SELECTED GARMENTS FROM THE WARDROBE OF MISS NORA A. TALBOT

1907-1950

By

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Golden Anniversary of the Division of Home Economics was celebrated in splendor on October 20 and 21, 1950 at the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College, Stillwater, Oklahoma. It represented fifty years of progress; the fruits of the harvest of fifty years of activity, accomplishment and recognition for those who were or ever had been associated with the Division of Home Economics. A parade of colorful costumes helped to set the theme for the Anniversary Banquet in the ballroom of the Student Union. These garments, modeled by slender co-eds, were of symbolic concern because they had been selected from the extensive, accumulated wardrobe of Miss Nora Amaryllis Talbot.

The parade of garments reflected Miss Talbot's interest in certain phases of household arts: clothing, textiles, and design. The author, a household arts major and having similar interests in clothing, textiles, and design, set out to determine the significance of the costumes worn by Miss Talbot: to objectively portray her taste in clothes; and to identify the styles of her costumes. Upon investigation, it was found that no record had been made of the clothing selections of Miss Talbot during her years as student, professor, Head of the Household Arts Department, and Dean of the Division of Home Economics at this College. It is believed that she has made a contribution to mankind by her personal appearance during each phase of her career on the campus as well as through her academic endeavors.

Three methods were used in the choice of garments that are considered in this study. The first way was to select costumes at intervals sufficiently close to indicate changes in fashion; the second was to have costumes representing important events or phases in her career; and third was to single out those garments which were favorites of Miss Talbot.

The more intimate information for this paper has been given by Miss Talbot during interviews, while other data have been found from her records, books and magazines.

In the main, reference to costume will refer to a garment. However, in so far as it is possible the accessories worn with each garment will be in the discussion if such information can be provided or is in evidence for description.

CHAPTER II

DESCRIPTION OF GARMENTS AND HISTORIC HIGHLIGHTS

The study of Miss Talbot's clothing selections can hardly be started without telling something of her physical appearance. At the time of her graduation from Central State Normal, Miss Talbot was a tall, willowy figure. She measured five feet and seven inches and weighed one hundred and ten pounds. She could boast a twenty-two inch waist and a thirty-two bust measurement. Her medium brown hair, which she wore up in two psyche twists, fell below her waist when she let it down.

GRADUATION DRESS OF 1907

In partial fulfillment for a degree of music from Central State Normal at Edmond, Oklahoma, Nora Amaryllis Talbot gave her senior recital May 27, 1907. The floor length dress she wore on this occasion was made of white imported lawn, which is a smooth, sheer fabric.

Barbara Summers, her maternal grandmother, who lived in Lincoln, Nebraska, sent her ten yards of fabric to make this dress. It was one of her favorites which she kept for parties and other special occasions. She wore it many times after coming back to Stillwater where she accepted a position in the public school as music teacher.

This two-piece dress worn for the recital was cut from a commercial pattern and made by Miss Talbot. The studio picture of this dress shows the modish high collar which she believed was especially flattering to her thin neck. The waist was fashioned with an inset of embroidered net at the neck, giving a square yoke effect, and continuing up to form a high standing collar. Lace insertion an inch wide was used around the square edge of the net. Lace edging of the same pattern as the insertion was slightly gathered and machine stitched on top along the edges of the insertion and around the top of the collar.

The square treatment of the neckline was repeated by inserting lace in the waist front. Starting near the armscye on the shoulder, the two-inch insertion was placed in a vertical and horizontal design, forming a right angle on each side. The horizontal area was three and one-half inches above the waistline and lacked five inches coming together in center front. Gathered lace was stitched along the edges of the insertion. Two bows of onehalf inch white velvet ribbon were attached, one above the other on each side, toward the end of the insertion where it terminated above the waistline. A similar arrangement ornamented the back of the waist.

The set-in sleeves were gathered into the armscye. A continuous band of insertion held the bottom of the sleeves in a bloused effect just below the elbow. Two bows of white velvet ribbon were attached to the band, one above the other, on the outer arm position. The two inch insertion was put in above the elbow in a horizontal line around the sleeve and the gathered lace edging outlined all areas of insertion in the sleeves.

The waist which was opened all the way down center back, lapped right over left and was fastened with hooks and eyes.

The skirt gave the appearance of the bustle but was not a severe treatment. Each gore in the six gore skirt was a thirty-six inch width of fabric, with little shaping at the waistline. A continuous bound and faced placket, fourteen inches long, gave ample room to get the skirt on and off. This placket, opening down the center back, was closed with hooks and eyes. Two rows of shirring were spaced below the waist band to control the spread of the fullness.

Tucks, lace insertion, and lace edging adorned the skirt in horizontal

and vertical treatment. Starting at the floor, three tucks, each threeeights of an inch deep were grouped eleven inches from the floor in a five and one-half inch area. This series of tucks was broken at fifteen inch intervals by a vertical arrangement of one-inch insertion fourteen inches deep. Three inches below the group of six tucks, alternate areas between the vertical insertion were connected with two-inch insertion strips. All the insertion areas were edged with slightly gathered lace. Three white velvet bows were attached, one above the other, on the vertical insertion where it intersected the six tucks.

The center front of the belt was a shirred piece of fabric two and onehalf inches long and three inches deep. To each end of this shirred section a two-inch piece of insertion was attached. The entire belt thus formed was stitched to a stiff cotton fabric to give support. Gathered lace was added to the edges of the insertion. Two velvet bows were placed on the top of the insertion, one above the other on each side, where it was attached to the shirred area. Three hooks and eyes were used to fasten the belt at the center back.

Under this sheer dress appropriate undergarments were worn to give foundation and enrichment. Vogue Magazine gives a rather concise description of the corset that determined the silhouette of the early 1900's.

In 1900, that mainstay of modes, the corset, underwent a change that resulted in a striking modification of the silhouette to the famous "straight-front" line...

The theory of this new corset, which undoubtedly seem to the woman of today worse than that of the early 'ninties, was that the inward curve at the waist in front was injurious and that only a curve at back could be permitted with safety. This was a radical change, and it came in for extraordinary exaggeration. To attain this straight front line, the hips were swung backward and the flesh forced upward, exaggerating the curve of the bust, since, after all, one's anatomy must be put somewhere. Women were suddenly all hips and bust...

About 1907, the mode began, as one might have forseen, to reach the unpleasant consciousness that it was becoming "hipped" on hips. Certain very smart women began to alter the lacing of the corset so that it compressed the hips a bit and slightly widened the waist, reducing the curve that had so long been exaggerated.¹

It was explained that this corset was most helpful and necessary in keeping the waist and skirt from separating at the waistline. A vest, knitted from lisle threads, was worn under the corset to protect the body from friction and to help absorb the body perspiration. It was supported at the shoulders by straps and hugged the body closely until it ended below the hip line. In appearance this vest resembled the sleeveless undershirts worn by men at the present time.

Drawers, a trouser-like garment, made of lightweight muslin, were worn next to the body and over the corset. The opening was on the left side and finished with a continuous binding. The waist band was fastened with buttons and buttonholes. Lace was attached to the hem edges which stopped just above the knees.

A full length one-piece petticoat had a fitted bodice which continued below the waistline forming a slight flare. The straps were cut in with the garment, necessitating seams at the shoulders. The neckline was rounded, low in front and higher in the back, while the armholes were the shape of the natural armscye line. A double piece of fabric was stitched into the armhole to form a shield to protect the dress from perspiration. This piece was wider under the arm and decreased to a width of one inch at the shoulder line. The neck and the armscye of the petticoat were edged with tatting. Buttons and hand worked buttonholes closed the placket that provided an opening at center back, from the neck to below the waistline.

1 "Thirty Years of the Mode," Vogue, (January 1, 1923), 178, 180.

Ten inches below the waistline a band of machine embroidered insertion was set in. This was placed so that it would form a part of the design and would show through when worn under sheer dresses. Below this insertion the skirt became two thicknesses. The underneath skirt was made of heavy white muslin to insure shadow-proofness and to form a background for the embroidered overskirt. The faced hem was finished at the bottom with hand crocheted lace. The overskirt consisted of a motif eleven inches deep around the bottom, which produced a border design. This machine applied embroidery was made of cutwork and satin stitch. The petticoat served to enrich the costume and to add to its feminine appearance.

The only jewelry worn with the dress was a single strand choker of gold beads and a small broach which was a gift from her mother.

Miss Talbot's diary preserves a story of the significance of this dress. "May 27, 1907. We gave our musical recital this evening....I sang 'My Heart Is Weary' from Sampson and Delilah by Saint Saens."² Her musical talent was not limited to expression through her contralto voice. She played the cello in the college orchestra directed by Mr. Otto Lehr. One number was so arranged that she played the solo part.

As the style in skirts became straighter in line, she removed one of the gores in the skirt and readjusted the fullness in the waistline. Later she made the sleeves long and less full. To do this she took some of the gathers out at the top and added embreidered net, like that used at the neck, to make the sleeves to the wrist. The fitted net portion was edged with lace at the bottom. The white velvet bows were also removed. These alterations made the dress suitable to more occasions than just parties.

2 Nora A. Talbot. Line a Day Diary, May 27, 1907.



The graduation dress of 1907 indicates the transition of the styles from 1904 to 1910. Kettunen pictures this change and makes these statements: "A frock of 1904 shows that clothes once more were becoming elaborate and sleeves were extremely full. By 1910, the tubular silhouette was definitely established."³

GRADUATION DRESS OF 1910

Graduation was the order of the day for Miss Talbot again in May of 1910 when she received her Bachelor of Science Degree from the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College. Commencement was held in what is at present the Prairie Play House on the campus.

The graduates in earlier years did not wear the caps and gowns as they do today, so, the graduation dress was of much importance. Miss Talbot recalled having worn this dress to all the functions associated with graduation, such as receptions and teas. She was a member of the college glee club which sang at her graduation. The choir furnished part of the program on that occasion and, being small in number, needed all its members.

The accompanying picture depicts some of the details of the graduation dress designed and made in a clothing class during her senior year. The teacher, Miss Etcheson, encouraged her in the field of original design and dressmaking. The design was carefully executed in every detail of construction with items, such as tucks and lace, machine stitched with size ninety sewing thread.

The white shadow patterned organdy was selected for this dress because of its interesting texture. Marns were inserted during the weaving process

3 Marietta Kettunen, Fundamentals of Dress, p. 248.

giving a lacy appearance. It cost approximately two dollars a yard. Plain organdy was used as a contrasting fabric.

The entire dress was made over a bobbinet background. The bobbinet was attached to the dress seam at the waistline and at the sleeves where the cuffs set on. Otherwise, it hung as a separate garment and fitted the body a little closer than the dress. At the center back of the bobbinet, a placket that opened from the neck to the waistline, was lapped right over left and fastened with snaps.

The waist of the dress was rather unusual in as much as the back, the side fronts, and short kimono sleeves were cut in one piece. The collar and cuffs were fashioned from a fabric that Miss Talbot had decorated by putting one-half inch lace insertion between plain organdy strips on which there were four pin tucks. The collar, a single thickness of material, was seventeen inches long and three inches wide. It was attached to the neckline so that it rolled slightly at the back of the neck and lay flat in front where it ended at each corner of the square neckline. When the cuffs were added and turned back they formed a continuous finish three inches wide. The insertion and tucks gave a vertical emphasis to the collar and cuffs which were edged with one-half inch slightly gathered lace.

A rectangular panel of plain organdy, thirty-four inches deep, seven inches wide, and outlined with lace edging, decorated the front of the dress. Its upper edge formed the straight line of the square neck. From the neckline to the waistline it formed a part of the waist, being seamed to the side fronts of the waist. This panel hung free from the waistline and terminated twelve inches above the hem line of the garment. Metal weights, encased in organdy, were applied to the back of the panel at the lower corners to keep it hanging close to the dress and to prevent the corners from rolling. At the waistline and seven inches above it was a band of plain organdy. It surrounded the body except for being attached to either side of the center front panel. Lace was stitched along the edges of this band.

The skirt was slightly gathered at the waistline and hung straight until it ended about eight inches from the floor. A double thickness of plain organdy completed the last six inches of the skirt. The lace edging trimmed the top and bottom of this part of the skirt.

The thirtieth anniversary issue of the Vogue magazine has this to say about the foundation garment.

She no longer curves at any point save with the slim grace of a sapling. Her corset was not merely straight in front; it was straight all the way around—and it came nearly to her toes. Naturally, it exerted its greatest pressure on the long-exaggerated hips, and a brassiere flattened the line of the bust.⁴

The long lace mits reached the elbow and almost met the sleeves. She carried a white silk fan which was edged with lace and supported with bone stays. A circular shaped brown bone stick comb was worn at the back of the head. From the front the comb, with a simple band of inlaid gold, focused attention to her hair.

A fashion artist and designer of New York expresses in her book of 1939 by picture and word the fashion of 1910. "By 1910 there was a change to.... a higher, larger waistline, and a loose blouse with a round neckline and a short kimono sleeve....and many artificial puffs and curls.....⁵

^{4 &}quot;Thirty Years of the Mode", Vogue, (January 1, 1923), 180.

⁵ Carrie Wilson, Fashions Since Their Debut, plate XXIV



THE DRESS WORN AT COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY, SUMMER 1915

Miss Talbot spent the summers of 1911, 1913, 1915, 1916, 1920 and the spring semester of 1922 at Columbia University, New York City, working for her Master's Degree in Household Arts. Meanwhile she taught regular terms of high school in Oklahoma until 1915 when she was invited to return to the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College to become Head of the Household Arts Department.

One of the dresses in her wardrobe for the summer of 1915 at Columbia was a silk taffeta with long sleeves. She usually took a few long sleeved garments because of the cool evenings in New York City. The top of the dress and the sleeves were made from solid black taffeta while the skirt, cuffs, collar, and pocket edges were of black and white plaid taffeta cut on the bias grain of the fabric. The texture of the plaid was highlighted by certain stripes being satin.

She used a commercial pattern to make this dress. The waist had one and one-half inch stitched pleats from mid shoulder to the waistline on each side, back and front. Two and one-half inches to the left of center front the placket opened from the neck to below the normal waistline. Three large smoked pearl buttons and bound buttonholes fastened the waist. The placket in the skirt was closed by the use of snaps. The collar, a bias strip of fabric four and one-half inches wide, was attached from shoulder sean to shoulder seam on the back of the neck and from there it hung free. It was long enough that it could be tied under the chin in a large bow or could be worn loose as a scarf and tucked under the belts at the waistline. The long fitted sleeves were the set-in type. Bias bands of plaid two and one-half inches deep finished the sleeves at the wrist.

The skirt was designed in the mode of the peg-top skirt. With reference

to the fashions of 1915 to 1920, Carrie Wilson states, "Skirts were about six inches below the knees, fullness was added at the waist and hip, making them barrel shaped, the extreme ones being called peg-top."⁶ The front part of the skirt was set high on the waist. In the back the waistline was normal. The illusion of width in the hips was achieved by adding pockets to the sides in such a manner that they protruded from the lines of the body. The lower part of the pocket blended into the slender lines of the skirt.

Two belts of the black fabric were used to emphasize the waistline. One was worn at the normal waistline and the other above it on the seam that joined the waist and skirt in front. Each was fastened with a smoked pearl buckle.

There seems to have been little change in the type of foundation garment worn since 1910.

She enjoyed wearing this dress to work because her students liked it. It had been her idea through the years that clothes should please those persons with whom one spent a large portion of time, so she remembered this dress as one which brought pleasure to others. The feel of silk and the rustle of taffeta was pleasing to her.

During this period her long brown hair was combed in a large roll over a hair "rat" around her head with a knot done up on the crown of the head.

GARMENTS SELECTED IN PARIS AND LONDON 1926

Miss Talbot had dreamed of a trip to Europe for many years. In January 1926, while attending to professional duties in New York City, she called the Long Island residence of her cousin, Herman A. MacNeil. She accepted an invitation to their home and over a cup of tea Mrs. MacNeil suggested that she

⁶ Ibid., plate XXVI.

should accompany them to Europe in June. Her answer could not be definite but she hoped that the college administration would approve her going.

When she returned to the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College campus where she was serving as Dean of Home Economics, having been appointed to this position in 1923, she formulated her plans. Upon request, she was granted a leave of absence for the Summer Session of 1926. Much work had to be cared for, schedules arranged, and personal needs attended in preparation for her departure. She was in New York at the appointed time and they sailed on the English liner, Arabic, Miss Talbot and Herman MacNeil, his wife Carol, and daughter, Joye.

The MacNeils had been to Paris a number of times and had lived there for a period of four years at one time when Mr. MacNeil was studying art and doing sculptural work. With the MacNeils to guide and advise her, Miss Talbot spent time seeing those things which she felt would help her professionally and the things which they thought would be most enjoyable to her. Mr. MacNeil's friends in Paris, several of whom were Americans studying art, soon became Miss Talbot's friends and she neither lacked for some where to go for entertainment, nor an escort for the occasion.

Since she had taught clothing and textile classes she had a keen interest in fabrics. One of the highlights of her trip was a visit to the textile district of Paris. She visited shops of various kinds to glean all the new ideas she could.

In the shop "Printemps" in Paris she purchased two garments. One was a short formal evening dress made of soft silk lace and the other a lightweight flannel coat suitable for street wear.

The design in the lace, patterned in horizontal scallops so graceful and as rhythmic as the Greek honeysuckle swag, can be observed in the photograph of this dress. The heavier part of the pattern was a delicate pink which deepened into a lavender in the connecting meshes between the scallops. The color of the dress was made richer by the lavender-pink taffeta slip which was worn beneath it. This sleeveless, collarless dress hung straight from the shoulders and terminated just below the knees. The deep U-shaped neckline and the armscyes were bound in matching pink georgette crepe, forming a one-fourth inch edge trimming.

The exceptionally long waist of the dress was attached to the eighteen inch skirt by placing the waist on the skirt and stitching along a row of scallops, thus maintaining the unbroken effect of the pattern in the lace. Width was added to this straight skirt by setting in two godets, one on either side of the front, about the position of the French dart line. The scallops in the godets were carefully matched with those in the skirt. The bottom edge of the skirt was trimmed in the shape of the scallops of the lace, eliminating the need for a turned hem.

A large velvet rose was worn on the left side front below the normal waistline. The velvet petals of the flower were in shades of pink. The silver leaves were from a fabric woven of metallic threads. It nestled in a cluster of contrasting lace which was coarser in texture and deeper in value than the lace of the dress.

Designed as a part of this costume, although not attached to it, was a deep pink scarf of georgette crepe. It was six feet and six inches long and eighteen inches wide. It was almost completely decorated with machine embroidered flowers. The silk embroidery yarns were in shades of pink and rose with accent colors in blue and yellow. Two rows of desert plume feathers wer put along the edge of the scarf. It was worn as a stole or shoulder scarf and completed the dress.



She had difficulty finding shoes suitable to wear with the lace because the French ones available seemed to be built on a wider last than the American made shoes. She finally found slippers with a strap across the front and close to the ankle. They were made from silver colored fabric brocaded with rose threads.

Since little jewelry was needed with this costume, she wore only a single strand of LaTosca pearls, a gift from a friend, and an antique gold bracelet which she purchased at the Caledonian Market in London. She carried a white chiffon handkerchief which was edged in lace.

The foundation garments worn in this era were simple. The girdle or short corset, if worn at all, provided much more freedom of movement than it had in former days. The brassiere was usually made of lace, lace decorated, and designed to produce a flattened effect on the bustline. The figure thus molded gave the "boyish figure". The chemise and drawers were combined.⁷ This garment was called the "teddy". In appearance the teddy looked like a slip at the top and some resembled drawers at the bottom. They were frequently made of crepe satin or batiste. Later they were made of silk jersey.

The blue Parisian coat was unusual in cut and interesting in design because of the material from which it was made. The fabric was fifty inches wide and decorated with an adaptation of Byzantine motifs woven with white silk thread. The motifs, which were clearly defined but not noticeable unless carefully studied, included a lamb, a deer, a lion with a flower tail, a peacock, a rose, foliage, and an Oriental temple. The elaborated area was applied in three panels of equal width, fifteen and one-half inches deep along the bottom of the garment. The center panel of the design decorated

^{7 &}quot;Sheer Facts About The Inner Life of the Paris Mode - Just Between the Parisienne and Her Frock," Vogue, (November 15, 1925), 72-73.

the back of the coat and the panels on each side of it gave identical design to the front.

The body of the coat was one width of the fabric, uncut, except to shape the neckline, shoulder seams, and armholes. Where side seams usually appear in a coat, darts were taken to give shape. The darts started under the arms and tapered to nothing eight inches below the armhole. The convertible type collar, which rolled in the back, had a border design three-fourths of an inch deep along the edge. The set-in sleeves were long and straight with a designed strip six inches wide set in five inches above the bottom.

A blue silk crepe material of matching color was used to line the coat. The garment hung straight and the designer omitted the use of a fastener.

Miss Talbot wore both of these garments many times and with much enjoyment. The evening dress was worn to the Captain's party on the return voyage and there were many pleasant memories of this gay evening with the promenade, the costume judging, and the dance. She appeared in it sometimes in the receiving line at college receptions.

The coat served as a topper on the trip to Holland and on board the Homeric, an English liner, for the return trip. It was almost a conversation piece on the campus because of the unusual design. The color was becoming to Miss Talbot.

After spending five weeks in Paris the group went to London, England, for a three and one-half weeks period. Most of the time there was spent sight-seeing, only taking time to go shopping once. She wanted to bring back with her an example of English wool fabric and the type of workmanship used in the construction of their clothes. At Harrods, a large department store, she purchased a fine worsted wool poplin tailored dress. Although it was more severe in line than she was accustomed to wearing, the fine texture of the fabric and the georgette crepe trimming gave it a feminine touch which she felt justified the purchase. She chose the dress rather than a suit because heavy tweeds, which were worn extensively by the British woman, were neither suited to her personality nor to her work.

The dress was a rose color of medium value and the contrasting fabric of georgette was a light rose pink which acquired a deeper hue when worn over the darker color. The garment hung straight from the shoulders, omitting all the natural curves of the body, thus placing the emphasis on the vertical lines.

Two one inch strips of self material, cut on the crosswise grain of the fabric, were set into each side of the waist front in a vertical line starting at the scycline and ending below the natural waistline. Pleats corresponding in line, width, and grain to those in the waist were set into the skirt. The straight collar rolled in the back and formed revers which ended near the long waistline. A central front kick pleat which continued in line to meet the revers, gave the appearance of an opening all the way down the center front. The illusion of the center front opening was given importance by placing bound buttonholes and small rose colored bone buttons on either side of the center front, five above the long waistline and four below the waistline. Seven buttons were sewed to the top of the side pleats in the skirt. A belt of self material accented the long waistline. An ornamented rose colored buckle fastened the belt.

The set-in sleeves were long and fitted to the arm. The four inch placket at the wrist was fastened with three bound buttonholes and the buttons identical to those on the skirt. A simulated cuff was affected by using a one-half inch strip of georgette three-fourths of an inch above and parallel to the sleeve edge. The over-collar was of georgette. The ends of



the collar were elongated through the use of a knife-pleated ruffled tab three inches deep which was finished with a picot edge. This furnished a note of softness around the face as shown in the picture of the dress. The vestee was of the poplin material.

The back of the dress was similar in line to the front in as much as there were two set-in strips in each side of the waist and two set-in pleats in each side of the skirt with the botton at the top of the pleats.

The workmanship on this dress was a good example of English tailor's finish. There were no raw seams left on the wrong side of the garment, all the set-in sections were carefully bound with silk tape and much of the finishing work was done by hand.

This dress was worn the year Miss Talbot attended Harvard University because the cold climate called for warm clothing. She enjoyed the color because the muted rose was harmonious with her hair that was beginning to turn gray.

THE DEAN'S TEA DRESS OF 1933

A light blue georgette crepe afternoon dress was chosen for the party Miss Talbot gave in 1933. It was possible to entertain the graduating home economists at her home each year after she became Dean of the Division of Home Economics. Frequently, it was an afternoon tea or an evening reception.

She purchased the dress at Marshall Field & Company in Chicage while in the city to employ a teacher. The novelty treatment of the fabric interested Miss Talbot when she first saw it. While the material was still in one piece it had been shirred from selvage to selvage. The one inch groups of machine made chain stitching gave the appearance of bands. The bands were one and five-eighths inches apart except at one area where the shirring measured six inches instead of one inch. The dress was simple in design without darts, tucks, or pleats. All of the ease and fullness was regulated through shaping of the seams and through the shirring. The waistline was at the normal waistline of the body and the skirt was only eight inches from the floor. The long puffed sleeves were graceful. The waist of the garment was cut with the six inch shirred area which formed a yoke effect across the chest in front, and across the shoulders in the back. This shirring can be noted in the accompanying picture. Also, the six inch shirred area formed most of the sleeve cap. Below this the one inch bands were the decorative pattern. To get fullness at the bottom of the skirt, seven bands of the one inch shirring had been removed. Four bands had been removed at the bottom of the sleeve to allow them to puff. Evidence of the machine stitching can still be detected.

The wide V-shaped neckline was finished with a gathered collar of self material. The four inch straight strip of material which formed the collar was decorated with hemstitching. The rows of hemstitching were parallel to the length of it and were one-half inch apart. Between the rows of hemstitching was a heavy chain stitch that added line and texture. This single piece of fabric was applied with a three-fourths inch heading around the neckline. A jabot of self fabric, decorated like the collar, was placed at the point of the V of the neckline. The set-in sleeves were finished with a onefourth inch band at the bottom. The skirt was finished at the bottom with the picoted edge.

A five inch placket at the waistline on the left side was fastened with two snaps and one hook and eye. The one and one-half inch belt of self material was stitched horizontally. A covered buckle fastened the belt.

A soft taffeta slip of the same light blue color was worn under the dress. The foundation garments were as follows: a long girdle, panties, and a brassiere.



Miss Talbot had a corsage of fresh flowers almost every time she wore this dress. Pink clear beads added a contrasting color at the neck.

The flowing long sleeves were comfortable and added pleasure to the wearing of the dress. The horizontal lines created by the shirring appeared to give rhythmic movement to the costume. The pure blue of the color emphasized the wearer's blue eyes.

ROYAL BLUE SILK OF 1937

Enroute to Boston in 1937, to attend the annual meeting of the Christian Science Association, Miss Talbot had a few hours to shop in New York City. She walked from the Grand Central Railroad Terminal to a specialty shop on Forty-second street, near the New York Public Library, where she had made purchases on similar occasions. Her selection was quickly made.

She was attracted to a royal blue, hand finished, silk crepe dress with a rose motif executed in cross-stitch embroidery. The collar, the waist front, the belt, and the long puffed sleeves were the parts of the garment decorated.

The lines of this dress were simple. The waist front and the central front gore of the skirt were cut in one piece. Darts at the shoulder and side seam of the waist helped to shape the garment and give ease over the bust. Side front gores, four and three-fourths inches wide at the waistline, were set on the central front gore in a way that allowed the vertical seam to continue above the waistline as a dart. The back of the dress had the same general lines used as those in the front. Three darts at the back of the neck gave ease across the shoulders.

The two and three-fourths inch collar fitted high around the neck. It rolled at the back of the neck but was rather flat in front. It was edged with a blanket stitch in which a white silk thread was used. Bud and leaf motifs were applied in the corners. The center front opening was six inches



long and finished with a fitted facing, turned to the wrong side. The edge of the opening was buttonhole stitched with white yarns like the collar, and four crocheted loops at the top of the opening held the round wooden buttons. A large area of the waist front was ornamented in a design of roses embroidered in the cross-stitch pattern.

One row of shirring at the top of the long full sleeves helped to gather the fullness into the armhole. Each sleeve, where it entered the three inch waist band, measured thirty-six inches in width. Crocheted loops and wooden buttons were used to fasten the wrist bands. The placket in the left side seam measured four and one-half inches above and below the waistline. Snaps were used as fasteners in the placket.

The belt was two inches wide and forty-three inches long. The ends of the belt went through a bone ring and fastened back on each side with a crocheted loop and wooden button. A rose bud was cross-stitched in each end of the belt.

The use of large silk yarns in shades of rose and white combined with a small, soft, wool yarn in a gray color created an unusual texture in the embroidery. Because of the decoration only fraternity pins were worn. Those which she was eligible to wear were Omicron Nu, Chi Delta Phi, Phi Kappa Phi, and Chi Omega.

When the garment was new she wore it to the sixtieth weeding anniversary of her parents in September, 1937. A family picture taken at the gathering shows an outline of the embroidered part of this dress. It was a dress which she later wore to the office.

THE DRESS WORN IN ST. LOUIS IN 1947

Many professional meetings were a part of the dean's schedule. She attended these, eager to give and exchange ideas that would keep her leader-



ship an inspiration to the Home Economics faculty and the student group. In 1947 she attended the annual American Home Economics Association meeting that convened in St. Louis, Missouri.

Simplicity was the keynote of the pastel pink rayon crepe dress worn by her to the association meeting. Its tailored lines were contrasted with a feminine detail that held one's attention. The jacket type blouse, ending six inches below the normal waistline, had princess lines with seams on the French dart lines. The wide revers, which turned back, were stitched in the shoulder line to the armhole. They swept downward in a restrained curve to a point just above the waistline. Four unpressed pleats on the shoulder gave a draped effect to the revers. A vestee of self material filled the front and fitted close to the neck. A tie effect finished the front of the vestee. A two inch piece of fabric, with picoted edges and tripple pleats stitched down the center of its length, was attached by hand along the edge of the revers to give a ruche finish. To hold this ruffle erect, the picoted edges were tacked together at one inch intervals. Four covered buttons and fabric loops fastened the blouse at the waist. The sleeves were the three-quarter length. Shoulder pads gave a rather square effect to the shoulder line. The blouse features of the design are evident in the picture.

The skirt was twenty-six inches in length and came just below the knees. It was straight in the general line with four gores in the front and three gores in the back. A seven inch zipper closed the placket on the left side of the skirt. The band around the waist buttoned over the zipper at the top.

THE GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY DRESSES OF 1950

The two days of activities pertaining to the celebration of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Home Economics Division, October 20 and 21, 1950, will long be remembered by those who attended. The first day had a full schedule with: the Anniversary Tea; the Recognition of the First Unit of the new Home Economics Building; the banquet, the first ever held in the ballroom of the new Student Union Building; and the Historical Pageant which followed.⁸ Miss Talbot had a part in each of these events. She was in the receiving line at the tea; and at the recognition service she was given a tribute for her successful building of the department during her deanship. She spoke a few words in response.

One morning during the celebration she escorted the visiting Home Economics dignitaries to a coffee and a tour of the campus. She presided at the anniversary address which preceeded the concluding luncheon.

A tissue faille dress of American Beauty rose color was worn to the luncheon. This dress she found at a local shop in Stillwater, Oklahoma. It was floor length and had short sleeves. The length of the skirt and the short sleeves did not meet her need, but she liked the color of the fabric and the trim. After thinking over the situation she returned to the shop with suggestions for alteration in the designs. By shortening it to a day length dress enough material was available to make long sleeves.

The fabric provided from the skirt was set onto the short sleeves in two curved pieces, each six and one-half inches deep. The horizontal seams were given emphasis by inserting cording of self material. Wrist bands, one and one-half inches deep, finished the bottom of the somewhat full sleeves and were fastened with snaps. These two alterations made the dress satisfactory.

The lines in the waist were simple with the upper part of the sleeve

⁸ Division of Home Economics, "Fiftieth Anniversary Program," Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College, (Oct. 20-21, 1950).

cut as a part of the back and the front of the garment. Slight gathers were eased in between the two darts in the front of the waist. Four buttons and loops closed the center back placket at the neckline, while the twelve inch zipper was set in nine inches below the neck and extended down into the skirt. A five inch dart on each side of the back gave a fitted waistline.

The skirt was rather unique in design. The front was made from one piece of fabric which continued around the side back where it joined a series of four narrow gores that completed the skirt. The gores were rather narrow over the hipline and became wider toward the bottom. This provided a comfortable line over the hips and gave a flare at the bottom. A peplum, eleven inches deep stitched in at the waistline, was shaped with rounded corners and met at the waistline in the back.

The decoration consisted of long crystal and round pearl beads, applied in a scroll design to the front of the waist. The design followed the shape of the neck and was located two inches below the neckline. The front of the peplum was ornamented in a similar manner with the design applied three inches from the bottom. A self fabric belt and buckle completed the dress.

The undergarments worn with dress, and with the blue lace dress, were the conventional ones: consisting of a girdle; panties; a brassiere; and a slip.

A three strand pearl choker and pearl earrings were the jewelry used with this dress. For the luncheon a small silver fabric hat, trimmed with three velvet roses, completed her costume. An orchid corsage was worn on the left shoulder.

She is pictured here wearing this dress when she poured for the Christmas party, an annual affair given by the Household Arts Department, in honor of its seniors.



Dean Talbot was especially desirous of appearing becomingly dressed at the banquet and pageant which followed. After hours of shopping, the cloud blue imported French lace dinner dress, which is pictured with her portrait, was purchased at an exclusive shop in Tulsa, Oklahoma. The long tight sleeves were raglan type. They were cut with the waist front and back and joined by a seam from the neckline along the shoulder to the wrist. The bottom edge was finished with a rolled hem and a three inch placket fastened with snaps. A velvet bow of cloud blue gave the effect of a cuff as it fitted around the sleeve. Diamond shaped gussets which were set in under the arms allowed for comfortable movement.

The collarless neckline fitted close to the neck in the back and plunged to a V in the front. Immediately below the V, shirring was affected four and one-half inches along the center front seam to give desired fullness. At the apex of the V neck, a garment weight was suspended to the inside on a three and one-half inch crocheted cord for the purpose of keeping the shirring and the point of the neckline in place. Darts, seven inches in length, were on the French dart line in the waist front.

The center back opening terminated in a placket. From the neck for nine inches, sixteen small lace covered buttons and crocheted loops were used. Below the last button and loop, a sixteen inch zipper was set in with six inches of its length above the waistline and ten inches below the waistline.

Blue taffeta, the same shade as the lace, was used under the lace. Above the waistline the taffeta was used as a bodice, except where it was opened and stitched with the zipper seams. Peach colored nylon net, one and three-fourths inches wide, finished the top of the bodice and was used for shoulder straps. The straps were held in place with crocheted loops on the shoulder seams.

The skirt, which was floor length, fitted close over the hips and thighs. In this area the taffeta was stitched with the seams in the lace to give a smooth line. Fitting was done with two and one-half inch darts on either side at the waistline in front and six inch darts from the waist to the hips in the back. Center front and back seams as well as side seams were given some body contour. Below this fitted part, a double flounce of gathered net completed the length of the skirt. The flounces were applied in a slanting and graceful line, ascending to a peak on the left side front. The net left the floor and took an upward swing in line, comparable to the peak above, leaving the left foot and ankle of the wearer exposed. Under this first layer of the net and in the peak on the left side, pink roses of French silk and velvet were attached. Petals were scattered over the net below the roses, giving the impression of falling petals. The top of the net so veiled the flower that it appeared to be real. The belt was a bias band of cloud blue velvet, two and one-fourth inches wide. fitted the waist and was fastened at the back with snaps.

Satin pumps were dyed the exact shade of the lace. A three strand pearl chocker and pearl earrings were the jewelry worn. She wore a V-shaped corsage of sweetheart roses at the center front.

The closing scene of the historical pageant was a simple but impressive ceremony that made a lasting impression on the writer. Miss Talbot, flanked on either side by the heads of the departments in the Division of Home Economics, each carrying an arm bouquet of chrysanthemums had the title of Dean Emeritus conferred upon her by Dr. Henry G. Bennett, President of Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College. As Dr. Bennett retired to his place on the platform Mr. Fred G. Drummond, Chairman of the Board of Regents, stepped forth, removed a piece of dark blue velvet, and in so doing publicly

presented a large oil portrait of Miss Nora A. Talbot, Dean Emeritus.

In the portrait she was wearing a blue dress. The hue was almost identical with the cloud blue of the floor length lace dinner dress she had carefully chosen to wear. The spontaneous ovation of the audience was not only to a person who was completing a successful career but to a beautiful woman.



CHAPTER III

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The eleven garments used in this study were carefully selected from the extensive wardrobe of Nora Amaryllis Talbot, Dean Emeritus, of the Division of Home Economics at Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College, Stillwater, Oklahoma. Some of the major fashion changes which occurred during Miss Talbot's career have been considered. Several of the garments selected were related to some special event in her life. Still others in the group were those which she especially liked.

The two graduation dresses, which marked changes in fashion, were worn on important occasions along the chain of events that formulated her career. The white lawn dress of 1907, worn when she received the music degree from Central State Normal at Edmond, Oklahoma, was the two-piece type that reached the floor. The high collar, that was good in 1904 and forced out in 1908, was a distinctive feature of the early 1900's. The Gibson Girl shoulder effect had left its imprint to the extent that this dress had puffed sleeves with fullness ending below the elbow. The small waist and bustle back effect had been achieved for several years by wearing the straight front corset. This corset was generally conceded to have been a most uncomfortable foundation garment.

The jewelry she wore, a strand of gold beads and a small broach, was appropriate and modest.

Her dark brown hair was long and thick. She fashioned it in two psyche twists on the back of her head and left a soft swept back look in front.

White organdy, patterned in a lacy effect, was selected for the dress she wore when she was graduated from the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College in 1910. This one piece dress with the open neck and kimono sleeves

was the beginning of the chemise dress that slipped over the head and did not require a placket. The corsets, although still boned, conformed to the more natural lines of the body. The chemise dress with its straight silhouette made this corset change acceptable.

The hair was combed over a wire roll to form a puff around the head. The ends were made into a knot. Miss Talbot's thick hair appeared even thicker when it was arranged in this manner and was worthy of being called her 'crowning glory'. She was still wearing her hair in this style when she attended Columbia University in New York City, New York, during the summer of 1915.

According to Burris-Meyer the peg-top style in the skirts of dresses was introduced in 1912.¹ The black and white plaid taffeta Miss Talbot wore to summer school in 1915 was made with the peg-top style. Pockets on the hips gave the skirt pronounced width at the hip line. The lower portion of the skirt was rather slender. The waist was girded about with two belts of self material which drew the bodice close to the body at the waistline and emphasized the illusion of width in the hips.

Three dresses which have been discussed were made by Miss Talbot. She designed the dress worn for graduation in 1910. The ones worn in 1907 and 1915 were made from commercial patterns. She enjoyed sewing and did it well.

The group of three garments purchased during her trip abroad in 1926 depict the long waisted, short-skirted style worn by everyone after World War I. The Parisian dress and coat were favorites of hers. The pink lace formal evening dress was the true chemise type of the twenties. It hung free from the shoulders and reached a length just below the knees. The silhouette was straight and void of a collar and sleeves. The most outstanding part of

¹ Elizabeth Burris-Meyer, This Is Fashion, p. 116.

the ensemble was the decorative scarf of rose colored georgette crepe. With the elaborate embroidery and edge trimming of delicate feathers, the scarf augmented the plain lines of the short formal. A desirable feature of the little chemise dress was the ease with which it could be donned.

The undergarments were as simple as the clothes that covered them. A girdle was sufficient as a foundation garment and in many cases was not worn unless desired. The chemise undergarment and the drawers were combined into one garment. The brassiere assisted in giving the body a flat boyish look.

The light blue wrap around coat she purchased in Paris hung straight from the shoulders and terminated slightly below the knees. The skirt of the coat was enriched by motifs woven with white silk threads. The cut of this panel designed decoration made the coat distinctive. It was designed without a fastener.

The rose colored worsted poplin dress from London was tailored and all the seams were carefully finished on the wrong side. The severity of the line and design was softened around the face by pink georgette crepe overcollar and vestee. A belt of self material actually fastened around the low waistline but the dress hung from the shoulders as did the other chemise style dresses. The long fitted sleeves gave warmth for this winter dress.

Miss Talbot's hair was still long but she tried to make it appear short by wearing it swept back over the ears and rolled in finger buns close to the head. The colors she chose were to give emphasis to her blue eyes and clear skin rather than to accent her hair which was becoming gray around her face.

The light blue georgette crepe dress worn in 1933 to the Dean's tea and those in the group worn since that date have had one feature in common, the waistline of the garment at the normal waistline of the body. The differences of fashion have been reflected in the length of the skirt and the shape of the shoulder pads. The skirt of the tea dress was eight inches from the floor, full, and flowing. The royal blue dress purchased in New York in 1937, was straight in line, except for the long full sleeves. The skirt terminated about five inches below the knees. Cross-stitch embroidery furnished much decoration for the dress. The brassieres worn with these two dresses were a carryover from the twenties but were beginning to give a little shape to the body rather than flattening it. The girdles gave support and a firm appearance to the body.

The two-piece pink dress worn in 1947 was short in skirt, almost to the knees. It was straight in line with emphasis centered in the shoulder area. The design as well as the broad shoulder pads gave width to the shoulders. The uplift brassiere gave the body curves. The dresses worn in 1950 during the Fiftieth Anniversary programs rather straight in line. The sleeves of the cloud blue lace formal dinner dress were long and closely fitted to the arms. The shoulder pads were small. The American Beauty rose colored luncheon dress had the rounded type shoulder pads. The sleeves of this dress were long and slightly full. Beads were applied in a simple design for decoration.

Miss Talbot's trim figure made it possible to wear the styles which prevailed during her career. She chose rather smooth soft textured fabrics which had a feminine appearance. Her favorite color was blue and she posed in this hue for her portrait. Pinks, with blue tones, were her second color choice.

Jewelry was worn sparingly because she preferred the beauty of the fabric or the decoration of the fabric to be dominant. Stitchery and other applied decorations appealed to her and were used on most all of her garments.

After careful consideration of the data secured through this study

certain facts have been concluded.

Miss Talbot used artistry in her manner of dress. She not only selected clothes in mode, but clothes which had line, texture, and color that revealed her best features.

She was always well dressed because she was suitably dressed. Frequently a garment was purchased for a special occasion to insure appropriateness. Her sensitive respect and appreciation for fabrics and fashion made her the beautiful, outstandingly well groomed person whose personal appearance was a pleasure to others.

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APPENDIX

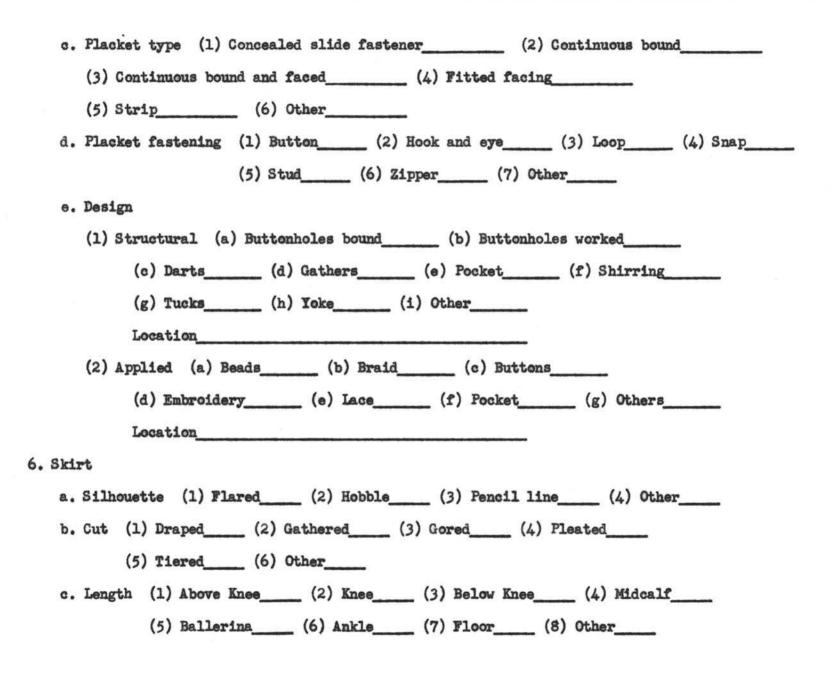
GARMENT	CHECK	SHEET
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I.	Number of Garment							
II.	Type of Garment							
	A. Dress 1. One Piece 2. Two Piece							
	B. Suit 1. Tailored							
	C. Coat 1. Full Length	2. Three-quarter	3. Shortie					
	D. Other							
III.	Occasion for Garment							
	A. Afternoon							
	B. Dinner 1. Formal	2. Informal						
	C. Evening 1. Formal	2. Informal						
	D. Lounging							
	E. Office or Street							
	F. Sport 1. Spectator	2. Participation						
	G. Travel							
	H. Other							
IV.	Facts about Garment							
	A. Date purchased							
	B. Place purchased 1. Shop	2. City	-					
	3. State	4. Country						

C. Custom made 1. Name of Seamstress 2. Address of Seamstress
3. Number yards fabric 4. Commercial pattern (yes, No)
D. Ready-to-wear 1. Size 2. Alterations made
E. Cost of garment (approximate)
V. Characteristics of the Garment
A. Fabric 1. Name 2. Color 3. Texture 4. Weave
B. Contrasting fabric 1. Name 2. Color
3. Texture 4. Weave
Construction Details
1. Collar
a. Position around neck 1. Flat 2. Rippled 3. Rolled 4. Standing
b. Silhouette 1. Bertha 2. Peter Pan 3. Sailor 4. Other
c. Decoration 1. Lace 2. Ruffles 3. Tucks 4. Other
d. Fastened to neckline 1. Attached 2. Detached 3. Convertible
2. Collarless
a. Shape 1. Boat 2. U 3. V 4. Other
b. Finish 1. Bound 2. Faced 3. Other
Explanation
3. Sleeve
a. Type 1. Dolman 2. Epaulet 3. Kimono 4. Raglan 5. Set-in

\$

b. Silhouette 1. Cowl 2. Leg-of-mutton 3. Flared 4. Other c. Length of sleeve 1. Long 2. Short 3. Three-quarter 4. Other d. Bottom Finish 1. Bound 2. Cuffs (a) Attached (b) Detached (c) Continuous bands (d) Turn back continuous (e) Placket-in band (f) Turn back open ends (g) Simulated (h) Other 3. Faced 4. Hemmed e. Decoration (1) Braid (2) Embroidery (3) Tucks (4) Other 4. Sleeveless a. Shape (1) Natural scye line (2) Strap (3) Other b. Finish (1) Bound (2) Faced (3) Hemmed (4) Other Explanation 5. Waist a. Silhouette (1) Empire____ (2) Princess (3) Other b. Placket opening (1) Location (a) Center front (b) Center back (c) Left Shoulder (d) Left side (e) None required (f) Other (2) Length (a) All way down front (b) All way down back (c) Left shoulder seam (d) Other, in inches



d. Placket opening

(1) Location (a) Center front (b) Center back (c) Left hip (d) None required (e) Other (2) Length (a) All way down front (b) All way down back (c) Left side in inches (d) Other, in inches e. Placket type (1) Concealed slide fastener (2) Continuous bound (3) Continuous bound faced (4) Fitted facing (5) Strip (6) Other_____ f. Placket fastening (1) Button (2) Hook and eye (3) Loop (4) Snap (5) Stud (6) Zipper (7) Other g. Design (1) Structural (a) Buttonholes bound (b) Buttonholes worked (c) Darts (d) Gathers (e) Pocket (f) Shirring (g) Tucks (h) Yoke (i) Other Location VI. Special undergarments required A. Foundation 1. Brassiere 2. Corset 3. Girdle Explanation B. Lingerie 1. Camisole 2. Chemise 3. Slip 4. (Other) Explanation

	C. Fabric 1. Name		2. Color 3. To		3. Tex	fexture			
		4. Weave							
VII.	Acc	essories worn wit	th garment				Date	City	Country
			<u>Material</u>	Texture	Color	Trade Name	Purchased	Purchased	Purchased
	A.	Bow		54 -					
	в.	Comb							
	c.	Fan							
	D.	Flower							
	E.	Gloves							
	F.	Handkerchief			22				
	G.	Hat							
	H.	Hose							
	I.	Jewelry							
	J.	Purse							
	K.	Scarf							
	L.	Shoes							
	M.	Umbrella							
	N.	Other							

VIII. Personal data about Miss Talbot at the time the garment was worn.

- A. Height_____.
- B. Color of hair _____.
- C. Arrangement of hair_____.
- D. Size of garment_____.
- E. Story of garment_____.

THESIS TITLE: Selected Garments From the Wardrobe of Miss Nora A. Talbot, 1907-1950.

NAME OF AUTHOR: Grace Lee Spivey

THES IS ADVISER: Miss Empo Henry

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