-skirt."

Peterson's Magazine, April 1870

"White costumes and mantles have never been so fashionable as they are now."

The Lady's Friend, September 1870

An unidentified young woman poses for her carte de visite *portrait in a very similar summer dress in Brighton, England. Although one can distinguish the basic structural elements of the dress, one can see why photographers, particularly during the first decades of the craft (1840-1880), recommended that women not wear all white for their photographs. In fact, this photographer compensated remarkably well; many had to touch-up the negatives quite heavily in order to make the subject be anything other than a white silhouette with a head.*

Sara Rees Boher *née* Hogan (ca. 1852-1917) wore this sheer summer dress consisting of bodice, skirt and overskirt. The bodice is lightly gathered into a waistband and features slightly flared sleeves trimmed with self-fabric flounces topped with a puffing. Lace edges the wrist opening. This slight flare, so cool for summer wear, announces the return of the pagoda sleeves that had been so popular in the 1850s, but not on such an exaggerated scale. More puffing and lace encircles the neck. In order to prevent stretching along the bias, the shoulder seams are piped in addition to the armscyes. The overskirt and underskirt are both trimmed with several rows of flounces topped by a puffing. Internal drawstrings in the overskirt allow the wearer to adjust the amount of fabric bustled in the back when worn, but the strings can also be let out to facilitate washing, starching and ironing. Such dresses were often worn with ribbon sashes or cravats for a splash of color. They also formed a perfect contrast for accessories made of black Chantilly lace.
S1981-14-044 Boher-Hosfeld

Silk Day Dress, 1869-1871

"For more quiet dresses for the street we see drab, snuff-brown, tea color, olive, cinnamon color, invisible green, and blue."

Godey's Lady's Book, November 1869

This three-piece silk dress consists of bodice, underskirt and overskirt in shades of snuff or tea-color greenish brown with harmonizing brown silk trim. It belonged to an unidentified member of the Means family from the Carlisle/Chambersburg, PA, area. The bodice is of the classic style established as of 1864: fitted with double bust darts and bearing the ubiquitous two-piece tailored coat sleeves. It was a shape that lingered until the end of the siege of Paris and the Franco-Prussian war of 1870-1871, at which point Paris was finally able to communicate the latest fashions again to the world. The center back seam comprises the unusual aspect of the bodice: typically the center back piece of front-fastening dresses was cut on the fold throughout the 1860s. It appears that the gown was expertly remade from a single-skirted dress of the mid-1860s or from a back-fastening gown dating even earlier: there are seam marks on the sleeves where trim was carefully picked away, and the plain brown cotton upper section of the underskirt is the reworked lining of the old skirt. One indication of prior use of the skirt lining is the fact that there is now an inaccessible pocket on the wearer's *derrière* that used to be on one side. The facing above the flounce on the underskirt is heavily pieced from scraps—another sign of economy and often of reworking. Sets of ties—three vertical and three horizontal—inside the overskirt control fullness at the back. The shirred panels on either side of the skirt are echoed in a certain measure by the very tight gauging at the center back waist.

S1986-87-026 Monmouth

"The Roman sash or scarf, with stripes of the national Roman colors. . . are also very fashionable."

Godey's Lady's Book, November 1869

"Roman Shawls! Every lady knows what `Roman Sashes' mean, they were the fashion last season, and have given place this spring to the `Shawl' with their distinctive bright colors. The season for `furs' has passed, and it is prudent wear something upon the shoulders to protect them from the changes in temperature; hence this may be called the `shawl season' and E. Lewis & Co.'s, No. 265 and 267 is the store to find a full assortment of the `Roman Shawls'."

Brooklyn Eagle, 11 April 1872

The irregular horizontal striped pattern identifies this bright wool shawl as "Roman" and dates it to the early 1870s. The fad for Roman stripes took its primary fashion form in scarves, sashes and shawls worn by men, women and children alike, although the scarves and sashes appear to have been more common. The fashion began in the early 1860s, but did not really take hold until around 1868. In their luxury versions, these Roman accessories were made of silk and were genuine Italian imports. Domestic manufacturers quickly capitalized on the fad and made them from both silk and wool.

S1982-32-009 Cree

Wedding/Reception Gown, 1872

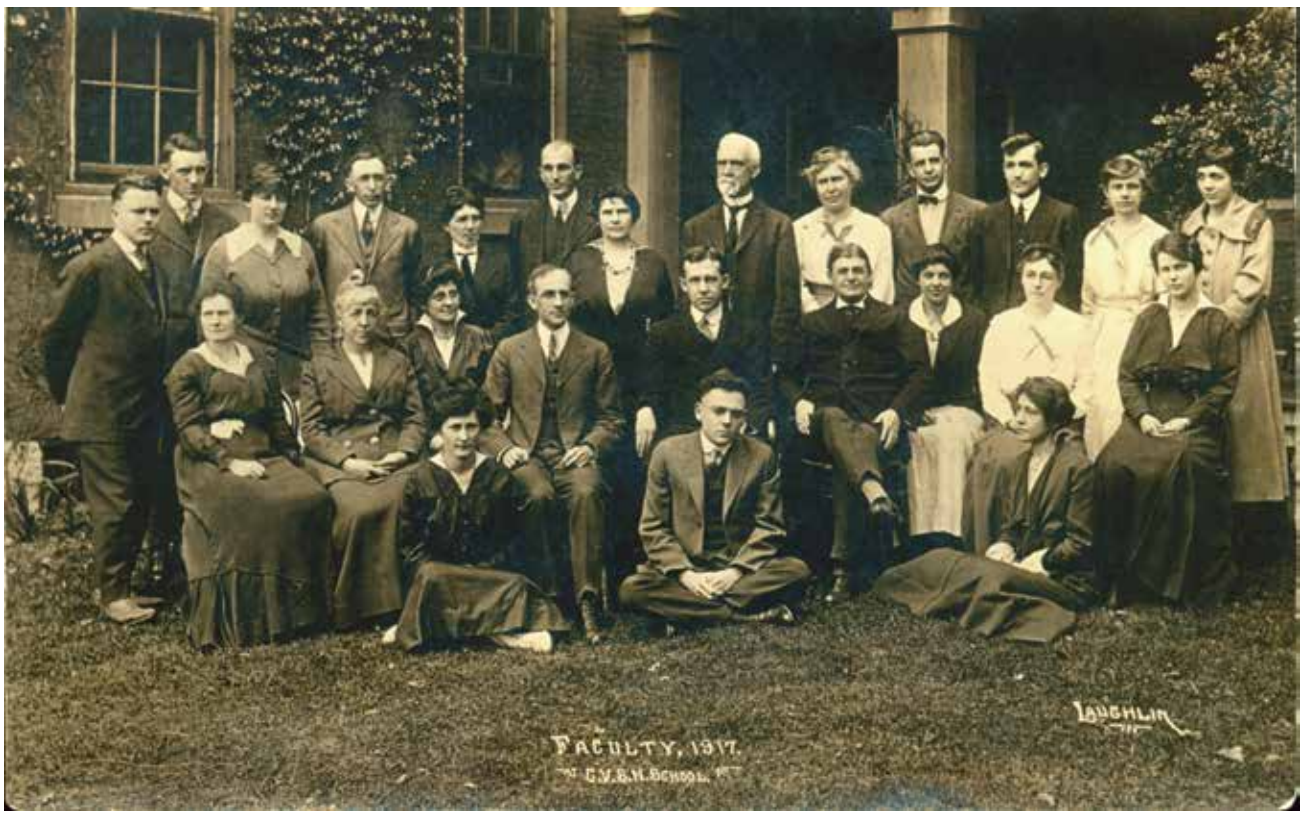
Unfortunately, there is no provenance associated with this gown. Although not white, it could have served as a wedding dress. By this time, white for weddings was the ideal, but it was not always a reality for Victorian brides. There are enough indications of wear on the gown to show that it saw extensive use for evening parties and receptions. One of the key features for dating the dress is the small basque, which is the nineteenth-century term for the skirt-like section of the bodice below the waistline, commonly called a peplum today. Basques could be large or small and have a variety of shapes depending upon the vagaries of fashion through the decades. After playing a key role in the 1850s, basques temporarily disappeared during the Civil War years. They made a brief comeback in the mid-1860s and then reappeared in the early 1870s. The diminutive size of the basques on this gown shows the resurgence of this fashion in its early stages. They would become larger and continue to evolve in connection with the popular overskirts during the remainder of the decade.

The self-fabric trim on this dress *(see detail, left)* is one of its most attractive features, and although it looks complicated, it is actually quite easy to make. It involves taking strips of fabric, removing a section of threads from the length of the strips, and leaving a portion of the fabric intact in between and along the edges. The fabric strips are then folded in half along the voided thread section, thus creating a soft, looped edge. The intact edge sections of the strip overlap in the back, and the strips are ready to sew to the garment by hand or machine. At this point they can be applied to the garment in a flat, pleated or gathered form. How much thread to remove and how much fabric to leave intact is determined by the desired finished size of the trim.
S1982-64-207 Wm. Penn

Boy's Cotton Dress, 1872-1873

Jesse S. Heiges (1871-1955, SU class of 1891) wore this hand-sewn dress as a toddler. Like all little boys of the nineteenth and early twentieth century, Jesse wore dresses until he was fully potty trained and possessed the manual dexterity to handle trouser buttons as necessary. The dress is made in two pieces; the skirt fastens to the bodice, which has eight buttons on the waistband. The trimming consists of bands of blue cotton which are slightly mismatched relative to the blue in the dress—being somewhat "off" in this manner did not matter in the nineteenth century, particularly for something like frequently washed children's clothes. The waistband of the skirt is cut on the cross-wise grain of the striped fabric for a bold visual effect. The armscyes and neckline are both piped. The skirt is gathered to the waistband with spaced box pleats. Children's dresses during the third quarter of the nineteenth century were generally very full and were worn over equally full petticoats. The hem circumference measures 63 inches, yet the skirt is only 11.75 inches from the top of the waistband to the hem. Jesse's mother was not particularly interested in the latest juvenile fashions, and her son was dressed in a standardized style of the late 1850s and 1860s whose only real update consisted in adoption of the coat sleeve, which began in 1864.

In this dated 1917 photo below, Heiges is seated in the middle row, fourth person from the left. He served as academic dean of the Cumberland Valley State Normal School (now Shippensburg University) from 1908-1934 and ultimately dedicated 63 years of his life to the university. His influence was profound, yet his leadership style was described as "unobtrusive" in his obituary. Shortly before his death, Heiges wrote, "I believe thoroughly in the philosophy of Horace Mann as expressed by him in these words—`Be ashamed to die until you have won some victory for humanity.'"
S1981-03-001 Heiges



Jenny Lind Fan, 1850-1870
Rigid Feather Fan, 1870s

International singing superstar Jenny Lind had several clothing fads named after her, and this type of silk "petal" fan was one of them. To vary their appearance, these fans were made with and without the shiny spangles. They could also feature very tiny beads. Dyed-to-match feather tips, occasionally feather sides as well, were another option. The petals could alternate between two strong colors such as black and white, or they could have a contrasting color appliquéd onto the top of each petal. This one is fortunate to have retained its original cord and tassel.
S1980-10-072 Russell

The graceful white feather fan most likely belonged to Sara Rees Boher *née* Hogan (ca. 1852-1917). The construction of such fans is fairly simple: it consists of rows of white feathers hand sewn to a stiff wire frame covered with a large mesh net. Such dainty items were used more for evening wear than for daytime cooling. These fans were purchased ready-made but could also be made at home. Women could buy pre-made wire frames and cover their own fans; instructions for such projects appeared regularly in the leading ladies' magazines. They could also buy just the turned handle and make their own frame if so inclined.
S1981-14-040 Boher-Hosfeld

Upper left: *An unidentified young lady from Vineland, NJ, poses with her Jenny Lind fan for her* carte de visite *photograph, ca. 1864.* Center left: *Miss F. Hammond from Philadelphia, 1871-1872, also decided to hold her Jenny Lind fan for her* carte de visite. Right: *The July 1867 fashion plate from* Peterson's Magazine *shows a seated figure in the center holding a feather-trimmed rigid fan. The figure on the far right also holds a rigid fan whose materials are more difficult to distinguish.*

Basque Wedding Dress, 1873

"Many flounces, ruffling, puffings, and quillings, are still worn as a rule, though a simpler style is adopted by many who are tired of excessive trimming"

Peterson's Magazine, March 1873

"We predict that dress-skirts, for both in and out-door wear, will be made perfectly plain; that is, without flounces, bands, or piping. Of course, this style of skirt will bring the basque again into vogue. . . ."

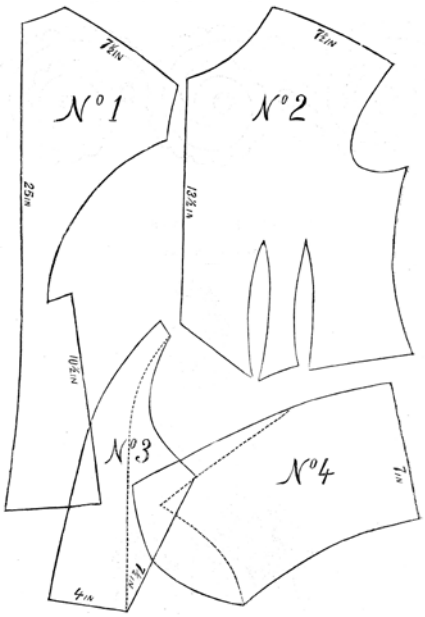
Peterson's Magazine, April 1873

"Skirts with or without over-skirts, are equally fashionable, and very much trimmed costumes, as well as those severely plain, are equally worn."

Peterson's Magazine, January 1874

Ellen Sawyer of Allegany County, New York, wore this brilliant plaid dress for her wedding to Philetus Cartwright (1838-1918) of Gennessee, Allegany County, New York, in 1873. She was his second wife, the first having died in childbirth. This marriage did not last either: Ellen died in 1875, perhaps due to complications from birth of her only son in November 1874, and Cartwright married his third wife shortly thereafter. The bodice and skirt provide an excellent example of the bold and brilliant colors that characterize Victorian fashion. The basque bodice and pagoda sleeves of the 1850s returned in the early 1870s in a modified, less exaggerated, form that was worn with a bustle. The white bridal gown was every young Victorian bride's dream, but frugality and practicality often led young women to select fabric which could be easily reused as a best dress after the wedding. Although Ellen's dress is fashionable, it has its conservative aspects. The bodice is of a common and popular type for 1873, and this one is beautifully made. The skirt is constructed to fit over a fashionable bustle, but completely lacks the overskirt that had characterized stylish skirts since the late 1860s and would continue to hold sway for several years still. Instead, in its uncluttered lines and bold velvet appliqués, the skirt owes more to the aesthetics of the mid-1860s than it does to the frilly frou-frou and layers that are the hallmark of the 1870s overall. As the citations above indicate, not everyone embraced this aspect of 1873 fashions, and Ellen was clearly one of them.

S2005-03-001 Bottoms-Steesy
Shown with collar, embroidered motifs on net, S1981-11-029 Edwards
Reproduction undersleeves

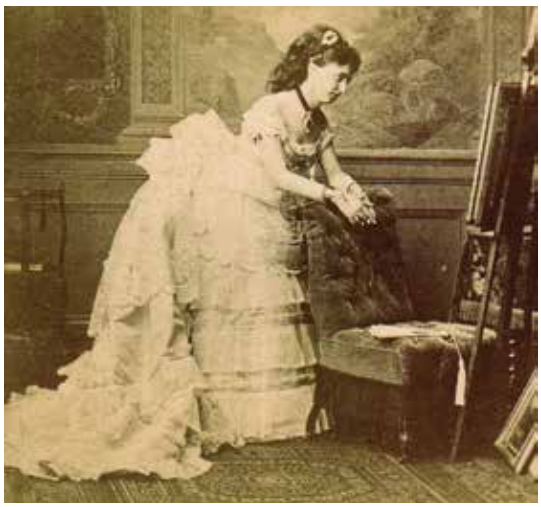


The April 1873 issue of Peterson's Magazine *featured a miniaturized pattern for a basque bodice very similar to Ellen's. The description states: "We take pleasure in laying before our readers a very neat and tasty Basque Waist, as will be seen by the accompanying engraving. It is easily constructed, and we think will amply repay any one for making it up. It is appropriate for this season of the year."*

Silk Reception Dress, 1873

Although the original lavender dye proved to be fugitive with time (traces of the original color remain in the seam allowances), the dress has nonetheless faded to an attractive purple-beige while the narrow silk fringe retains its original hue. The deep silk fringe also experienced a color shift, but one that was not quite as pronounced as that of the taffeta of the dress itself. In nineteenth-century terminology, the bodice was constructed with a Raphael neckline, or in modern terms, a square neckline. The shape is emphasized by the lace and fringe that outline the square and drape over the dress and also by the lace tucker, which is controlled by twisted silk threads that tie at the center front. A raised and padded bird in flight trims the buttons *(see photo detail, upper left)*. The sleeves are a revival of the pagoda sleeves of the 1850s, but they are not carried to the same extremes of size, and the double puff above the elbow creates a soft effect. The pointed basques with heavy trim accentuate the wearer's hips and come to a single point at the center back *(see photo detail, center left)*. What appears to be a second larger and rounded basque is a piece constructed and finished entirely separately. It is lightly tacked into the bodice at the side seams only, and its weight allows it to hang freely over the bustle. Bias-cut self-fabric flounces and layered bows on the bodice and skirt complete the picture of a frilly and dainty woman in the height of fashion. This dress is also a prime example of the reason why nineteenth-century magazines frequently discussed the fact that the trims cost more than the fabric.

S2004-01-022 Thompson
Reproduction undersleeves



Half of a stereoview depicting a woman in a reception gown from the same time period. Note the large "chunky" jewelry that characterized the late 1860s and early 1870s.

Wool Wrapper, 1870s-1880s

At-home comfort and lounging attire was one item of nineteenth-century fashion in which the general enthusiasm for color and pattern showed its fullest extent for both men and women. This particular wrapper must have been especially loved, for it was altered and mended extensively, but enough of the original characteristics remain to show its longevity. The wrapper still features the dropped shoulder line and piped armhole that were the hallmark of women's fashions until nearly the end of the 1870s, at which point the armscye moved to the natural shoulder line. The princess cut, in other words cutting the bodice and skirt together in single long pieces, first appeared in 1858. But it did not become a common dressmaking technique until the late 1860s and throughout the 1870s. Here, the plain velvet cuffs and standing band collar are an 1880s addition: 1870s dresses featured elaborate cuff treatments; plain and simple finishes such as this one were common in the 1880s, as was the standing collar. As currently constructed, this wrapper can accommodate a bustle, but awkwardly. Instead, it appears to have been designed for comfort in which the wearer could leave off such constructed furbelows, which would be entirely in keeping with the relaxation associated with wearing such garments. Knife-pleats on the bottom of the skirt were particularly common in the 1880s, but there were of course antecedents during the 1870s. In order to keep them neat and in place, a strip of scrap fabric is invisibly sewn behind the row of pleats.
S1991-45-431 Darnell

Wrappers were not commonly photographed, and obvious examples such as these cartes de visite *are rather rare.* Below left: *A Chicago mother looks tenderly at her son, 1866-1868. Close examination of the center front shows that the fabric was cut with the pattern off-center relative to the right and left half of her wrapper.* Below right: *A Washington, D.C., mother poses in her boldly striped wrapper with her son, who is holding some kind of pull toy, 1866-1870.*

Boy's Wool Dress, 1881-1882

Dr. Stephen Dana Sutliff (1878-1947) wore this plaid dress with contrasting bright blue wool trim. The dropped waistline is typical of children's styles of the early 1880s, and in this case the look is emphasized by the horizontal band of blue wool. The dress fastens with functional mother-of-pearl buttons that have been dyed brown and with additional concealed hooks and eyes.

After graduating from the College of Physicians and Surgeons (now the University of Maryland) in 1901, Sutliff moved to Shippensburg and opened a practice. He was on the staff of both the Chambersburg and Carlisle hospitals and even received presidential citations for his work during World Wars I and II. He died of injuries sustained in a car accident while on his way to pay a house call; his car overturned as he swerved to avoid a combine drawn by a tractor. The community paid a tribute to his memory when over 2,000 people attended his funeral services.
S1984-43-001 Sutliff

Although there are no photos of Sutliff in this particular dress, some photos from his youth are extant. The portrait with his mother *(above left)* dates to ca. 1885-1886, and a note indicates that he is 14 years old in the *carte de visite* photo *(below left)*.

Silk Plush Bodice, 1883-1885

"Long slender-looking waists are just now the fashion, so the shoulder-seams are short, the sleeves set in high up, the body-darts made quite low, and all trimmings on a bodice set straight and close down the front."

Peterson's Magazine, March 1883

"Long pointed bodices are also worn for evening-dress; but are made suitable for heavy materials. Cuirasses are also made pointed; they make the figure look slimmer than when tight and round over the hips."

Peterson's Magazine, May 1883

This bold electric blue bodice with its white silk-satin center front inset came from the estate of S. McClean Rhea (1855-1925) and his wife Sarah Rhodes Rhea (1855-1926) of Mercersburg, PA. Unfortunately, the skirt that accompanied it did not survive. It is a dramatic illustration not only of the brilliant color but also of the lush luxury fabrics available. The bodice once had bead trimmings on the wrist openings of the ¾-length sleeves: chemical interactions between the bodice and the beads discolored the plush. The wearer did gain some weight and had to let the waist out to 22 inches. As can be seen from the construction of the bodice back, it was made to accommodate the bustle, initially of very modest dimensions, that returned to fashion in 1883.

S2003-02-003 Gift

Left: Peterson's Magazine *depicted a bodice with a very similar design concept in June 1883.* Above: *Front view showing the strong visual contrast between the gleaming white silk-satin and the blue silk plush.*

Straw Hat, 1883

"Colored straws are the rage, comparatively few white ones being worn. They are of the fine English braid, and are shown in all the fashionable dark colors, such as navy-blue, olive-green, garnet, and seal-brown. They are usually trimmed with flowers in contrasting hues, massed around the edge of the bonnet both in front and at the back."

Peterson's Magazine, June 1883

"The latest tint of blue is called the `summer midnight,' and is a very dark and very lovely shade of marine blue."

Peterson's Magazine, July 1883

Family history associates this woman's bright blue straw bonnet and contrasting black straw lining under the brim with the year 1883. The manufacturer's name is embroidered in gold letters in the crown lining: Crofts, New York. The bonnet is trimmed on each side with multi-loop bows of wide dyed-to-match velvet ribbon. Clusters of blue silk flowers and green leaves trim the top and sides, and the bonnet fastens with black silk velvet ties. A white face ruffle is lightly basted inside the brim.
S1988-38-049 Sutliff

This particular bonnet shape was very popular in 1883, as shown by the engravings from Peterson's Magazine *that year.* Left: *Two bonnets from May. The top bonnet is of manila straw, lined with shirred pink crepe and trimmed with pink feathers and brown velvet bows. The hat immediately below it is made of brown straw and is trimmed with blackberries and leaves.* Right: *Two hats from April. The bonnet on the upper right is of black straw edged with jet and trimmed with pink roses. The bonnet on the lower right is of yellow straw trimmed with blue satin ribbon bows.*

Boy's Dresses, 1885-1886

John F. Seiler (1882-1955) of Millersburg, PA, wore both of these dresses, made by his step-grandmother, Sophie Seiler (1846-1918). The pink dress is the smaller of the two, and dates to about 1885 based on its size. The linen dress is larger, but not significantly so, and dates to about 1885-1886.

Throughout the nineteenth century, pink was considered a light shade of red and therefore an eminently masculine color suitable for boys' dresses. To provide an example, the March 1850 issue of *Peterson's Magazine* published a fashion plate of a "little boy's dress of pink merino." The dress fronts are cut in a one-piece A-line shape. To provide more fullness in the skirts for an active toddler, the back is cut with two upper pieces with a center back seam and a separate skirt piece consisting of eight directional knife pleats that have been pressed towards the center back. The trim is a combination of cotton wavy braid, now known as rick-rack, further ornamented with crochet *(see detail above)*. This technique of mixing a commercial trim with handwork was very common during the second half of the nineteenth century, and ladies' magazines routinely provided patterns for this kind of work.

The linen dress is constructed in two pieces: the skirt is attached to a white cotton sleeveless top, and the jacket, made to look like a jacket and vest, is worn over it. Once again, the freedom and ease of movement provided by nineteenth-century toddler's dresses is evident: although the skirt measures only 13 inches from waistline to hem, the hem circumference is a generous 84.5 inches. The collar and cuffs are hand crocheted, and white cotton braid forms an additional element of trim. Items that had to be washed, such as this dress and the pink one, were typically decorated with flat and sturdy trims that would hold up to boiling, scrubbing, starching and ironing and still look attractive while not generating specialized care and labor.

S1983-11-001, 006 Drake

Woman's Jersey Redingote, 1885-1886

The back of this Brooklyn, NY, cabinet card bears the name Miss Emma Burt Nichols and the date January 16, 1884. Her redingote is of a similar double-breasted style, and with her hat, purse and gloves, she is the epitome of winter fashion.

The double-breasted front of the coat is quite simple in its appearance with its welted pockets and artificial astrakhan collar and edging on the cuffs and hem *(see below)*. The elegance of the garment is found in the applied braid trim on the center back pieces. In order not to detract from the braid on the center back skirts of the coat, the tailor wisely did not apply the artificial astrakhan to that portion of the hem. The additional corded trim with its ornamental free-hanging ends emphasizes the bustle and the wearer's movements as she walks. To obtain a close fit on the back yet still shape the coat to the bustle, an additional inner band that ties around the wearer's waist is sewn to the center back.

S1990-11-003 Roddick

Girl's Silk Party Dress, 1885

Nineteenth-century children participated in juvenile versions of adult entertainments such as parties and dances. Here they learned to interact and socialize with one another and familiarized themselves with the prevailing etiquette that governed such occasions. An essential aspect of such events, for those who could afford it, was the appropriate attire, which the child was expected to protect from spills as much as possible. This fancy silk taffeta party dress with three-quarter length sleeves and a slightly dropped waistline would have been reserved for such fine parties. Blue silk-satin box-pleated flounces adorn the hemline and wrist openings. The dress features an overdress or pinafore in sheer cotton with a woven striped pattern. Permanent stains on the pinafore may be the result of a spill. The pinafore is trimmed with bows and edged with silk lace, and additional silk lace trims the wrist openings of the sleeves. The dress fastens in the center back with mother-of-pearl buttons, and it is fully lined with white cotton.
S2004-01-093 Thompson

Below left: *The prospect of her first party does not seem to appeal to the little girl in this ca. 1859 stereoview. It is difficult to see, but her dress skirt and sleeves are covered with eyelet hand embroidery, known in the nineteenth century as* broderie anglaise *or English embroidery. She is fortunate insofar as her dress is made out of cotton: if she spills her bread and jam, it can still be laundered.* Below right: *This cabinet card of an unidentified little Wisconsin girl, ca. 1881, in her lace-trimmed dress illustrates the lavish use of fine trims that appear on children's best clothing. Like the blue silk party dress, her dress is best left unwashed, and so she would have to be extremely careful while eating her party treats.*

Women's Hats, 1885-1890

The combination of novelty braided straw and brown silk velvet cut on the bias creates a charming hat *(next page, right)*. The brim is lined with a layered box-pleated frill made from chocolate brown ribbed silk, pinked on the raw edge. The top of the bonnet is trimmed with large multi-looped bows made from tobacco brown striped silk ribbon. Some of the bow loops have been wired. Another brown ribbon, with a satin edge and a horizontal rib, is tied in a bow at the back of the bonnet and then brought around and lightly tacked to the sides, where it then becomes the bonnet ties, called "strings" in the nineteenth century. The novelty straw braid at the back of the bonnet is mounted on a bullion net layer that, although darkened with age, still has some gleam to it. The lining is made of cream silk faille and the hat frame is constructed from wire and stiffened net.
S2004-01-004 Thompson

The appeal of this brown silk faille hat *(next page, left)* lies in the neat pleats that form its back; the same pleating is repeated on an even finer scale on the brim. In order to achieve a neat shape, the fabric was cut on the bias and fitted over a wire and buckram frame. With the artfully twisted ribbon trimming its sides and becoming the ties, the bonnet is tailored, simple and elegant.
S1988-30-012 Malvern Monday Afternoon Club

This engraving from the July 1888 issue of Peterson's Magazine *illustrates how these hats were worn, namely, high on the back and showing at the top of the head when the wearer was seen directly from the front.*

Silk Dress with Capelet, 1887-1889

"The excessive draping and looping at the back of the skirt are less and less seen, but the tournure [bustle] continues to be as large as ever, only the skirt now usually falls in full straight plaits [pleats] from the waist to the foot."

Peterson's Magazine, June 1886

This dress is an excellent example of the predilection for dyed-to-match jewel tones that is one of the characteristics of 1880s fashions, with just the colored cut-steel buttons providing a bright contrast. The plain silk taffeta and striped jacquard silk that comprise this dress match each other perfectly; the jacquard forms a center front inset on the bodice, the cuffs, the lining on the postillion tails, and additional skirt trim. The silk chenille fringe edging the pelerine is also a perfect color match *(see photo detail, left)*. The long asymmetrical overskirt with a noticeable point near the hem dominated the chic look of 1887-1889, and the lack of ornamental drapery on the skirt back is another characteristic of the last years of the decade. The plain cuffs are another feature of 1880s fashions beginning ca. 1883, and they constitute a fashion counter-reaction to the heavily trimmed and oversized cuffs of the 1870s.
S1985-67-015 Diehl

The roll of paper in the young lady's hands indicates that this unmarked cabinet card photograph is her graduation portrait. Although she has retained a large bustle in the back of her dress, her dress front features very similar asymmetrical overskirt drapery and vertical pleats. Her capelet appears to be made of velvet or plush, and it is lightly trimmed with fur around the neck and down the center fronts. Like her skirt, her hat sports an asymmetrical brim treatment.

Silk Faille Dress, 1887-1889

Sara in a fashionable hat during the late 1870s-early 1880s.

Sara Rees Boher *née* Hogan (ca. 1852-1917) owned this lovely dress. The bodice fastens in the center front with plain brown mother-of-pearl buttons which are subsequently concealed by a gathered inset at the bodice top and the asymmetrical closure with the large 1.5-inch figured buttons. The skirt features the long asymmetrical drapery typical of the last years of the bustle era. For an interesting design element, the back drapery of the skirt hooks into a discreet thread eye on the lower bodice back. Both skirt and bodice are trimmed with dark blue-black velvet and black glass beads. Such combinations of rich textures—shining silk, glittering black glass or jet, and somber velvet—form another key characteristic of women's fashions the 1880s.

S1981-14-069 Boher-Hosfeld

Silk-Satin Wedding Dress, 1889

Mary Helen Rinehart (1862-1894) of Fairfield, PA, wore this maroon silk-satin dress and straw hat for her wedding to William Lincoln Scott (1865-1949) on December 12, 1889. Family tradition indicates that she made the dress herself. It represents cutting-edge fashion for its date, as can be seen from the period quotations. Mary abandoned the smoothly fitted sleeves characteristic of the 1880s in favor of the slightly gathered sleeve cap that would eventually balloon into the oversized leg-o'mutton sleeves of the 1890s. The draped overskirt essential to the construction of bustled skirts has also disappeared. Instead, crisp tailored knife pleats in slimming vertical lines characterize the entire skirt. The last vestiges of the bustle remain in the center back skirt fullness, but the exaggerated silhouette of the 1880s has disappeared. The double-breasted bodice, known as the Directoire style, is beautifully highlighted by the coordinating paisley silk.

The accompanying hat is made from a novelty straw braid coiled to shape over a lightweight buckram frame covered with tissue paper. The raw edge is bound with lightly gathered burgundy silk velvet cut on the bias. The top is edged with machine-embroidered net lace, artfully twisted and gathered to place. A tuft of cream-colored feathers trims the top. According to family tradition, Mary bought the hat.

The green velvet hat *(right)* is also associated with Mary's wedding: it was her going-away hat worn on the train trip for the honeymoon visit to relatives in Maryland. The artfully folded velvet, twisted ribbons and sprays of feathers are lightly pinned to a wired black buckram base that is lined with cotton.

S1982-34-002, 004 Grove

"There is nothing absolutely new in the style of dresses; the Directoire gown, with its flat-falling skirt, much-trimmed bodice and sleeves, is still in great favor."

Peterson's Magazine, November 1889

"Buttons are large and are much used on bodices, and sometimes on the skirts."

Peterson's Magazine, November 1889

"Steels and tournures or bustles are very small. The skirt at the back is full, and falls in straight lines from the waist down to the feet, opening in front usually over a petticoat in straight lines or but very little draped; flatness is universal, steels being used only to keep the skirt from falling in at the bottom."

Peterson's Magazine, November 1889

"Sleeves are seen in great variety; but the small leg-of-mutton sleeve is perhaps the most popular—it is comfortably loose on the lower arm, widens toward the top, and is put in with a slight fullness into the armhole."

Peterson's Magazine, November 1889

"Tailor-made gowns are much modified in appearance; they are less heavy and stiff than formerly, the skirts are plain, the bodices have revers and vests, and the sleeves are not nearly so tight as they used to be, but are not made very full."

Peterson's Magazine, November 1889

Above left: *Cabinet card, 1889-1890, of a young woman from Butler, PA, in another Directoire dress with very similar styling.*

Silk Faille and Brocade Dress, 1892-1893

Mrs. Charles Clink of Fredericktown, OH, signed the back of her ca. 1892 cabinet card portrait. Her dress resembles the London-tailored gown, once again illustrating that fashion did not limit itself to world or state capitals.

Butterick published a similar bodice pattern in the May 1893 issue of The Delineator. *It is described as being "disposed with becoming fullness across the bust by gathers at the arms'-eyes." The description also specifies one aspect of Sarah Glover's dress: "The waist is worn under the skirt" and further suggests that it be accompanied by "an Empire or bell skirt" (p. 473). The same bodice illustrated in another fabric in the same issue is also described as having sleeves of "Empire puffs" (p. 455).*

The tailoring firm that made this silk faille dress sewed its label into the bodice: Russell & Allen, Old Bond St., London. The dress belonged to Sarah Eyre Glover *née* Blair (1861-1929) of Richmond, VA. It is an excellent example of the Empire styles that reappeared briefly at the beginning of the 1890s. Some of these Empire reinterpretations were what modern readers would define as true Empire fashions with the waistline set just below the wearer's bust. Others, such as this one, were still considered to be Empire styles due to the bustline emphasis created by the band of contrasting fabric draped across the bosom. The March 1893 issue of *The Delineator* featured two pages of dress patterns in the "Empire Style, or with Empire attributes, which are representative of the effects so very fashionable at the present time," demonstrating the broad interest in this historical revival.

The large double-puff three-quarter length sleeves on this dress illustrate the fullness that appeared on both the upper and lower arm when women's sleeves were beginning to expand. Most of the skirt's fullness is located in the back; three sets of inner tape ties at approximately the wearer's high hip, *derrière* and knees allow it to be adjusted. Typical skirts of the 1890s, such as this one, were rather simple when contrasted to the elaborately draped and trimmed skirts of the 1870s and 1880s. However, the simple lines hide complex internal workings: like others of this kind, this skirt is entirely interlined with crinoline, a blend of linen and horsehair, for stiffening. It is also fully lined, and has an additional dust ruffle sewn inside at the hemline. As a result, it is very heavy.
S2010-01-001 Glover, replacement sleeve frills

Boy's Velvet Suit, 1892-1893

"Frank T. Caldwell age 3 years" of Marion, IN, gazes at the camera with a steadiness that gives him an air of maturity in this cabinet card photo. He wears a wool suit similar to Besser's, and also provides a dramatic illustration of the elaborate frilled shirts that could accompany these outfits. Other optional style details included neck bows that were at times so wide that the ends extended from shoulder to shoulder. In addition, Lord Fauntleroy suits also came in versions that featured skirts for those boys who had not yet been "breeched," that is, had not yet made the transition from dresses to trousers.

John A. Besser (b. ca. 1890-1891) of Bellevue, PA, wore this olive velvet Little Lord Fauntleroy suit. Copper-colored silk cord with tasseled ends lace the trouser legs and jacket sleeves. Silk twill, again in a copper shade to provide a harmonizing contrast typical of Victorian color coordination, binds the edges of the collar, center front, lower hem, and jacket cuffs. The trousers are constructed with an inner waistband in order to button them to the shirt. A discreet convenience opening in the center front crotch seam renders hurried unbuttoning unnecessary. Such openings had already been a feature of boys' clothing for several decades, and they would continue well into the early twentieth century.

Suit S1982-07-062 Nickles
Shown with shirt 1885-1886 worn by John F. Seiler (1882-1955), S1983-11-003 Drake

Winter Promenade Suit, 1893-1894
Hat, 1895

For this promenade costume, textured wool is combined with dyed-to-match silk-satin and contrasting ivory machine-made lace at the bodice center front. The skirt is both lined and interlined, creating a very heavy garment. The 1890s was another decade in which women's sleeves reached enormous proportions, again creating a very broad shoulder line that was counter-balanced by a wide hemline. This highly fashionable suit shows the sleeve in the middle stages of its enlargement when there was still considerable fullness on the lower arm. For some now unknown reason, a second bodice was begun for this suit, but never finished.
S2004-01-016 Thompson

Elizabeth M. Bryant (1877-1964) wore this hat *(above left)* at her wedding to Frank H. Trowbridge (ca. 1869-1942) on May 19, 1895 in Mecklenburgh, New York. Her granddaughter, Elizabeth Thompson (1927-2003), became the founder of the Shippensburg University Fashion Archives and Museum. The hat consists of brown velvet pleated on the crown with a wired brown velvet bow. The brim is trimmed with orange and burgundy striped fabric, with additional fabric mixed with the wired bow.
S2004-01-007 Thompson

An unidentified couple from Chicago poses for their portrait, ca. 1893. Her promenade suit is equally as heavy, although not quite so "upholstered" in appearance, and features a similar color contrast at the bodice center front as well as satin bows on the waist and the back of the neck.

Silk Taffeta Dress, 1895

The contrasting striped fabric of this dress is limited to the upper bodice, thereby drawing the viewer's eye upwards towards the wearer's face. At the same time, the slight bias angle of the stripes on the yoke emphasizes the diminutive waistline. In the evolution of the exaggerated sleeves of the 1890s, there are definite transitions that aid in dating the garment. Initially, in 1892 and 1893, the leg-o'mutton sleeve tapered to the wrist, with the forearm of the sleeve being generous and wide. This began to disappear in 1893 and 1894, with the lower sleeve fitting much closer to the forearm. By 1895, the sleeve fit close to the arm from the wrist to just above the elbow, as is the case with this dress. As of 1896, the close fit of the lower sleeve extended part-way up the upper arm, but the sleeve puff was still very large. It abruptly collapsed to one of more reasonable size in 1897 and completely disappeared by 1898, at which point the tight sleeve was the height of fashion.

S1982-64-024 Wm. Penn

Wedding Dress, 1897

Mary Bowman wore this four-piece red and black dress at her wedding to John Aldus Herr on January 27, 1897. The couple married in the home of the groom's brother in West Lampeter Township in Lancaster County, PA. The bodice is constructed from nubby red and black wool with a plain square black velvet yoke *(see detail, upper left)*. The cuffs are trimmed with black velvet and edged with black cotton lace. The jet-beaded plastron is a separate piece that, when positioned on the bodice, creates the illusion of an elaborate scalloped yoke in the front and resembles a sailor collar in the back *(see detail, lower left)*. The collar, which is completely separate from the dress, is the fourth piece of the ensemble and is also trimmed with velvet and jet.

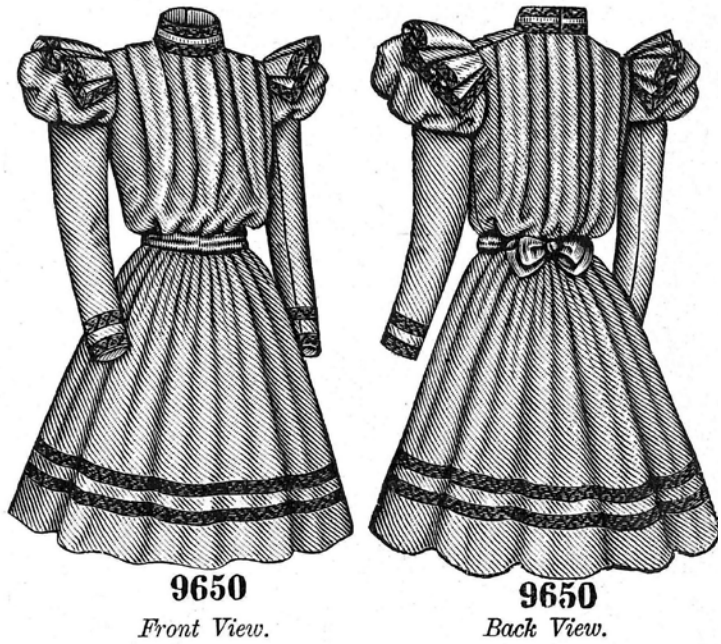
Mary was very much in the forefront of fashion in selecting this design for her dress. In 1897, the oversized leg-o'mutton sleeves that had been the latest style abruptly collapsed into a small upper sleeve puff on an otherwise tight-fitting sleeve. For clever Victorian seamstresses, it was a simple matter to pick apart their unfashionable 1896 sleeves with their large upper-arm puff, reduce the puff, and reinsert the newly downsized sleeve back into the armscye. Mary's dress moves beyond that intermediary phase and adopts the lightly gathered sleeve cap that characterized fashions as of 1898. Mary was a slim woman: the waist of her bodice measures a mere 21 inches. Because she had her first child within a year, it would seem that she was not able to use her dress much after the wedding.

S1986-85-018 Kulp

Girl's Silk Dress, 1897

According to the history associated with the garment, this red and white silk taffeta check was Miss Ella Martin's best dress when she was eight or nine years old. It was also this dress that sparked Elizabeth Thompson's, SUFAM's founder, interest in historic clothing. The bodice has a shirred center front inset that is mirrored by similar gathering in the bodice back. The high collar is detachable and is trimmed with lace and horizontal tucks. The sleeve is of a two-piece construction and features the typical small upper puff of 1897. The deep lace and self-fabric flounces would begin both to shrink and eventually disappear in 1898 in favor of shoulder tabs attached to the dress either at the neck or yoke seams or in the shoulder area of the armscye.
S2004-01-094 Thompson

Lower left: *Cabinet card photo of an unidentified little girl from Newark, NJ, wearing a dress very similar in style and construction to Ella's.* Lower right: *A dress pattern available from Butterick shows the subtle evolution from one year to the next. This pattern is again very similar to Ella's best dress, but the reduction in size of the upper sleeve ornamentation is evident. The descriptive text accompanying the engraving states that "The little frock is an exceptionally pretty style that will be suitable for either best or general wear" (*The Manchester Glass of Fashion Up to Date*, March 1898).*



GIRLS' BOX-PLAITED BLOUSE DRESS, WITH STRAIGHT SKIRT.

Printed Wool Dress with Silk Stripes, 1898

Sara Rees Boher *née* Hogan (ca. 1852-1917) wore this cream wool dress with a meandering burgundy floral pattern barred with cream silk stripes. Sara's love of fashionable clothing remained with her throughout her life, as this stunning dress and her portraits attest. The bodice fastens first at the center front, and then the draped front overlay hooks virtually invisibly at the wearer's left shoulder and side. The small shoulder tabs represent high style for 1898, as does the elaborate draping on the front. The burgundy silk-satin sleeves and bodice yoke covered with ivory lace are a typical decorative treatment of the 1890s. Just as the sleeves became smaller as of 1897, so did the decorative bows that trimmed the necklines, waistbands, bodices and skirts of fashionable clothing; the bodice and shoulder bows here are a prime example of the reduced scale. The large, almost floor-length, bow at the back of the bodice still has its original straight pin used to attach it, and the pin even retains its factory bluing. There is a small bolero-length jacket with three-quarter sleeves that accompanies the dress; its minimalist and basic construction does not reflect the same professional skill with which the dress was made, and it appears to have been an after-thought that was put together using remnants. In fact, there is an additional remnant of the cream floral wool that was saved along with the dress.

S1981-14-045 Boher-Hosfeld

Photo of Sara Rees Boher née Hogan ca. 1900, S1981-14-157

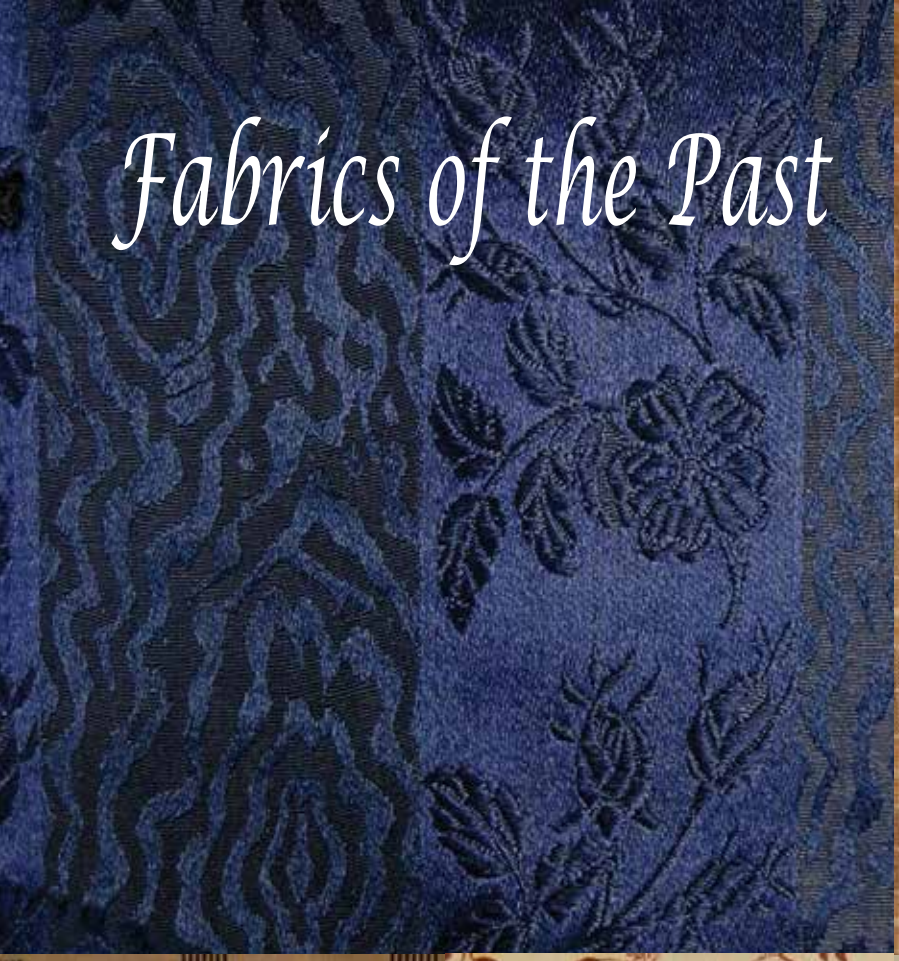
Satin Corset, 1890s

Few historical garments attract as much fascination and fetishism as the corset. This particular one is perhaps even a wedding corset. It is a beautiful example in sky-blue silk-satin that appears never to have been worn. Two layers of fabric are used in its construction: an ivory sateen lining is the backing for the blue satin, and both layers are treated as one. An inner waist stay further stabilizes the corset and has the brand name and model number stamped in black ink: R & G No. 397. To ensure a more comfortable fit, all the seams have been sewn to the outside of the corset. All 34 bones are encased in channels sewn to the exterior. These channels cover the seams made when piecing the corset sections together and also provide additional support and shaping on the pieces between the seams. It fastens in the center front with a standard busk, marked "R&G" on each of the busk's eyes, and fourteen brass grommets on either side of the center back allow the wearer to adjust the fit. The original lacing strings with their brass tips are still extant.

S2004-01-141 Thompson

Changes in fashion and in technology made the corset an ever-evolving wardrobe staple. Competition among manufacturers was fierce; each one offered "new," "improved," "sensible," or "healthy" models, to select just a few of the typical adjectives used in the advertisements. To give a sense of the range of products and styles, the advertisements reproduced here all appeared in the May 1893 issue of The Delineator*, and they represent just a few of the myriad corset manufacturers in the U.S. and the world.*

Fabrics of the Past



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