

Basic Detail Report



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Title Wedding Dress

Date 1882

Primary Maker Lena Lee Howard

Medium Machine-stitched and hand-stitched silk and cotton, with linen

(probably) lace, baleen boning, cotton wadding, non-ferrous metal weights, brass hooks and eyes, silk-covered wooden (probably) buttons

Description Woman's two-piece dress, consisting of a bodice (a) and skirt (b), made of cream-colored silk brocade with a leaf and berry design, and silk faille.

The basque bodice is made of the brocade and extends over the hips, dipping at center front. The neckline is square and is edged with the fashion fabric cut in scallops and bound with cream-colored silk satin. Needlerun net lace is laid under the scallops. Bordering the scallops is a pleated strip of the faille, meeting at center front with a satin bow. The center front opening fastens with eleven satin-covered buttons and a hook and eye at the top. The armholes are piped with satin. The sleeves are made of a sheer cream-colored silk voile, overlaid with two strips of embroidered voile. They are narrow and three-quarter-length, ending in multiple flounces of organdy and lace (reminiscent of eighteenth-century engageantes), topped by a satin bow. The center back of the bodice extends in a broad tail, topped by a satin bow. A double row of satin piping finishes the bottom edge of the bodice. The bodice is lined with cream-colored twill-woven silk. All of the seams are boned. Silk-covered cotton wadding fills out the bust area. A petersham stamped with the maker's label eases strain on

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the seams. The skirt has a train. It is lightly gathered in front, smooth over the hips, and full in the back, below the waistline. The center front panel is brocade, cut with points at the bottom, then bound with satin. The side panels are faille, edged at the bottom with a closely pleated self-fabric ruffle. More faille is folded in wide, diagonal pleats on either side of the front brocade panel; the pleats angle up towards the center back and are gathered into a bustled effect over the back panel. These pleats are edged with cream-colored fringe made of narrow, crimped silk tape. Tassels made of this tape fringe are also stitched between the points at the bottom of the center front panel. A large satin bow is mounted on the left side of the bustled faille. The center back panel is brocade and gathered very full. It is also edged with a pleated faille ruffle, which was pieced with a slightly darker color of faille when they apparently ran out of the cream color. Several different styles of stiff, open-weave fabric are used to line the brocade panels and bottom edge of the skirt. A pleated ruffle of the lining fabric edges the inside of the skirt hem. The skirt's fullness is controlled by tapes sewn in the skirt lining. The center back of the skirt closes with two large hooks and eyes.

Dimensions Bodice (bodice center back length x width across shoulders): 36 3/4 x 13in. (93.3 x 33cm) Bodice (at longest point): 21in. (53.3cm) Skirt (center front length): 39 3/4in. (101cm) Skirt (center back length): 60in. (152.4cm) Skirt (waist circumference): 23 1/2in. (59.7cm)