

Basic Detail Report



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Title Dress

Date about 1890

Primary Maker Mrs. Charles B. Smith

Medium Machine-stitched and hand-stitched silk/cotton and cotton, with non-ferrous metal hooks, wool wadding, steel wire, one piece of steel boning, and other boning, probably of baleen

Description Woman's dress of burgundy red velvet. The bodice has a pointed waist, a V-neckline, and a standing, wired collar that is 2 1/4 inches high at the back of the neck. The center front opening fastens with metal hooks and thread eyes. The sleeves are three-quarter length; they are gathered at the shoulder, then tapered to a tight fit at the elbow. The sleeve is cut in three pieces; the seam at the inside of the elbow is gathered to allow more comfortable movement. The bodice front is fitted with two nine-inch-long darts on each side; the back is cut in six pieces to achieve a close fit. The back panels of the bodice are cut one with the back panels of the skirt. Fabric is folded in deep, layered box pleats at the center back seam, leading into the skirt. At the inner side back seams, the skirt fabric is accordin-folded to create standing pleats at hip level. The outer side-back seams are decorated with self-fabric rosettes, also at hip level. The skirt front has one deep knife pleat at the center, and a shallow knife pleat to the left of the center. The right side of the skirt front is pleated up into the side seam to create an asymmetrical draped effect. Around the bottom of the skirt's white cotton lining are stitched three layers of ruffles and pleats: the innermost layer is knife-pleated white cotton, edged with machine-made lace;

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the next layer is velvet, stitched smoothly to stiff, white cotton with a woven

check; and the final layer of pleating under the skirt's top fabric is box-pleated

velvet. Two silk pads filled with curled horsehair (probably) are stitched at the

center back of the skirt to create a bustle. The skirt opens along the side back

seams; the skirt side panels are pulled to the back as the skirt waistband fastens

with large hooks and eyes at the center back. The back panel of the skirt covers

this slightly awkward construction as it is pulled up and settled across the back

of the hips by the fastening of the bodice. The waistband of the skirt is covered

with a strip of self-fabric twisted in a rope-like decoration. The bodice is lined

with cream-colored, twill-woven silk. There are dress shields in the armholes,

stitched over black silk pads stuffed with wool. These pads prevent an awkward

hollow in the fitting of the bodice front below the shoulders. All seams and darts

are boned.

Dimensions Dress (center back length x hem circumference): 144 x 78in. (365.8 x

198.1cm)