

Spring 6-2022

# The Needle and the Pen: a Retrospective on Eighteenth Century Life, Consumerism, and Dress in Relation to Modern Garment Production

Madeleine F. Beer  
*Portland State University*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/honorsthesis>



Part of the [Art Practice Commons](#)

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.

---

## Recommended Citation

Beer, Madeleine F., "The Needle and the Pen: a Retrospective on Eighteenth Century Life, Consumerism, and Dress in Relation to Modern Garment Production" (2022). *University Honors Theses*. Paper 1219.  
<https://doi.org/10.15760/honors.1250>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access. It has been accepted for inclusion in University Honors Theses by an authorized administrator of PDXScholar. Please contact us if we can make this document more accessible: [pdxscholar@pdx.edu](mailto:pdxscholar@pdx.edu).

# The Needle and the Pen

A retrospective on eighteenth century life, consumerism, and dress  
in relation to modern garment production

By Madeleine Beer

An undergraduate honors thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for  
the degree of

Bachelor of Fine Arts

in University Honors and Art Practice

Thesis Advisor

Alison Heryer

Portland State University

2022

## *Contents*

---

A Note on Historical Accuracy	1
Introduction	1
The Female Consumer	4
Trades in Garment Manufacturing	7
The Industrial Revolution	10
Fashions of the Time	13
Layers of Dress	16
Isabella MacTavish Fraser	18
A Project in Tartan	23
Project Reflection	27
Project Photos	36
Bibliography	39

## A Note on Historical Accuracy

My journey of recreating historical garments has not been a long one, I have only dabbled in historical costuming for the past few years in university, however the skills I have obtained through hours of research are based in historical practice. In this project, everything I aim to do is to meet the bar of historical plausibility -that the materials and techniques used could have possibly been used during the period- and be open to the tools and materials that are feasible and available to me today. I want to create work and have the allure of a garment being able to take you back in time, have something feel historical, yet be made in the modern context. This is not the goal of everyone who creates historical or historically inspired garments.

Within the historical costuming community, there is a discussion about gatekeeping and historical accuracy, the idea of doing things the way they were done in the past, using tools and materials they would have had in the past, as much as possible to get as close to an original extant garment as possible. This can be an incredible aspiration and learning experience, However not everyone is on the same playing field. Historically accurate materials are often hard to find and expensive. The research that leads to the culmination of knowledge takes time and effort, and often a great deal of money which as a college student I do not have, nor do I have unlimited access to institutional databases or extant garments in my vicinity.

Many individuals do not want to constrict themselves to historical accuracy, the lens you view the world is not the same as others. Some people take inspiration from historical dress, and apply the materials and resources they have access to, some just simply enjoy the making process, and others simply do not have the hours upon hours of time to sit and hand sew. This does not make them any less valid or their skills less valuable.

One of the main reasons I decided to attempt to sew everything by hand was the fact that I commute to school, and I was unable to constantly work in the studios provided for me at school. Hand sewing is also a meditative process for me. In the push to be as historically accurate as possible, it is easy to lose sight of the reasons why we are drawn to this hobby in the first place. I enjoy the sister term of “historically adequate” in which an individual uses modern methods that fit their abilities in order to give the visual impression of historical recreation without the pressure of using exclusively historical methods. What works for one person may not work for another. The ability to mix and match techniques that work best for the individual is what creating is truly about.

I strive to make work that is both aesthetically pleasing and informative. Textiles reflect the human story, weaving in linear narratives into a cloth of stories and lives lived. Extant garments of the past are a peek into the life and society of an individual in a specific time in the past, exploring the hands of anonymous women who made them.

I find that the process of recreating a historical garment or attempting a craft that had been practiced in the past, brings history to life. Allowing oneself to be connected to their ancestors through creative implementation, threads connections between the present and the past. Recreating history shows how those who lived before were real and normal people who often didn't finish their seams.

## Introduction

Within the realm of feminist scholarship of history, it has been said that “human stories can be told as effectively with the needle as with the pen” (Dyer pg. 9)

Throughout history, trade deemed “womens work” has been undervalued on all levels but aesthetic. Gendered creative practices have been the focus of dress and craft historians; and such works have begun to reverse the emphasis of women as simply consumers and instead push forward the narrative of women as creator and producer.

My thesis will focus on historical garment making practices within the realm of the eighteenth century in predominantly western European countries as this is what relates closest to my personal background and general focus. It is unfortunate that the study of historic dress is substantially eurocentric, and I hope that continued scholarship will bring further light to non-western dress history.

As practices become modernized, the work behind them is often lost. The comparison of garments manufactured today to those made in the past further degrades these practices that were passed down from master to apprentice through oral tradition.

The work I create in conjunction with my academic thesis is a dress ensemble using as close to historical practice as possible. A large part of my study is keeping track of the amount of time it takes to cut and hand sew each garment, and then putting the labor into perspective with modern manufacturing practices. These hours do not include the time it took to learn techniques or historical research. A great deal of the knowledge I have gained has been over the course of the past four years, on my own time as well as through costume and dress history courses. I could not accurately calculate the amount of time I have spent researching and developing skills into a number.

I take on the roles of tailor (flat patterning), mantua maker (dressmakers, draping (due to underpinnings and support structures on the body), female dominated), and milliner (accessories and other fashions, not just hats). All aspects of the ensemble will be handcrafted including undergarments, dress layers, and outer layers. I ought to confess that I am no master sewist nor do I have years of constructing and hand sewing garments, however I try to the best of my ability to recreate such multifaceted garments. Through such processes I am trying to balance a duality of not recreating the garments within a historical recreation or living history setting, but still attempt to engage with the specific processes used at the time. While I attempt to take on such roles of the trade system, I am working in a completely different environment and society. Taking on all of these roles in itself takes me out of the historical context, I am working outside of the structured and specialized trades system.

In deciding to create a gown based upon an extant garment, I looked into museum collections which had enough information to accurately reconstruct from the inside out. The lack of photographic documentation of the interior of extant garments was often disheartening, until I stumbled upon the recreation of the Isabella MacTavish Fraser wedding gown project. The original project was led by a team of women with like minded in dress history, historical costuming, and experience in making historical dress, costume interpretation, and living history. The great amount of detail and examination applied to this project allowed me to recreate my own gown using instructions given by experts.

My goal in creating my BFA project is to not simply create a pretty gown. I want to take elements of my heritage and my personal interests, and create something that could potentially be passed down as an heirloom as the original gown was. This project

includes some preliminary research in the subjects of textile and garment production to give support to the larger project created.

There are a myriad of reasons why exact replicas of historical textiles are unable to be made today. Changes in loom and weaving technology, breeds of sheep becoming extinct, and differences in commercial and synthetic dyes are some of them.

There are many lessons that can be taught from historical lifestyle practices. In the twenty-first century, consumer culture runs rampant and is devastating to the environment. Such valuable information will be gathered from the texts of Serena Dyer *Material Lives: Women Makers and Consumer Culture in the 18th Century* and John Styles *The Dress of the People Everyday Fashion in Eighteenth-century England*.

I wish to draw all of these threads together. What can we learn from historical practices and how can we apply what we learn to our own lives? What can be brought into the modern world from pre-industrial garment production? and what can the lifecycle of textiles during the eighteenth century teach us?

In order to understand more about the process I took, I broke my research into sections, the main focuses of my research surround the social aspects of garment creation of the time or consumerism, and the craft or making processes.



## The Female Consumer

The purchasing habits of those who came before have always intrigued me. Understanding why items were purchased and the drastic difference to our spending habits on material goods today.

By the end of the nineteenth century, most women in all social classes were knowledgeable in sewing, having been taught by their mothers. By 1871, the first curriculum in home economics was offered by Iowa State College. Needlework shifted from being a commercial enterprise in the 18th century to a private home activity to be done at home. Even at this point in history only a hundred years after the focus of this paper many female dominated trades had become hobby-craft or in some cases obsolete.

There are a great deal of misconceptions that surround pre-industrial periods of home sewing. These misconceptions came from the “make do” era of the early twentieth century when women made clothing due to economic hardships. Household sewing came in and out of fashion depending on the swing of the economic pendulum. Purchasing readymade in the 1920s was popular due to the simplified silhouette and reduced price due to less fabric used. However “Marketing changed to emphasize the non-economic benefits of sewing at home, especially the higher quality and better fit of home sewn clothes.” (National Women’s History Museum) Then WWII brought a change to home sewing as women were encouraged to “remake, mend, and make do”. Following the war, home sewing became a leisure activity.

The modern misconception that prior generations were underdeveloped and primitive in their sewing abilities is often applied to times before the 1940s-60s due to the “make do” attitude of WWII. This idea that all women made their clothes at home prior to the industrial revolution is simply false. Commercial sewing patterns were not

invented until the mid nineteenth century, although texts were available to walk through creation of basic garments that could and would be made at home. People made garments, home dressmaking was still a way to fashion oneself, the ability and knowledge to not only mend but sew was common practice, however the reliance on home sewing stemmed from rural areas where access to skilled tradesmen was less prevalent.

Throughout history the bias against women consumers has continued to evolve. In the eighteenth century a woman would be depicted as morally corrupt and economically dangerous compared to her male counterpart when shopping. Women were seen as frivolous and unproductive in their consumerism and driven by desire rather than economic or material productivity. According to Dyer, the practice of browsing is not a sign of self indulgence, but instead gives the consumer or maker sensory experiences to make rational and informed choices. The quality and hand of the material is important in decision making. Today, women are still criticized by their partners for how long it takes for them to shop (I myself have experienced this in shopping for almost any consumable good) I am unsure if this is a rooted feminine urge, or simply something engrained societally. The aura of shamefulness that plagues women through media is often enforced by the level of superficiality that fashion implies. Those who are able to afford and follow the latest fashion trends are often viewed as vain or conceited as fashion has continued to be women's work.



Fig. 1. Isaac Cruikshank, *Miseries of Human Life*, 1808.

Even within early print media, “Isaac Cruikshank’s 1808 caricature series, *Miseries of Human Life*, includes an image which wonderfully sums up how haptic browsing practices were warped and twisted through hierarchical gendered binaries...this image depicts two women as they carefully inspect a length of cloth, while their male companion waits by the door and are prudently and judiciously assessing the fabric - quality, weight, sustainability, color - as they amass material knowledge and exercise their material literacy. Irritated by the raucous din of a saw being sharpened, the impatient man perceives nothing by his own inconvenience and frustration and is blind to the rationality of the task at hand” (Dyer pg. 11) As written by the hand of a man, the true intentions of the female consumers are muddled and further misrepresented. The continuous repetition of such opinions of the feminine frivolity has led to the modern stigmas of women as consumer both on the individual and commercial level.

## Trades in Garment Manufacturing

Trades in themselves are an important aspect to look at as I had planned on subverting the traditional trade dynamics to adapt to my own project. As my project was also time based, having a detailed understanding of the amount of time and effort it took to become a master at such a trade. Tailors, mantua makers, and milliners are the garment manufacturers in the early eighteenth century, each serving a wide demographic of customers. The cutting and construction of garments was a trade passed from master to apprentice and at the time such knowledge was protected. Little before the twentieth century was known by the public about the construction of garments, and even less was written down. Male labor was valorized by society where women laborers were all but forgotten.

The skills of making were another commodity, and those without the skills would pay a hearty fee to learn, consumers themselves were in the market for making and consuming knowledge. Those who were not adept at craft would purchase the time and expertise of a tailor or mantua maker to make garments for them. For most of the general population this would be the case, women in the home were expected to be able to mend and sew simple garments but would purchase their fabric and pay a professional to make the garment.

Fabric is the main expense in creating clothing, as garments can be taken back to a tailor or mantua maker to alter silhouette, add trim, raise or lower waistline etc. to compliment fashion trends. Gowns could and would be remade over and over again to fit the newest fashions. This is how fashion was able to move and adapt quickly at the time.

In France, A law was passed in 1675 allowing women to make womens outerwear separate from the tailors. In Scotland guilds were not set up as they were in France. The

trade in France was at the same level of the male dominated staymakers and tailors. The demand became so high that women were able to set up services legally in Scotland to be tradespeople, and had licenses granted to them to advertise their services. Mantua makers served apprenticeships around 7 years in France. Or 3-5 years in Scotland and England. This period of the 18th century opened up new economic roles and opportunities, beginning and ending with social and economic reforms and revolutions. A shift from draping to cutting and the development of two dimensional patterns again.

Additional “unseen” laborers were critical in the production of textiles including those who were responsible for the growing of fibers, production of threads and the weaving of cloth. Until the industrialization of fabric production however these laborers were generally employed on a living wage rather than slave labor.

The mantua maker had a few career options, she could open her own shop that would also sell imported items of dress and millinery; outsourcing items to make a profit. She could also take on apprentices and hire seamstresses, as time was money. She could also be a freelance journeywoman, a hand to mouth existence with no guarantee of any work. They may work out of their homes and would be mothers and homemakers. They were the backbone of providing clothing for women in the 18th century, the bulk of their work was to refashion work. Or duties of a ladies maid to cut new shapes, take care of clothes, help dress and get her ready.

There is some scholarship into invoices and receipts of the time of what a mantua maker would charge for her expertise. According to classified ads in London, a well known mantua maker in London could charge 14 shillings (today £60 or \$75) in 1782 for an Italian gown or saque gown with matching petticoat. Further outside of London, the price drops slightly for the same garments. Again the price of labor was little in comparison to what individuals paid for material textiles, and the price of construction

often stayed the same no matter the cost of fabric that the customer brought to her mantua maker.

Involuntary consumption within the eighteenth century was a common experience with items of clothing. Garments, accessories, and other consumable goods were often used as forms of payment instead of physical money. It could be speculated that higher valued clothing made of more luxurious materials would be worth more. Articles of clothing were often used as a prize to encourage work productivity and donations of clothing from family or employers was common. Clothing given as gifts was valuable currency in personal relationships, much of this information comes from the wills of those well off, items with great sentimental or monetary value were passed down to loved ones. Charity donations were given to the poor throughout history, and clothing was a main donation commodity.

In the 18th century however, the knowledge of fiber content of clothing was not only important politically but deemed social status as well. Individuals for the most part knew who made their clothes (unless second hand; due to the lack of labeling or branding which would not occur until the late nineteenth century) and were a part of the process in the designing of their garments. Children were taught their fibers through games and dialogues, (Dyer) School samplers and dolls garments made by daughters of the gentry and aristocracy are some surviving examples.

The rag trade of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was a way to wring the last life out of textile consumables. Many textiles would be made into other forms of consumables like paper, textiles would be sorted by quality, color, and fiber and then processed into paper. At the time paper was made of muslin, and then in the nineteenth century cotton, and finally wood pulp fibers in the late nineteenth century.

## The Industrial Revolution

Although the work I create in this project predates the industrial revolution, It was important to me to understand the changes which led cottage based industries to modern manufacturing.

With changes in the early nineteenth century, industrial manufacturing of textiles and garments became common. Garment labor had been considered a trade of low monetary value throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and became even less valuable as industrialization grew.

The mantua making trade died at the end of the 18th century as the neoclassical silhouette developed in the Regency era, a style depicted after Ancient Greek statues brought back to France by Napoleon Bonaparte. Between the years of 1789 and 1800, the dress revolution occurred and was the first time in history where a clear repetition of style drawn from the past occurred.

The women's silhouette deflated from the prior Rococo pannier supported skirts and transitioned into lighter sheer gowns made popular by the growing English cotton industry in the Americas and India, however the Industrial Revolution did not reach the Americas until the 1820s, but began with textile manufacturers in the northeast.

When revisiting historical practices, one must acknowledge the past that they are diving into. By the eighteenth century India had mastered the art of cotton production with intricate weaving and printing techniques that would be appropriated by Western Europeans in their fashions. England exploited and altered the textile manufacturing industry through colonization.



Fig. 2. Colonial Cloth Makers. Carding, spinning, and weaving woolen cloth in an 18th century American household.

Before 1765, cottage industries were responsible for supplying textiles to the world. All steps to creating fabric occurred within the homes of families. Raw materials were often cleaned and sorted by children, while the women of the household spun the fibers and the men wove the cloth. The raw materials were cleaned and carded which produced roving, then spun unto tight strands where it became thread collected on the spindle of the spinning wheel.

This was an arduous process which could take an extended amount of time to transport and process the raw materials before becoming cloth. This led to a large divide between supply and demand. Forcing merchants to search for alternative methods of cloth creation to improve product development. The later invention of the flying shuttle and the power loom improved the speed at which fabric could be woven.



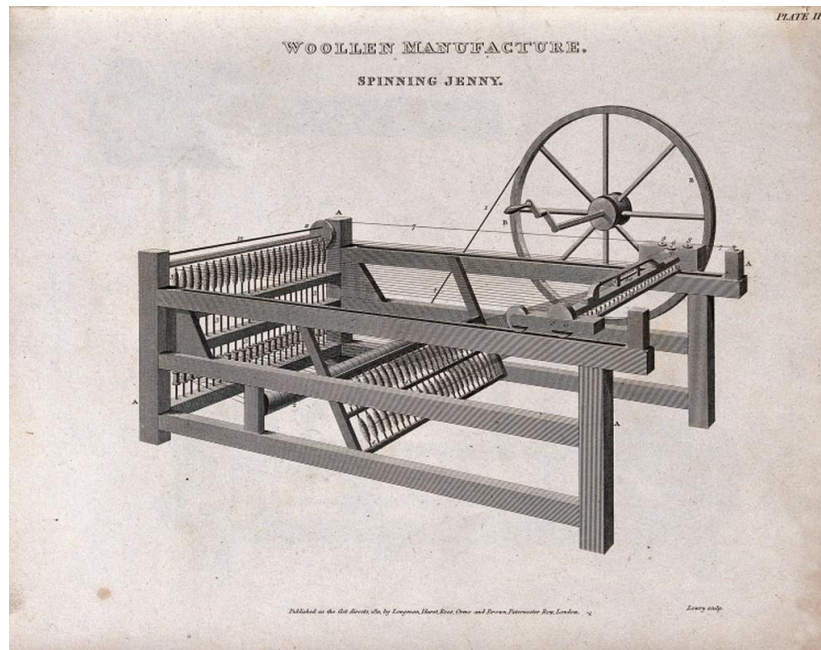


Fig. 3. Textiles: a spinning jenny. Engraving by W. Lowry, 1811.

The invention of machinery to aid in the production and process of cotton marks the beginning of the industrial revolution. The “spinning jenny” was invented by a weaver named James Hargreaves c. 1765, a machine which used eight spindles connected to a single spinning wheel, increasing production speed by 400%. This singular invention took the trade from cottage industry homes into factories which grew and expanded across the world.

The transportation cost of raw materials and produced goods decreased as these larger machines would be operated by fewer workers under fewer factories, concentrating labor and materials in one place. This way of distributing labor increased production and created jobs for factory workers. A shift made to improve the textile demand altered Europe and the United States into leading industrial economies. As factories condensed more jobs under a singular roof, the draw of industrial labor brought

people to cities, by 1750, 15% of people lived in cities, by 1850 that grew to 50%, by 1900 it rose to 85%.

The cotton gin was invented in 1794, which greatly sped up the process of extracting seeds from the cotton fibers, and led to the justification of slave owners to continue to maintain the number of enslaved people to work on cotton plantations.

The British owned East India company imported luxury fabrics and goods to Europe from the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries. Such fabrics included fine muslins and block printed chintz and calico.

The Jacquard loom was invented in 1801, with a punch card system for the programming of patterns and was the foundation of binary computer codes. This new loom could adapt and appropriate intricate patterns developed in Asia. With factories moving away from colonial India into the United Kingdom, more textile products were made locally and the supply chain shortened. Such “exotic” patterns were adapted to European taste. The Paisley pattern was a pattern developed and made in Paisley Scotland in the years following the invention of the Jacquard loom.

## Fashions of the Time

When constructing any historical costume or recreation, I find that no matter the choice of fabric, fiber content, or pattern, the most important part to create something historically accurate or similar is to achieve the correct silhouette.

What we know today as an English gown or Robe Anglaise, was known as a “nightgown” in England and Scotland during the eighteenth century. Over the course of the century, it became known ubiquitously as a ‘gown’, distinguished by a close fitted bodice and a pleated back worn over stays. The style of gown derived from mantuas

made by mantua makers. The aristocrats in Louis XIV's court revolted against the heavily boned bodices and moved towards the looser fitted gowns, instead of the flat cut patterns by tailors, gowns would be draped and pleated onto the body. Molding to the body in a softer fashion in the late seventeenth century. The lengths of the pleated fabric would fall and pool in folds on the floor. Such early iterations would be folded back at the front to reveal a heavily decorated petticoat and stomacher.

In the 1740s, there would be a front opening where a somacher would fill in the gap. In the 1770s, gowns were altered, the front robings would be unpicked where a space was left open, and the extra fabric would be used to fill in the center to make a center front closed breasted gown, the back stayed the same. Contrary to earlier seventeenth century style gowns, a division between structural undergarments and fashion layers became more common; the creation of the looser mantua style gowns led to structured boning to be kept within the underlayer of the stays rather than as an integral part of the bodice.

New silks emerged in France at the same time as the growing popularity of the mantua. This new fashionable commodity overtook the market of Italian silks. Then London became a major manufacturer. The new silks had large intricate patterns that would be well displayed on large swaths of textile.

The expense of fabric led to altering gowns for decades. In the 1780s the Italian gown emerged, the pleats in the back became more and more narrow, until a point where they were the skirt and the bodice became two separate pieces joined at the waistline. Bodice pleating in the back became less common and bodice pieces were joined with seams.

The robe Battante or robe Volante was the even looser style, differing from the nightgown by having the back pleats left loose rather than stitched down. The nightgown would be the common style of dress for the next 50 years, with small adjustments in style changing over the course of the century and location. Alterations in sleeve length and fullness, pleat patterns, and decorative trimmings were the main alterations, however the general cut and construction of the garments stayed unanimously the same across Europe.

“Shapes” rather than “patterns” were used in the eighteenth century to create female garments, scrap fabric would be pinned and cut on the torso and over support garments reflecting the contours and curvatures of the female form. Shapes would be made for the individual and could be used numerous times for a myriad of garments. The role of seamstress was a relatively unskilled position of making even stitches, they would be day laborers hired for more menial tasks. Mantua makers could make a gown in 10-12 hours, depending on the availability of the client for fittings.

Clothing worn by women was made by women, mended by women, laundered by women and continuously remade by women who made money in this female dominated trade.

## Layers of Dress

The proper underpinnings to achieve the period accurate silhouette are essential to the form and fit of any historical garment. Without these foundational garments, items of dress are unsupported and ill fitting to the body.

The chemise or shift is the innermost layer worn against the skin. This simply constructed T shaped garment with moisture wicking properties of linen prevented the body from coming in contact with the outer garments often made of precious textiles which were difficult or too delicate to wash regularly. Individuals would have multiple shifts that would be washed regularly and exchanged to keep the wearer clean.

The second layer, the stays, is the equivalent to the modern brasier and the precursor to the corset. Layers of linen with sewn channels of baleen (whalebone) or reed provided structure and support to the outer layers. The bust was supported from the waist rather than the modern method of using the shoulders for support. Stays lifted the bust and held the shoulders back while smoothing the form into the fashionable conical shape. The outer layer of the stays could be made of a myriad of fabric depending on what the individual could afford. They could be laced from the front or back, with or without straps, and included tabs extending from the waistline to support the skirts.



Fig. 4. Stays, Great Britain, 1780-1789 (made), Linen, hand sewn with linen thread, applied ribbon, chamois and whalebone.

Throughout the century padding took on many forms including the sausage shaped bum roll to the grand panniers of the French court. According to *The History of Underclothes*, the rump “...was a large roll pad, tapering at the ends and tied round the waist. It was stuffed with cork or any light cushion stuffing... The revival of this ancient device seems to have appeared, in the fashionable world, early in the 1770’s” (Cunnington 91) A modest rump was worn by most women in order to give additional support to the layers of petticoats tied around the waist.

This caricature is to be taken with a grain of truth as it is a satirical print. The assumption that the artist creating the print is purposefully over-exaggerating the forms and shapes in poking fun of the female consumers. This image however does show the varying shapes that false rumps could be constructed in, some extension over the hips with vertical lines of quilting and the majority of the volume being centralized in the back. Other rumps depicted include a short petticoat or skirting that would have been used to help smooth the silhouette.



Fig. 5. The Bum Shop, 1785.

Without such supports, the weight of the skirts would only be supported by the wearer's own waist. Attop the rump or other skirt supports were layers of petticoats, these could vary in length, fiber content, and volume depending on the weather, fashionable silhouette, or status of the wearer. From here styles varied indefinitely in the combinations of bodices, jackets, skirts, and gowns.

## Isabella MacTavish Fraser

A majority of the information presented in this section came from a lecture by Rebecca Olds of Timesmith Dress History in collaboration with the brand American Duchess.



Fig. 6. Isabella MacTavish Fraser Gown c. 1784

Isabella was married in 1785 in the British Isles. Little is known about the women who made the gown or Isabella herself. It is a mystery of where her fabric came from, who spun the fibers, dyed them, and wove them into cloth. How the pattern was decided or why the decisions were made in the style of the gown. The abundance of red in the tartan signifies that the fabric was relatively expensive and would have been indicative of a higher social status. There is no indication through records that Isabella's family was of a high social status, the lack of information suggests that the textile was either traded, a payment or a possible gift. It is known that Isabella lived a short way from Inverness where there was definitely a skilled mantua maker.

The date of her marriage is important, Olds states that Isabella was married on January 12th, this is a time of year where in rural communities many social events took place as

the workload at the farm was at an annual low. The 12th of January is at the end of the Christmas season and was a popular time for weddings at the time. It can be speculated that the local mantua maker had multiple clients at this time due to the spike in social activities. The lack of additional fittings gathered by the construction furthers this speculation.

The gown has captivated dress historians for a myriad of reasons, taking a closer examination at the details of the gown suggests that some alterations had to have been done as Isabella could not easily attend fittings with her mantua maker often. The fabric itself can not be traced to have been used in another garment or project. The textile was most likely purchased or traded for the intention of making the gown. Through the examination of the gown, there is no suggestion that the fabric was ever let out or taken in at any of the side seams. Within the construction of the bodice, both pieces of the bodice lining and outer fabric were cut on the straight of grain parallel to the selvedge, this directly works against the use of the bias of the fabric to smooth across the form of the torso. However the choice in omitting the bias cut may have had to do with the directionality of the tartan pattern. This specific point reflects the Scottish approach to achieving the popular French fashion of the period.



Fig. 7. Back of Isabella MacTavish Fraser Gown c. 1784



It is also fascinating that the stitching of the garment can tell the story of who was working on each individual section. Longer unfitted seams such as the skirt panel were sewn by an individual with a dominant left hand (due to the angle and direction of the stitches) and would have been a common job for a day laborer seamstress.



Fig. 8. Robe à l'Anglaise, British, 1770-75.



Fig. 9. Robe à l'Anglaise, American, 1785-95.

The construction of the gown was in the style of the 1780s Italian gown rather than the 1740s nightgown. The weight and drape of the textile may be partially to blame for the adjustment in styles being that the thickness of the fabric would make it nearly impossible to pleat down to such narrow widths and into the pointed back style of the Italian gown. (see above images)

Nearing the end of the eighteenth century, styles of womenswear were constructed slightly differently and were made of more popular textiles that were much thinner and finer due to industrialization processes. The Isabella gown contains elements of new and old styles that make the construction of it quite odd. In the construction of the gown, there are two distinct styles of dress incorporated, the front of the gown is

styled in the manner of the 1780s while the back is in the pleated bodice to skirt style of the 1740s.

The information given by Peter Eslea MacDonald states that “The material is hand-woven from hand spun singles (unplied) yarn, is 25.5-26 inches wide along the length of the plaid section and shows little evidence of errors or inconsistencies. It was woven with a 6 Dent reed, 8 ends per split and has 48 epi, an average density for this type of rural cloth. This ‘single-width’ is typical of surviving specimens of 18th century rurally woven (non-industrial) tartan. There are two setts across the width of the cloth that run from and to the single green stripe, each sett would be approximately 13 inches”

Tartan in the Scottish context refers to both the pattern and the fabric, most generally it was woven from wool, however blended silks or cottons would also be possible. Tartan as a design, it is a repetitive check pattern in its most basic form. Different combinations of weaving patterns and colors can produce thousands of pattern variations.

An interesting aspect about the gown itself is that through researching the fabric that the gown is made of it is dated to no earlier than 1775 due to the use of Quercitron as a yellow dye source, which was invented by Edward Bancroft and introduced to manufacturers in that year. Other dyes used were Cochineal (red), Indigo and Woad (blue), and Fustic and Quercitron (yellow).

A noted mistake when observing the construction of the gown are the sleeve cuffs. The sleeve in its construction is a two part sleeve, however not a two part design. There were sleeves at the time cut in two parts with a seam running down the front of the arm and one down the back.



Fig. 10. Sleeve detail of Isabella MacTavish  
Fraser Gown c. 1784.

In the case of this gown, the sleeve was cut too short and had been extended; it consisted of one rectangle of sleeve that ended right above the elbow; as the 1740s styles would have been. The sleeve had to be slimmed down and slightly lengthened as the seam allowance shows.

This odd construction is probably due to the fact that the sleeves were cut as large rectangles to begin, possibly having been cut out in advance rather than draped as shapes on the body. The sleeve was then found to be too tight with the addition of the cuff, so through deduction, the mantua maker clipped into the extension at the bottom of the sleeve to release the tension and tightness. The cuffs covered up the end of the sleeve where the cut had to be made, so it is unclear if the cuffs were added to cover this mistake or had been a part of the sleeve design in the first place. This could be due to the lack of time in making the dress, or the inability to fit the gown on Isabella as often as it should have been. Time is money in this profession, and compromises have to be made

when a deadline is set in place. The mantua maker had to make quick decisions and find the most efficient and expedient way to fix mistakes and get the job done.

Another anomaly is the construction of the bodice, the lining of the bodice front was a continuous piece including the shoulder strap; it is cut with the shoulder strap as part of the front piece, where the end of the strap is attached to the top of the bodice back. This was not uncommon however the front bodice in the tartan was not cut the same way, this is the more common way where there is a separate shoulder strap to fit the sleeve cap between the lining piece and fashion fabric. The order of operations in the fitting of the sleeve into the shoulder was constructed in an odd manner. The back bodice edge was lapped over the top and stitched down to finish, more commonly the fashion fabric shoulder strap would be the last piece to be stitched down to contain all of the raw edges. The grain line of the bodice and shoulder strap are often quite different, in this case the fact that Isabella had quite straight shoulders allowed for the grainline to be similar to the bodice front. This may have also been a decision made due to needing to piece the tartan fabric.

## A Project in Tartan

In reference to my own heritage, I chose to weave the Innes clan tartan, my paternal grandmother's family name is Ince, a spelling variation of Innes. The clan itself dates back to 1160 AD. King Malcom IV "confirmed the lands of Innes on Berowald from Flanders." Located in the Northeast corner of Scotland, the land comprised the shore of the Moray firth between the rivers of Spey and Lossie. In Gaelic, Innes translates to greens, island, or meadow, all accurate descriptions of the land. Within the province of There are no extant tartan gowns before the mid eighteenth century, however there is evidence that it was common for women to wear accessories with subliminal political messages such as garters embroidered with phrases. It must be stated that there are many

misconceptions and allegories after the failed Jacobite rebellion and the battle at Culloden in relation to the significance of tartan patterns.

Many restrictions on highland culture came into play leading to the assumption that tartan was banned completely. However this is not the entire truth, tartan as a pattern was banned in certain garments such as men's great coats. The British government saw men and boys wearing tartan as a military threat and the British desired the use of tartan to be reserved to their own army, they saw the Scots wearing tartan as an act of rebellion. This "Act of Proscription" also banned the playing of bagpipes, and the speaking of the Gaelic language. Tartan was left to be worn by women everywhere across the Scottish isles. Tartan production continued as it was used in homewares and even increased in the 1760s. Some tartan was reserved to Scottish regiments of the British army where the right to wear highland dress and tartan coats by men was protected.

Tartan patterns for women's gowns and clothing for children were fashionable with striking patterns and practical wool weatherproofing. Those who could afford high quality tartan purchased and wore it.

A great deal of tartan history focuses on garments worn by men as the ban directly impacted their dress. Other than observations made by British foreigners of the dress of Scottish women's differing headwear and going barefoot around the home, Scottish and English women's dress was quite the same, there are obvious differences in social standing and working individuals versus aristocracy as well as textile necessities due to climate differences in the Highlands and Lowlands. Scotland was not cut off from the rest of the world as merchants and tradespeople traveled through the country via established trade routes. Access to markets was not scarce throughout Scotland and information on fashion and access to clothing were not limited to larger cities.

According to extant sources describing the dress of those in the western Scottish Isles, author Martin Martin described in his work *A Description of the Western Islands of Scotland* (1703):

*“The ancient dress wore by the women... is called arisad, is a white plaid, having a few small stripes of black, blue and red; it reached from the neck to the heels, and was tied before on the breast with a buckle of silver or brass, according to the quality of the person... The plaid being pleated all round, was tied with a belt below the breast; the belt was of leather, and several pieces of silver intermixed with the leather like a chain... They wore sleeves of scarlet cloth, closed at the end as men’s vests, with gold lace round them, having plate buttons with fine stones. The head dress was a fine kerchief of linen strait (tight) about the head, hanging down the back taper-wise; a large lock of hair hangs down their cheeks above their breast, the lower end tied with a knot of ribbands.”*



**Fig. 11. Habit of Gentleman in the Highlands of Scotland & A Lady in the Highlands of Scotland, James Basire, 1759.**

The arisaid shown in the illustrations above is in tartan, however this was not always the pattern woven, the fabric was often woven plain or with stripes depending on region. A headdress worn by married women was the *kertch* or *breid caol* in Gaelic. Unmarried women wore a *snood*; a ribbon wrapped around the head allowing hair to fall loosely.

Another written account by Willian Sachceverell in 1668 states that *“The usual habit of both sexes is the pladd; the women’s much finer, the colours more lively, and the square much larger than the men’s, and put me in the mind of the ancient Picts. This serves them for a veil and covers both head and body.”*



Fig. 12. Flora Macdonald (1721-1780) A farmer’s daughter who helped Bonnie Prince Charlie to escape to the Isle of Skye after the Scottish defeat at Culloden in 1746.

One last statement by Edward Burt in 1754 on the dress of the women in Inverness:

*“The plaid is the undress of the ladies at Inverness and to a genteel woman who adjusts it with a good air, is a becoming veil. But as I am pretty sure you never saw one of them in England, I shall employ a few words to describe it to you. It is made of silk or fine worsted, chequered with various lively colours, two breadths wide, and three yards in length; it is brought over the head, and may hide or discover the face according to the wearer’s fancy or occasion: it reaches to the waist behind; one corner as low as the ankle on one side; and the other part in folds hangs down from the opposite arm.”*

As mentioned earlier, the amount of red featured in the Isabella gown can be correlated to certain status or meaning. The modern relationship between tartan and clan association is a relatively new concept created in the nineteenth century by King George IV. In 1822, he visited Edinburgh and proposed that at official ceremonies respective tartans should be worn dictating clanship or any tartan if they had no identifying pattern. Many tartans were reinvented due to original patterns lost due to the dress acts of the previous century. Tartan also became more popular in England due to Queen Victoria's adoration for "scottish culture" (more specifically highland culture), having first visited in 1842 and renovated a castle by the middle of the century.

### Project Reflection

There are multiple ways to approach the recreation of a garment, one way is to replicate the pattern and stitching as close as possible to the original and the other way is to put yourself into the shoes of the creator and deduce through the making process how the garment was made and for what purpose specific decisions were made. This second way you are creating a new garment with the deciphering of skills while putting your own self into the work. It is important to pull key points of the garment in its recreation such as the pleating placement and design, but in recreating a garment there are going to be differences, from the shapes of the individual to the way you hold your needle.

The individuality in the construction of a bespoke garment can never be reproduced exactly for another individual, each person's body is different. Honoring the original garment while applying scholarly insight and modern craftsmanship is an interesting dance of acknowledgment and figuring out what exactly works. Some changes are simply needed to improve fit on a different body.



The gown is most definitely modeled after the original gown as well as the recreated gown by the team in collaboration with the American Duchess company. As a recreation of a replication of an original gown, elements are bound to change. The information gathered by the team of scholars in the recreation of the Isabella MacTavish Fraser gown was invaluable in the creation of my own gown.

I used the information gathered from the reconstruction of the Isabella gown and applied my own skills and knowledge to creating a gown on my own, taking this venture further in making all of the undergarments as well as dying and weaving the fabric. The layers of recreation and bespoke garment making combines the skills of deduction, art, and experimentation to create a gown fit for my individual body. This is the culmination of such skills that makes such an experience so special and non recreatable as all elements of wearer, mantua maker, fabric, experience, and vision must all come together in synchronicity.

The ambitious nature of this project forced me to cut a few corners where time constraints became overwhelming. This makes a great deal of sense in hindsight as I was attempting to learn and replicate the trades of multiple craftspeople of the time . I would have loved to dive into natural dye methods and experimented with recipes, however I was unable to add the additional cost of natural dyes at the time of my project and had become strained on time. I began this project with the overwhelming desire to build this ensemble from scratch; however nearing the end of the allotted time period to complete this project I found myself with a warped loom, a few feet of warp wound on the loom, and yards of warp threads tangled. I made the decision to take a step back and reevaluate my ambitious plans. In the middle of week eight of our ten week winter term I decided that my plan was a bit too desirous and one person could not simply do everything within the time scale in which I gave myself. The slightly insane idea to weave my own

tartan was a goal that I overestimated, however the process of dyeing and weaving a smaller section of fabric was a learning experience in itself and will still be used as a sampler in the final project.

I purchased tartan fabric from Lochcarron of Scotland, a company specializing in the production of authentic tartan. The company being only 60 miles from Inverness adds another layer of connection to the overall project. The company was founded in 1892 and is the leading manufacturer of tartan. The company works with wool and other natural fibers and strives to make products that are sustainable and environmentally conscious. A quarter of the yarn used annually by Lochcarron is sourced in Britain and the majority of that is sourced from within Scotland. They work to keep British farming and manufacturing a top priority as well as work with other United Kingdom manufacturers to spin yarn and sew garments for them. Their practices to reuse the yarns and fibers in production before recycling mirrors the rag trade of the eighteenth century, and remnants are repurposed for crafting or are donated to organizations that will repurpose them.

I found the use of the “Isabella MacTavish Fraser Gown Pattern and Construction” guide to be of great help while constructing my own gown. I began the process closely following the directions given, however intuition took over and I constructed the gown in a different order than directed. I found this to be interesting in that my interpretation of the construction methods of the gown altered as I created.

My gown is not a direct replica of this gown. Even if I had the same measurements as the original, my distinct anatomy would be different, I did not grow up wearing stays since youth, and the reliance on technology has definitely impacted my posture.

As stated in the beginning of my thesis, I recorded the active hours in which it took me to create each piece of the entire ensemble. The ten to twelve hours that it took for a skilled mantua maker to construct a gown was something that stuck with me during the creation of my project.

In total it took around 170 active hours to complete. The undergarments included the chemise which took 8 hours, stays 70 hours, false rump 3 hours, short under-petticoat 6 hours, long striped petticoat 7 hours, ruffled petticoat 8 hours, pieced tie on pocket 4 hours, embroidered fichu 3 hours and embroidered garters 3 hours. The gown itself took around 58 hours to complete.

The inseparability of making and purchasing in the eighteenth century is something to be considered especially in comparison to modern consumerism. The consumption patterns of women were shaped by what *they* were making and what *they* needed. A woman would purchase fabric and notions to make a garment just as an artist would purchase paints, brushes and canvas to make a painting. Such items would only be purchased if the woman was going to pursue such activities. The marketplace for consumers offered not only finished goods but items to create said goods by the individual.

The collaborative dynamic of clothes maker and consumer is a relationship that has been driven to be only accessible by the modern aristocracy and celebrity. In my project this is what I intended to bring forth the idea that I as the average creator could design my own version of a garment and create it using the knowledge and expertise of contemporary dress scholars.

The gown I created is a sentimental garment made outside of the modern fashion marketplace. However there are still connections of labor and wage disparities that reflect the social value of material goods over human labor throughout time.

The realization that I could not master or partake in every trade role is one that came shockingly late in the project. I found that no matter how much research or reading I did, there is nothing that can replace the hours of training and practice at a craft. As I stated at the beginning of my thesis, I am no master sewist. However the 170 hours of hand sewing that I applied to this project most definitely improved my skills. This is not something that I have done my entire life nor is it my livelihood.

In recreating garments of the past, there is often much that is overlooked in the realm of context. Often history is made a fantasy where only the beauty of garments are on display, the larger social influences are left in the shadows where the discomfort of race and labor are hidden from the world.

It is hard for me now to simply look at garments with an aesthetic lens, I no longer can look at post-industrial clothing without thinking about the environmental impact or the modern slave labor that has carried from the cotton fields of the eighteenth century to the sweatshops overseas.

It was important for me to use natural fibers not only for the historical aspects of the project, but the environment as well. However my access to high quality locally sourced textiles and notions with a relatively short turnaround time did not give me the opportunity to investigate alternatives. Ordering fabric as an exception to purchasing locally due to geographical hurdles was a variable that I would have taken time to research in hindsight.

Textile waste is continuing to rise. In 1980 the Environmental Protection Agency found that the United States generated around 5 billion pounds of textile waste, and had risen to 32.44 billion pounds in 2014, this number continues to rise today. Post-consumer waste of textiles includes clothing, accessories, shoes, bedding, and other household items. According to the Center for EcoTechnology “95% of all textiles have the potential to be reused or recycled, but currently they are recycled at a rate of only 15%” (2017)

Such an issue is thought to be caused by lack of awareness and action among the individual consumer. The rates given above do not include waste generated by the fashion industry or corporate businesses. The modern fashion industry uses a majority of non-renewable resources such as petroleum to create garments that are used for a short period, and begin to degrade in quality quickly, leading once again to more purchases of poorly constructed synthetic material based garments. The textile production system generated one fifth of the world’s industrial water pollution.

The business model of “fast fashion” is used in the majority of retail stores today. New styles are brought to the market with an extremely quick turnaround. Within the last decade, fashions have gone from being released once a season, to around every four weeks. As more fashion styles are released, the incentive to shop increases and styles go in and out of fashion at a quicker pace. Garments are sold at a cheaper price which encourages consumers to purchase more items; less money spent means less attachment to the garment and a higher probability of it ending up in the landfill. (Beall)

What does the average person know about their clothes? There is a disconnect between manufacturers, retailers, and consumers. Besides the little information of estimated material content and country of manufacturing printed on the label of modern garments, not much else is known about how the garment is made or the people who made it.

In our modern world, garment production is seen as something made on the other side of the world. At least in America, we distance ourselves from our garment consumption and production. The majority of garments made and distributed around the world are non-domestic and consumers of these are willfully ignorant. Garments also do not traditionally have a “shelf life” although the poor quality materials and manufacturing make the life of the garment when worn much shorter.

The textile and apparel industry is significant in the loss of natural biodiversity. There are direct connections between these industries and their supply chains and waterway pollution, soil degradation, and destruction of natural ecosystems. However this is not a new impact with modern fast fashion, the industrial revolution began these issues with purposefully growing cotton variants with longer fibers which took greater amounts of water to cultivate.

More modern movements like in the early twentieth century, Gandhi’s Khadi cloth movement reintroduced biodiverse cotton in India. Gandhi asked all people to plant and harvest their own materials in order to create their own cloth and wealth, spending time each day no matter their circumstances spinning Khadi, an exercise which helped bring unity throughout India through shared labor. This led to the country becoming more self-sufficient.

As a part of the larger Swadeshi Movement to boycott imported materials and products, the goal was to elevate India out of poverty through the creation of industries and production of local business. It moved to end the unequal trade between India and Britain as India has become reliant on expensive imported British goods even though the raw materials originated in India.

The tasks of harvesting, spinning, and weaving the Khadi was done all by hand without machines or factories. The power of the human artist's hand at the basic level is undervalued with modern technology. Through my own process I found ways to slow my work without industrial machinery and take time with each step of the process to be conscious of the labor that I was expending.

Although not a part of the finished dress ensemble, the creative processes of spinning, weaving, and dyeing my own yarn and fabric brought what Gandhi was inspired to a new space for me.

Other artists and creators who make art looking at colonialism through textiles were major inspirations for me. Yinka Shonibare a Nigerian artist focuses on the influence of colonialism and post-colonialism within globalization and the relationship this has with cultural identity. His sculptural work using Ankara cloth juxtaposed with western silhouettes, my favorite of his works is his sculptural reimagining of *The Swing*.

The work Shonibare creates in sculpture features headless mannequins dressed in pre and post industrial dress, depicting narratives which combine idyllic luxury as well as violent decadence.

Although my discourse does not add to the decolonization and rewriting of dress history I hope that it may inspire others to look into the impact that their clothing has on the planet and modern slavery.

It took me quite a while to figure out the ways in which I wanted to document and display my work for the BFA showcase exhibition. My biggest concern was the influence of gallery setting, I didn't want my work to be seen as just another pretty gown on display. The crucial information that every piece had been handcrafted is difficult to portray without directly stating it. I decided to be upfront with the information by

including the amount of time each piece took to sew within the title of each individual piece.

With documenting the work, I wish that I would have taken more in process photo documentation; however I found that the entire process brought me to a space where I focused solely on creating.

I decided to take photos of myself in the gown at the Macleay Park Structure in Portland's Forest Park. This ruined stone structure has always felt like a place frozen in time, a nature sanctuary in the center of a bustling metropolitan city. Often called the “witch’s castle” or simply the “stone house”, the abandoned stone structure has had various uses throughout the years. Now it is often covered in graffiti, marked by hundreds of travelers and artists passing through.

Research makes connections and through my research I have made many, in most cultures our lives are surrounded by clothing from the day we are born to the day we die. Periods of time are often referenced by their popular fashion trends, however with fast fashion those trends are created and die in quick succession. Industrialization and capitalism has caused a need for more material items, with little monetary cost, which can be discarded without a second thought.

I wish to live a full life in the clothes that I wear and create. Like garments created in history, I hope the work I create is passed down through time as a sentimental work, with function unrelated to the modern fashion marketplace.



## Project Photos







## Bibliography

- Adrosko, Rita J. *Natural Dyes and Home Dyeing*. Dover Publications, 1971.
- Arnold, Janet. *Patterns of Fashion: Englishwomen's Dresses & Their Construction, vol. 1, c. 1660–1860*. London: Wace, 1964.
- Bank, Mirra. *Anonymous Was a Woman: A Celebration in Words and Images of Traditional American Art and the Women Who Made It*. United States, St. Martin's Press, 1995.
- Barber, E. J. W.. *Women's work : the first 20,000 years : women, cloth, and society in early times*. United Kingdom, Norton, 1995.
- Beall, Abigail. "Why clothes are so hard to recycle" BBC Future, July 12, 2020.
- Browne, James. *A History of the Highlands and of the Highland Clans*. Ireland, A. Fullarton, 1849.
- Buck, Anne. *Dress in eighteenth-century England*. Holmes & Meier, 1979.
- Burt, Edward. *Burt's Letters from the North of Scotland*. United Kingdom, Birlinn, 1998.
- Cullen, Oriole. "Eighteenth-Century European Dress." In Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–2003.
- Cunnington, Phillis, and Cunnington, Cecil Willett. *The History of Underclothes*. London, M. Joseph, 1951.
- Davis, Linda. *Weaving Tartans: A Guide for Contemporary Handweavers*. N.p., Independently Published, 2018.

- Delpierre, Madeleine, and Beamish, Caroline. *Dress in France in the eighteenth century*. Yale University Press, 1997.
- Dyer, Serena. *Material Lives: Women Makers and Consumer Culture in the 18th Century*. United Kingdom, Bloomsbury Publishing, 2021.
- Godley, Andrew. "Homeworking and the Sewing Machine in the British Clothing Industry 1850–1905." *The Culture of Sewing: Gender, Consumption and Home Dressmaking*. Ed. Barbara Burman. Oxford: Berg, 1999. 255–268. Dress, Body, Culture. Bloomsbury Fashion Central.
- Friendship, Elizabeth. *Creating Historical Clothes; Pattern Cutting from the 16th to the 19th Centuries*. Silman-James Press, 2013.
- Hart, Avril and Susan North. *Historical Fashion in Detail; The 17th and 18th Centuries*. Victoria and Albert Museum, 1998.
- Hood, Adrienne D., "The Material World of Cloth: Production and Use in Eighteenth-Century Rural Pennsylvania." *Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture. The William and Mary Quarterly*, Jan., 1996, Vol. 53, No. 1, *Material Culture in Early America*, pp. 43-66.
- Horn, D. B. "George IV and Highland Dress." *The Scottish Historical Review*, vol. 47, no. 144, Edinburgh University Press, 1968, pp. 209–10, JSTOR.
- Krznaric, Roman. "The Movement to Live More Simply Is Older Than You Think" *YES! Magazine*, Dec. 6, 2013.
- Lemire, Beverly, and Giorgio Riello. "East & West: Textiles and Fashion in Early Modern Europe." Oxford University Press. *Journal of Social History*, Summer, 2008, Vol. 41, No. 4, pp. 887-916.

- Martin, Martin. *A Description of the Western Islands of Scotland*. United Kingdom, Andrew Bell, at the Cross-Keys and Bible, in Cornhil, near Stocks-Market., 1703.
- National Women's History Museum "Fashioning Yourself: a story of home sewing"  
Google Arts and Culture
- North, Susan. *18th-Century Fashion in Detail*. Thames & Hudson/ Victoria and Albert Museum, London, 2018.
- Ramsey, Michael. "Scottish Dress in 18th-Century Virginia", Colonial Williamsburg, Nov, 10, 2020
- Reynolds, Nicole. "Cottage Industry: The Ladies of Llangollen and the Symbolic Capital of the 'Cottage Ornée.'" *The Eighteenth Century*, vol. 51, no. 1/2, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010, pp. 211–27.
- Ribero, Aileen. *The Art of Dress; Fashion in England and France, 1750-1820*. Yale University Press, 1995.
- Ribeiro, Aileen. *Dress in eighteenth-century Europe, 1715-1789*. Yale University Press, 2002.
- Styles, John. *The Dress of the People : everyday fashion in eighteenth-century England*. Yale University Press, 2007.
- Stobart, Jon. "The Economic and Social Worlds of Rural Craftsmen-Retailers in Eighteenth-Century Cheshire." *The Agricultural History Review*, vol. 52, no. 2, 2004, pp. 141–160. JSTOR.
- Stowell, Lauren, and Abby Cox. *The American Duchess Guide to 18th Century Dressmaking*. Page Street Publishing, 2017.

Stowell, Lauren, and Abby Cox. *The American Duchess Guide to 18th Century Beauty*.  
Page Street Publishing, 2019.

St. Clair, Kassia. *The Golden Thread: How Fabric Changed History*. New York, Liveright,  
2019.

## Images

Fig. 1. Cruikshank, Isaac. *Miseries of Human Life*, 1808. Courtesy of The Lewis Walpole  
Library, Yale University.

Fig. 2. Granger Academic. *Colonial Cloth Makers*. Carding, spinning, and weaving  
woolen cloth in an 18th century American household. Drawing, 19th century.

Fig. 3. Lowry, J. Wilson. *Textiles: a spinning jenny*. Engraving by W. Lowry, 1811. Artstor,  
[library-artstor-org.proxy.lib.pdx.edu/asset/24855922](https://www.artstor.org/asset/24855922).

Fig. 4. Unknown. *Stays 1780-1789*, Victoria and Albert Museum.  
<https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O115752/stays-unknown/>.

Fig. 5. R. Rushworth (fl. 1785–1786) *The Bum Shop* Etching, with hand coloring, 32.8 x 46  
cm (sheet) Published July 11, 1785 by S.W. Fores The Lewis Walpole Library, Yale  
University, 785.07.11.01+.

Fig. 6. Weatherspoon, Ewen. *Isabella MacTavish Fraser wedding gown c. 1785*.  
Reproduced with permission of Inverness Museum & Art Gallery.

Fig. 7. Weatherspoon, Ewen. *Isabella MacTavish Fraser wedding gown c. 1785*.  
Reproduced with permission of Inverness Museum & Art Gallery.

Fig. 8. Unknown. *Robe à l'Anglaise*, British, 1770-75, The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Fig. 9. Unknown. Robe à l'Anglaise, American, 1785-95, The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Fig. 10. Sleeve detail of Isabella MacTavish Fraser Gown c. 1784. Blog Atelier Nostalgia.

Fig. 11. Habit of Gentleman in the Highlands of Scotland & A Lady in the Highlands of Scotland, James Basire, 1759, Work on paper, 27.1 cm X 18.9 cm, National Galleries Scotland, Edinburgh, Scotland, Pg. 48 & 49.

Fig. 12. Robertson, William. Flora Macdonald (1722-1780) Oil on Canvas. Glasgow Museums Resource Centre.