Basic Detail Report



Title Wedding Dress

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Date 1883

Primary Maker Mary Christina Harris

Medium Bodice (a): Machine-stitched and hand-stitched silk and cotton, with ferrous metal hooks and eyes, and silk thread-covered ferrous metal buttons; unidentified boning. Skirt (b): Machine-stitched and hand-stitched silk and cotton, with wool hem tape, and ferrous metal hooks and eyes.

Description Woman's dress of aubergine silk, consisting of a bodice (a) and a skirt (b). The bodice has a two-inch-high standing band collar of moire of a matching color. The shoulderline is natural. The center front opening of the bodice is constructed within an inset of the silk moire; the opening fastens with 21 buttons which are covered with matching silk thread worked in a star pattern. The bodice fabric flanking the moire inset is folded into three narrow vertical pleats, and embroidered with featherstitching. The bodice front is fitted with two 8 1/2-inch long darts on each side; the back of the bodice is cut in six pieces to provide a close fit. The center back panels of the bodice extend in decorative, looped tails. The long sleeves are tightly fitted; they are cut with an upper and lower seam and are curved at the elbow. The seam is open at the outside of the wrist for two inches; a long triangle of the moire is wrapped around the sleeve at the wrist. The bodice is lined with tan twill-woven cotton. The darts and side seams are boned. A tab of the lining fabric is stitched on each side of the bodice front at the waist, fastening with hooks and eyes to ease stress on the button closure; this tab has been extended with heavy white cotton tape, 3 1/8 inches wide. The button side of the opening has been let out and the buttons moved to

enlarge the waist. Also, a strip of similar silk has been stitched in this area to stabilize the alteration. The skirt is asymetrically draped with two panels of self-fabric, pulled up into pleats at the back waistline in order to puff at the hips. The center back panel of the skirt is folded into deep pleats which stand out from waistline. The skirt panel on the proper left side is the moire fabric. A six-inch-wide strip of moire borders the bottom of the skirt around the front and back to the left side, where it meets the vertical moire panel. The skirt waistband is made of brown cotton, which also lines the skirt. The waistband fastens with buttons at the center back; this is covered by the center back skirt panel, which hooks to the left of the button closure. There is an in-seam pocket on the proper right side of the skirt, hidden by the drapery. The bottom of the skirt is edged with purple wool tape. A length of pleated self-fabric (c) taken off the skirt when it was altered remains with the dress. A strip of ruched self-fabric trim (d) was taken off an undetermined location on the dress; it also remains with the dress. Dimensions Bodice (center back length x width across shoulders): 25 x 13 3/4in. (63.5 x 34.9cm) Skirt (hem circumference x center back length): 100 3/4 x 47in. (255.9 x 119.4cm)