

AN HISTORIC ACCOUNT OF AMERICAN
WOMEN'S UNDERGARMENTS FROM
1609 THROUGH 1930

By

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

For centuries undergarments have remained the uncelebrated heroines of the ever changing fashion silhouette of the American woman. To obtain information it is necessary to delve deeply into works concerned primarily with outergarments. The occasional mention of a horsehair padded bustle, an elaborately embroidered petticoat described in great detail, and perhaps a sketch of a feminine figure enveloped in a tightly laced corset give evidence of the importance that undergarments have had in shaping the fashion silhouette. The Cunningtons (1) authors of the one book dedicated solely to underclothing state:

In the many books on period costume the subject of underclothes has seldom been treated adequately, if, indeed, at all. Yet we cannot appreciate the significance of the outer form unless we understand the nature of the supporting garments beneath. The complete costume is a combination of the two, producing, very often, a shape singularly unlike that of the human body. For this the undergarments may be mainly responsible.

The silhouettes of women's dresses have varied sometimes drastically and at other times only slightly. It is not the outergarment alone that makes a change in the outline. More often than not, it is a single or a combination of undergarments that provide the foundation for the shape of the silhouette. Bradfield (2) states that one cannot fully appreciate the outside of a period dress without a thorough knowledge of the proper foundations of necessary underwear.

Kybalova, Herbenova, Lararova (3) found undergarments to be of primary importance in establishing a particular silhouette. It is their belief that with fashion and history, one is a reflection of the other.

Statement of the Problem

The problem was to first set up a series of plates representing the basic silhouettes of American costume from 1609 to 1930. By doing library research and delving into historic references, silhouettes were established at intervals when definite changes were evident. Undergarments responsible for the foundation of the silhouette were described in detail.

By starting with 1609, when the first two women arrived at the first American colony settled in Jamestown, Virginia and ending with 1930, a sufficient background of undergarments worn in America was established. This information was then used for the second phase of the problem. The undergarments in the Oklahoma State University Historic Costume Collection which date back from 1930 were classified. The garments were catalogued according to the system set up and used by Barbara McCormick.

Purposes of the Study

Because undergarments play such an important part in shaping the silhouette of woman's costume, this particular study had several purposes which were as follows:

1. To give due credit to the foundation garments responsible for shaping the fashion silhouettes of the American woman

from 1609 to 1930.

2. To classify and catalog the undergarments in order to establish the physical condition of each piece and each garment's place in and contribution to history.
3. To establish a working catalog so that the garments might be used by students for educational purposes such as examination of fiber content, methods of construction, and style.
4. To give recommendations for better cleaning practices and storage facilities.

The Need

Little attention has been given to the Oklahoma State University Historic Costume Collection as a whole. A study of this type has provided the proper background for classifying the undergarments already existing in the collection as well as serving as a future reference for additions to the collection. The actual garments were catalogued to determine what pieces are on hand, the garment's physical condition, and its place in history. The study has provided a working costume collection. The catalogued classification of garments show which ones are in condition to be taken into class to be examined by students thus making the collection a more valuable shared experience.

The Procedure

The procedure of this study included the following:

American costume silhouettes were established at intervals from 1609 to 1930. The silhouettes were outlined and each of the undergarments responsible for contributing to a particular shape were described

in detail. When possible, line drawings were included to show shape, character, and method of wearing the garment. These provided a better understanding and clearer picture of each article of clothing.

The classification of undergarments in the Oklahoma State University Historic Costume Collection were a part of the study. These garments were catalogued according to the system set up by Barbara McCormick. The cataloguing and classification included the following information on a six by eight inch card:

Name of the Item
 Period of History
 Description
 Sketch or Photo
 Condition
 Donor and Donor Date
 Approximate Value (present or repaired state)

The reverse side recorded the process, date, cost, and by whom the garment was cleaned.

By simply using a different colored card, a working catalog was established which indicate physical condition permitting handling of garments by instructors and/or students for class use.

The Limitations

The historic information was gathered from pertinent literature available in the local libraries, theses obtained through interlibrary loan, and museum displays in this locality. The study was limited by the availability of these materials.

The study was further limited to the undergarments of the Oklahoma State University Historic Costume Collection as of June 18, 1971.

Definition of Terms

With the help of dictionaries and Picken's (4) The Language of Fashion to obtain appropriate definitions, the following terms have been used throughout this study:

- Bloomers:** Pantaloon type of garment closed by elastic above or below knee; sometimes worn without overskirt for athletic games; named for Mrs. Amelia Bloomer, American dress reformer of late 19th century.
- Brassière:** Garment to support and shape the breasts, usually of elastic material and provided with shoulder straps.
- Bustle:** A pad or framework worn beneath a woman's skirt just below the back of the waist.
- Cambric:** Fine closely woven, white, or yarn dyed warp cotton fabric in plain weave with gloss on right side.
- Camisole:** Underbodice, often lace-trimmed, usually with straight top and shoulder straps of ribbon, lace, or self-material; first worn as corset cover.
- Chemise:** Loose combination undergarment for women, hanging straight from shoulders, covering torso; originally with or without sleeves, worn next to the skin.
- Chemisette:** Plain or ornamental sleeveless underbodice covering neck, shoulders, and breast; worn generally to fill in neckline of dress.
- Combination:** One-piece garment, often a chemise combined with drawers or pantie.
- Corselet:** A comfortable, smaller corset, stiffened only with light whalebones or not at all; sometimes combined a lightly boned corset with a brassière.
- Corset:** Smoothly fitted undergarment extending from or below the bust down over the hipline; often stiffened by strips of steel or whalebone, limbered by elastic goring; sometimes tightened by lacing; worn by women for support and figure-molding; originally made in two pieces laced together at front and back; formerly called stays.
- Crinoline:** A stiff cloth, originally made of horsehair and linen thread, used for stiffening or lining; also, steel springs or featherbone forming hoop.
- Drawers:** Somewhat like men's knee-length trousers; completely separate

legs attached to a band were later joined.

Farthingale: Petticoat with a padded contrivance or hoop of iron, wood, bone, or cane which distended the outerskirt.

Flounce: Gathered or plaited strip sewn to garment, lower edge often being left free.

Hoop: Circular bands, usually metal or whalebone, of graduated sizes fastened one above the other, with largest at bottom and smallest at top.

Pannier: Framework forming a basket-like projection worn under each side of the skirt; also, a bouffant drape at the side of a skirt, giving effect of a wired pannier.

Pantalettes: Long drawers decorated about the ankles with tucks, ruffles, embroidery, and lace, which showed below skirts; often worn as separate frills tied on below the knee.

Pantie: Short undergarment, having practically no leg portion, fitted snugly at hipline.

Petticoat: A woman's undergarment, usually just slightly shorter than the outside skirt, was ruffled or trimmed.

Silhouette: Outline or contour of a figure or costume.

Undergarment: Any garment, excluding stockings, that is worn under the outer garment.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Underclothing is so familiar to us that its existence is taken for granted. We often fail to question the reasoning behind its invention. Man clothed himself in skins or fabric so that he might present a "front" to the outside world, or to provide warmth or protection. He then was faced with a need to adapt this outer covering to the comfort and function of the skin and body. This included a means of preventing the rough inside surfaces of the outer layer from contact with the body; some way of absorbing perspiration; and providing a form of protection so that heavy outer clothing would not rub with every movement. These criteria were obtained by placing one or more individual garments between the outer garment and the skin of the wearer. "Man was thus arrayed in two sets of separate garments; an outer covering with which he faced the outer world, and an inner covering with which he faced his own skin and body" (5).

Cunnington believes that underclothing can be divided into five different functions. The first is to protect the body from the cold. Women's lives were less active than men's. Because their legs were usually left bare and exposed beneath the expanding skirts they seemed to require more clothing. Secondly, undergarments support the shape of the costume, quite often giving an air of mystery to the structure. The third function serves to protect the skin from the outer garment.

Until the end of the 18th century the reverse held true as elegant fabrics had to be protected from the filthy and verminous skin beneath. Another reason appears to be the erotic use of underclothing. Lastly, underclothing was considered as a method of class distinction. The number of garments owned, the elaborateness of the fabric and decorative features, and how often the garments were cleaned gave evidence of class distinction (1).

Riegel (6) found that women's clothing played an important part in the early feminist movements of the 19th century. The first grievance dealt with feminine health for long skirts were voluminous and difficult to handle, especially, when draped over hoops of expanding diameters. Tightly corseted waists rearranged vital organs causing poor health. Tight garters resulted in poor circulation of the legs. Low necks and flimsy shoes invited pneumonia. Few people could disagree that women were courting sickness and death to the point that they were unable to perform simple household tasks and bear healthy children. The second line of feminist attack stated that current female clothing incited immorality. The tightly compressed waist emphasizing the bust and hips, combined with a low-cut bodice and bare arms which tended to encourage male imaginations. Flowing skirts attracted "pruient peering" as they gave glimpses of white-clad ankles and women's legs during the 19th century. The third complaint stated emphatically that feminine apparel was consciously designed to hamper women's movements in order to prevent them from earning a living except through marriage. One feminist advocate declared, "I see no business avocation in which woman in her present dress can possibly earn equal wages with man" (6).

The feminist movement received mixed reactions. Little headway seemed to be made as far as more satisfactory underwear, shorter skirts, and simplified dress. The dress reform movement disappeared during World War I just as it had during the Civil War. It failed to revive in the postwar period. Even though the propaganda disappeared, the feminist aims that had been proclaimed so loudly for half a century were achieved by the vagaries of fashion. Undergarments were fewer and simpler, corsets were lighter or discarded, skirts became skimpy and rose to the knees; shorts, knickers, and one-piece bathing suits provided all the physical freedom anyone could desire. This sequence of events bore out a prophecy made by The Woman's Journal in 1870, "Reformed dress is dependent upon and must come after suffrage." Improved clothes had in fact played no part in feminine emancipation, but feminine emancipation had brought greater dress reform than the most visionary of the early feminists had advocated (6).

Love's (7) study tried to determine if dresses of the American pioneer woman became more functional in nature or continued to follow the fashion trends set by the East. She concluded that hardships and poverty left little time or money to be overly concerned with fashionable dresses. No one typical style prevailed although all the dresses had similar characteristics. Simplesness was an outstanding feature. There were several attempts at exhibiting the new trend in fashion that came from the East. On an overland journey to Oregon in the 1850's one woman wrote in her diary, "We met two of the bloomers at the river...Mrs. Tait with a mind as changing as the wind has adopted the bloomer dress...Two more bloomers this morning..." Love cited the case of one woman fifty years old who used her imagination and

appeared in a short skirt and pantalettes.

The pioneer women learned to be practical rather than fashionable. After the drought in 1859-1860 in Kansas they made petticoats out of manilla sacks marked "W. T. M. Army, Agent" in which supplies had been sent (7).

Fargo (8) was interested in the clothing of the Kansas woman from 1854 to 1870. She found that clothing was chosen with regard to the environment and materials available rather than fashion and styles. The women's prime interest was establishing a home and providing for their families.

Langner (5) found that clothing embraced almost every aspect of human behavior. He said, "Clothing, unlike beauty, was far deeper than skin-deep." He wrote that clothing influences and is influenced by religion, morals, sex, marriage, and most social activities. As a result of his experiences and research, he concluded that all clothes were originally "inventions" and that inferiority feelings of man have played a major role in stimulating him to make these inventions.

Brooke and Laver (9) wrote that in the 19th century the modern world took shape. For in that century the evolution of clothing reflected the existing political and economic revolutions. They felt that perhaps the greatest revolution was the inability to distinguish classes by dress. Only by adopting the very novel could a woman of wealth distinguish herself.

Yarwood (10) limited his study to the costumes of the average fashionable men and women of each period. He believed that a comprehensive study on historic costumes had to be limited in expression of comparisons and opinions.

Hansen's (11) studies sought to explain that the similarities of lines and colors of peoples clothing in any given period is called "period style." This finds its expression in the whole mode of life of an era. It is especially apparent in the art and architecture. Period style influences furniture, painting, sculpture, and all the inanimate objects which surround us. Thus, it is only natural that people should try to adapt their appearance to their environment through the clothes they wear. For example, during the 19th century furniture was heavily upholstered and thickly draped curtains were popular. Women's clothes became so voluminous that it was difficult to discern the outline of the human form beneath.

Norwood (12) in her study found that elderly women need to feel useful and wanted. Attractive and appropriate clothing is one of the best aids to the problem of low morale.

McClellan (13) once stated, "Fashion wears out more apparel than the man." She felt a need to compile clear accurate drawings with chronologically dated pages. General style changes with less explanatory and mostly pictorial material was desirable. Her drawings were made from period sources as photographs lost clarity and detail. These drawings also portrayed as closely as possible the character of the people wearing the costumes as well as the dress. She felt that the two were inseparable.

Undergarments have been used throughout history to alter woman's natural feminine figure by cinching, pushing, flattening, lifting, etc. This realization prompted Jourard and Secord (14) to carry out a survey on "Body-Cathexis and the Ideal Female Figure." Their study was concerned with measuring the relationship between women's satisfaction

with parts of their bodies and the size of these parts. It was found that the ideal size of body parts was significantly smaller than the actual size with the exception of the bust where the ideal size was larger.

Because women's costume is so unstable it is necessary to devise some type of scheme for record keeping. The best method that has been passed down through the hundreds of years since prehistoric man first began to scrawl on the walls of caves is the simple use of sketches or pictures. Bradfield (2) presented a series of women's undergarments and the inside structure of dresses from 1730-1930. Her procedure was detailed descriptions centered around very rough drawings of her subjects.

In addition to sketches or photographs some researchers prefer to use an itemized garment check sheet such as that developed in 1951 by Spivey (15). Such a form may include the catalog number, type of garment, occasion for wearing, date and place of purchase, fabric construction, details, etc. which helps to eliminate much excess writing of descriptive detail. In the words of Carl Kohler (16), "The cut of a garment cannot be described in words; we must actually see how its lines run before we can appreciate the effect".

CHAPTER III

AMERICAN WOMEN'S UNDERGARMENTS

FROM 1609 - 1930

Life in the early settlements began in 1607 when a company of 105 men with three ships entered what is now known as the Chesapeake Bay. They built a few crude shelters along the James River which they called Jamestown. The company was an odd combination of men--more than half were gentlemen, some tradesmen, and a few servants. Times were difficult in this new land and ships bringing supplies and men were few and far between. By the spring of 1610 out of a company of 506, less than 60 remained alive. Reinforcements arrived in June of the same year bringing a new source of life to the colony. The Virginia Company had profited from its mistakes and the ships were laden with carpenters, smiths, coopers, fishermen, tanners, shoemakers, shipwrights, brickmen, gardeners, husbandmen, and laboring men of all sorts (17).

The colony was then able to grow and prosper and men were capable of supporting families. In 1619 a shipload of ninety women arrived. All of them were prospective wives for the colonists! The passage fare was one hundred twenty pounds of tobacco to be paid by the man whose wife a woman became. Until this time Virginia had seen only two English women, Mistress Forest and her maid, Anne Burras who had landed in 1609.

These women were naturally not ladies of quality but rather poor

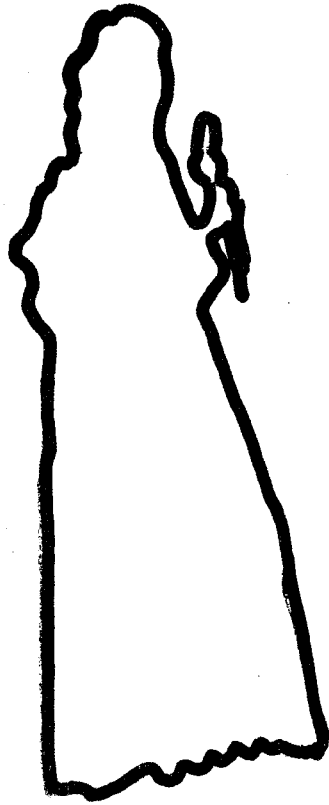


PLATE I

17TH CENTURY 1600-1642

maidens and widows--young, handsome, and chaste. Their gowns were understandably neither of the richest material nor the finest cut. Considering the nature of their journey it is certain they selected and purchased the best their means would allow. It is probable they followed as closely as they could the latest London mode (17).

1609 thru 1642

Few records of clothing were kept during the early colonization of America as the colonists were more preoccupied with self-preservation. Since the immigrants came from such countries as England, Spain, and France it seems safe to assume that their clothing would be similar to that worn in the mother country. A few adaptations were no doubt made necessary by the additional hardships of a new and unsettled frontier.

Plate I depicts the silhouette considered to be characteristic of the first women colonists in America. This outline was given shape by the use of chemise, corset, petticoats, and/or a farthingale depending upon the individual's own preference.

The chemise, a garment worn next to the skin was an item that hung straight from the shoulders, usually cut quite full, and with or without sleeves (figure 1). Very often the chemise or white kenting (figure 4) (18) as it was sometimes called would be exposed by the outside garment usually extending from beneath the shorter bodice sleeves or at the neckline.

Sometimes a chemisette was mistaken for a highnecked chemise when actually it was merely a filler (17). The chemise was made from cambric or holland and occasionally silk but always heavily perfumed with

sweet smelling powder or herbs to mask less agreeable body odors (1).

The corset during this time was an underbodice stiffened with busks of wood or whalebone inserted into casings. It was laced, and tied by busk points at the center front or back. Soft leather may have been used to make an entire corset similar to the one in figure 2 (2). It is thought that due to hardships and a strenuous way of life, the corset may not have been so stiffened and tightly laced but rather made to fit more closely to the natural figure (17).

There is no reference made to drawers during this period or even until the close of the 18th century. The only mention of a garment covering this area of the body was referred to as a "rag of linen" (1).

If the petticoat was ornamental it was left visible, if homely it remained as the underpetticoat. There was still some use of graduated hoops at this time but full cut petticoats, often quilted, were more popular. They might have been made of printed linen or dimity trimmed with silk or silver lace, serge, flannel, tabby, broadcloth, or linsey-woolsey. They were tied by points or laces to the body.

The simplest skirt was cut full and hung in rich folds to within a few inches of the ground. Most skirts opened in front exposing an underskirt of a different material. If the outerskirt was plain, the underskirt was usually more elaborate. It seems to have been a common practice for busy and hard working women to get their skirts out of the way by gathering up the skirt on the left side allowing it to hang diagonally across the body in the careless manner of figure 5. At other times the skirt might be gathered up on each side exposing the petticoat all the way around as in the variations of figures 4 and 6 (17).

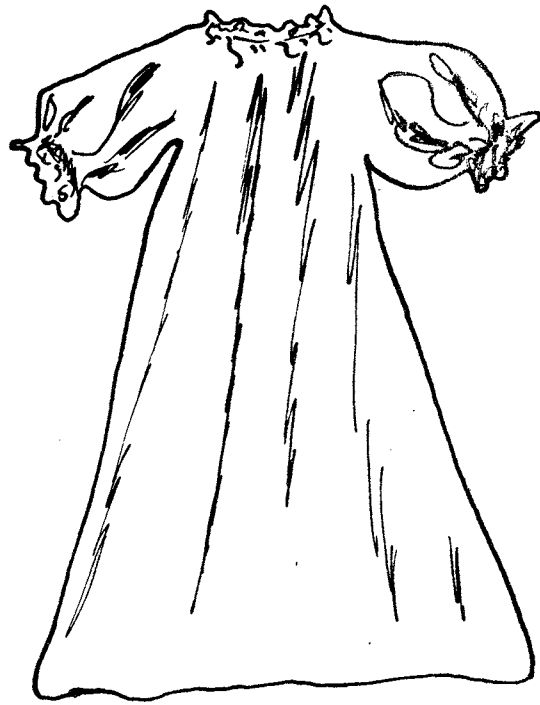


Figure 1. Linen Chemise (1)



Figure 2. Leather Corset (10)



Figure 3. Farthingale (13)



Figure 4.



Figure 5.

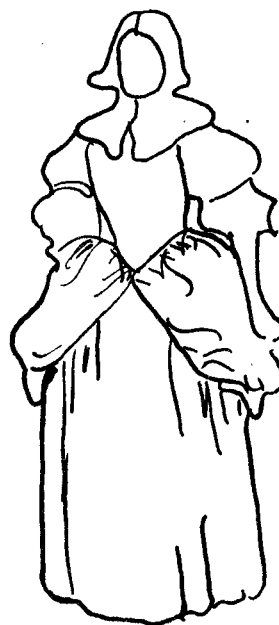


Figure 6.

Methods of Lifting Skirts to Expose
Petticoats (17)

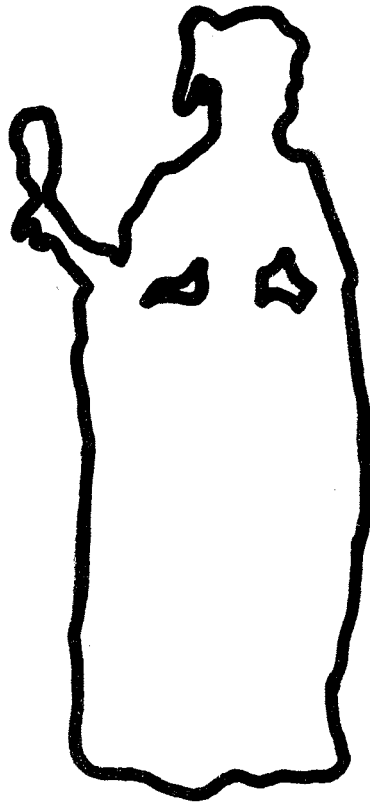


PLATE II

17TH CENTURY 1643-1714

To add additional width to the silhouette, a farthingale was still often used although its popularity was rapidly diminishing. This was a bolster-like bustle, sometimes referred to as a "bum-roll," which was tied around the waist and rested on the hips (figure 3) over which the skirt was draped (17).

1643 thru 1714

The chemise was still knee-length or longer and rather like a night dress. It was made of fine holland or lawn cut simply or very full. Usually richly adorned with lace and gathered frills edging sleeves and the neck, it often extended beyond the boundaries of the outer garment. The neckline was cut low with a V-opening in front and tied with a threaded draw string. It had large balloon sleeves that reached below the elbow to show under bodice sleeves. The sleeve band was pierced with buttonholes through which ribbon was threaded for tie fastenings (figure 7) (13).

The structure of women's silhouette during this era depended greatly on the stays which laced at the back coming down almost to the bottom of the spine. Figure 8 illustrates several variations of the corsets worn from 1660-1710. Tassets splayed out from the waists allowing the corset to fit down over the hips (2). The fabric and boning was hard and stiff making sewing so difficult that corsets were made by special craftsmen or by tailors (3).

The hooped skirts created the need for a change in the stays which ended a few inches below the waist. Shoulder straps became mere strings. Corsets were cut almost straight to mold and support the breasts as well as to push them upward. They were so stiff that some

movements were startlingly revealing and breathing space was limited (19).

When the bodice was heavily boned there was no need to wear the strapless corset. Near the end of the century this appeared in two parts and laced up both front and back (1).

Farthingales were discarded and layers of fringed, corded, and quilted petticoats were in use. Many of these were quite elaborate and it was not unusual to see petticoats with the following descriptions:

...a scarlet and gold atlas petticoat edged with silver, under-petticoat edged with gold, a black velvet petticoat, an allejah petticoat striped with green, gold, and white, a petticoat of rich strong flowered satin, red and white and all in great flowers of leaves, and scarlet flowers with black specks brocaded in, raised high like velvet shag...(13)

Of course, not all petticoats of the day were this fine or elaborate for muslin, linen, linsey-woolsey, etc. were still used. The practice of exposing the underskirt by gathering up the outer garment and securing it on both sides of the waist was still popular.

Occasionally, the skirts of the outergarments had trains which made it necessary for the petticoats to be extended in the same manner. Near 1711 the hooped petticoat once again made its appearance. It was preceded by the bustle which was created by simply bunching up the overskirt and securing it at the small of the back. Eventually, the bustle was extended to the sides as panniers.

1715 thru 1773

The chemise was still the principal garment and reached just

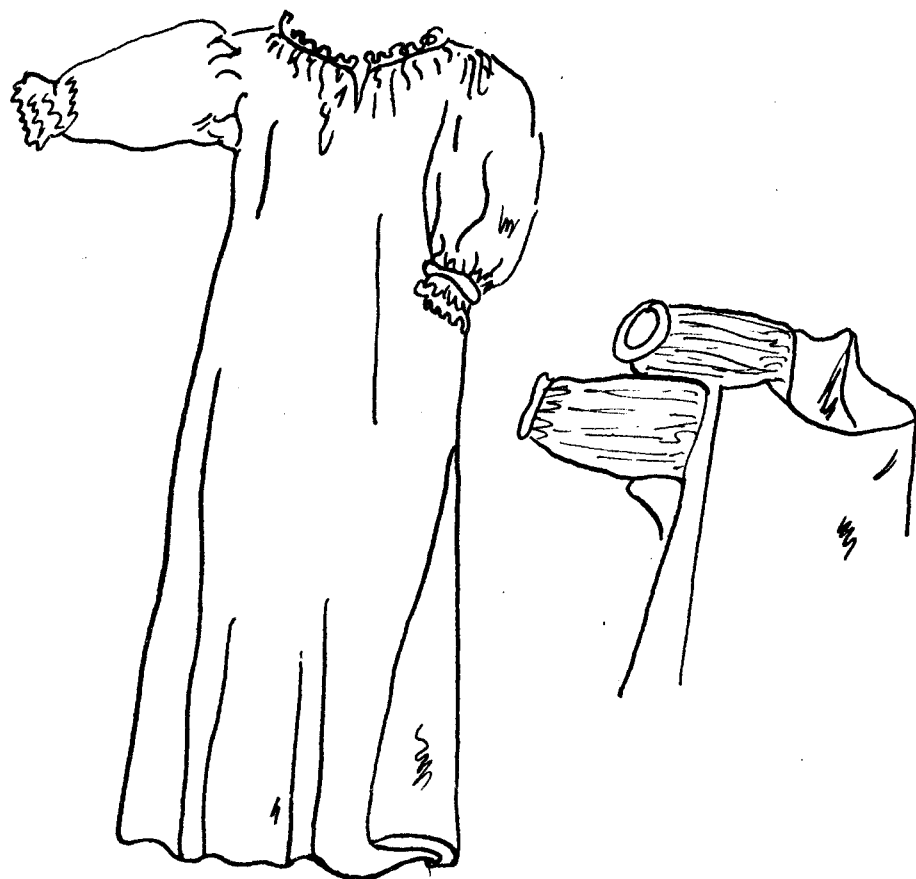
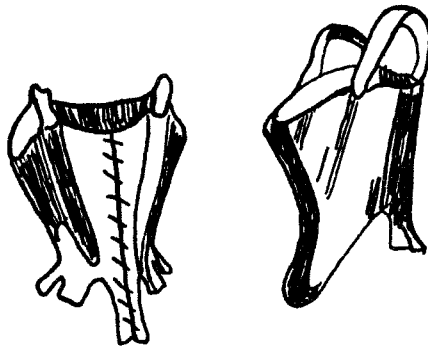
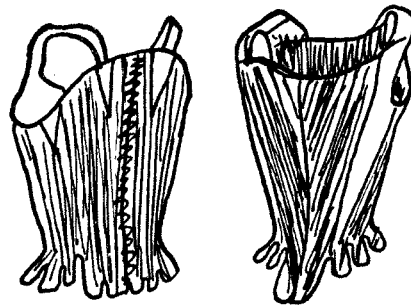


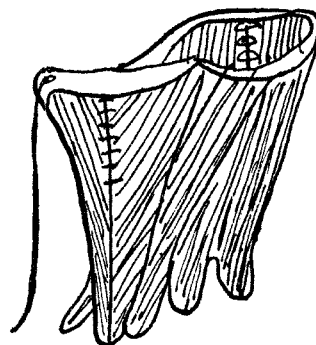
Figure 7. A Chemise Worn Beneath the Stays (1)



1660



1680-1700



1710

Figure 8. Stays (1)

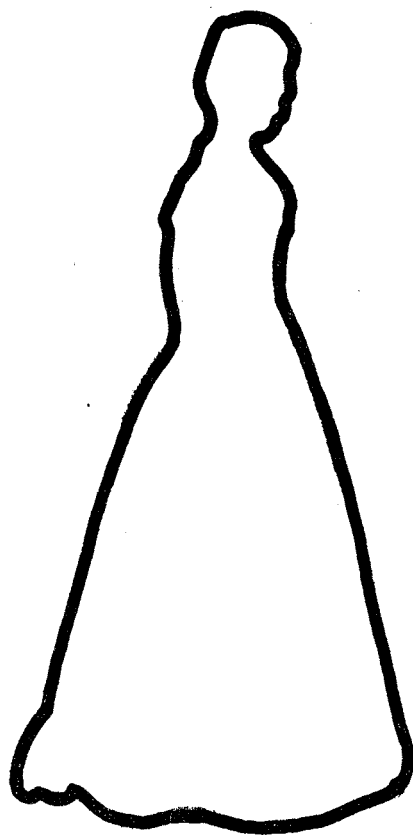


PLATE III

18TH CENTURY 1715-1773

below the knees with the top scarcely on the shoulders in order to follow the very low cut neckline of the bodice. It had full sleeves gathered at the top, varying from elbow to wrist length that may or may not have been exposed depending on the length of the bodice sleeves. Again, buttonholes and ribbon ties were used to fasten the chemise (1).

The corset, worn from early childhood, was rigid and compressing. It was usually made of a coarse material with closely stitched casings from top to bottom into which cane or whalebone strips were inserted. The lower edge was divided into tassets so the garment could conform to the fullness of the hips. The front ended below the waist while the back was made higher and fitted with shoulder straps (figure 9). If the neckline of the bodice was cut low, the straps passed around the tops of the arms as shown in figure 10. The corset laced in front by means of eyelet holes reinforced with silk stitching as metal eyelets had not come into use. Very stout people were assisted by the use of extra side lacing extensions. Frequently corsets were covered with elaborate fashion fabrics to form the bodice of the gown. These were usually made with eyelet holes round the armholes to which detachable sleeves could be secured (1).

Petticoats, with or without their trains, were cut full and of elegant fabrics as seen in figure 12. The number worn was decreasing as the hooped petticoat rapidly came into fashion. It began as a pyramidal then progressed to a dome shape (figure 11) and eventually was flattened in the front and back to make it more oval (figure 14). It was almost three yards in width. The hooped petticoat soon developed into hooped bustles or false hips or panniers as they were termed about 1755. Figure 13 gives a better understanding of the pannier.

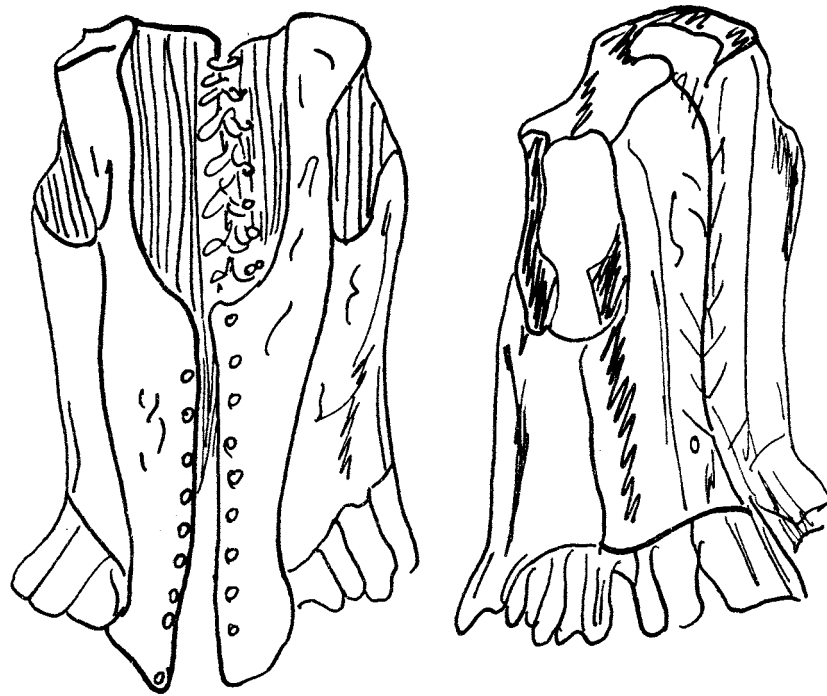


Figure 9. Linen Stays with Front and Back Lacing (2)

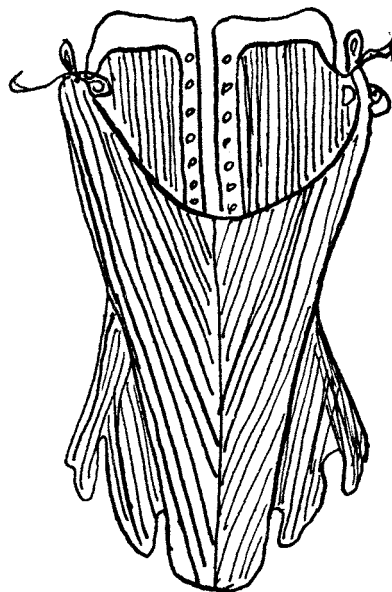


Figure 10. Corset Showing Back Lacing (10)

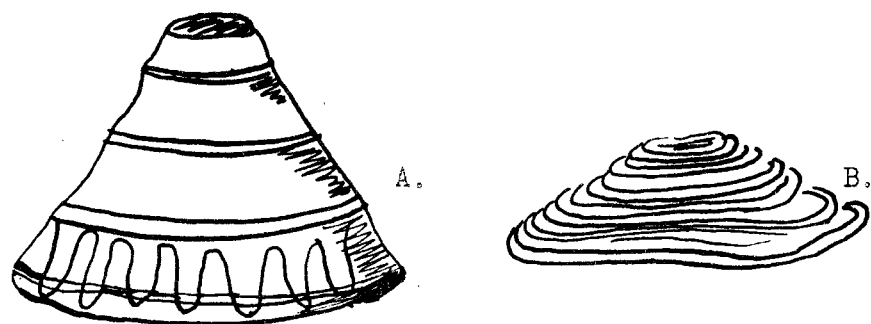


Figure 11. Hooped Petticoats from 1721. (B) Shows the Collapsible Style that was Popular After 1750 (11)

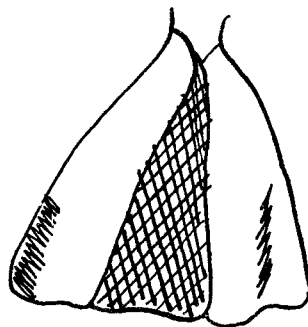


Figure 12. Petticoat Designed to Expose Fashion Fabric (13)

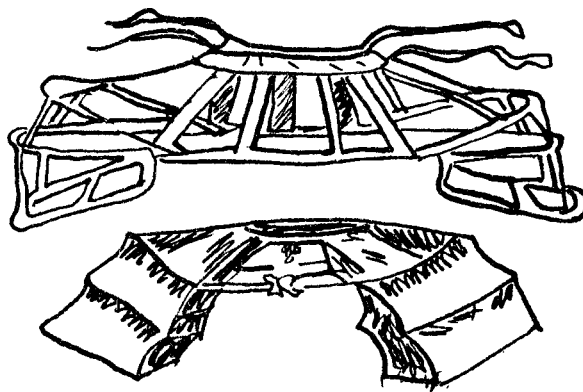
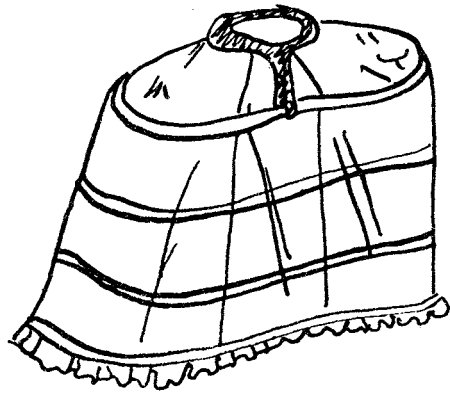
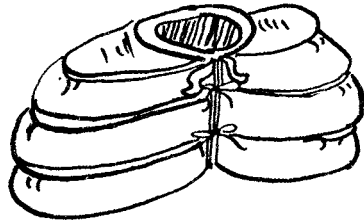


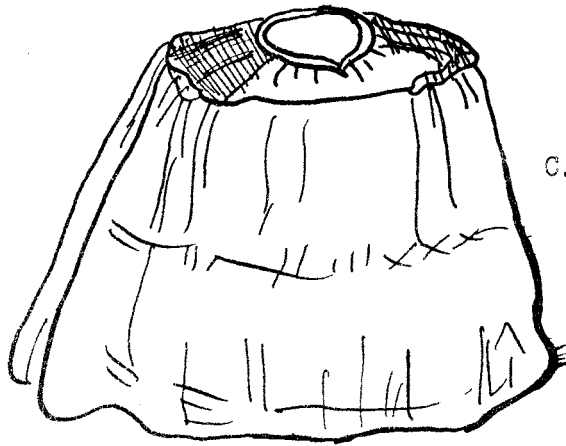
Figure 13. Side Hoops of Panniers of 1740's (17)



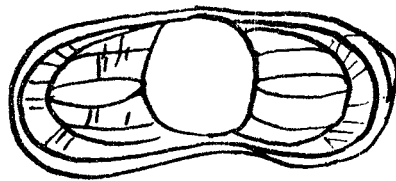
A.



B.



C.



D. Hoop in Collapsed State

Figure 14. Oval Hooped Petticoats (1)

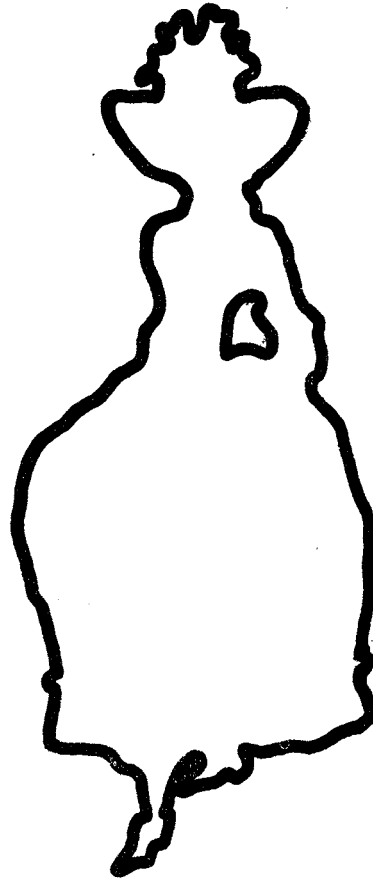


PLATE IV

18TH CENTURY 1774-1788

Another variation of the bustle was the large padded roll stuffed with cork or horsehair or most any light weight material. It had tapering ends and tied around the hips with strings (1).

The under-petticoat was narrow and tubular and did not reach below the small of the leg. Quilted for warmth, it was constructed of cambric, dimity, flannel, or calico with an occasional colored border for trim (1). Quilted petticoats still did their part in extending the silhouette in spite of the hoops. Most of them were between three and one-half yards round the bottom and the entire width was gathered onto tapes at the waist (19).

Outer skirts were still being made to reveal more of the petticoat, such as the one in figure 12, which was usually of the same fabric. The tucked up effect at the sides was improved by the use of tapes forming loops on the inside of the garment and buttons on the outside. With these conveniences the skirt could be hitched up when necessary (19).

1774 thru 1788

The ruffled chemise was still very much the same as it had been in the previous period (20). However, figure 15 is an example of petticoats which were getting increasingly shorter with the ankles and several inches of leg often being seen. Hoops were being used less and less for every day wear and quilted petticoats survived until the 1780's.

One type of corset in the late 70's had an iron stiffener curved round the upper border in the front and was encased in the material. In 1775 the waistline began to rise and was governed by wearing short

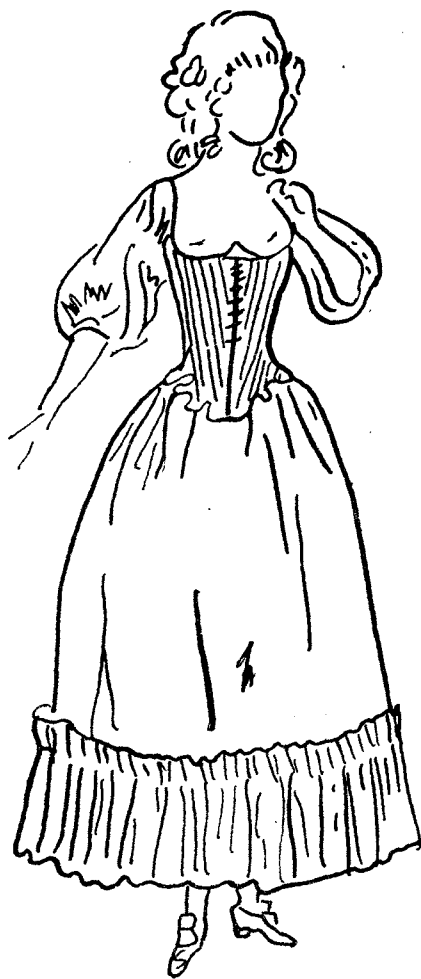


Figure 15. Corset, Chemise, and Petticoat of 1780 (1)

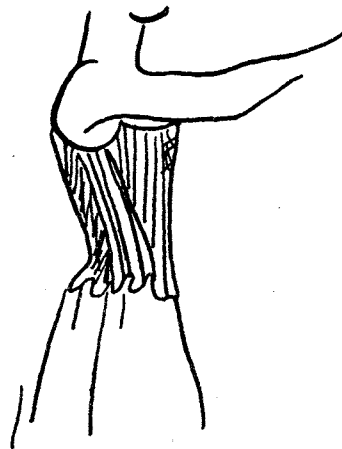


Figure 16. Side View of Corset

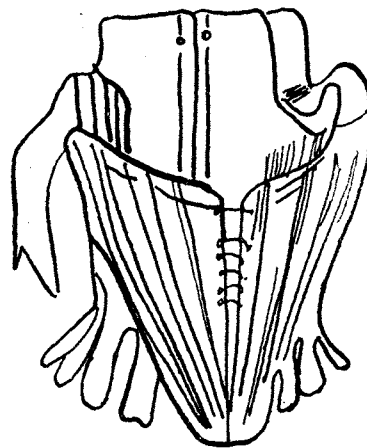


Figure 17. High-waisted Stays of 1785 (10)

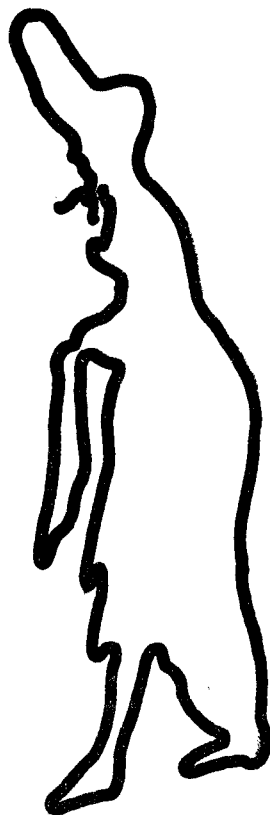


PLATE V

TRANSITION PERIOD 1789-1813

but high stays, as seen in figures 16 and 17, which forced the breasts up still higher than previously.

1789 thru 1813

This was a transition period that saw several changes. The familiar cotton or linen chemise (figure 20) was made straight and ungathered extending to the knee. The neck was square with a narrow muslin frill edging. The short sleeves were set in by using a gusset in the underarm seam. If the dress was very narrow, the chemise was omitted and the neckline filled in with a chemisette somewhat like that pictured in figure 18 (21).

The high waisted "round dress" producing its goddess-like figures caused the discarding of stays for a few years. Between 1794 and 1800 the corsets were short and not worn universally. From 1800-1811 they were again longer, well stiffened with whalebone, long enough to cover the hips, and high enough to push the breasts upward. The only pinching was at the bustline. The lower edge was straight and without tabs while the rigidity of the bosom was lessened with the use of padded cup-shaped supports (1). Figure 22 pictures a heavy busk of steel, bone, wood, whalebone, or silver which was used to keep the front of the stays straight (2). They laced down the back and it is said, "...many mother advised her daughter to lie face down on the ground so as to put her foot in the small of the back for a firmer grip on the laces" (1).

The pregnant stay was designed in 1811 and enveloped the body from the shoulders to below the hips. The boning compressed and reduced the shape to a more natural state when the body was in a state



Figure 18. Muslin Chemisette (17)

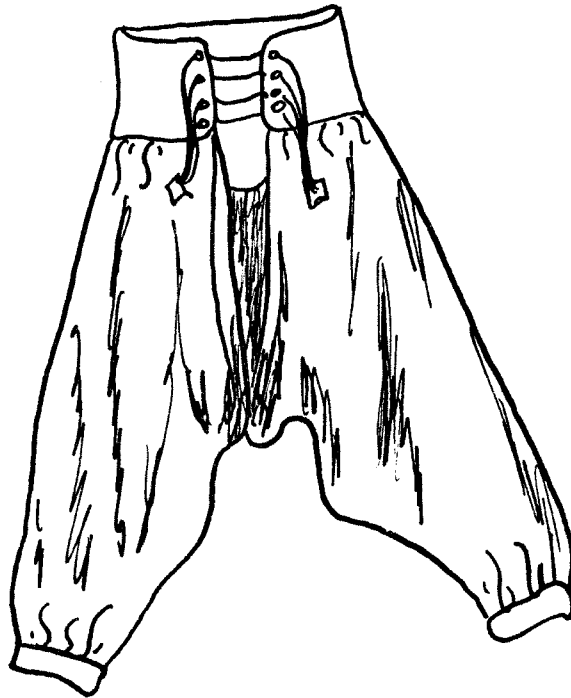


Figure 19. Linen Drawers of 1820 (1)



Figure 20. Chemise and
Drawers (1)



Figure 21. High-waisted Petti-
coat (2)



Figure 22. Back Lacing Corset
with Removable
Busk (2)

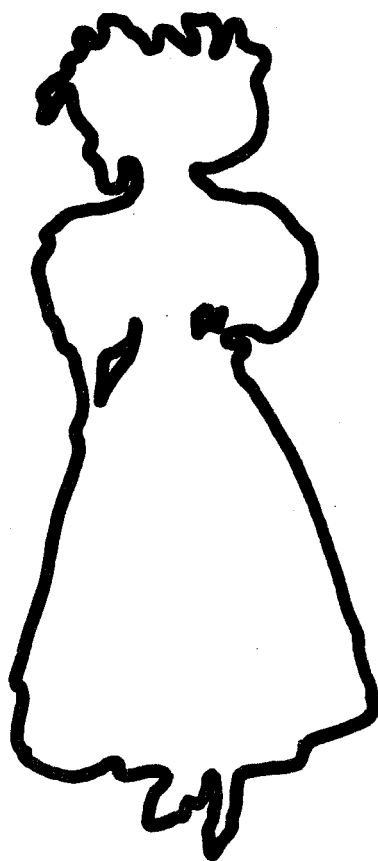


PLATE VI

19TH CENTURY 1814-1835

of fruitfulness (1).

By 1806 drawers that had previously been considered purely masculine were finally accepted by the women. The legs were tubular or gathered onto a band with button fastenings below the knee (figure 19). In 1813 drawers with attached feet were being worn. White muslin underwear was introduced by the Empress Josephine. Pantalettes reaching just below the calf and trimmed with lace and rows of tucks were made to be seen and were in fashion at this time. They did not last beyond the thirties as excess fabric tended to spoil the clinging line (21). Incidentally, petticoats were revived again in order to hide the embarrassing lines of the natural figure!

At the beginning of this period small hoops over the hips and small bustles were common. They were replaced by petticoats and bustles in the form of ruffles sewn to the skirt of the dress. Bustles as separate items were added again during 1810. The petticoat was of cotton, cambric, linen, or fine flannel and was constructed with an attached bodice that tied or buttoned in front (figure 21). In 1807 elastic Spanish lamb's wool was used for petticoats and drawers. It was woven on a stocking loom creating an elastic, stretchable, stockinette type of fabric. Garments made of this were more popular in later years, as seen by figures 38 and 44.

1814 thru 1835

The chemisette or the longer chemise with a low square neck and short sleeves gathered at the shoulder were worn during this time. Figure 23, is a good example.

The tighter laced corset brought about a change in the silhouette.



Figure 23. Chemise 1825 (1)



Figure 24. Pantalettes (1)

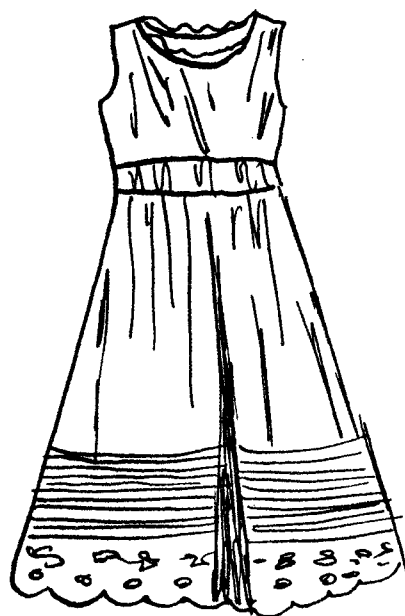


Figure 25. Princess Petticoat 1820 (1)

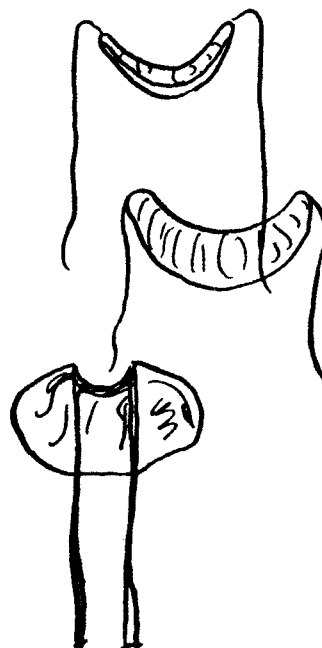


Figure 26. Bustles 1833 (1)

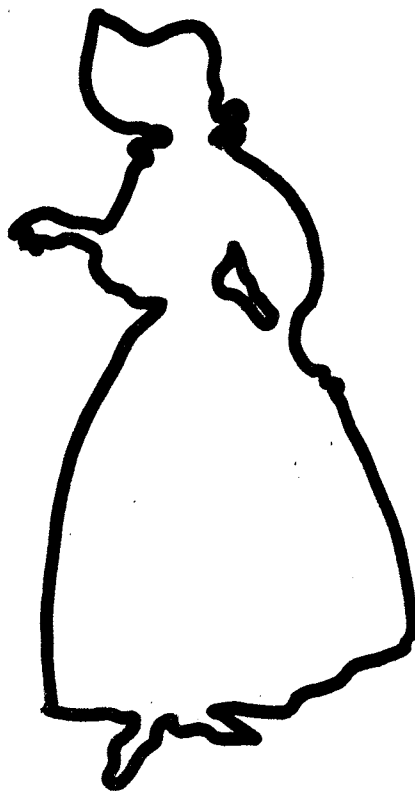


PLATE VII

19TH CENTURY 1836-1849

It was longer after 1825 and the lacing was more severe. By 1828 stays with iron enforced eyelets through which the laces passed were able to bear the brunt of tremendous tugging. To the relief of women doing domestic work demi-corsets that were eight to ten inches high and enforced with light whalebone were introduced. Those in figure 67, are later examples of this. In 1830 an elastic stiffening called, "India Rubber" which was made of a vegetable substance was invented. It was used for shoulder straps, corsets, garters, and a number of other items (1).

Drawers, as mentioned earlier, consisting of two separate pieces held together with narrow tape were not usually accepted until 1830. Ankle-length pantalettes or pantaloons usually edged with lace and made of percale, silk, or cambric carried over from previous years (figure 24) (19).

The quilted and heavily starched petticoat was attached to a bodice with wide shoulder straps, as seen in figure 25. It was assisted in increasing the diameter by the use of a bustle (figure 26) often stuffed with down, horsehair, or cork and worn double or treble. The "false bottom," as it was called was sometimes made by gathering rows of a stiffened material and attaching them to the inside of the dress.

It was also common for women to wear a pair of pockets that were attached to each other and tied around the waist under the petticoat.

1836 thru 1849

A front falling flap, as indicated by figure 27, was characteristic of this period's chemise. Its purpose was to adapt to the low neckline of the bodice by folding down to cover the corset. The high-

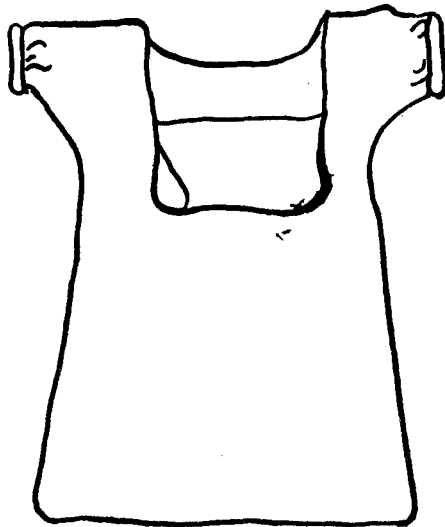


Figure 27. Chemise with Front Flap 1849 (1)

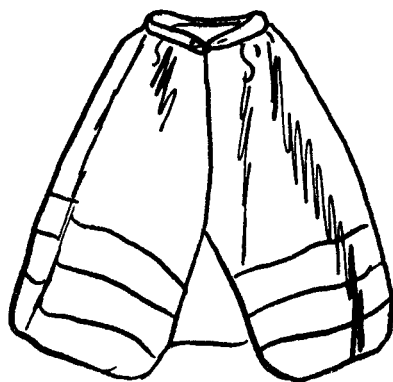


Figure 28. Crinoline Petticoat
1840-1850 (1)



Figure 29. Woman's Camisole
with Back Fastening (1)



PLATE VIII

19TH CENTURY 1850-1867

necked and long-sleeved chemise and chemisette were often exchanged for one with short sleeves and coming to the knee. The sleeves were gathered onto a band, a gusset was used at the underarm seam, a draw-string fastened the neck and the skirt had some degree of shaping. Occasionally a vest was worn under the corset instead or in place of the chemise to absorb perspiration and ease friction between the skin and the corset (1).

This was an era of many petticoats worn at the same time--one of flannel, one padded with horsehair, one of calico stiffened with cord, and one of starched muslin. Under all of these was worn a plain white petticoat gathered onto a waistband and fastened by strings. When attached to a bodice it was called a "slip" and later a "princess petticoat." It usually buttoned down the front. Often the petticoats would be flounced or stiffened from hem to knee with a border of a stiff fabric such as crinoline (figure 28) or perhaps heavily trimmed and corded with rows of piping. Quilting was still a method used for expanding the diameter by padding and for warmth during cold weather.

By the end of the period bust improvers of air-proof materials and cotton and wool were used to increase the bust measurement. The demi-corset was common as was the long corset which covered the bosom, abdomen, and moved down over the hips. Back lacings were used but front lacings were more popular. In 1847 corsets were being made of fabric that had elastic threads woven in which no doubt increased the comfort.

The bustle covered the back and extended to the sides. In 1849 they were called dress improvers by the more fashion conscious females.

An undergarment called the camisole appeared early in the 1840's.

Similar to the one shown in figure 29, it was first spoken of as a waistcoat and made of longcloth. Shaped to the waist by goring, its purpose was to cover the corset and eliminate the flap front type chemise.

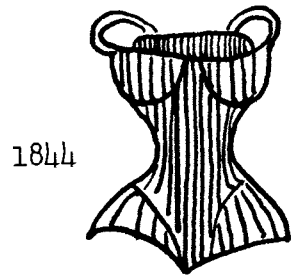
1850 thru 1867

The lace trimmed chemise, chemisette, and vest remained unaltered as did the camisole worn over the corset.

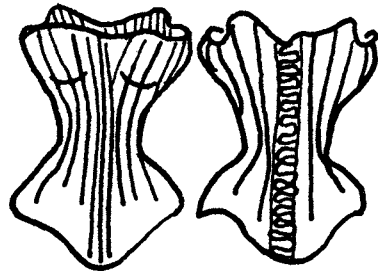
In the 50's the age of stiff stays departed with the use of more elastic materials and lacings. The Corset Amazone sported elaborate lacings and was constructed so that by simply pulling a concealed cord it would shorten three inches (1). An elastic bodice was sometimes substituted for the corset whose shaped cups soon diminished. During 1860 the waist and corset shortened and in 1864 when the crinoline began to diminish the tight lacing did also. Those years saw an increased need for elaborately colored corsets.

Long drawers, as in figure 33, were trimmed with frills and insertions and were often confined below the knee with elastic. Woolen undergarments and drawers of chamois or bloomers were gathered at the knees or ankles (figures 31 and 32).

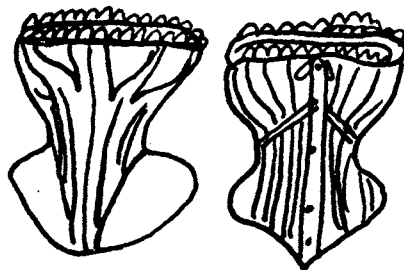
At first, numerous petticoats were worn at one time: red flannel petticoat with underpetticoat three and one-half yards wide, petticoat wadded or quilted to knees and stiffened with whalebone, white starched petticoat with three stiffly starched flounces, two muslin petticoats, and finally the dress (20). It was not uncommon to have two or three petticoats on the same band. The petticoats were often gored. Elaborate petticoats were often made to show beneath the outside skirt from 1861 to 1866. The flounce used to expand the skirt adequately



1844



1851



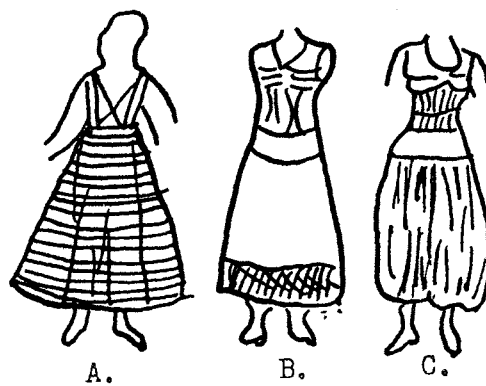
1862

1866

Figure 30. Stays (1)



Figure 31. Bloomers of the 1850's (11)



A.

B.

C.

Figure 32. Attempts at Reform 1867-1886 (11)



PLATE IX

19TH CENTURY 1868-1889

expressed the attitude of women during this time (21).

Hooped petticoats strengthened with metal or whalebone were used but this was the era of crinoline. Early in 1857 the whalebone was discarded for watch-spring steels. The crinoline took several shapes and methods of construction. Some were cage-like forms (figure 32 A), others had hoops below the knees suspended by tapes (figure 43 B), and still others were covered with fabric for washability (figure 43 A). Crinolettes were sometimes used to form the bustle. A device of side hinges on the lowest two hoops with a concealed string passing up the inside of the skirt to the waist could be pulled to draw up the skirt front enough to clear the ankles when ascending stairs (1). It was not necessary to wear under-petticoats beneath the crinoline (figure 43 A) although a more ornamental one might be worn over it. The crinolines really did not last too long for as early as 1866 women were replacing them with stiffly starched and elaborately flounced muslin petticoats (figure 32 B).

As the skirt increased the circumference might measure up to ten yards. The busy mills of the East, England, and France were rapidly producing creations of "frothy unreality." These lovely fabrics submitted to the perils of fire and tales of ghastly death; especially those worn by actresses who were in direct contact with gas or candle lights (21).

1868 thru 1889

The chemise had a front opening with button closure. It was elegantly edged and made more ornamental with vertical tucking down the front. By 1876 it had more body conforming shape to take up as little

room as possible beneath the stays. In 1879 the breast pleated and gusseted chemise was of four types: 1) like a princess dress, 2) with three box-pleats in front and gored in back, 3) with the front like a chemisette, and 4) made with one gore at the center back. The goring helped to eliminate excess bulk under excessively light dresses (1).

The camisole or petticoat bodice was also more figure shaped and frequently had a heart-shaped opening (figure 34).

Drawers now barely reached the knee and were not always entirely separate, as those in figure 35, but were more often closed-legged, as in figure 36. Made of silk, flannel, cambric, or muslin they had a three button side closure.

Combination (figure 44) of the chemise and drawers with either a front or back opening (figure 37), high neck, and long sleeves (figure 38) came into being in 1877. They were made of linen, merino, nainsook, calico, cambric, and silks in colors such as pink or cream. Often buttons were sewn along the hipline to which petticoats could be fastened.

The closure for corsets was now either a springlatch or back lacing which remained more popular than a front closure as it interfered less with the close fit of the bodice. In the sixties corsets were from 17 to 21 inches long and increased in length during the seventies. To omit the camisole, corsets began to be covered with satins and edged with lace (figures 39 and 40). To save space under tight bodices, petticoats were buttoned onto corsets and in 1878 suspenders were attached to the bottom for clipping onto stockings. These replaced the garters. The suspenders were made of satin and elastic with gilt clips (1). A strong busk was used to hold the front straight and

weights were inserted into the hem to prevent wrinkling. At this time the corset and long bodice were worn over the underskirts. It was also the tiny waist era of breath-taking boning. Nineteen inch waists were not uncommon and it is said that some even suffered under the pressures of a fifteen inch measurement (21).

Flounced-to-the-waist petticoats, such as figure 45, replaced the crinolette by being pulled in just below the bustle with drawstrings. A large number of petticoats worn at one time was the fashion and these were constructed with tightly gored fronts and back fullness (7). In 1876 (figure 41) the petticoat might have occasionally been replaced by a muslin flounce being sewn to the inner side of the skirt. The princess petticoat became popular in 1877. It buttoned down the back and was made of white or colored silk. With this was worn a second narrow skirt with knee-deep flounces that buttoned to the corset. The train was buttoned to the petticoat thus making it detachable. Figures 47 and 48 show underskirts with trains that were not detachable. False lace frills were sewn under the hems of dresses to simulate rich underwear that would have been too bulky in layers over the hips (21). By 1882 steels were added to the flouncing (figure 46) which forecasted the return of the bustle. The princess petticoat with its button front often had five box pleats at the back of the waist to create a bustle effect. Sometimes this additional fullness was made to stand out by the use of a draw-string (1).

A substitute for the crinoline in 1867 was a horsehair petticoat sewn onto an elastic waistband. Later, hoops suspended by tapes were used to support the bustle, similar to figure 42. In 1869 a crinolette of steel half hoops with horsehair and crinoline flounces (fig-



Figure 33. Open-legged Style Drawers 1860-1870 (1)

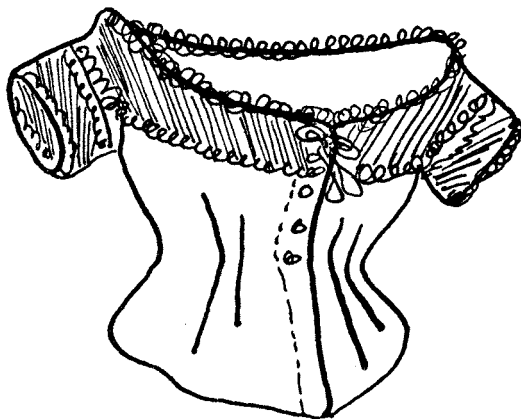


Figure 34. Under-bodice 1876 (1)



Figure 35. Drawers 1880 (1)

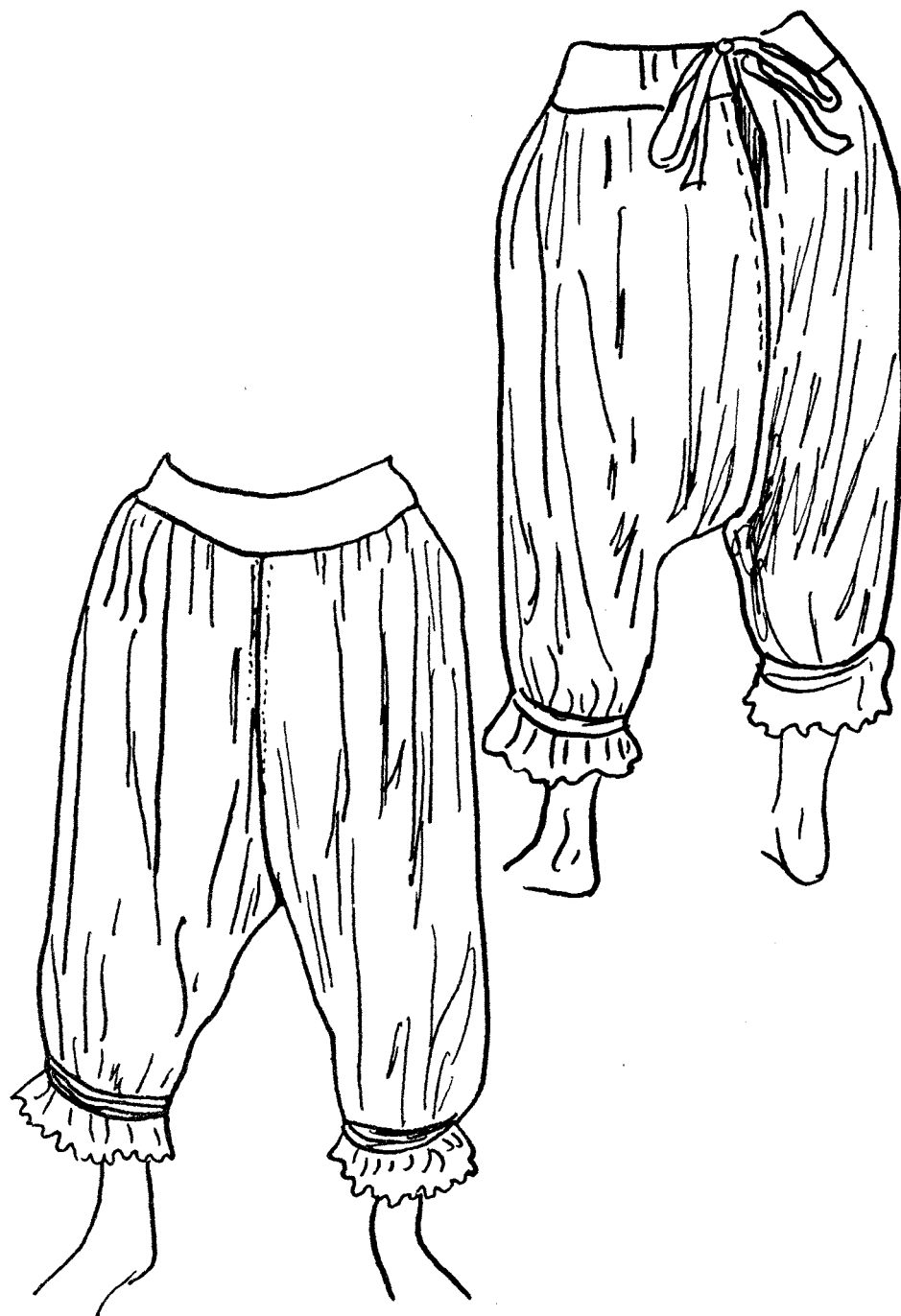


Figure 36. Open-leg Drawers of White Cotton 1884-1888 (2)



Figure 37. Combinations with Button
Closure of Inside Leg
1870's-1880's (2)



Figure 38. Women's Sani-
tary Combi-
nations
1885 (1)

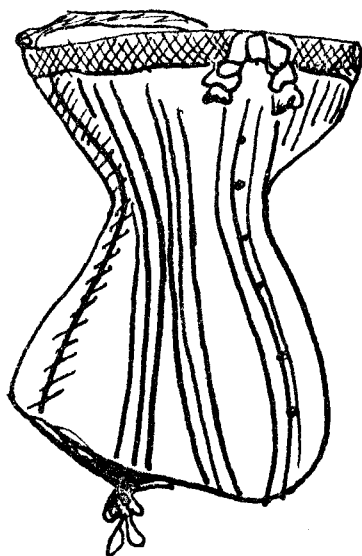


Figure 39. Corset 1879 (1)

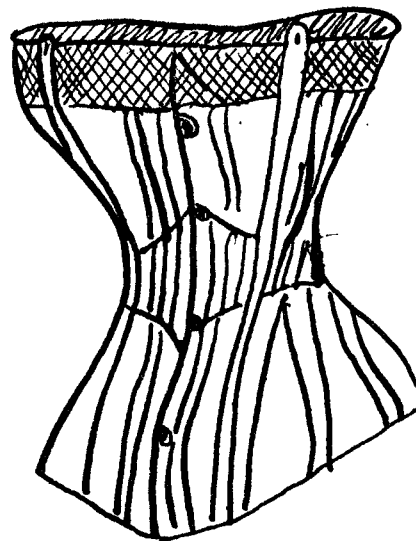


Figure 40. Jaeger Corset
1886 (1)

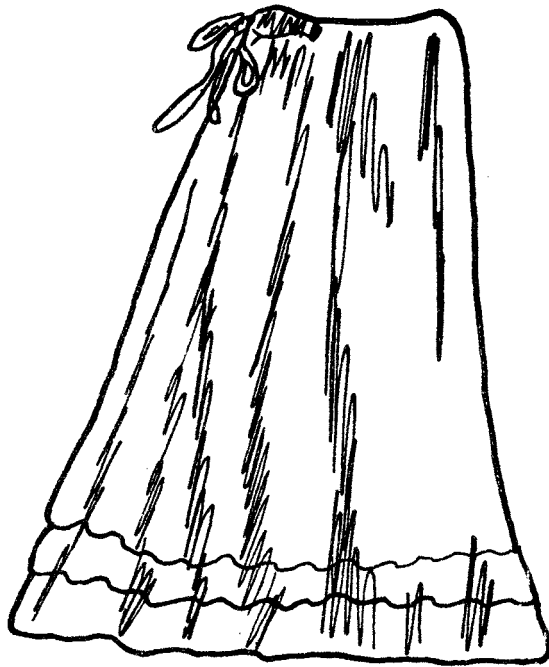


Figure 41. Petticoat 1880 (1)

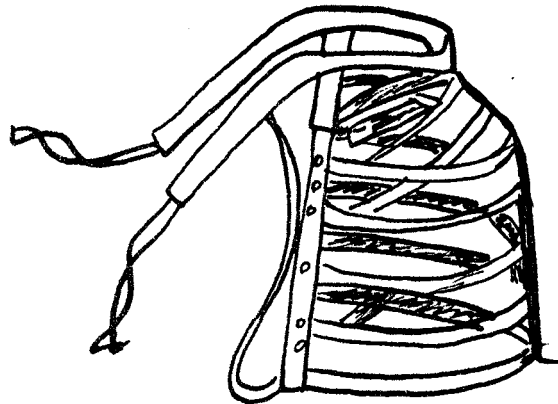
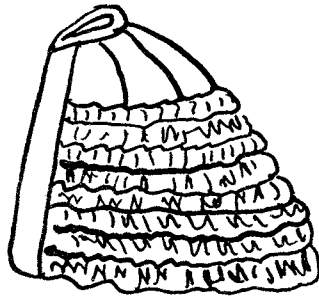
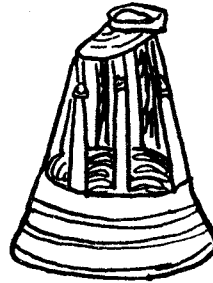


Figure 42. Canfield Bustle 1888 (1)

Figure 43.

A. Sansflectum Crinoline
1863 (1)B. Flamel
Crinoline
1869 (1)C. Crinolette
1873 (1)Figure 44. Cellular Combinations from
1888 (2)

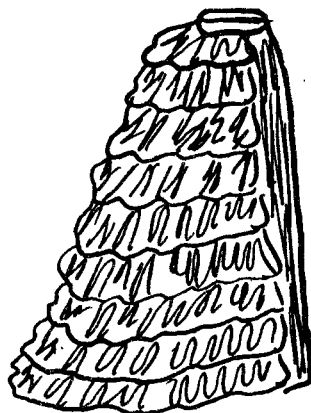


Figure 45. Petticoat 1873 (1)

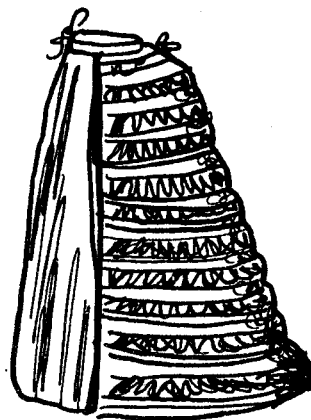


Figure 46. Crinoline for
Trained Dress
1873 (1)

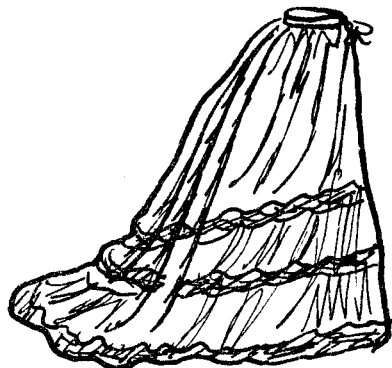


Figure 47. Underskirt with
Train 1876 (1)

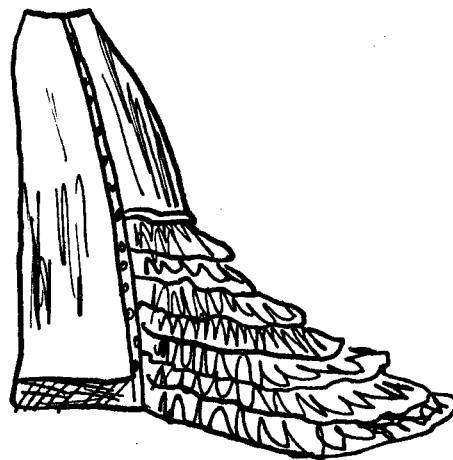


Figure 48. Underskirt with
Train 1879 (1)



Figure 49. Crinoline with Tight Fitting Front. Two eyelets at Center Back Waist Used to Secure Petticoat to Corset (2)

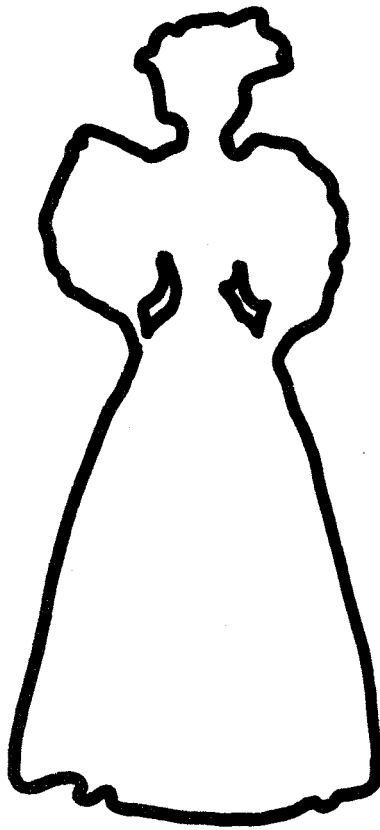


PLATE X

19TH CENTURY 1890-1899

ure 49) was designed to keep the fullness in the back.

The actual bustle appeared in 1868 as steels or whalebone insertions in the back top of petticoats and pulled into half hoops by means of tapes attached to the inner sides. In 1869 it appeared as melon-sized half hoops permanently fixed on top of the crinolette (figure 43 C) (1). The bustle had two functions: 1) to push out back fullness, and 2) to act as an anchor on which to secure the material pulled up from the front (21). In the 1870's it extended downwards and outward over the hips in the form of steel enforced flounces. By 1873 it narrowed and lengthened and projected outwards by the use of fabric encased steel bands and elastic ties. In spite of all these, the bustle, tournure, or dress improver was fast disappearing.

1890 thru 1899

The chemise remained unchanged until the end of the 1880's. At that time the empire chemise with its high waist and puffed sleeves came into use. It had lace trim and was worn under the corset until 1905.

The chemise and knitted vest were gradually being replaced by combinations. These were made of wool, silk, nainsook, surah and had lace insertions with colored baby ribbons used as draw strings at the neck.

Although combinations came into use, like those in figure 50, drawers were often worn over them. They were frilled at the knees and the leg was often as wide as a petticoat. The old open style was being replaced by a knickerbocker form (figure 51) with a buttoned back flap (figure 54). Bloomers were still worn beneath short dresses.



Figure 50. Open-leg Drawers with Partial Center Front and Back Seams. Openings were on Both Sides (2)



Figure 51. Open-leg Drawers (2)

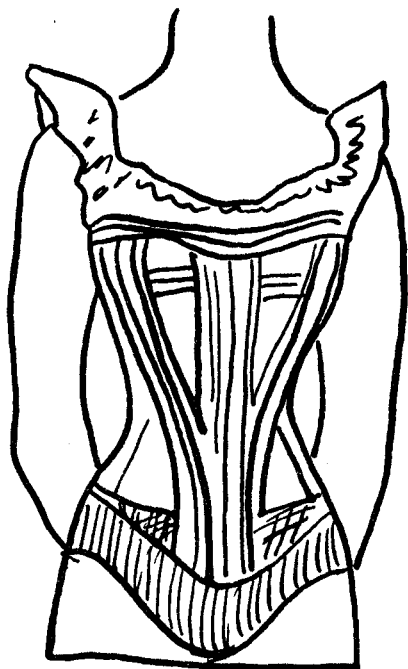


Figure 52. Belt Corset
1899 (1)

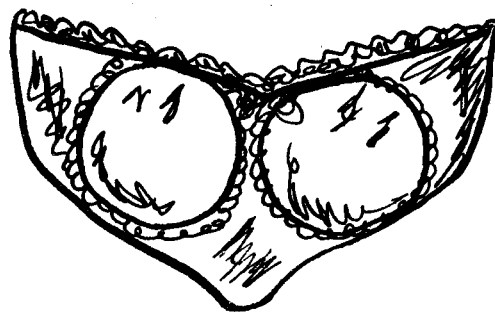


Figure 53. Bust Improver
1896 (2)



Figure 54. Woolen Knickers of
Late 1890's (17)

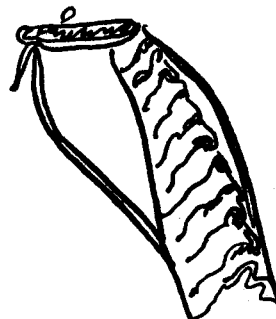


Figure 55. Bustle 1898 (17)



Figure 56. Petticoat 1893 (2)



Figure 57. Petticoat with Train and Side
Fastenings 1890 (2)



PLATE XI

20TH CENTURY 1900-1913

The corset (figure 52) was long waisted and covered with brocades and satins in a rainbow of colors. In 1890, corsets were being worn over the petticoat or short petticoats were buttoned on at the bottom of the stays. Excessive lacing retained a waist of twenty-one inches or less as it was desirable to have a waist measurement that did not exceed the age at the time of the girl's marriage. The tight corset was worn high in front in order to give an upward tilt to the bust. Cup-shape wired and padded bust improvers were placed between the skin and the corset (figure 53).

The hour glass figure was also enhanced by figure improvers. These were pads placed at strategic points (20). One writer very accurately described the woman of the day as being all bottom and bosom! (22).

Layers of petticoats were still worn by fashionable women at the end of the 19th century. The bustle was revived and the petticoat with its back flounces, drawstrings, and tight straight fronts prevailed. Usually, a short flannel or muslin petticoat was worn with more elegant ones sporting knife-pleated and laced edge ruffles (figure 57). By 1894 the gored top and wide hem was being edged with ruching to produce the enchanting rustle (figure 56) (1).

As a separate article, the bustle, figure 55 is one variation, began its return in 1883. It was usually attached to the bodice or petticoat but was sometimes a part of the outer dress. In 1885 the mattress, a six inch square horsehair filled pad, was added. This helped produce a prominence that was almost at right angles to the figure. It declined in 1888 and eventually disappeared in 1889 (20).

1900 thru 1913

The knitted chemise and sleeveless vest were worn until 1905. An empire patterned chemise sloped at the waist and tied at the shoulders with colored ribbons and bows. Sometime later it was cut with a square neck and narrow shoulder straps. Figures 70 and 75 depict two examples of the chemise. In 1901 its rival the camisole took over in popularity once more.

Combinations (figures 58 and 59) of knicker plus camisole made of wool or silk and wool blends came into the undergarment fashion world. In 1908 these two combination garments began slowly to disappear and were replaced by skirt knockers or by the cami-skirt which were more skin fitting combinations. Pantalettes of silk also helped in their removal (1).

Knickers boasted frills of muslin and fine embroidery. The knickers were simply a divided skirt with wide legs (figure 60). These were similar to the circular umbrella drawers of 1908 pictured in figure 72 (20). Closed-legged drawers in figure 73 were still being worn during this period.

Fullness was lended to the chest by the straight fronted corset (figures 62, 63, 65, 66, 68). The Gibson Girl corsets of 1905 were quite long below the waist and much shorter above. Sometimes they were so long, in addition to being pulled down by garters that sitting was impractical if not impossible. Rust-proof boning was introduced in 1912. Clock-spring steels were covered with hard rubber or celluloid. Corsets were simply straight sheaths of cloth and steel as illustrated in figures 63 and 68.



Figure 58. Practical Combined Garment. Petticoat
Back with Open-leg Drawers 1909-1917 (2)



Figure 59. Flounced Combinations with Open-legs (2)

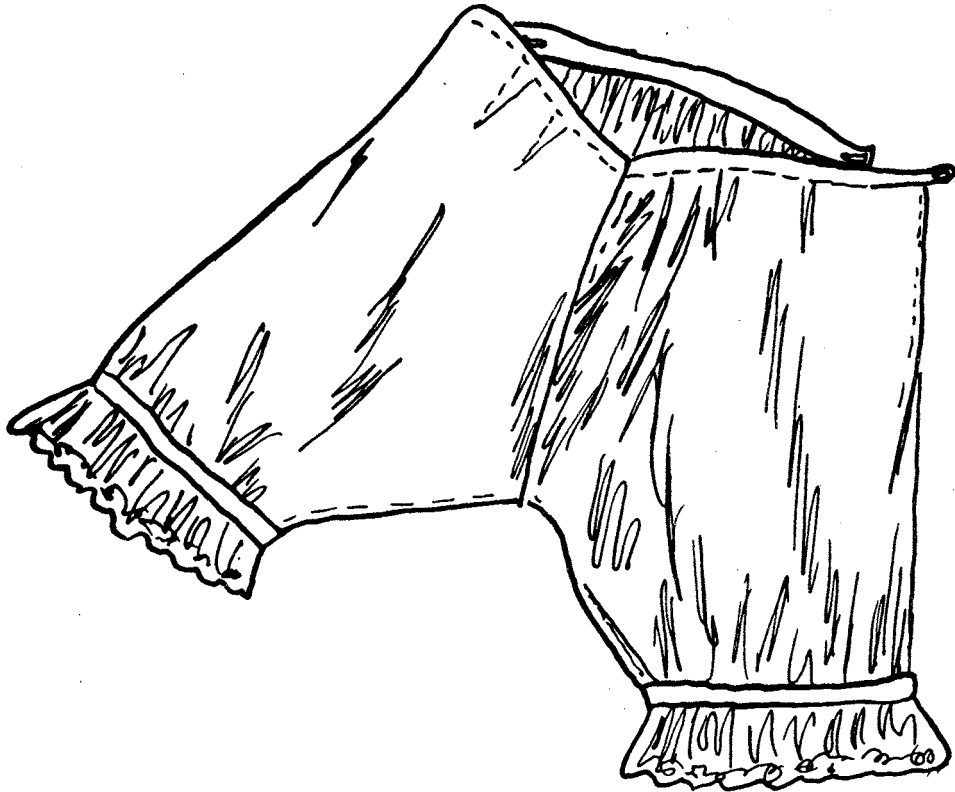


Figure 60. Knickers with Fastenings at Sides. Gave a Smoother Line than Drawers (2)

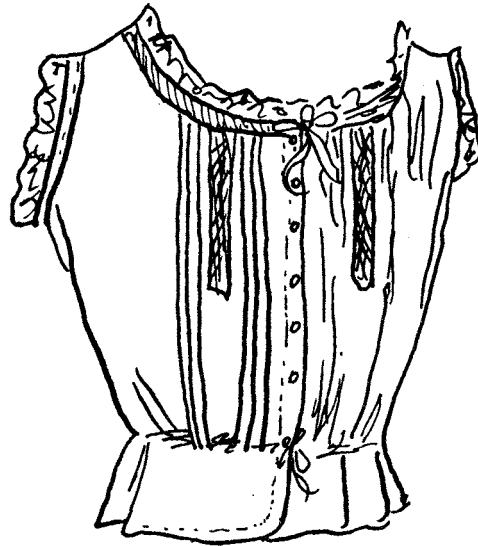


Figure 61. Front Fastening Camisole with Lace Insertions and Tucks (2)



Figure 62. Boned Corset from Below
the Bust to Mid-thigh
1909-1916 (2)

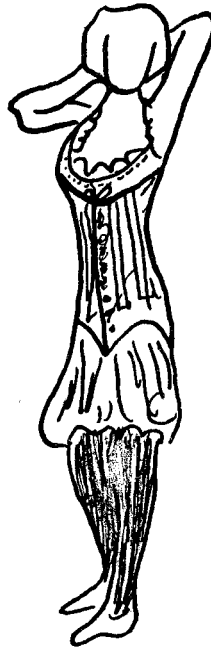


Figure 63. Straight Line Fig-
ure 1911. Cor-
sets Worn Under
Petticoat and
Drawers (2)

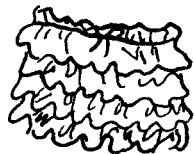


Figure 64. Lace Bust
Extender (4)



Figure 65. Corset 1903-1904
(2)

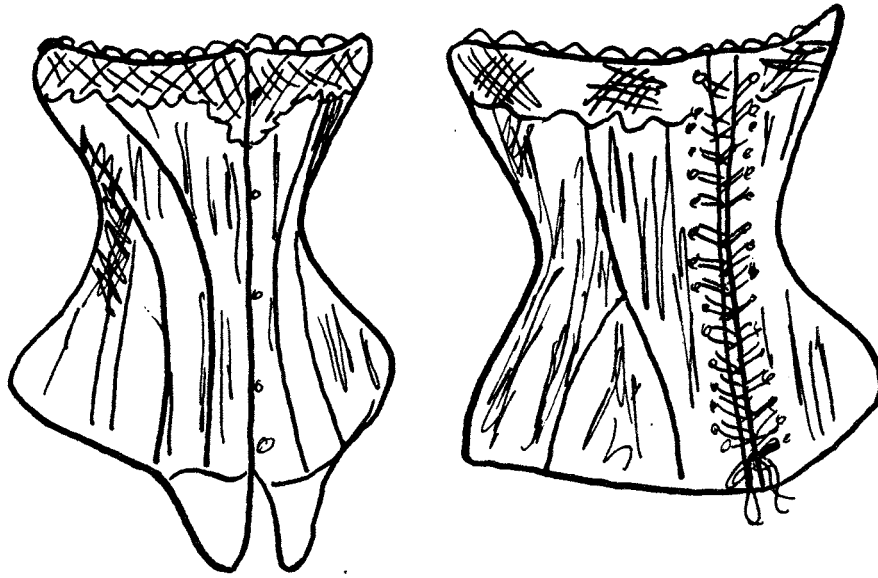


Figure 66. Short Corset Gave Impression of Tiny Waist.
Allowed Figure to Blossom Out in Full
Curves Above and Below 1904-1907 (2)

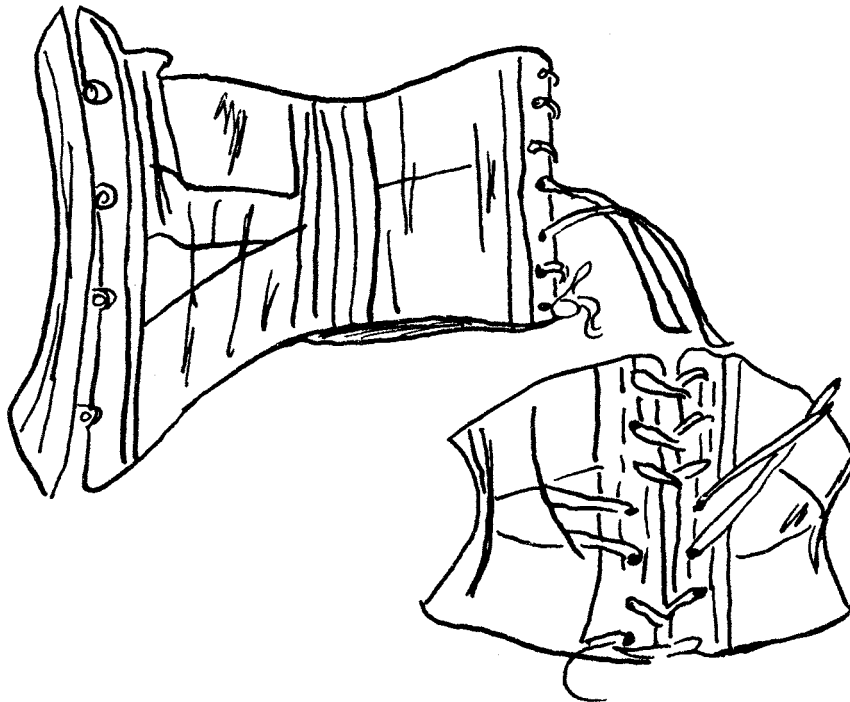


Figure 67. Ribbon Corsets Usually Worn for Sport or with
a N glig e (2)

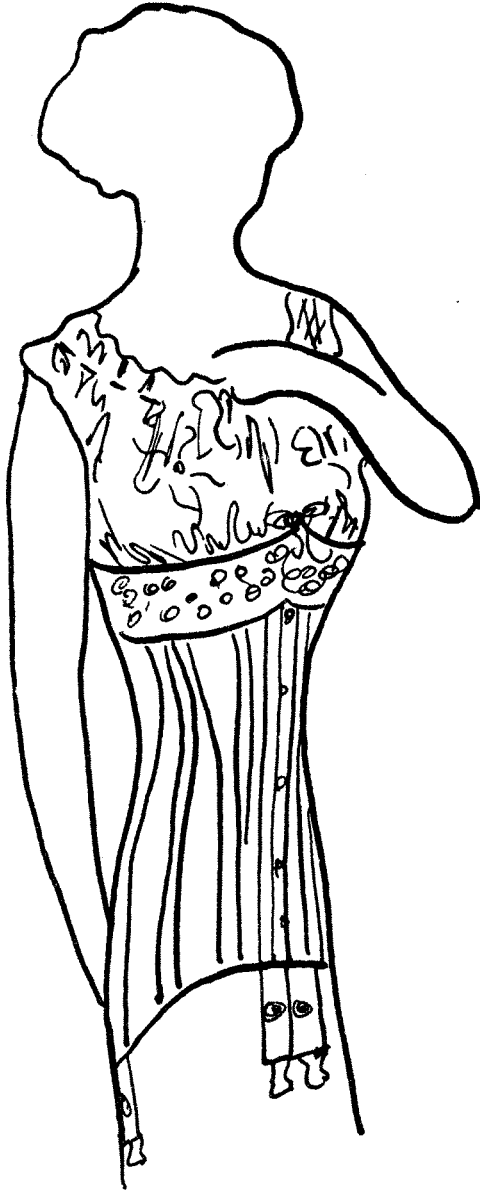


Figure 68. Nuform Corset
1911 (1)



Figure 69. Corset with Shoulder
Straps and Suspenders 1918 (1)

Figure 71. Underskirt and
Chemise Over
Corset 1906 (1)



Figure 70. Chemise and Drawers
1911 (1)

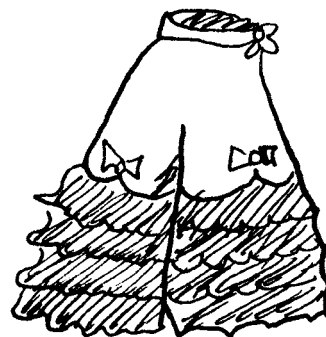


Figure 72. Umbrella Drawers
(20)

Figure 73. Close-leg Drawers 1908 (2)



Figure 75. Chemise (2)

Figure 74. Waist-petticoat and Open-leg
Drawers Go Out of use by 1910
(2)

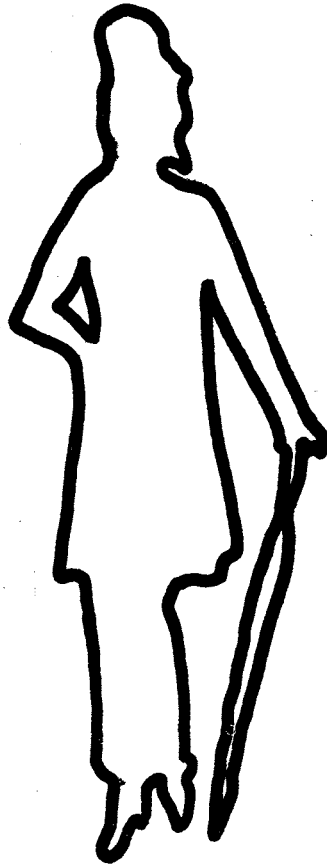


PLATE XII

20TH CENTURY 1914-1930

A center lacing bust bodice of 1903 was usually worn over the short corset. It seems ironic that in 1909 starched ruffles (figure 64) termed bust extenders, and cup-shaped perforated metal disks were worn to give a buxom appearance. Yet in 1910 the brassière flattened and made the bust appear smaller. With this new invention, the rigid figure changed to a drooping almost spineless silhouette for the corset was being discontinued and exchanged for a girdle (1).

A short muslin or flannel petticoat was still being worn, although one additional petticoat instead of six or seven became practical by 1910. They were often made of rustling taffeta with a number of ruffles from the knee down. Or perhaps they were made from muslin with lace trimmed flounces resembling figures 71 and 74. Starch was not being used as much as there was a trend toward softer fabrics (20).

The petticoat bodices, corset covers, or camisoles, shown in figures 61 and 71, were made of thin silk and were without sleeves. They were made thinner and thinner and purposely replaced the "slip bodice" of the 1890's that usually buttoned down the front to hip level (1).

1914 thru 1930

In 1924 the long lasting chemise actually became the vest but survived under its original name. The vest, usually of wool was not considered as the most fashionable garment but many persisted in wearing it. The chemise was frequently made of lawn, silk, or chiffon trimmed with lace. By 1926 it adapted so well to low cut garments that one for evening use might be backless.

The combinations became even closer fitting garments of silk or later, silk and wool blends trimmed in lace.

The disappearing of the camisole as a single item took place in the twenties. In a futile effort to survive, they were made of satin in lovely colors such as ivory, pink, apple, peach, and apricot.

The bust bodice was the forerunner of the brassière, in figure 76, which also took the place of the camisole. In the 1920's it was a very tight fitting garment that bound the breasts to produce a straight shapeless form. The figure was more aptly described as being "bosomless, waistless, and hipless" (3). Several styles were on the market. One was the long brassière rich with lace and embroidery that came well over the corset (1923). The strapless brassière of 1926 and the elastic pull-on brassière introduced in 1929 were two other variations (1).

Woven porous elastic was a material being used for corsets. Wrap-around rubber corsets helped to flatten the buttocks and produce a slenderizing effect on the figure (1).

A substitute for corsets (figures 84 and 81) was the belt, in figure 83, which varied from abdominal supports to light suspender belts with or without bones. Belts were known as "roll-ons" if made entirely of elastic. Those with a zipper fastening were referred to as "step-ins." Occasionally, the belt would have an elastic top forming the brassière. The garments in figures 69 and 86 are good examples.

The open-legged drawers and closed knickers were finally becoming unfashionable. By 1924 knickers were being shortened into panties (figure 90) and later "trunks." A variety of colors and an elastic waist were characteristic of the woven knickers of the twenties.

Fewer and fewer undergarments were being worn as it was necessary

Figure 76. Brassiere and Drawers 1927 (1)

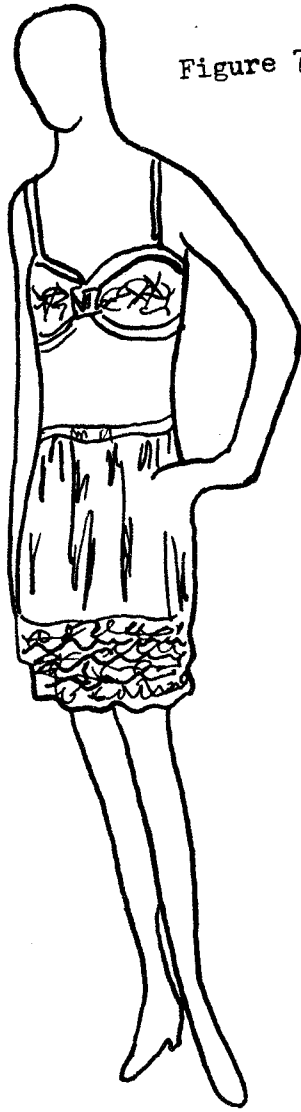


Figure 77. Camiknickers 1926 (1)



Figure 78. Camiknickers 1928 (1)

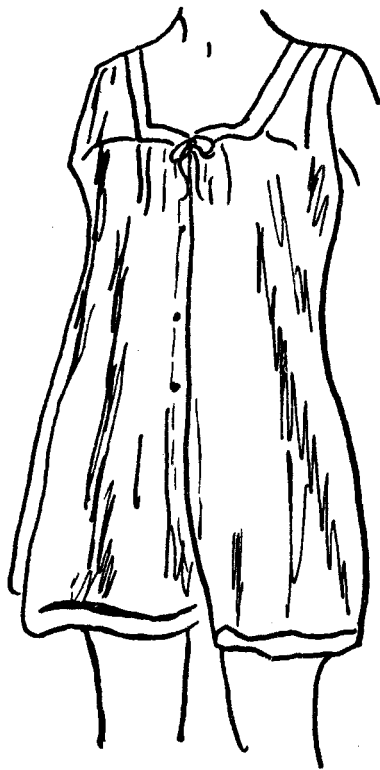


Figure 79. Combinations with Early Open-leg Style. Button Closure to Waist Only, 1920's (2)



Figure 80. Underskirt of 1916 was Characteristically Exclusive of Decoration (1)



Figure 81. Corset Over Camisole 1916 (4)



Figure 82. Camiknickers 1922 (1)



Figure 83. An Elastic Rubber and Satin Suspender Belt 1925 (10)



Figure 84. Corset 1917-1918 (2)



Figure 85. Brassière and Pantie Combinations (2)



Figure 86. Corset Used to Flatten Rather than to Mould or Improve the Figure (2)



Figure 87. Combinations 1918 (1)



Figure 88. Camisole and Petticoat 1918



Figure 89. Brassière Chemise (4)



Figure 90. Panties 1930's (4)

to discard an abundance of fabric that might mar "The creaseless perfection." Figure 80 depicts a petticoat fitted snugly at the hips yet with much fullness at the hem. In 1930 it was not uncommon to find a heavy fabric outer garment worn without a petticoat of any kind. When worn, the petticoat was usually of the princess type which we now refer to as a "slip." They quite often had a vandyked edge and were knee length with several rows of flounces. Flimsy fabrics such as silk, milanese, georgette, and crêpe de Chine in multicolors were used to create princess petticoats with elasticized waists, figure conformity, and brassière tops.

A corset and brassière combination was introduced in 1921. The "foundation garment" called the underbelt corselette with an additional belt for abdominal support followed in 1922. These two garments, in figures 86 and 69, and their variations supposedly insured perfect control (1).

Chemise-knickers, cami-knickers, or step-ins were all names for the combination of camisole with knicker (figures 77, 79, 82, 85, 89). These items were introduced in 1919 made of figure conforming fabrics in triple ninon, silk, crêpe de Chine, artificial silk, crêpe suzette, or satin. The sheath-like fit came in peach, pink, apricot, orchid, black, etc.

Another similar version to the cami-knickers was the cami-bocker. It was a union of the camisole and directoire knickers. Having three buttons at the waist it fastened in back with the waist flap being closed by press studs (1).

After 1925 underwear got its present day appearance. It became more elegantly cut with narrower shoulder straps and tailored slips (3).

CHAPTER IV

CATALOGUING AND CLASSIFICATION OF UNDERGARMENTS

A cataloguing system to be used for the Oklahoma State University Historic Costume Collection was set up in 1970 by Barbara McCormick. The procedure was designed by the graduate student after corresponding with several museums across the nation. The system was first used on the Oklahoma territorial period costumes.

Determination of the physical condition of the garment was left up to the discretion of the researcher. The terms used had the following connotation:

excellent:	like new
good:	suitable for handling
fair:	very careful handling
poor:	handled as little as possible

A working catalog was based on the physical condition of the garments. A different colored index card was the only requirement for easy recognition. Garments that were in condition for use were identified and were determined by the red card top. Other catalogued information on the five by eight inch file card can be found in Appendix A.

The articles of clothing were grouped into subdivisions under the major heading of undergarments (see Appendix B). The subdivisions were made according to available historic background information. Several of the garments in the collection were handmade adaptations. These did not seem to match any previous sketches. They did, however,

fit a few vague descriptions which were used as the best fitting subtitles.

The length of the periods for particular groups of items may seem to be a little too broad for the Oklahoma State University Historic Costume Collection. The reason for this is that an abrupt and total change from the skin out is not warranted by each new trend. The fashion cycle is a gradual thing with the new intermingling with the old. For this reason, the total span of years included garments with similar characteristics from the beginning of their existence to the approximate end.

The catalog number consists of the following elements:

1. UG represents the major undergarment category of women's clothing.
2. The first two letters of the subdivision titles is also used. For example, UG-Ca-, designates the catalog number for camisoles, drawers, petticoats, etc.
3. The garments in each subdivision are numbered consecutively and this comprises the last digit or digits. Therefore, item ten of the camisole division of undergarments would have this catalog number: UG-Ca-10.

Several museum directors suggested that the catalog number be written on a paper tag and sewn into the garment with a piece of lightweight string. It seemed more practical to use indelible ink and either sew or iron on a water resistant tag to the garment.

A summary of the cataloging of the undergarments in the Oklahoma State University Historic Costume Collection follows:

1. The subdivision of camisoles represented the largest number of pieces in the collection. The sixteen pieces dated from 1870 thru 1927. With the exception of three pieces, all were in good condition. Most of the camisoles were made of white cotton fabrics of various weights. A few were constructed of silk or rayon which were usually cream or pink in color. Each piece had some type of decorative work. The most popular trim was the lace

edging at the neck and armseye. Embroidered motifs, lace fabric, crocheted or tatted edgings, lace insertions, and ribbon ties were frequently used. Drawstring necklines, ribbon ties, and button closures at either the front or the back were the methods for fastening. When buttons were used, the closure was almost always hidden with an extra covering of fabric. This was probably to make the outergrament have a smoother fitting appearance.

2. The petticoat subdivision referred to those without an attached bodice. Fourteen separate pieces dating from 1890 to the thirties made up this section of the collection. All but one, the black silk from the 1890's, were in good condition. Most of the garments were made of cotton fabrics. They were gathered and often had more fullness in the back. The length varied from floor to knee length. All were trimmed by such methods as lace edgings, lace insertions, tucks, embroidery, or gathered flounces. Sometimes two layers of flounces were used from the knee down. The methods for fastening were drawstrings and buttoned plackets.

3. The full-petticoat describes those having an attached bodice. Only eight, dating from 1820 to 1930 are in this subdivision. With the exception of a few pieces made in silk or rayon, the majority were made of cotton fabrics. The length varied from floor to knee and all the pieces were in good condition. Lace insertions, embroidery, tucks, edgings, and flounces were popular means of trimming. The garments pulled on over the head or had button closures in the front or back. One or two used hooks and eyes instead of buttons.

4. The drawers were representative of the years from 1890 to the thirties. All were of cotton and the open-legged style. Embroidery, lace insertions, edging, tucks, and flounces gave a decorative touch to the lower edge of the legs. Drawstrings, ties, or button closures were used. The garments were in good condition although some were slightly stained.

5. Three garments were catalogued under the subtitle of vests. One was similar to the vague historical descriptions of vests but may have been an early homemade adaptation of the brassière. It was a pink handcrocheted item with ribbon drawstrings at the neck and armseyes. The other two garments were identical and in good condition. They were strapless stockinette tubes with a crocheted edging and drawstring at the top. The bottom reached to below the hip line.

6. Two garments were classified as modesty panels although they are sometimes referred to as shadow panels. They were probably worn during the twenties and thirties when petticoats were at a minimum or not worn at all. Both were in good condition. One was made of slightly yellowed wool with a center inverted pleat. It had no means of fastening. The other was of black silk with

tatted edging and tapes for tying at the waist.

7. The one corset dated from 1900-1910. It was made of heavy cotton and rust-proof boning. The corset was made in two sections. The back laced and the front had metal hook closures. It was made to push the bust upward and the untabbed bottom fit down over the hips. Six elastic garters with metal clasps were attached to the lower edge.

8. Dating from 1883 to 1889, the one bustle in the collection was approximately six by eight inches. It was a black cotton sateen pouch filled with horsehair and tufted in five or six places to keep the stuffing in place. Tapes were used to secure this article to the waist.

9. One variation of the combination garments, the union suit, could have dated as far back as ~~1888~~ to the thirties. It was of white cotton stockinette knit fabric with an open crotch. The legs reached to the knee. It was in excellent condition.

Storage and Cleaning

The storage situation in the Clothing, Textiles, and Merchandising Department is very limited. However, a few suggestions can be made. Garments should not be stored dirty. The undergarments in this collection, with the exception of those that are in fair or poor condition, can be subjected to delicate washer settings, cold or lukewarm water, and very mild detergents (23).

Clean garments should be stored in plastic bags which have been sealed. Wool items should be moth-proofed before being put into a bag. All clothing should be stored away from light, preferably in a closet or metal wardrobe cabinet in a room with controlled humidity and temperature (24).

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Undergarments have long been hidden from the eyes of the public. A woman in a bathing suit exposes much of her body to public view. Yet the same woman becomes extremely embarrassed should her petticoat escape the confines of a knee-length skirt. Perhaps it is because undergarments are such personal and intimate objects that writers have failed to include them in works on historic costume. They do not command praise or attention, only some recognition for the part they play in helping to shape the American woman's ever changing fashion silhouette.

This problem was undertaken to establish the basic female silhouettes from 1609 thru 1930. The undergarments responsible for producing specific silhouettes were described in detail. The second phase of the problem was to use the information to catalog and classify the undergarments in the Oklahoma State University Historic Costume Collection.

The purposes of the study were to:

1. Give recognition to undergarments.
2. Establish what is included in the Oklahoma State University Historic Costume Collection, each garment's physical condition, and period in history.
3. Give recommendations for better cleaning practices, storage facilities.
4. Establish a working catalog.

The historic background revealed similar characteristics of undergarments through the years.

1. Cotton and linen have been the most popular fabrics. This was probably due to their laundering and comfort characteristics.
2. The various items of undergarments from chemise to drawers and corset to petticoat were ornate. Some pieces were perhaps more elaborate than others such as the brocaded petticoats or satin covered corsets.
3. Body shaping devices of one form or another were a part of women's underclothing from 1609 thru 1930. Only one--the corset--adapted and was used during each period studied. It varied from high to low, soft to stiff, and tightly laced to somewhat elastic. It was responsible for the 15 to 21 inch waist measurements and frequent fainting spells.
4. Two other items that were passed down through the years were the chemise and petticoat. The chemise persisted until approximately 1910 when it was replaced by the more popular camisole. Petticoats, long, short, with or without a bodice, have long endured. With the exception of fabric, it is difficult to judge which style comes from which period as the characteristics are so similar.
5. Adaptations of older garments frequently brought new changes into the undergarment world. The hooped skirt was the forerunner of the crinoline with its watch-spring boning. The elastic type girdles followed the corset. Brassières were preceded by the camisoles and vests. These adaptations create an intermingling of the new mode with the familiarities of the past.

Historic information was used to help classify the undergarments in the Oklahoma State University Historic Costume Collection. Fifty items were catalogued and classified by period in nine different subtitles.

With the exception of three garments, all the clothing was included in the working catalog. Their suitable physical condition will allow them to be taken into the classroom to be examined by students.

With the exception of four, the garments could be washed in a delicate washer setting, lukewarm water, and very mild detergent.

This cleaning process should precede storage. Clothing needs to be sealed in plastic bags, placed away from light, and ideally in a metal wardrobe cabinet with controlled humidity and temperature.

Recommendations

This study revealed the need for others of a similar nature. The collection has many other categories of clothing--wedding dresses, shoes, children's clothing--all of which need to be recorded and classified.

Cataloguing should utilize a uniform system. New additions should be catalogued immediately upon their arrival. Information such as the donor's name and address and any notes or documents concerning the garment should be kept in a file for such artifacts.

The entire collection should be stored in one area. This area should be kept locked. Unauthorized people should not be allowed to pilfer through the collection at random.

Garments making up the major categories of clothing were: accessories, blouses, coats, dresses, footwear, hats, skirts, sleepwear, and undergarments. Each category should be stored together in separate closets. The only exception might be those that are a part of a special collection such as the Talbot or Wilham collections.

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- (23) Collins, Maureen. "How to Wet-Clean Undyed Cotton and Linen." Smithsonian Institution Museum of History and Technology Textile Laboratory, Leaflet 478 (1967), 6-8.
- (24) "Accessioning System for Museum of the Great Plains." Institute of the Great Plains, Lawton, Oklahoma, 1971.

APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

FRONT SIDE OF FILE CARD

No.: _____ Item: _____ Period: _____

Location: _____

Description: _____

SKETCH OR

PHOTO

Condition: _____

Donor and Donor Date: _____

Approximate Value (present or repaired state): _____

Other Information: _____

Cataloger: _____ Date: _____

BACK SIDE OF FILE CARD

Maintenance Record

Date	Wash	Iron	Cost	Date	Dry Clean	Cost
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APPENDIX B

No.	Item	Description
UG-Ca-1	Camisoles	Lt. wt. sheer lace; kimono sleeves with underarm gussets; hidden front button closure; lace edgings; drawstring at waistline.
UG-Ca-2	Camisoles	Cotton; wide lace edging; drawstring; extension from waistline.
UG-Ca-3	Camisoles	Cotton; hidden front button closure; lace yoke; drawstring at neck; waistband.
UG-Ca-4	Camisoles	Cotton; scalloped edges; topstitching; fitted waist; rounded extension.
UG-Ca-5	Camisoles	Cotton; lace insertions; front buttons; extension from waist; drawstrings at neck and waist.
UG-Ca-6	Camisoles	Cotton; sleeveless; lace insertion; drawstring at waist; buttonhole stitch armhold edge.
UG-Ca-7	Camisoles	Cotton; drawstring waist; crocheted yoke and finish on armseyes.
UG-Ca-8	Camisoles	Pink silk; lace-like yoke; tatted edging; satin ties at neck; elastic at waist; fabric covered snaps.
UG-Ca-9	Camisoles	Crepe; crocheted yoke; drawstring at neckline; also at waist; bodice gathered onto yoke.
UG-Ca-10	Camisoles	Fine cotton; front buttons; tucks cb.; lace insertions; edging; drawstring at neck; waist extension; embroidered tulips.
UG-Ca-11(2)	Camisoles	Rayon; yoke of tucked chiffon; satin ribbon straps; knit bottom; elastic encased waistline.
UG-Ca-12	Camisoles	Pink silk; no underarm seams; side ties; 1 button and loop at underarm; lace edging; drawstring neck.
UG-Ca-13	Camisoles	Woven rayon or silk; drawstring at waistline; tatted yoke; hand made.

No.	Item	Description
UG-Ca-14	Camisoles	Crepe fabric; embroidered roses; kimino; lace edging applied with blue briar stitch; drawstrings neck and waist.
UG-Ca-15	Camisoles	Identical to 24 except embroidered flower is daisy.
UG-Pe-1	Petticoats	Cotton; to floor; more fullness at back; slight train effect; waistband; buttons in back.
UG-Pe-2	Petticoats	Black taffeta-like fabric; perhaps silk; gored; gathered ruffles at lower edge.
UG-Pe-3	Petticoats	Calf-length; back placket; buttons; more fullness in back; starched; flounced.
UG-Pe-4	Petticoats	Light cotton; gathered with more fullness at back; ornate; tucks; ruffles; to floor; back buttons.
UG-Pe-5	Petticoats	Calf-length; black silk or rayon type fabric; wide satin waistband; bias strips; ruffles.
UG-Pe-6	Petticoats	Lt. wt. cotton; lace insertions; embroidery and scalloped edges on the gathered lower portion which is sewn on at hip level; below knee length.
UG-Pe-7	Petticoats	Cotton, gored and gathered skirt; waistband; placket; lace edging; insertions; tucks.
UG-Pe-8	Petticoats	Bias band at waist; flatfell seams; tucked, gathered flounce from knee to calf; lace edge; cotton.
UG-Pe-9	Petticoats	Starched cotton; drawstring waist; tucks, lace insets; 2 layers of flounces below knee.
UG-Pe-10	Petticoats	Cotton; gored; net-like trim; waistband; to ankle.
UG-Pe-11	Petticoats	Cotton; placket; waistband; gathers; flounces; lace edging and insets; starched; tuck to shorten.
UG-Pe-12(2)	Petticoats	Heavy cotton; to calf; 4 front darts-top stitched; scalloped edge; tucks to shorten.

No.	Item	Description
UG-Pe-13	Petticoats	Sheer cotton; 5" wide waistband; tucks, appliques, embroidery; scalloped edge at hem.
UG-FP-1	Full Petticoat	Cotton; side button closure; fitted waistline; gathered skirt with more back fullness; flounce and edges trimmed with embroidery, scallops.
UG-FP-2	Full Petticoat	Cotton; lace insertions, edging; gored for princess fit; front closure, buttons concealed; tuck for shortness; lace and tucks on lower edge.
UG-FP-3	Full Petticoat	Cotton; lace insertions; to calf; slight gathers at neck; lace edging; hooks and eyes in back; fitted waist with lace insertions.
UG-FP-4	Full Petticoat	Cotton; back buttons; lace ruffled edging; lace insertions; princess fit; darts; 2 layers for flounce from knee down; lace, embroidery, tucks.
UG-FP-5	Full Petticoat	Cotton; lace insertions; drawstring neckline; sidepleat at hip level; insertions of rickrack like trim used for edging, also.
UG-FP-6	Full Petticoat	Cotton; to knee; lace insertions; yoke; straps; gathered flounces; scalloped hem; front open to hip; crocheted buttons; back fitted with center back top-stitched tucks.
UG-FP-7	Full Petticoat	Rayon slip; knitted fabric; to floor; pleats on sides at hip level; drawstring neckline.
UG-FP-8	Full Petticoat	Pink silk (?) straight cut; knee length; 5" hem; straps; home made.
UG-Dr-1	Drawers	Same as 18 except for difference in decoration of leg ruffle.
UG-Dr-2	Drawers	Cotton; open legs; drawstring; fathered flounce with tucks below knees.
UG-Dr-3	Drawers	Open legs; 2" band at waist; 2 side plackets with buttons; gathered flounce, lace insertions and edging.
UG-Dr-4	Drawers	Cotton; open leg; gathered; wide waistband; button closure; lace and embroidery trim.

No.	Item	Description
UG-Dr-5	Drawers	Cotton; gathered open legs; wise band; drawstrings, lace edging, tucks, insertions on ruffle.
UG-Ve-1(2)	Vests	Stockinette ribbed fabric; crocheted edging on upper edge had drawstring; below hip level; strapless.
UG-Ve-2	Vests	Hand crocheted; drawstring at armseye and neck; pink ribbons at front closure.
UG-MP-1	Modesty Panel	Black silk taffeta-like fabric; knee length; worn in front; satin ribbon ties at waist; tatted edging; reinforced with bias tape on backside.
UG-MP-2	Modesty Panel	Modesty Panel; woll; center inverted pleat; twill tape reinforcement at top and pleat; hem briar stitched into place.
UG-Co-1	Corset	Corset; heavy cotton fabric; double boning; below breast; over hips; back lacings; front metal hooks; 6 garters on elastic suspenders.
UG-Bu-1	Bustle	Black cotton sateen; filled with horsehair; attaches to waist with string ties; about 8" x 6".
UG-Com-1	Combination	Stockinette tube-type fabric; drawstring neckline; narrow shoulder straps; open crotch.

APPENDIX C

Number	Item	Period	Condition
UG-Ca-1	Camisole	1870-1927	Fair
UG-Ca-2	Camisole	1870-1927	Good
UG-Ca-3	Camisole	1870-1927	Good
UG-Ca-4	Camisole	1903	Good
UG-Ca-5	Camisole	1870-1927	Good
UG-Ca-6	Camisole	1870-1927	Good
UG-Ca-7	Camisole	1870-1927	Good
UG-Ca-8	Camisole	1897-1927	Good
UG-Ca-9	Camisole	1870-1927	Good
UG-Ca-10	Camisole	1870-1927	Good
UG-Ca-11(2)	Camisole	1920-1927	Poor
UG-Ca-12	Camisole	1897-1927	Fair
UG-Ca-13	Camisole	1920-1927	Good
UG-Ca-14	Camisole	1870-1927	Good
UG-Ca-15	Camisole	1870-1927	Good
UG-Pe-1	Petticoats	1890-1910	Good
UG-Pe-2	Petticoats	1890-1910	Poor
UG-Pe-3	Petticoats	1900-20's	Good
UG-Pe-4	Petticoats	1890-1910	Good
UG-Pe-5	Petticoats	1910	Good
UG-Pe-6	Petticoats	1915	Good
UG-Pe-7	Petticoats	1920-30	Good

Number	Item	Period	Condition
UG-Pe-8	Petticoats	1900's	Good
UG-Pe-9	Petticoats	1900's	Good
UG-Pe-10	Petticoats	1893-1918	Good
UG-Pe-11	Petticoats	1900's	Good
UG-Pe-12(2)	Petticoats	1920-30	Good
UG-Pe-13	Petticoats	1913	Good
UG-FP-1	Full Petticoats	1890-1930	Good
UG-FP-2	Full Petticoats	1830-1930	Good
UG-FP-3	Full Petticoats	1910-1930	Good
UG-FP-4	Full Petticoats	1820-1930	Good
UG-FP-5	Full Petticoats	1820-1930	Good
UG-FP-6	Full Petticoats	1910	Good
UG-FP-7	Full Petticoats	1920	Good
UG-FP-8	Full Petticoats	1920-1930	Good
UG-Dr-1	Drawers	1890-1905	Good
UG-Dr-2	Drawers	1890-1905	Good
UG-Dr-3	Drawers	1905	Good
UG-Dr-4	Drawers	1890-1905	Good
UG-Dr-5	Drawers	1890-1905	Good
UG-Ve-1(2)	Vests	1910	Good
UG-Ve-2	Vests	1900's-20's	Good

Number	Item	Period	Condition
UG-MP-1	Modesty Panels		Good
UG-MP-2	Modesty Panels		Good
UG-Co-1	Corset	1900-1910	Good
UG-Bu-1	Bustle	1883-1889	Good
UG-Com-1	Combination	1888-1930's	Excellent

APPENDIX D



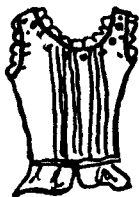
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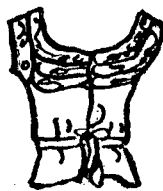
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UG-Ca-3



UG-Ca-4



UG-Ca-5



UG-Ca-6



UG-Ca-7



UG-Ca-8



UG-Ca-9



UG-Ca-10



UG-Ca-11(2)



UG-Ca-12



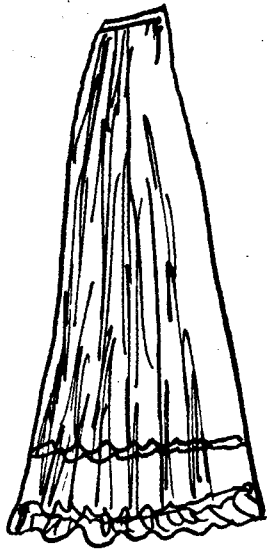
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UG-Ca-14



UG-Ca-15



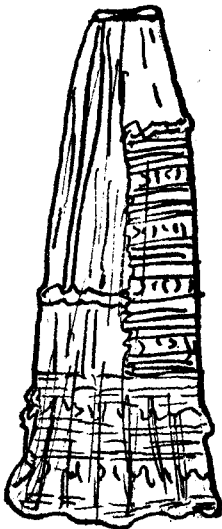
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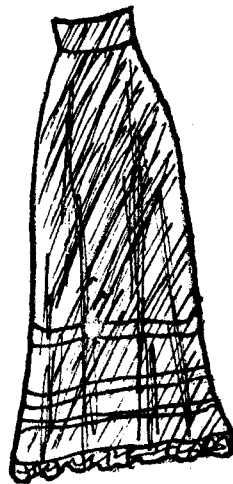
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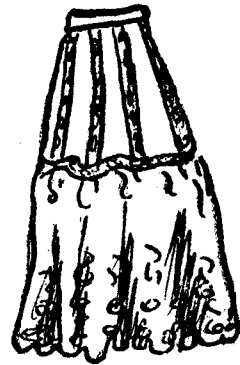
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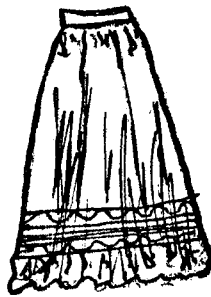
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UG-Pe-5



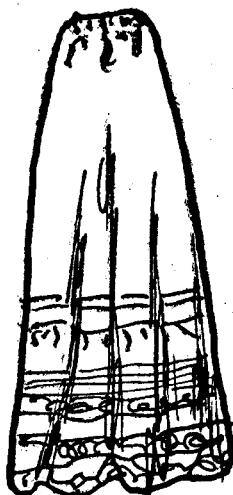
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UG-Pe-7



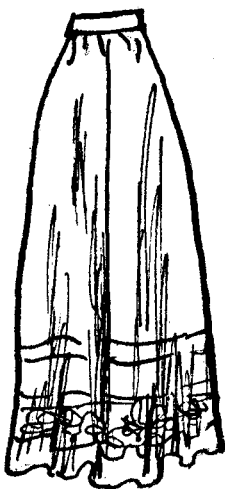
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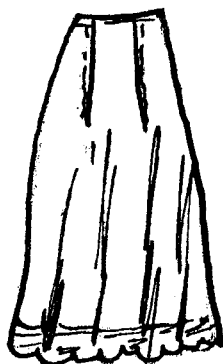
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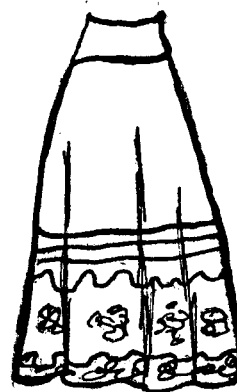
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UG-Pe-11



UG-Pe-12(2)



UG-Pe-13



UG-FP-1



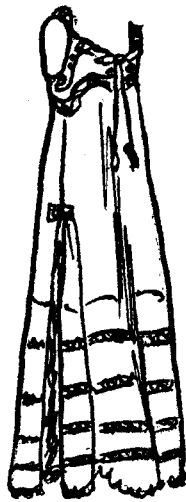
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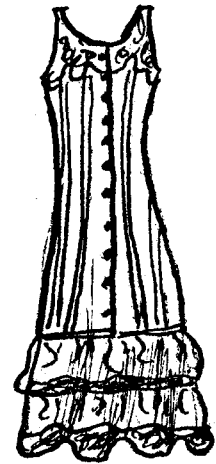
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UG-FP-4



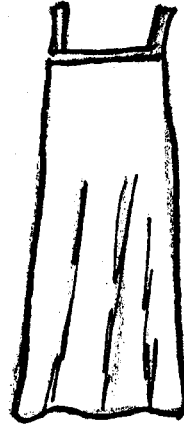
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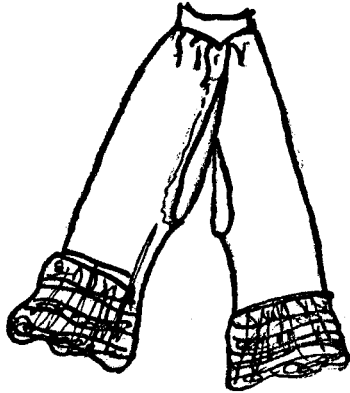
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UG-FP-7



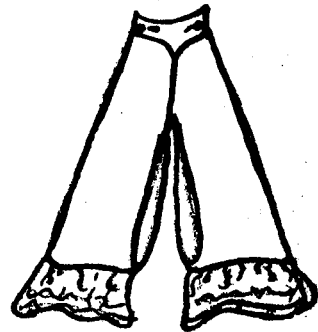
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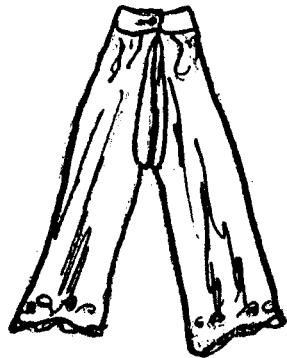
UG-Dr-1



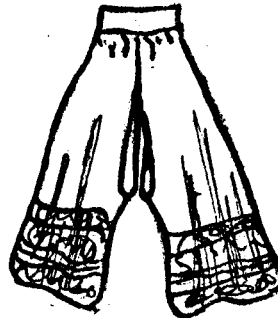
UG-Dr-2



UG-Dr-3



UG-Dr-4



UG-Dr-5



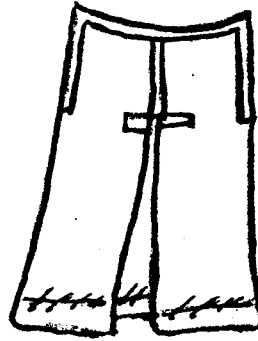
UG-Ve-1(2)



UG-Ve-2



UG-MP-1



UG-MP-2



UG-Co-1



UG-Bu-1



UG-Com-1

VITA

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