

A STUDY OF FASHIONS THROUGH THE 1830'S DOLL

How to Replicate the Style of the Romantic Period

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Overview of 1830's Women's Dress:

A goal of this manual is to showcase the extremities of the fashion throughout the romantic era. The 1830s were a time where fashion moved quickly into the Victorian era as we know it today. From the end of the 1820's to the very beginning of the 1830's the increase in middle class residents occurred quickly, and there was more power amongst those other than the extremely wealthy for the first time in the West. The 1830s marked a change in family life as well. The vision of Victorian life from this period as we see it represented today, comes from the ideal roles that men and women would play in the home. Strict gender norms were enforced, in that men and women were believed to have extremely opposite and important places. The goal of family life was for the woman to nurture and raise children, and oblige to domestic activities. The romantic period emphasized innocence in its dress, but the idea of innocence within childhood became extremely prevalent during this era as well. Children were to be raised as such, and according to the new ideas of childhood first introduced during this decade. Social image was linked back to fashion and family, and this emphasis in a similar manner would continue throughout the 19th century.

The 1830s represent the many cultural changes through fashionable silhouettes that defined an era. To begin, the focus of an ensemble was a lady's large gigot sleeves, and the extravagant hat upon her head. The gigot sleeve refers to a sleeve with great fullness at the armhole, (sometimes accompanied by ruffles, pleats, etc.) and shifts dramatically down the arm to fit snugly around the forearm. The bodice was also of great detail, and tapered to fit slightly

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above the natural waist. This manual will highlight the elements of 1830s fashion that are essential to the woman's silhouette, and how this can be translated into a fashion doll, using the correct fabrications, construction techniques and notions. It is important to lay out definitions as well as context for the different terms used to describe women's fashion of this period to gain an understanding of the 1830's silhouette.

The Sleeve:



"Newest Fashions for August 1831" 1831. Hand Colored etching, stipple engraving. Fashion plate published in *The World of Fashions*. National Portrait Gallery, London.

A theme of early 1830s fashion, is the general width of the silhouette. The upper half of the body was highly emphasized, while the skirts were supported by a petticoat, and a soft bustle. Hats of great detail and size were worn upon the head, and the volume continued with sleeves that extended inches off of the shoulder. As stated, the attention to detail was within the sleeve. The most commonly used term for the late 1820s and early 1830s sleeve was as a gigot sleeve, it is also referred to as a leg-o-mutton sleeve. The gigot, which became popular at the very beginning of the decade, had many variations throughout this part of the decade. The general

The idea was the incredible volume of the sleeve. For day dresses, we see gigot sleeves that use a great amount of fabric, and are draped effortlessly down until the elbow and fit comfortably around the forearm.

Another variation of this sleeve is the, à la giraffes sleeve. This sleeve would require the same amount of fullness as a plain gigot, but would be stitched or banded down to create voluminous puffs down the sleeve. In evening dresses, we see short sleeves, with incredible fullness, even as they started off of the

shoulder and went into a dramatic, sometimes angular puff. A great example of the evening wear of the early 1830's, is the fashion plate *Magasin för konst, nyheter och moder* 1831, Sweden. This depicts ladies in voluminous white cotton evening dresses, wearing elbow length silk gloves, and other elaborate features of 1830s evening dress. Another edition to these evening dress sleeves could be the addition of a silk net, or gauze oversleeve. This would be worn from the shoulder seam of evening dresses with off the shoulder necklines.

Sleeves: The Shift of 1836

In 1836, the expansive width of the previous part of the decade suddenly shrank. This shift is extremely important to acknowledge when discussing the romantic era, as in the latter part of the 1830s, in comparison to the late 1820s and early part of the decade, the two popular silhouettes seem to take on two representations of romantic fashion. 1836, was the year prior to Queen Victoria's rule. The Queen would impact this decade greatly with her tastes for understated, feminine, and modest fashions. The 1830s would internalize the Queens family values, and maternal instincts within social affairs as well as fashionable dress. 1836 in the middle of the fashion year, the once immense gigot sleeve took its volume completely from the shoulder, and fashioned the excess fabric into pleats, ruffles, and other manipulation, the rest of the volume draped down the elbow, creating a puff near the wrist until the cuff. This new silhouette is often what gives the mid 1830s the label of “drooping sentimentality”. This new silhouette would still give the sleeve immense detail, and a flattering shape fit to the wearers body. The new interpretation of a romantic woman's dress, continued to embrace femininity, domesticity, and somewhat turned away from the flamboyance of the start of the decade.

The Bodice:



The bodice of the early 1830s women dress, is proportionally as detailed and eccentric as the sleeves. The bodice brings back the focus of the dress to the upper half of the figure. The silhouette of the bodice is one that is wide, often creating a large scoop neckline, or a nechole that ends just at the shoulders to attach the sleeves. The shapes used in bodice patterns of the time have been described as an upside-down triangle. This shape was used to emphasize a silhouette that valued a trimmed, narrow waist. This silhouette, while requiring a tight laced corset, actually ended just above the natural waistline. Where the skirt was joined to the bodice, there were multiple bodice patterns with details that created intricate shapes for the waistline. The upside down triangle shape was common as it elongated the waist line, while the skirt itself began above the natural waist. Throughout the decade,

“Morning Dress”, 1835, Hand coloured etching. Fashion plate published in “Ladies Cabinet of Fashion, Music and Romance”. National

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another common trait of waistlines is the addition of a belt, made from solid, patterned or matching silk, cotton as the shell of the dress, to emphasize the waist. These belts were extremely well fitted to the body, and range in width. The most notable feature of belts being worn was the buckle. They ranged from highly decorated geometric shapes, solid silver, gold or bronze, or in narrow rectangles carved with floral details. This created a unique accessory, crucial to the defining silhouette of this era.

The intricacies of bodices are important to understanding the construction of an 1830s dress, and putting them in their proper context. The day dresses throughout this period have consistent detailed construction, and a lot of care and hand work that goes into manipulating the fabrics. Very commonly, we see pleats on the center of the bodice, which radiate from the center front of the bodice. One of the more popular techniques was known as, *à la Sevigne*. This technique is a general name, describing the process of applying pleats in different ways to an 1830s bodice. The process would require bonding in the front of the bodice to further stabilize its shape. This would not be visible, as the highly detailed pleats, would still create that soft and dainty look to a garment. This boned bodice would be divided by many folds to create the detail. A construction detail that was commonly used to reinforce a garment and give it more stability was the use of cording. Cording on a bodice's detail sometimes had a more decorative use. Through the early 1830s, the use of pleated detail accompanied with trims and embroidery were common in day dress, as well as evening wear. The detail made from the self fabric could be gathered, crossed over two pattern pieces. These gathers, when looking at the interior of a bodice were very neatly placed, and evenly distributed throughout the fullness of a bodice. There are innumerable variations of pleats and gathers. But a common feature is the accentuation of the breast as well as elegating the waist.

The details that would accompany these construction details can be brought to life with the finely crafted lace from this period. Trimmings were much more common within the evening dress of the early 1830s. We see a great number of floral details, in the form of actual flowers, ribbon roses, and silk flowers. Commonly across the sleeve, merging into the bodice this detail was used. Another common detail was contrasting fabric in terms of color, but of the same fabrication. This was a detail commonly used in the pleats of evening dresses. White cotton dresses, could also be trimmed with ribbon of a vibrant color high on the bodice, usually above the *à la Sevigne* detail.

Accessories worn on the upper half of the body are another essential part of the decade, especially in the first half. In addition to undergarments that may be included in a day dress such as a Chemisette, there were other decorative additions. An accessory that added a great romantic

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flair, while also widening the silhouette was the pelerine. This piece was usually made of a light cotton, and white in color. They would extend from the middle of the neck to form a collar, and go over the wide sleeves. Perelines would have very dainty, beautiful details. Eyelets that made the shape of flowers, small scallops, and additions of thin lace were seen in these pieces. Ruffles around the neck, and sleeves created more volume, and added another heir of femininity to the woman's ensemble.

The Skirt:

The focus of the 1830s silhouette was on the upper half of the body, with sleeves that span the width of the lower half. This silhouette was completed by the skirt. The early 1830s saw the skirt expand from the 1820's smaller, flowing skirt silhouette that slowly moved away from the narrow skirt of the Regency. The start of the 1830s would begin with the previously slim skirts having panels added to widen the hem, and this would only increase as the decade progressed. The skirt would be placed above, or just slightly above the ladies natural waist line. And the hem would fall just above the The fullness of a skirt would be emphasized with neat, small pleats securely sewn into the waist tape. The waist climbed further up as the decade progressed due to a greater number of petticoats that were worn in order to increase the width of the skirt. Corded Petticoats were the staples to a soft belle shape that defines the romantic era. 3 petticoats at least, but up to 5 may be worn under each dress of the 1830. Ruffled petticoats of light cotton would go over the structured cotton corded petticoat. This number, and the fabrications used fluctuated with the seasons. To finish the skirts undergarments, a soft, padded bustle would be tied around the waist.



“French Dinner or Evening Dress”, 1836.
Hand colored etching, line and stipple
engraving. Fashion plate published in Le
Folliet , Courrier des Salons, Journal Des
Modes. National Portrait Gallery, London.

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The details included on the skirt of the 1830s would be made by manipulating the fabric with additional draping, ruffles, and additions of trims, silks, and contrasting cottons. For the most part, the textiles on the skirt of a dress would be consistent with the dress's bodice. There are enumerable additions that could be made to a romantic era skirt. When looking at this period, but especially garments such as the skirt, realizing that the garment were hand stitched, gives a special charm to the dainty, and extremely intricate details throughout the dress. The most eccentric and flamboyant of the details were associated with evening dresses, but day dresses can be seen with subtle but complex fabric manipulation. The dresses largest width, would often be emphasized by border details. The fabric could be pressed into folds, and sewn into eyelets of small florets. But the addition of ruffles made of the self fabric, contrasting lace or cotton was extremely prevalent. Ruffles attached with cording travelling up the skirt in multiple layers, or staying at the border can be seen. The addition of a ruffle trim that may only be added to a partial section of the skirt was ended beautifully with a wide silk ribbon. The skirts patterns were enumerable, while still maintaining the belle shape. But within the evening dress, it was common for a dress to have a large triangle cut out of the front, showing usually white cotton ruffles underneath, or a white decorative corded skirt. The edges of this cut of skirt would be finished with contrasting lace or silk ribbon. These are only a generalization of the bounty of handworked details into the 1830s evening and day dresses. The details throughout a dress did not end at the bodice, but were cohesive throughout.

Undergarments:

In order to achieve the signature shape of the 1830s, and all of its extremes, the proper undergarments were necessary. To support the circumference of the ladies dress, proper supports were needed under the undergarments. As a corset was worn, a chemise was needed, to protect the skin from the boning, and rigid fabrics of the undergarments. These garments would be known as the chemise or a shift. The garment had minimal construction as well as minimal shape. The bodice was essentially a rectangle. With rectangular cap sleeves, and a low, rectangular neckline. In previous decades, this may have included a ruffled yolk, but the more geometric rectangular shape this garment was constructed out of, gave a more flattened and clean look to the rest of the garment. The neckline would have a top stitched rectangle the width of the top of the breast. Variations of this shape were common, as evening dresses had far lower necklines than those of the day dresses. Ladies would usually own numerous chemises. As the chemise and other undergarments served the practical use of being the garments to catch sweat, dirt and other bodily functions from the outer dress, they must be easily washable, as well as more than 1 in number to be able to rotate. Usually this garment was constructed out of light linens, and less commonly, variations of cotton, such as pima broadcloth, to again serve the

purpose of comfort and being easily washable. This fabrication also allowed for a range of movement in the chemise. Square gussets would be installed under the arm to allow for free movement, and to catch additional sweat. The addition of a gusset and its size would depend on the wearer, as well as the cut of the dress.

The undergarment we know today as bloomers, would then be called drawers, is not entirely certain that all ladies wore this undergarment below their petticoats. But as some wealthy ladies, such as English Royalty, were known to wear drawers for the reasons of modesty. The term trousers was also used in the context of pants like undergarments when worn by women or young ladies. Young women who wore drawers, wore ankle length loose fitting pants, ruffled at the ankle, and finished with large decorative ruffles. These would be seen below the hem of the skirt. The drawers we saw worn by women were about knee length, and two pants legs, not joined together, but only sewn to a waistband that was meant to be tied. Split drawers were the most common variation, as they would allow for modesty, and comfort. Most commonly, they were made of a white linen, and the same weave as the chemise.

Over these two protective garments that would hug the body, the corset was worn. The 1830s corset adhered to the dress shape of the time, emphasise of the waist, and breast, shaped to fit the low necklines. In order to create these shapes, a strong fabric, of twill or tight weave was used, in multiple layers to provide strength for the boning that would be held within. The boning would either be whale boning or reed boning for added strength. Later in the century, steel boning would be used. The boning would be placed in various eras that created the essential shape. Boning would often be placed as the busk, which refers to the seam in the center front that went all the way up the garment and between the breasts, to emphasize the chest and stiffening the corsets shape. Throughout the corset, boning was strategically placed in geometric patterns along the waist to allow the body to form the subtle “hourglass” shape of this period. The placement of these channels would also be used to provide comfort for the wearer, based on body shape. A “belly curve” would mean that the busk would have a slight curve around the stomach so as to properly shape the body. In certain cases, the cording so common amongst 1830s garments was also tightly sewn in channels to provide support. The goal of the corset was to push up, and give more volume to the upper half of the body. The breast support would be in the form of two cups, halfway covering the chest, most often reinforced with additional rows of cording closely stitched together, this part of the corset would have much more softness to add volume. The corset would be the longest of the corsets introduced previously, as it extended into the hips, giving the torso further consistent shape. Going back to the construction of the corset, the 1830s were revolutionary in way of lacing. Previous decades are examples of corsets that required a second hand of a servant, or ladies maid to properly lace the garment. 1830s corsets

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however, introduced fan lacing. More than a dozen pairs of grommet holes at the back of the garment would share once lace, and intertwine to cross the opposite side of the center back, and eventually join in one piece of cotton tape. The two pieces of cotton tape would have ties that allowed the lady to easily pull the garment over her head, and be fully laced.

The shape of the 1830s skirt was defined by a bell shape, with volume around the skirt, but especially at the back. This is where the multiple petticoats are necessary. The petticoats needed to provide the proper shape were most reliant on the corded petticoat. This garment would be constructed of a stable cotton twill, or broadcloth, and sometimes a textile woven with horsehair. The fabric though, no matter its weave would be starched as a finishing, and give the fabric the body it needs to support the many others over top of it. The cording would be sewn in many patterns of parallel lines, and with different spaces between the rows as they were sewn further up the skirt. On average, petticoats could contain up to 60 lines of cotton cording. The petticoats that were worn atop the corded petticoat, were made of a stable cotton, or linen, again starched. These petticoats followed much simpler less intricate designs that would hold their shape, but not create a great amount of bulk. The initial soft petticoat may be plain one, with a deep hem to hold its shape, and others come in variations of tucks in the fabric near the lower 1/3rd of the skirt. As these skirts could be underneath skirts 6-7 times the waist girth of the lady, the volumes of the petticoats were in matching fullness. As the decade progresses, and the fashions move further from the slim regency silhouette, more petticoats are added to create even softer shapes.

One of the most interesting, and uniquely early 1830's undergarments are the sleeve supports. These supports, also known as sleeve plumpers, or poufs, were the essential element for a proper gigot sleeve. The supports were essentially the shape of a large puff sleeve, gathered onto an armband, and stuffed with rags, cotton, or feathers to fill the entire enclosed pouf. The most common variation of the supports were soft gathered circular supports sewn to a fitted armband, only supported with the stuffing inside. The plumpers were not worn initially with the other undergarments, the ties on the plumpers were placed in the armhole. The ties created would be made by one being placed in the gathered seam, and one being placed on the armband. The ties would be tied to the shoulder, and the elbow of the sleeve. This would allow for the supports to suspend in place comfortably within the garment.

Introduction to the 1830s Doll:

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The dolls of the 19th century can be viewed as unique artifacts of fashion history, and an essential part of middle to upper class girlhood. Dolls of the 1830's represent the ideal dress and demeanor of the Romantic woman. Dolls of this period have individual differences that tell a handmade history of clothes, artisan painted and sculpted faces, made by mothers, children, and professional dollmakers.



**“Doll in Fashionable Dress” 1830,
Victorian And Albert Museum, Textile
and Fashion Collection, London.**

17 inches tall, wooden body with pierced ears, gessoed and painted, carved hair, and painted details. Wearing a gold silk dress with gigot sleeves, ankle length skirt, three petticoats of flannel, cotton, and wool. Carved; Germany, dressed; England.

Each doll and her fashions become unique, as the skill among the dresses made varies greatly. While showing the general themes of fashions, the detail in which they were constructed, as well as the accuracy or proportions on the dress fluctuate from one doll to the next. Looking at archives of dolls that survive from the 1830s, show the personalities and unique quirks from a doll to the next. Although, with more skilled doll makers, and sewers, the fashions could appear with great accuracy, and changed with the seasons of the fashions. Dolls of the early 30's and late 20's are pictured with the basic silhouette, immense sleeves, full skirt, and bodice with tiny placed pleats. And this silhouette of the early thirties, transitioned with queen Victoria's Reign as the real world did. Gigot Sleeves in dolls were also made into tiny pleats, corded in place, moving the volume down below the elbow.

The undergarments worn beneath dolls represented what was standard of the time, but like the clothing, often lacked the functionality of real undergarments.

Undergarments were simplified as they only had to support a small width of fabric, in comparison to those worn by that of a woman. Dolls figures were already shaped to a corseted figure, and the greater part of the time, their bodies had no boning within them. The

corded seams would be used instead to give the bodice its structure. The petticoats of a doll were subtracted to only a corded petticoat, or multiple woolen, cotton or linen petticoats. And sleeve supports were not necessary most of the time, and the sleeve would instead be reinforced with its own cording. The exterior of an 1830s doll, especially of the latter period shows great detail in

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fabric manipulation, and fine finishings on the inside that resemble real world garments for ladies.

1830's Dolls and Values:

A dolls purpose is not an easily answered question, but a distinction of dolls historically is that they were not meant as art. But instead, dolls were used as vessels for domestic teachings of the day. Understanding the changes within the political climate of the 1830s links to the use of dolls. The 1830s marked the start of the Victorian era as we know it, and its complexities. New ideas were rapidly being introduced, and new social standards became commonplace and expected. The middle class womans role of this time is linked to the new American concept of, of "Republican motherhood". This ideal focuses on the mothers role and the family dynamic as a whole. A childbearing woman would be expected to put great energy into nurturing children, domestic activities, and general family focus. Beginning its roots in the early 19th century this ideal is cemented in art. The young girls in a great number of pieces are pictured seated around the home, quiet and disciplined, older teenage girls, pictured learning to sew from their mother, and father sitting quietly, or entertaining the children.

The dolls' role as a domestic teacher is founded on these new ideas of domesticity, and what middle to upper class girls were expected to become as wives and mothers. Looking at the accessories accompanying dolls, we can see the lessons that were taught. One example is the inclusion of a trousseau. A trousseau is defined as a collection of heirloom linens, passed down through a family to a bride. These linens made for dolls include numerable garments, accessories, and furnishings for a dollhouse. These were extremely finely made items, bonnets of fine liene, and silk, accompanied with functioning floral sewing cases. This is a symbol of the eventual role of the wife, and reinstates who the dolls represent.

Construction of the 1837 Day Dress:

Part I: Corded Petticoat

The corded petticoat is an essential component of 1830's undergarments, as it stayed throughout the decade to support increasing widths of skirts, and lowering hemlines. Within dolls, this same importance is applied, as a petticoat will allow for proper measurements to create the desired full silhouette on the scale of a doll.

In this manual, I will demonstrate with non-period accurate techniques for the petticoat for efficiency, and stability in the final garment, in my use of a commercial sewing machine. The rows of cording would be sewn into channels by hand using a small running stitch. Although, I

will demonstrate period accurate use of materials, and notions.

The corded petticoat is an example of fine and detailed undergarments of the period, and how the use of materials can create a finished garment that is dainty to look at, as well as structurally sound. After looking at period examples of women's corded petticoats, I have based this version on museum descriptions of their interiors, and materials used. riptions of their interiors, and materials used.



"Petticoat", 1830's, cotton, horsehair cording, MET, Costume Institute, New York City.

Petticoat: Fabrics (Fat Quarter)

Cotton broadcloth, cotton twill, linen, cotton shirting.

Notions:

Thread to match self

2.5 yards 2mm. cotton cording

Marking tool

Zipper Foot (for sewing in channels)

Creating the Petticoat:

1. CUT AND MARK CORDING CHANNELS.



Fig 1.1. The petticoat panel made from waist and length measurements with initial cord sewn in, and channel markings made.

This petticoat follows the notion that 1830's dolls skirts did not require a great amount of structure, or tailoring. Measure from the smallest point of the doll's waist on the back, down to the floor. This is the length. Multiply this by two as the cording channels are created by the two sides of the panel sandwiched together. Depending on the bulk of the fabric, the petticoat is generally 6 times the waist girth. As my fabrication is a cotton twill, the waist

measurement is 4 times my dolls waist. Cut a rectangle made from these two measurements on the straight grain of the fabric.

Press the panel in half. To prevent the fabric from moving as you sew, pin only the top edge of the panel, where the waistband will be sewn. Then, place the cording into the bottom fold of the fabric. Place zipper foot against the side opposite the bottom fold of the panel, and sew with a 3mm stitch along the cording, backstitch. This will create the initial panel, and an accurate measurement for the markings. To make the markings, measure the width of the first cording channel, and then make a marking of $\frac{1}{4}$ of an inch above the first channel. Make a second line the width of the first channel. Continue up the skirt until 3-4 inches at the top remain.

2. CONTINUE CORDING CHANNELS



Fig. 1.2: Sewing in seam alongside second cording channel, with 3mm straight stitch.



Fig. 1.3: First two initial lines of cording done, third channel seam sewn in.

Continue on the second marking made with a straight stitch of the same width. Then, with the zipper foot push the cording towards that seam as you sew, and stitch right alongside the seam. Then, use the marking to sew the seam for the next cording channel. At the end of each channel, finish with a backstitch over 3-5 times, to stitch cording in place.

Continue to use markings and the zipper foot to stitch cording in place. Stop sewing following the

markings, once the cording is 3-5 inches from the top of the skirt.



Fig. 1.4: cording is sewn up all channels using same technique and length of stitches, stops 3-5 inches from the top of the panel.

3. FINISHING CENTER BACK SEAM.

Once each cording channel is finished with a back stitch, it is time to join the two sides together.

First, press all of the cording in place. This will allow the cording to become more sturdy in its place, and makes sure that the top edges will be matched up properly once sewn.

After the edges are pressed, the extra three inches on top will be pressed to create room to fit on the waist of the doll, and allow for a drawstring. To create this slit, first use a 2mm zig-zag stitch on the top edges of the center back seam, this will use less fabric, and ensure that there will be no fraying when the skirt is worn. Then, mark $\frac{1}{2}$ inch from the edge, and turn the center back edges to the marking and press. Then use a 2mm straight stitch to finish the slit.



Fig 1.5.: Center back slit finished, with a 2mm zig zag stitch, pressed and turned over a $\frac{1}{2}$ inch hem.



Fig 1.6. Center back finished with $\frac{1}{2}$ inch, straight stitched seam, pressed.

Then, to finish the rest of the center back stitch, zig zag again down each center back edge, over the back stitching of each channel. While in other garments, this kind of construction would create unwanted bulk in the seam, it gives the petticoat its proper structure. This kind of seam also acts as an alternative to the period method of

starching the petticoat to give it body. On the scale of a doll, this gives the petticoat enough reinforcement. After zig zagging the stitch, stitch with a 2mm straight stitch down the corded center back, joining both edges, back stitch. Remove threads from the seam, press.

4. GATHERING PETTICOAT AND ATTACHING WAISTBAND.



Fig 1.7. Doll placed next to flat petticoat. Line is marked where the waist of the doll hits the petticoat, to create guide for basting stitches.

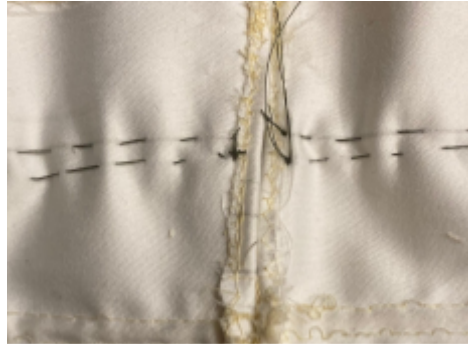


Fig 1.8. Two rows of basting stitches made with sturdy waxed thread, prior to being gathered.

In order to ensure that the cording provides enough body. Most petticoat's cording ends at the wearer's hip bone. As the cording can make the panel shrink as the cording is added in, an inch may be added as seam allowance. At the step of gathering the petticoat, align the flat panel with the doll, draw a line where the waistline hits the skirt along the top portion of the petticoat. This will be the line where two

rows of basting stitches will be sewn to gather the skirt. Use a sturdy or waxed thread, and hand stitch two lines of basting. Before gathering the basting to the waist measurement, cut the seam allowance above to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch above the top stitch. Gather the stitches to the waist measurement of the doll, plus $\frac{1}{4}$ inch ease on each side. To hold the Gathering stitches in place, pull excess thread from both basting stitches, cut knot at end, use the two threads to tie a knot tightly. Machine sew down the gathers on top of the lowest basting stitch using a 2mm straight stitch. Back stitch. Then, cut and pull out both basting stitches, careful to avoid machine stitches.

The waist band at its finished width will be $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch. To cut the waistband, use the doll's waist measurement plus a half an inch for finishing



Fig 1.9. Machine sewing with 2mm straight stitch over bottom basting stitch, once $\frac{1}{2}$ seam allowance is cut.



Fig 1.9. 2 in. waist band, with 1.4 in pressed edges, before smallest edges are pressed to 1.8th of an inch.

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edges, and 2 inches wide cut on the straight grain. Then press each length to a 1/4 inch seam, before sewing, press in the shortest edges in 1/8 of an inch in.

Fold waistband in half lengthwise, and press.

To begin attaching the waistband to the unfinished gathered edge, open the waistband fold, and match up the pressed edge of the waistband edge with the machine sewn gathered skirt edge. Hand whip stitch the interior of the skirt only, careful to only attach one edge of the waistband. Because pinning the bulk of the skirt would risk losing the volume of the petticoat, basting the inside first holds the gathers in place. Then, press the waistband over again, and machine sew with a 2mm straight stitch 1/4 from the outside folded edge of the waistband.



Fig 1.10. Pressed waistband, with gathered skirt edge placed to matchup with folded edge, and hand-basted on the interior only.



Fig 1.11. Finished exterior of waistband, finished with 2mm machine straight stitch.

5. ADDING DRAWSTRING TO PETTICOAT.

After the waistband is placed, and gathers are securely within the waistband, the drawstring can be added. The drawstrings within 1830s petticoats are most commonly the sturdy cotton cording used within its channels. On the scale of a doll, a drawstring can ensure proper fit, and security in the garment staying as more layers are added on top.

The drawstring is simply added using a safety pin, take the cording from the roll without trimming it, and place a safety pin 1/2 inch away from the edge. Feed the cording in the waistband. To ensure fit, place a petticoat on the doll with the drawstring still uncut, and tie tightly to the small of the waist. Trim cording with 3 inches on each end to tie neatly.



Fig 1.13. Drawstring added to waistband after being fed through with an attached safety pin.

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Fig 1.14. Doll wearing petticoat, attached with drawstring waistband.

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“Ladies Cotton Dress”, 1837, Cotton, Wenham Museum, Wenham MA.

Instructions-1837 Ladies Day dress:

The instructions provided in the rest of this manual will be based on the construction of a surviving doll's dress from the later part of the 1830's. This dress is quintessential 1830s ladies wear, and properly to scale for a dolls body. The bodice includes the characteristic chest pleats that were a commonality throughout the decade. But as details became more simplified, and fiber to the body, the pleats, and fabric manipulation with detailed construction could be seen in the greater part of dresses. The plainness of this dress also allows for creative freedom, if you would like to add more ruffles, increase or decrease the scale of details, or add trims, the dress may suggest the early 1830s. The factor that most distinguishes this dress as a result of the mid 1830's, is the more modest, and less voluminous sleeve after the gigot sleeve was out of fashion. This dress includes voluminous flounces, fixed with cording. This was a look that would be common of dresses altered from the gigot sleeve, now pleated to fit the arm, and ruffles added at the forearm or elbow. While having great detail in the construction of this dress, the added details still appear quite modest and simple.

The skirt is joined to the bodice with a waistline that rises above the petticoats worn underneath. This waistline rose back up through the decade, as more voluminous petticoats would be worn. The skirt itself though, does not have detail or nearly as much structure as the bodice, it simply adds volume with tight and neatly placed gathers.

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Construction of 1830s Garments:

As this dress adheres to the use of an accurate pattern, historical construction is taken into account. The techniques used to construct the original dress below align with the detailed making of ladies 1830's garments. The sewing style of the 1830s implemented two stitches most often, the running stitch, and the blind stitch or "hem stitch". These stitches were not all that held the garment together, cording and the use of bias tape made it so that each seam was layered with other stitches numerous times before the garment could be complete. These stitches, especially in the scale of a doll were miniscule, intended to be invisible from the outside, allowing the details to be crisp.

While the construction required time and skill to hem the wide skirts, and secure the flounces, the outward appearance of dresses from the mid 1830s to 1840s was plain. The fabrications used may have included colors, elaborate florals and fine materials, but the details made adhered to the piety expected at the time. The shift of the mid 1830s did not change the high expectations for quality, but instead allowed the more simplified details to show the feminine shapes and polished look.

Materials:

The materials that are able to be used in a dress of this time adhere to the ones acceptable for ladies. The quality and finery was greatly valued in textiles during this time. Doll clothes have survived so well, as well as actual garments from this time due to the natural fibers used in all elements of construction. The body of these fabrics were fine, and delicate but had body, even if blended with other fibers. Most common in day dresses, satins were used, especially thin satins, taffeta was used for its crispness. A great amount of cotton in many variations was found, such as baste or pima cotton. Fine wools and linens were common amongst many underclothes, but in dresses as well. For this project, a variation of these fabrics that have softness, light body, but are a tight enough weave to withstand manipulation, should be chosen for the exterior, and the lining.

The prints seen on ladies wear are intricate, and involve colors that are slightly muted, and not entirely bright. Color though, was still used very often, as seen in fashion plates of the time. When selecting a fabric, a small calico, check, plaid or stripe to scale the doll is preferred. Plaids in dress were especially common during Queen Victoria's Reign due to her love of the Scottish countryside.



Day dress, pattern circa 1837, of contemporary lightweight cotton calico. Note: a ruff fills the neckline

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The materials used within the seams of the dress are of great importance to techniques used during the 1830s. Almost all seams of a doll's bodice of this time require narrow and sturdy cotton cording. Although ladies dresses often had bodices with a busk down the middle, no surviving dolls today show evidence of boning used in bodice construction. Instead, cording was relied on. The cotton cording used should be a narrow 2mm cording. It should be an off-white or ecru white to blend in with more sheer fabrics and seams. The cording available on the market today is not exactly the same as period material, but if the fibers in the cording chosen are correct, the look will be the same. As the cording should not be seen outwardly, its characteristics are important in creating the proper silhouette. A 100% cotton macrame cording is sturdy and flexible, pearl cotton cording as well has a softer finish. A cording with a waxed finish should be avoided, so that the seams are able to be pressed.

The cording within seams of the 1830's represent the reliance on the material, before cord stopped being used for construction purposes in 1850. Cording can be seen as a decorative trim within contemporary garments, and throughout the rest of the 19th century. The reason cording is essential to the 1830s is it allowed for garments to last. The initial running stitch to join a garment's self to its lining would not survive to be worn multiple times, but cording ensured the sturdiness of armholes, waistlines, and fine detail.

Dress: Fabrics (Self: ½ Yard, 45 in. Wide, Lining 1/4 Quarter):

- Cotton Broadcloth,
- Pima cotton,
- Batiste,
- Crisp-light shirting in solids, calico, check, small florals or stripe,
- Thin satins; e. Taffeta

Notions:

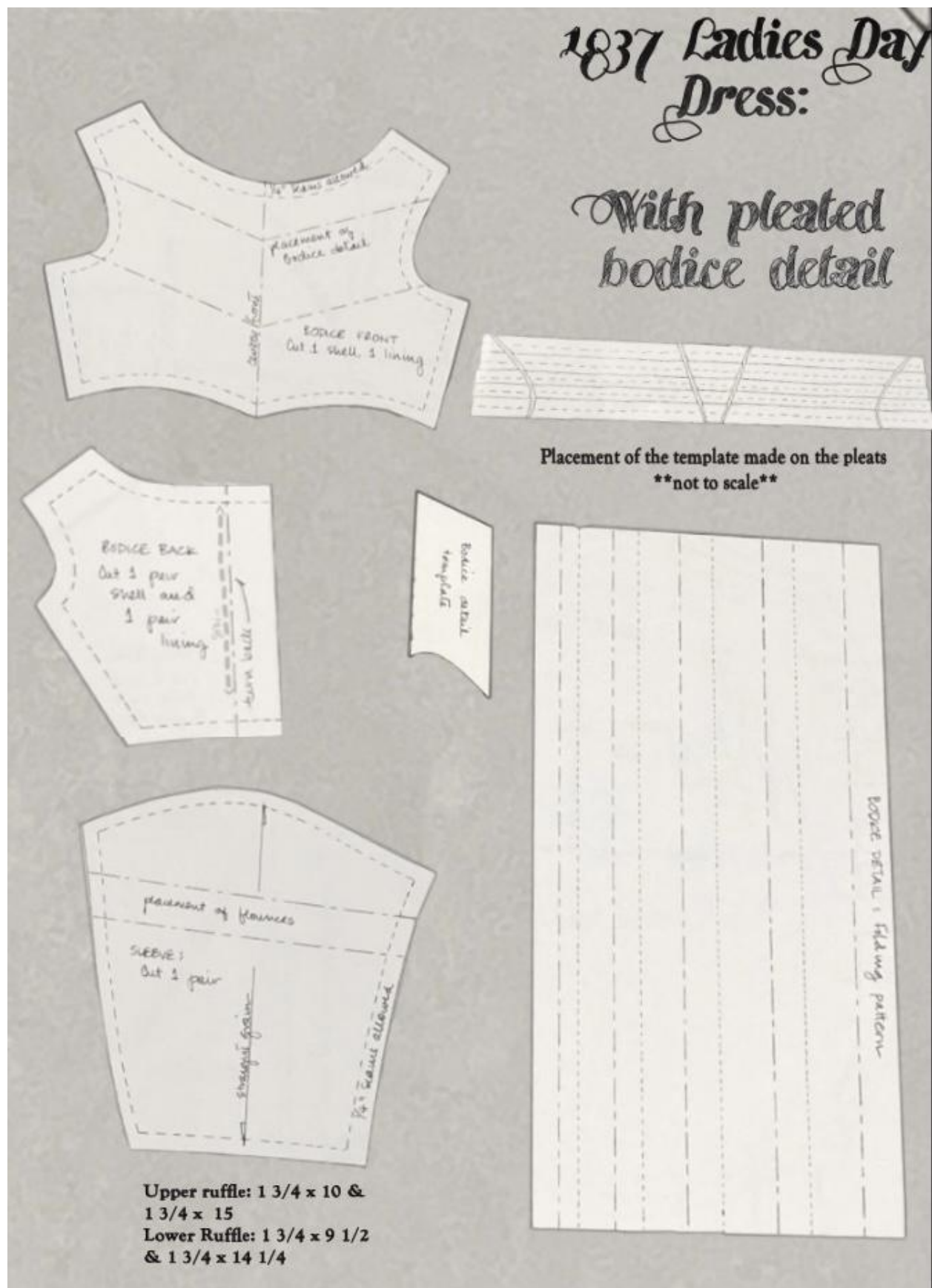
Thread to match self fabric
2 yards cording (pearl cotton, 100% cotton, carpet warp)
4 hooks and eyes
Cotton interfacing, iron on (to interface skirt)
Pre-made waist tape OR Thin, lightweight cotton for folding into waist tape

SEE PATTERN FOR 1837 DAY DRESS ON FOLLOWING PAGE

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Part II: Skirt

The skirt of the 1837 day dress, will act as a starting point for the rest of the garment. The skirts of dolls differ from the ones worn by ladies of the day, as they mimicked their volume, but not as much their shape. Dolls skirts from this time essentially had no real shape, and were made from a panel of cotton or silk self. Skirts of this time were almost all unlined, and just supported by the skirts underneath. The reason for not shaping the skirts is to allow the appearance on a small scale to still be light, and flowy, just as real ladies wished their ensembles to appear.



Fig 2.1. Skirt panel with raw seam, after center back is finished with a running stitch, and turned in twice so that the placket is clean.

1. MEASURE, CUT AND SEAM SKIRT PANEL.

To begin, make sure that your doll is wearing all undergarments desired, this will give you the proper measurements for the skirt. Measure from the back starting at the waist of the petticoat, down and over it to the floor. Depending on the scale of the doll, add 1" to 1.5" inch seam allowance at the top, this will allow enough room for gathering the skirt. Add 1" to 2" inch seam allowance at the bottom for hemming. (I did 2 inches of seam allowance in total, for my 10 inch doll.)

For the waist measurement, we will follow approximately how Victorian dress makers approached waist measurements. Often, the materials used to construct the dress would be expensive, and while the wearer would want to appear exuberant and wealthy, multiple steps were taken to lessen the cost when dressmaking. Fabrics were much less wide than the ones today, being about 28" inches wide. Seams were often not finished, and a false hem was used. With modern fabrics, 45" wide, a single width would cover this measurement. There is only one seam in

dolls skirts, the center back seam.

Cut a panel by the waist measurement times 6-7, and length plus added seam allowance, this panel is cut on the straight grain. Depending on the sheerness of your fabric, add an iron on or woven interfacing before stitching. (I added an iron on interfacing as my fabric is cotton batiste, with a thin weave.)

To stitch the center back seam, mark the lower $\frac{1}{3}$ of the skirt, this will be the opening. Take a deep seam, about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch from the edge, using a small running stitch to $\frac{1}{3}$ marking, and press open. If you have cut the panel so that you are left with selvage, this step is complete. If you are left with a raw seam, turn it in once at the top, press, and turn it under so that the plate is clean.

2. HEM SKIRT.

At this step, depending on your fabrication you can decide whether to approach hemming with the conventional method, or use a false hem. False hems were used to conserve costly fabric, or to reinforce a more delicate textile. False hems are seen on many 1830's garments as the widths were much narrower, and more costly. Using a false hem could allow to make a full skirt out of a small width. To make a false hem, cut a strip of sturdy cotton, that will allow for it not be seen from the self fabric. Cut a strip about 2" wide, and the length of your skirts waist. Turn strip to an inch, stitch strip to the center back seam of the skirt, and use the turned edge to blind stitch the strip to the raw edge of the skirt. Turn the other edge to the inside of the hem.

I chose my skirt conventionally, turning in the edge $\frac{1}{2}$ an inch, and over once again so that the hem is clean. Close this edge with a small hemming stitch, blind stitch or running stitch. The blind stitch is opposite to the hemming stitch in that it picks up a small amount of the folded edge of the fabric, and the needle continues to the fabric underneath. (Fig 2.2) Continue this throughout the rest of the hem of the skirt.



Fig 2.2. Interior of a skirt with finished conventional hem, sewn with a blind stitch.



Fig 2.3. Finished exterior of skirt, with top $\frac{1}{3}$ of center back pressed, but not closed, bottom hem finished with blind hem.

3. GATHERING SKIRT AND SETTING WAIST TAPE.



Fig 2.4. Top edge of skirt, folded over $\frac{1}{4}$ ", with a small basting stitch throughout to create gathers.



Fig 2.5. Small stitches taken through each gather individually. This is done by taking a small stitch through the top of each pleat and going through the bottom folded edge.

Gather skirt by pressing over the top edge by $\frac{1}{4}$ ". Then, send a small basting stitch throughout the edge. Cut a piece of pre-made waist tape, or thin lightweight cotton handmade waist tape to the doll's waist measurement, plus 1". Tuck in each short end of the tape by $\frac{1}{2}$ ". Victorian dress makers are extremely full at the waist, with even volume around the skirt. In order to neatly arrange the gathers, draw the skirt up to the waist measurement, and arrange the gathers into neatly placed pleats, all approximately the same size throughout the skirt. Once the gathers are placed, working from the right side of the skirt, take each pleat individually, and stitch through the top, and through the bottom edge. Make sure the stitches are close, small and sturdy enough to hold in place.

____ To attach the gathers to the waist tape, pin the waist tape to the skirt in fourths. To stitch, go through the top of each pleat, just as was done to hold the gathers in place. Then, pick up a few threads of the lower fold of the waist tape and travel through a small bit of the fold of the waist tape, then the needle travels to the other side of the fold on the gather. Continue this process until the waist tape is fully attached to the skirt.



Fig 2.6. The skirt, after gathers are stitched in place and waist tape is pinned into fourths, before being stitched to the skirt.

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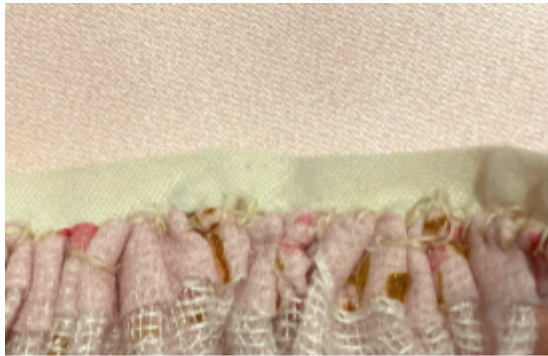


Fig 2.7. Skirt after being stitched to waist tape. The skirt is stitched by the needle travelling through one fold of a gather, through the waist tape, and to the other fold.



Fig 2.8. The finished skirt, with waist tape attached, center-back seam finished, and hem stitched.



"Dinner and Evening Dresses, 1839", 1839. Hand-colored etching and line stipple engraving. Published in the Court Magazine and Monthly Critic. National Portrait Gallery, London.

Part III: Bodice

The bodice of this dress utilizes some techniques characteristic of the late 1830s, and early 1840s that makes it instantly recognizable to that era. The chosen silhouette for this bodice allows the entire dress to fit in the flattering "half high style". The pattern is cut so that the bodice ends just above the natural waist. And the point at the center front is important to define as you sew, and eventually attach the bodice to the skirt. Depending on the proportions of the chosen doll, the dress may not fit exactly above the waist, it is likely that it will sit more like a low empire waist, if the doll's torso is smaller.

The bodice is the part of the garment that uses the most reinforcement, by use of cording. Cording is used to allow the garment to have structural integrity, and to make the most use

out of the delicate fabrics of the period. Cording is used in garments, armholes, neckholes, closures and waist bands, as well as some decorative aspects. For this reason, *before beginning*, cut 2 yards worth of bias strips out of the self fabric, or another fabrication similar to the one used for the exterior of the dress about 1" wide. This is about how much cording will be required to finish all of the seams within the bodice. Not all of the cording is assembled in the same fashion, so simply cut the strips and have them available as you sew.

1. **ASSEMBLE AND BASTE BODICE PLEATS.**

This step will create the bodice detail of the garment, which is simply pleats, cut on the placement template which can be found in the 1837 Ladies Day dress Pattern. The pattern piece shown for this bodice is a general estimate, with pleat guides based on the dress worn in the 1837, Ladies Cotton Dress on an 18" doll. As my doll is 10", I decreased the size of the pattern by 50% when scanning the pattern. To have the pleats to the same scale though, I simply cut the pleat folding pattern in half, giving myself 3 pleats to make in this step. I would recommend using your dolls bust measurement, and seeing how many pleats you are able to fit, and cutting the pattern accordingly.



Fig 3.1 Cutting the adjusted pleat detail on the straight grain with a fold.

To cut the pleat detail, if you have a solid fabric, or a non-geometric print, simply cut the panel on the straight grain, with a fold as the pleats will need to have fabric folded under, while being pressed to pleat. *If you have a pattern such as a small check or stripe, you may want to cut the detail on the bias grain, as it will make two halves that extend from the center evenly. Follow the guide of the adjusted panel, and begin by pressing the pleats will non pleated sides at each end to fold under once the pleats are pressed.

Pin pleats in place, and put a basting stitch carefully through the layer underneath and above each pleat. Use the pleating template accordingly to sketch out where the detail is cut.



Fig 3.2. Pleated detail after being pressed, with folded edge underneath. A basting stitch runs through the top of each pleat, to hold in place as the bodice detail template is drawn on.

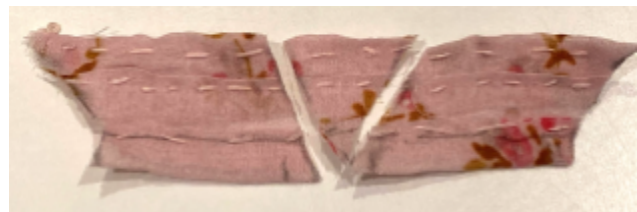


Fig 3.3. The pleated bodice detail after being cut according to the template.

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To attach the detail to the bodice, begin by cutting out the following pattern pieces, 1 front piece and 1 lining, and two back pieces, with two linings. Set all of the back pieces aside, and keep the two front pieces. Baste the bodice front piece to its lining at the center front top and bottom, and place the pleated detail according to the armhole, sewing the armholes only where the pleats start and end, and at the center front.



3.4. All bodice pattern pieces cut out before assembling. 1 front piece and 1 lining, cut two bodice back pieces and their lining.

2. CLOSE SHOULDER SEAMS.

The shoulder seams connect to the rest of the armhole which will later be reinforced by bias cording. To begin, gather two bias strips the length of the shoulder seam plus $\frac{1}{2}$ " this will give seam allowance in case the cording frays. Press the bias strip in half, and pinch the cording into the seam. Baste stitch the cording into the strip, as you sew continue to press the cording into the seam. Lay the strip onto the shoulder seam without sewing into the lining, the neckhole or armhole. Trim off the excess cording off either side.

Join the shoulder seams of the front of the bodice to the back of the bodice, first folding the seam allowance of the cording inwards, and then laying the bodice to the back pieces right sides together. Sew along the line of the cording for each shoulder. Trim out the excess bias strip from the seam once attached.

The central band, which will hold the pleats in place at the center front is cut 1" by 2" from bias tape. Press in $\frac{1}{4}$ " on either side, and fold in the bottom edges to fit your pleat detail. Place it down or pin, and use a small blind stitch all around through the pleated layers.



Fig 3.5. The bodice front, center top and bottom basted, with pleated detail fully attached to where the pleat stops and ends at the armhole and center. The central band is cut 1" by 2" and folded by $\frac{1}{4}$ " of an inch.



Fig 3.6. The shoulder seam is made by stitching cording into the bias strip of the self fabric, sewn into the shoulder seam but avoiding the armhole and neckhole.

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Fig 3.7. The shoulders of the front and back of the bodice joined, with excess bias tape trimmed out.

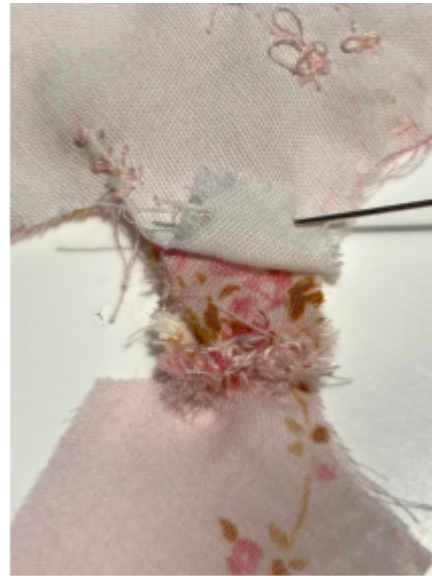


Fig 3.7 The interior of the bodice shoulder seam.

Now, stitch the shoulder seams of the lining, place the piece of the back lining onto the back piece, and blind stitch the front lining piece to the back piece. While blind stitching, catch threads of the shell seam below to connect the bodice together. This is a common technique used in women's 1830s garments that allowed for stability in the shoulder.



Fig 3.8. The bodice shoulder seams connected, with all pieces laid flat.



3.9. The finished exterior of the shoulder seam, with cording attached.

3. CLOSE SIDE SEAMS.

Stitch the side seams. First, sew a very small running stitch on the inside of the outer fabric to hold in place. Then, press this seam towards the back, and top stitch using a small running stitch. The topstitches, and other seams that show on the outside of original 1830's garments have extremely small stitches, so make this stitch as small as possible. Then, do the same with the lining, sew a small running stitch to attach, and then make a small top stitch that as you sew, grabs a few threads from the self fabric below.

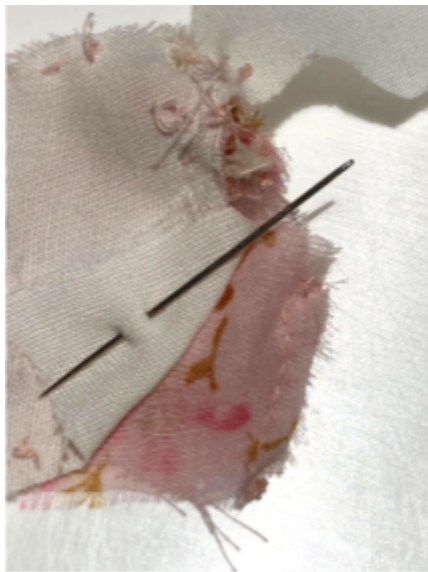


Fig 3.10. Initial running stitch made on the side seam of the bodice, to hold the self pieces in place before top stitching.



Fig 3.11. First topstitch made only from the self fabric.



Fig 3.12. Finished topstitch, after using the same technique to sew the side seam of the lining, and attaching the self fabric to the lining.

4. TURN CENTER BACK FACINGS.

Before beginning to attach the center back facings, begin putting the bodice as it is on the doll. At the dolls back, the bodice should have about 1/4" overlap at the center back, to allow for the back facings and closures to be attached.

_To begin finishing the left center back, trim out 1/4 of the lining. This will make a turnback without excess lining. Make a 1/4 turn back, first stitching with a blind stitch, and then a small topstitch.

The right side of the bodice is finished with a corded strip. Before the cording can be added, measure 1/4 " back from the raw center back edge, put small basting stitches up the 1/4" marking.



Fig 3.11. The bodice as it is worn, with about a 1/4" overlap.

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This will act as a guide for the cording to be stitched on top of. The corded strip is made with a 1" strip of bias tape. First, measure from the neckline down to the waistline of the bodice. And add $\frac{1}{4}$ for seam allowance to that measurement, and cut strips accordingly. Before inserting the cording, take the 1" wide strip, and fold one edge down $\frac{1}{4}$ " of an inch and press, fold the other side down until the two ends meet. Insert cording into one of the edges, as they should be the same width. Push the cording in towards the fold, and sew. Use the $\frac{1}{4}$ " stitch as a guide, and place the cording wrong side down on the right side of the bodice. The cording should be in line with the $\frac{1}{4}$ " stitches. Stitch down the cording with a straight stitch. Then, the other folded edge should be blind stitched to the center back of the bodice.



3.12. Left side of bodice $\frac{1}{4}$ of the self folded in, and straight stitched across.



3.13. The cording made, now each edge folded over $\frac{1}{4}$ ", and one side with cording sewn in.



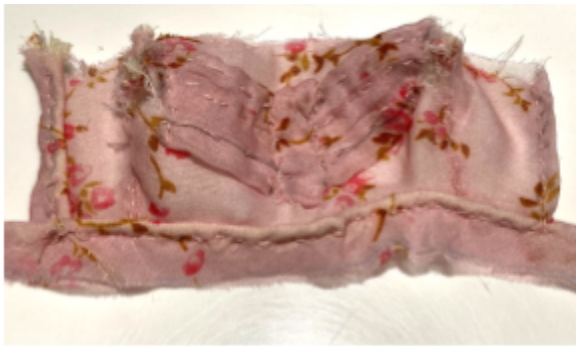
3.14. The right side of the bodice, with cording sewn $\frac{1}{4}$ " from the edge, and cord facing sewn on the right side of the bodice.



3.15. Interior of the right side of the bodice, with the excess $\frac{1}{4}$ " edge blind stitched down.

5. **BLIND STITCH NECKHOLE, AND WAISTLINE.**

The waistline requires the support provided by a piece of bias covered cording. Generally, cutting a length of 10" of 1" wide bias cording allows for the shrinkage of the tape that occurs while sewing in the cord, and gives enough ease while sewing the cording on. Use the 10" length of cording, press in half, and sew cording into the fold. Sew the cording to the waistband by lining up the stitches where the cording is sewn into the tape with the edge of the waistband, as you go around and sew into the curves and the point, allow enough ease so that the shape is not lost. Press the rest of the ½" seam allowance up into the interior of the bodice. This edge will be left raw, as the waist tape will cover this edge once the skirt and bodice are joined. Sew the turned up edge in the center front to preserve the shape of the point, by whip stitching a small tuck in the center. Then, going through the lining only sews small tacks around the cording strip to hold it in place.



3.16. Bodice waistline exterior, with cording strip sewn on with a straight stitch.

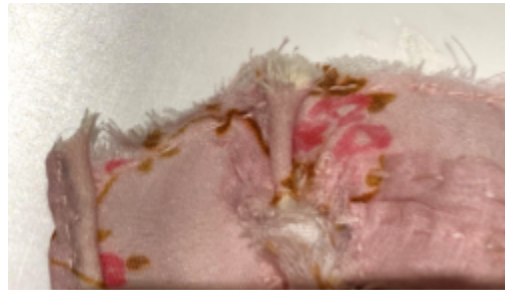


3.17. The interior of the bodice, with tacks sewn to hold the strip in place, a small fold is whip stitched at the center to preserve the point.

The neckline is finished in a similar fashion as the waistline. First, a small running stitch should be taken ⅛" from the raw edge, so that the ends of the shoulder cording will be covered by the neckline finish. Another strip of cording strips should be made as the right center back cording was made. Set the cording strip so that the cord seam is in line with the neckline running stitch. Press the other side of the cording to the lining, and blind stitch down.



3.19. Bodice exterior, with neckline cording sewn down, before folded edge is blind stitched down.



3.18. Small running stitch at the edge of the neckline, to act as a guide for the cording.

6. CREATING AND MOUNTING SLEEVE FLOUNCES.

The sleeve flounces in this garment allow it to have the unique quality of the later 1830s, and early 1840s. The construction in creating the sleeves, uses detailed period techniques, characteristics of exterior details on garments from the time. On each sleeve, there will be two sleeve flounces attached. To start, cut 4 strips, The first two, 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ " wide and 10" long, the second two, 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ " wide and 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ " long. These will be the upper flounces, and have a length that is about double the width of the upper arm and lower arm on the sleeve pattern. Cut the four pieces on the straight grain. For the two 10" peices, press a double $\frac{1}{4}$ " fold, and straight stitch across, this will be the bottom hem. Then, take another double $\frac{1}{4}$ " fold and press again at the top, this edge will be rolled, and whipped in place. For bulkier fabrics such as a heavier calico, take the same approach as the bottom hem, and gather to the width of the upper arm. For lighter fabrics that are able to whip stitch by rolling the $\frac{1}{4}$ " fold to its raw edge, and in order to hold in place as you continue to sew, moistening the fingers to hold the rolled edge in place. Whip the roll in place by drawing the needle under the rolled edge, continuing until the edge is finished. For the bottom two flounces, do a double $\frac{1}{4}$ " fold on each side, one side being a flat hem, and the other begging as a flat edge, but will be gathered when attached to the bottom.



Fig 3.19. Two top ruffles, sewn with a rolled edge, and a bottom straight stitched hem.

To attach the sleeve flounces, begin by using the sleeve pattern to sketch where the top and bottom details are placed. The sleeve pattern is cut on the straight grain. This template can be used depending on the size you cut your sleeve pattern, to measure the cording for the top flounce. The cording channel should start just above the top mark, and end just above the bottom mark. Use a 1" piece of bias cording, with a self covered cord and trim the excess accordingly. Measure about 2" and cut. Straight stitch the cord to the top marking, and blind stitch the seam allowance to just above the lower marking.

After both of the cording channels are attached, attach the lower ruffle. Put a small basting stitch through the top of the $\frac{1}{4}$ " hem, and draw it up to fit the length of the lower marking.

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Place on the marking, and use a running stitch to hold it in place.



3.20. The sleeve pattern, with marks of where the top and bottom flounces will be attached.



3.21. Flat sleeve (left), with upper cording attached, and lower flounce attached.



3.22. Top cording attached with a running stitch and blind stitch, and the top gathers for the lower flounce.

___Then, to attach the top ruffle, go directly below the whipped edge, and put in a small basting stitch. Draw the flounce up to fit the upper marking, and straight stitch in place. The upper flounce should be placed just below the cording, so that the covered cord is still visible.

Make two pieces of bias covered cord the length of the front sleeve seam. The front sleeve seam is the edge that connects to the slanted, more pointed edge on the shoulder curve. The cord, according to my doll's measurements, is about 5". Baste the cord into the seam, the cording should line up with the sleeves raw edge. Do this for both sleeves.

Once the cording is attached, take the seam allowance of the cording, and press towards the back of the sleeve, blind stitch in place.

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3.23. The two flounces attached, the top flounce reinforced with a header of cording.



3.24. The flat sleeves with cording in the front sleeve seam, attached with a basting stitch.



3.25. The middle seam's cording, with seam allowance blind stitched facing the back of the sleeve.

7. CLOSE SLEEVE SEAM.

To close the sleeve seam, begin by lining up the corded edge with the raw edge, to make sure that they fit together. The wrist hole may unevenly line up as you sew, this edge will be covered by a corded cuff, so the priority should be on evenly placing the armhole. To sew up the sleeve seam, place a blind stitch, going through the corded channel, and then picking up a small amount of fabric from the raw edge. Continue down the entire seam of both sleeves. *Make sure that the blind stitched seam allowance from the cording remains facing towards the back of the sleeve as you sew.



3.26. The finished sleeve seam, blind stitched closed with armhole lined up evenly.

8. FINISH CUFF.

The cuff measurements depending on alterations made to the pattern, or how the fabric used behaves when having details and blind stitches attached may be prone to shrinking. To double check cuff measurement, measure the end of the sleeve, add $\frac{1}{2}$ " to the measurement For the addition of two $\frac{1}{4}$ " folds. Use a 1" wide piece of cording and cut according to the sleeve measurement. The cuff facing is made by taking two $\frac{1}{4}$ " folds at the shortest sides, and two $\frac{1}{4}$ " folds lengthwise where the cording will be inserted. Place cording in one of these folds, stitch in place. Turn the cord facing so that it is placed on the inside of the end of the sleeve. The facing should be wrong side to wrong side of the sleeve, The cording should line up with the raw edge, and straight stitch down. The cording is then blind stitched to the raw edge of the cuff.



Fig 3.27. The cuff facing, after being pressed. The smaller two ends are pressed in $\frac{1}{4}$ ", and two $\frac{1}{4}$ " folds are pressed lengthwise.

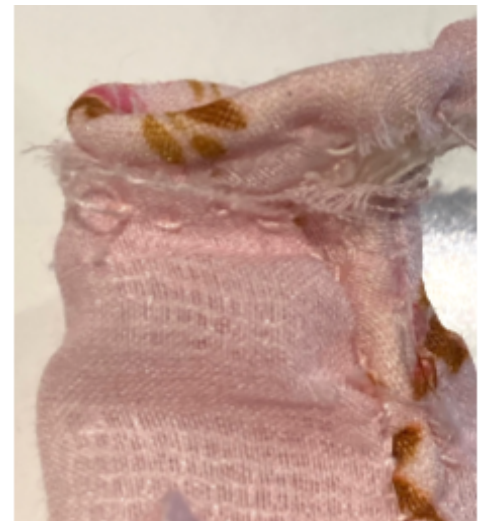


Fig 3.28. The cuff at its first stage of being sewn. The facing is placed wrong side to wrong side with the sleeve, and straight stitched in place below the cording.

9. CORD ARMHOLE AND SET SLEEVE.

The armholes of early Victorian garments were all corded to allow for further reinforcement, during the 1830's this was done out of necessity, so that garments could have more durability, not as a decorative touch. While the cording does give a polished and dainty edge, that allows the sleeve to stand out with a clean seam. The methods in which Victorians would sew in cording at the armhole by simply basting in the cording as usual, and using this as a guide to set the sleeve, and turning in the excess. We will be following a similar, more simple method to properly set the sleeves.

You will need two bias covered cords, of which the length can be found by measuring the finished bodice as it is, flat. The sleeve will be adjusted as such. To begin, place a small basting stitch around the armhole, as close to the raw edge as possible, while still going deep enough that the stitch will cover the cording at the shoulder and pleat detail. This will be a guide for the corded edge. The cord will start with a 1" length, but should be trimmed according to the basting stitch put in, The edge should be double the measurement of the distance between the basting stitch and the raw edge. The seam allowance will allow

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for minimal bulk at the armhole, to maintain the proper size for the dolls upper arm. Cording can often cause the most shrinkage in a project, so extra care is to be taken with this step.

To begin placing the cording, find the actual bottom of the armhole. The side seam should not be considered as the bottom of the armhole. As is the side of the bodice, with bulk already added. Begin setting in the cording around the armhole along the line of the basting stitch. To secure the ends of the cording in place, take out $\frac{1}{8}$ " of the cording, and open the bias strip. Place the open edge over the other, and stitch to close. Make sure that in closing the seam, you're not drawing up the stitches, so as to tighten the armhole.



Fig 3.29. The armhole, with cording attached and lapped at the edges, before being turned inwards.

The seam allowance attached to the cording should be cut to the correct measurement of the distance between the basting stitch and the inside of the armhole. Turn in the seam allowance tightly, and blind stitch if there is enough fabric to do so. Otherwise, place a small running stitch to the lining only.

To begin setting in the sleeve, note the top to the sleeve with a very small notch in the fabric, if the fabric is prone to fraying, draw a small mark instead. Beginning at this mark, place a very small basting stitch around the raw edge, and pull it up slightly. This will allow the sleeve to fit in the armhole properly. The sleeve should only have a small amount of ease, so the allowance should be evenly distributed as it is sewn in. Begin blind stitching the sleeve to the corded armhole at the bottom marking of the sleeve, or where the corded lap begins. The sleeve is attached from the outside of the bodice. Line up the sleeve with the armhole, and continue to ease the sleeve towards the needle to

hold it in place. Take a blind stitch starting at the corded channel's edge, and picking up a small amount of the sleeve's fabric at its basted edge. Continue around the seam, making sure to evenly distribute the ease in the sleeve.



Fig 3.30. The sleeve with a small basting stitch that draws it up slightly to the armhole measurement.

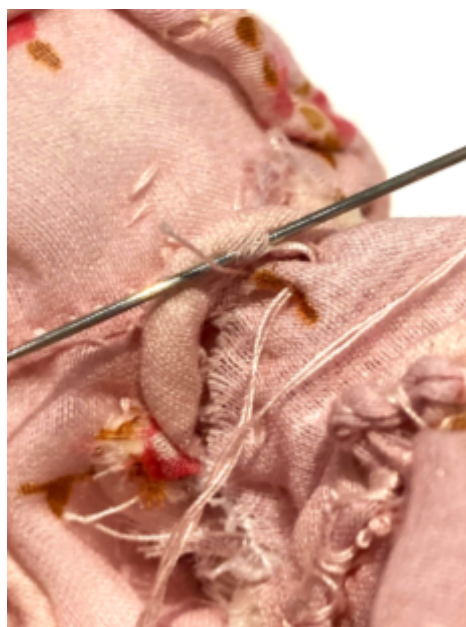


Fig 3.31. The sleeve being set to the armhole, with a blind stitch. The stitch goes through the cording channel, and picks up a bit of the basted edge.

10. SEW SKIRT TO BODICE, AND FINISH CLOSURES.

At this step, it can be helpful to fit both the dress and the bodice at once to make sure that the sleeves fit securely, and that the waistline is able to lay over the waisttape of the skirt. The bodice should have as little bulk as possible in the shoulder, if needed, the blind stitched cording seam allowance can be taken in, by taking out the seam and carefully removing the excess.

To join the bodice to the skirt, line both garments up flat, starting from the center back. Use a blind stitch, going through the channel under the bodice cording, and into each gather of the skirt. A technique that was used during the period with bodices of this style would be to leave 1" (to scale of a womens dress) on either side of the point unsewn. This can be done on the scale of the doll as well, if ½" to ¼" is left unsewn. If you are taking this approach, make sure that the rest of the bodice is properly aligned, so that the middle point still lies where it should.



Fig 3.32. The bodice being joined to the skirt. A blind stitch is taken from the channel of the cording, and into each gather of the skirt.



Fig. 3.33. The bodice attached to the skirt, using the method of going through the point.

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Attach the hooks and eyes on the inside of the bodice and skirt. Begin with the eyes, include 3 eyes on the bodice, and one on the waist tape edge. The eyes should be going out slightly from the bodice, so that an overlap will be created once the garment is worn. The hooks should be placed similarly, 3 on the bodice, and one on the waist tape. Only, these should be slightly behind the center back edge.



Fig 3.34. The hooks and eyes attached to the inside of the bodice, 3 on the bodice, and 1 on each side of the skirt.



Fig 3.35. The finished interior of the bodice, with all closures attached.

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The Finished Dress:



The finished doll. Wearing a lightweight cotton
1837 Day Dress, *made with contemporary fabric.
Detail photo of bodice. (Doll is wearing added
ruff)

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Finished doll. Showing entire 1837 Day Dress of
lightweight printed cotton.