

Basic Detail Report

Title Wedding Dress

Date 1783-1816

Primary Maker Prudence Punderson

Medium Hand-stitched and machine-stitched silk and cotton

Description This dress is made of a salmon pink and cream silk ribbed brocade.

The pattern is of red/pink/white roses with green leaves and lavender flowers,

and white flowered fronds on a pattern of satin-woven and rib-woven salmon

stripes alternating with narrow rib-woven cream and satin-woven salmon

stripes. The fabric is typical of the period of the dress's first form, the 1780s, or a

bit earlier. The dress has been repeatedly remade so that it is an amalgamation

of different fashions. The smooth, tight sleeves are typical of the late eighteenth

century, although the rounded set of the armscye is later. The sleeves were

probably shortened to their current 11 1/2-inch length in the early nineteenth

century. The skirt train is typical of the circa 1800-1805 period and also of the

early twentieth century, which witnessed a neoclassical revival; it has been

pieced of squared panels, with the corners turned up and inside to form a

rounded extension. A plain-woven white cotton pleated ruffle is basted inside

the hem of the skirt train. This is a typical treatment of the early twentieth

century. The high waistline and drawstring front opening were probably done at

the same time as that alteration. The skirt is full all the way around the body, a

style which is typical c. 1780-1800 and after about 1825; however, the cartridge-

style pleating (most evident at the back of the skirt) is not seen until the

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nineteenth century, and is most typical of the 1840s and 1850s. The piping set into the armhole and back waist seams are post-1820; the alteration of the side-back "seams" (constructed with basting stitches in a form more like darts) was probably done at the same time. The form of the original 1780s bodice is still visible inside the dress. The bodice panels were taken apart and reversed and the drawstring casing was sewn across the panels, so the original dipped front is still evident, hanging in broad tabs on the inside of the dress. The dress now has a low and wide square neckline. The drawstring opening of the bodice is set to the right of center; the skirt extends to the proper right hip via a narrow pink grosgrain band, which would have pinned in place under the bodice. The bodice back is lined with white plain-woven cotton. A separate flap of plain-woven linen fabric pins over the bosom and is then covered by the dress front. This panel is machine-stitched.

Dimensions Primary Dimensions (front length x width across shoulders): 52 1/2 x 15in. (133.4 x 38.1cm) Skirt (center back length including train): 73 1/2in. (186.7 cm)