

# Basic Detail Report

## Title Maternity Dress

Date about 1836-1840

Primary Maker Unknown

Medium Hand-stitched silk, with silk fringe, brass hooks, and silk-covered wooden buttons.

Description Maternity dress of brown, blue, and white silk plaid, with matching cape collar. The dress is styled with an "infant" bodice, the fabric being pleated into a yoke across the front and back shoulders. The dress opens at center back and the back waistline is gathered on a drawstring to allow for the wearer's changing girth, while the front remains relatively fashionable-looking. (There is no other closing mechanism stitched to the bodice, but there are puncture marks indicating that hooks and eyes or pins were used.) The front of the bodice is pleated into the waistline and into the yoke. The yoke in front is decorated with a self-fabric, piped strip across the bottom edge. The neckline is round, and the shoulderline is dropped. The full sleeves are pleated into the armscye, and banded down with a self-fabric strip 2 1/4 inches below the shoulder. This strip is decorated with self-covered, non-functioning buttons at each end (button is missing from the back of the right sleeve). The bottom of the sleeves are gathered into a 1 1/8-inch-wide cuff. The neckline, armscye seams, underarm sleeve seams, sleeve banding, cuffs, and yoke edges are piped. The dress is entirely unlined, which also allows easier fitting as the pregnancy advances. The skirt is knife-pleated into the bodice across the front, and gathered across the

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back. It is lined at the hem for about six inches with a reddish-brown silk, and finished with brown wool tape, which is a later addition. A 2 3/4-inch-wide tuck is taken in the skirt, about four inches above the bottom edge. A separate cape collar (b) of matching silk would have covered up the unfashionable gathering in the back of the bodice. It is trimmed with brown silk fringe and it ties at the neck with brown silk ribbon.

Dimensions Primary Dimensions (length x width across shoulders): 54 1/2 x 19in.  
(138.4 x 48.3cm)