

For the **AGM ACORSO** - with additions added July, 2021.  
***ACORSO RIG: 'Tailored clothes for women, 1750-1930.'***  
***Vêtements sur mesure pour femmes, 1750-1930***



**Images:** No 1: Miss Caroline Vernon, 1770, Attingham Park NT; No 2 Cloak, 1790- 1810, Lichfield Hist Soc. Pasadena, USA.; No 3 Mary Anning, Fossil hunter, c1838-39, Lyme Regis Mus; No 4: 1880 Carte de Visite, Berlin – state Library Berlin. No 5: Redfern Paris 1903 Maciet, Musée Art Deco, Paris. No 6: Cheruit, Paris, 1916 BNF Gallica.

**AIMS:** A material culture, comparative study of the design, manufacture, retailing and consumption of tailored garments for and by women, at all market levels in the 1750-1920 period. We look at this in the context of the struggle by women of all social classes for social, economic and political inclusion in the 1750-1920 period.

1820 Cloak, USA, Met Mus. No 2009.300.8032 ; 1867, Promenade Suit, USA, *Godey's*, NYPL.

Tessie Reynolds, Brighton cyclist, 1890.



# 'Man or Woman?' We will assess the gendered hostility to women in tailored clothes.

- Walking Dress, 1880, *Augustine Martin*, Paris, bought in Philadelphia. (Drexel Univ Coll. USA)
- Cartoon, 1880, by *Linley Sambourne* in *Punch magazine*, London.



"MAN OR WOMAN?"—A TOSS UP.  
"DRESSES ARE STILL UNIVERSALLY CUT EN COUR. A VERY DRESSY TOILETTE, AND ONE, MUCH WORN NOW, FOR THE EVENING, IS OF BLACK BROCHÉ OR CLOTH MATERIAL CUT EN HABIT D'HOMME, WITH PLAIN OR KILTED SKIRT, VERY TIGHT; FOR FAIR LADIES IT IS VERY BECOMING TO OMIT A TUCKER, AND HAVE THE BLACK WITH NO SOFTENING."  
*Journal des Modes*, 1<sup>er</sup> Avril.

# Our RIG Membership:

- 32 members = England, Scotland, N. Ireland, USA  
France, Austria, Italy, Germany, Spain.
- 12 Museum curators/staff in England, Scotland, N.  
Ireland, Austria, Spain.
- 18 University lecturers or PhD /MA students in UK,  
USA, UK, Germany, Austria, Italy.
- 2 Freelance dress historians

# Activities: 2020-2021

Jan. 2020: Study Day at Vienna Academy of Fine Art at invitation of Prof Elke Gaugele. Visit by 7 RIG members to Dress Collection, Vienna Museum.

May. 2020- 9-strong Steering Committee set up – meets virtually monthly via TEAMS : 7 from UK, 1 USA , 1 Germany.

Sept. 2020 RIG TEAMS IMAGE AND TEXT RESEARCH SITE established- with c. 20 specific themed research folders matching our research aims. Open only to Members.

Nov. 2020 Virtual RIG Research Meeting '*Early tailored clothes for women, 1800-1875* attended by 30.

Nov. 2020 Decision to widen dates of our research from 1750-1920- later extended to 1930.

Jan. 2021 Presentation to ACORSO AGM and formal, free Membership system established. We are now a group of 30 researchers.

Jan. 2021 Members invited to join specific Small Interest Research Groups to divide up research.

Feb 2021 10 Small Research Interest Groups set up and start work - meeting monthly.

From May 2021- Planning for Autumn 2021 conference.

## From Feb. 2021: Examples of some of the research topics of our Small Interest Groups (SIGS.)

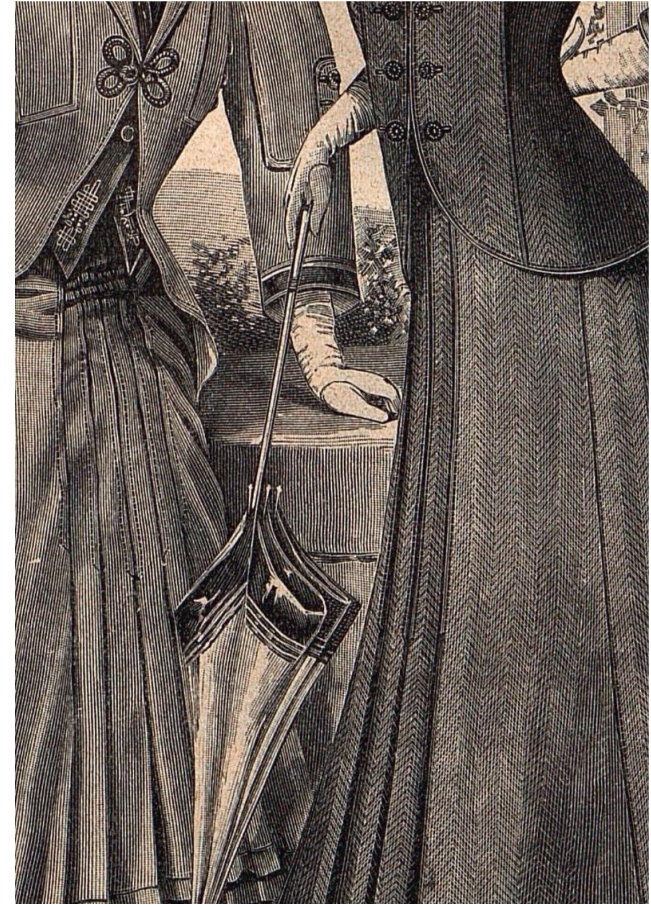
- Glossaries of Terms: for tailored garments, the blouse; fabrics;
- Range of manufacturers of fabrics and garments: qualities and prices from couture to mass production and second hand - from mid 18<sup>th</sup> century East Coast, USA to the East End of London 1888 and the couture tailoring trades in London Paris, New York, Vienna from c. the 1870s.
- Development of the blouse to be worn under costumes/ suits.
- Development of waterproofing for outdoor clothing.
- Development of manufacturing methods and related technology in UK and USA
- Cutting Systems and Paper Patterns from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards.
- ..... ... and more

‘The shared expertise among our group means that we truly can advance this project by tapping into, and complementing, each other’s research.’

(Sarah Johnson Jan 2021)

# Presentations of research interests by 6 Members of our group:

- Cally Blackman
- Sarah Johnson
- Marie McLoughlin
- Hannah Rumball
- Suzanne Rowland
- Lou Taylor





# CALLY BLACKMAN, Senior

**Lecturer,** Central St. Martins. [Author *100 Years of Fashion Illustration* (2007); co-author of *A Portrait of Fashion* (2015); contributor to exhibition catalogues for the V&A and Palais Galliera.]



**‘WALKING TO WORKING AMAZONS: the development of the riding habit from the 1660s to the early twentieth century.’**

1770 Caroline Vernon, by François-Xavier Vispré, Attingham Park, NT, UK





*Dame en habit de Chasse.*  
*Cette belle en habit de chasse,*  
*Avec ses yeux doux et brillants,*  
*Au lieu de perdrix, ou becasse,*  
*Pourà prendre quelques Galants.*

"...the Queen's ladies of honour were dressed in their riding garbs, with coats and doublets with deep skirts, just for all the world like men...with perriwigs and with hats so that, only for a long petticoat dragging under their men's coats, nobody could take them for women in any point whatever..."

Samuel Pepys 12th June 1666

1670 Woman in Hunting Dress, Nicolas Bonnart, (in masculine style except for the skirt. )



c1675 Mary of Modena by Verelst



c1690 Duchess de Bourgoyne by Gobert



1744 Princess Amalia von Preussen  
en Amazone by Pesne



1745 A Country Dance by Hogarth

By mid 18<sup>th</sup> century fashionable women wear riding habits for walking and traveling for ease of movement – see left image



c. 1740 Detail, Arthur Devis,  
1890.

Trevelyan Conversation Piece, Wallington, NT



1775 Riding Habit. V and A .no 269..-B



1775. Duchess of Gordon by Garner



• 1780: Lady Worsley by Reynolds



1788 'Tally Ho' by Dighton



Left: 1826 , Riding Habit USA. (Met NY C.I.41.145.2a,b) Centre: 'Sept heure du matin', Deveria. 1829. (Carnavalet Mus.Paris.) Right; 1895-1900 Travelling ensemble, *Siebenma* ready-to-wear, Paris (Mus. Art Deco. UF55.54.1)



Dr. Sarah Johnson,  
Independent Scholar  
New York

*'Tailoring for Women in  
the USA, 1754-1869.'*

sj3551@gmail.com



My research aim is to bridge mid-18<sup>th</sup>-mid-19<sup>th</sup> century studies of women's tailoring to the second half of the 19C, when we know women begin to wear "modern" two-piece suits.

Tailors' advertisements in American newspapers from 1754 led to this re-examination of earlier women's travelling clothing, including Josephs, cloaks, pelisses, and to riding habits as noted by Cally Blackman.

Use of press advertisements to track tailors making garments for women on East coast USA from mid 18<sup>th</sup> century to early 19<sup>th</sup> century - riding habits, Josephs, cloaks, pelisses.....

JOHN REEVES, AND GEORGE  
OTTAWELL, TAYLORS, living in an  
Apartment adjoining to Mr. George Johnson's,  
Peruke-Maker, in *Annapolis*,

**C**ARRY on the Business of  
TAYLORING, where Gentlemen and  
Others may depend on being faithfully served, by  
*Their most humble Servants,*  
*John Reeves,*  
*George Ottawell.*

N. B. The said *George Ottawell* perfectly un-  
derstands making of Ladies Riding-Habits, and  
Josephs, in the neatest Manner, having served the  
most noticed Man in *England*.

Ad. for Reeves and Ottawell:  
Makers of Ladies Riding  
Habits and Josephs, beginning  
in 1754, Annapolis, Maryland,  
USA, (from the *Maryland Gazette*,  
[Annapolis, MD], 7 Nov 1754, p.2.)

**T**HE Subscriber returns his sincere Thanks  
to his Friends and Customers, for their Favours received,  
and hopes that his Endeavours will merit a Continuance of  
the same. **ANDREW TAYLOR.**

He has provided himself with a Set of good Hands, and  
makes Ladies Riding-Habits, Cardinal Cloaks, and Josephs.  
N. B. Mrs. TAYLOR continues to carry on the Man-  
tua-making Business as usual.

Charleston, 1767: Ad. for Andrew Taylor, making 'Ladies Riding Habits, Cardinal Cloaks and Josephs' and Mrs. Taylor's Mantuamaking Business. (*The South Carolina Gazette, and Country Journal*, [Charleston, SC], 17 Feb 1767, p.3)

# British Women's Riding Coats, ca. 1760

(Metropolitan Museum: Cl: brown - 1976.147.1; blue - 1976.147.2)



LEFT. Ad. For Thomas Stokes, Merchant Taylor, New York, 1810 (*NY Evening Post*, 23<sup>rd</sup> Feb.1810)

RIGHT: Ad. for C. Newman, Mathematical Taylor, New Orleans, 1825 for 'Ladies Pelisses and Riding Habits.' (*Louisiana State Gazette*, New Orleans, (th April, 1825.p.2)

**A** men and families, with CLOTHES of the first quality, fashion and workmanship —The great encouragement received from his friends and the public since the adoption of this plan, which admits of a liberal discount for cash, from the high charges necessarily made by fashionable Taylors who give long credits, merits his grateful acknowledgements  
to The subscriber respectfully informs his customers and others, that he has now on hand a handsome assortment of London superfine Cloths and other articles of the first quality in his line; and that all orders will be executed in the same superior style and workmanship, which has given such general satisfaction.—Regimental. Naval U.

**A CARD.**  
**C** NEWMAN, mathematical Taylor, saturated with gratitude, for the unextinguished encouragement he has met with in this city, now respectfully informs his friends, the public, and the envious of this city, that that he has removed to No. 93, Chartres St. where he will execute all orders in his line of business with punctnality. Regimental and Uniform coats, Ladies pelisses, riding habits' embroidery, or braid work, done on the shortest notice, and most reasonable terms,  
a 9

Left: Pelisse, silk, 1815, Paris, (Met NY no . 1988.390.)

Right: Pelisse, McGregor wool tartan, c 1825, British, (Historic Deerfield, HD 2003.30).





Tracking immigrant tailors: 1766 Ad. for Stephen Buck, 'Tailor from London,' making Ladies Riding Habits. Williamsburg, VA, *The Virginia Gazette* [Williamsburg, VA], 6 Nov 1766, p.2.

*S T E P H E N B U C K,*  
TAILOR from LONDON,

**B**EGS leave to inform his CUSTOMERS, and others, that he has removed from the RED LYON to a house adjoining Mr. Attorney's; where he continues to carry on his business with the greatest expedition. Gentlemen and others, who please to favour him with their custom, may depend upon being well served, with the genteelest taste and newest fashions, and no pains spared to merit a continuance of their favours.

N. B. Ladies RIDING HABITS neatly made, and five per cent. discount for ready money.

Daniel Blowe: *View of the USA forming a complete Emigrant's Directory through every part of the Republic...*, (London, 1820,) cites start-up costs for tailors in the USA -£ 500-2000 pounds, with women and boys hedging in.

FORMING A COMPLETE

## Emigrant's Directory

*Through every part of the Republic :*

Particularising the States of Kentucky, Tennessee, Ohio, Indiana, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Illinois; and the Territories of Alabama, Missouri, with a description of the newly-acquired countries, East and West Florida, Michigan, and North-western; and comprising important details on the mode of settling, prospect of adventurers, religious opinions, manners and customs of the inhabitants, principal towns and villages, their manufactures, commerce, objects of curiosity, &c.; with a minute and comprehensive description of the soil, productions, climate and aspect of the country; likewise, an account of

the latter 8s. 5d. English money. Tailors can earn from 36s. to 54s.; but their trade is much injured by the employment of women and boys, who work from twenty-five to fifty per cent. cheaper than the men. A man that can cut out will be occasionally very well paid; the women not being clever in this branch of the business, makes men more necessary. When a journeyman works by the piece, for making a common coat he receives 18s.; a best do. 27s.; if he finds the trimmings, he is paid for a superfine coat 45s. to 51s.; for making trowsers, 9s. To carry on this trade as a master, with a prospect of success, will require a capital of from £500 to £2,000; the profits are large, but long credit is given. The price of a coat made of best cloth is from £7 4s. to £8 2s. There are large quantities of clothing imported from England, and many persons have their regular London tailors. Black and coloured Chinese crape, black stuff, white jean, white drill and Nankin, are worn for trowsers; all of which are made by women.

**MARTINEAU, 16 Court**  
v received by the ship For  
ore Hats, Caps and Head D  
gant printed Cloaks, all rea  
resses, which will be ope  
ember.

Ad. for Mrs. Martineau, Fashionable  
Dress Making, Importer  
(*New York Evening Post*, 27 Nov. 1830, p.1)

Fashion Plate: Redingote - (*La Mode* 1836 Palais Galliera G16300)



**FASHIONABLE DRESS-MAKING.**—Mrs. Martineau, No. 16 Courtlandt street, flattered by the success of the Pelisse which has already been so liberally exchanged, in carrying on the Dress Making Business branches, begs leave respectfully to return her sincere thanks to the Ladies of this city for the encouragement she has received from them in the Milinery Department, and to assure them that no care, pains, trouble, or expense, and Mr. Martineau's, shall be wanting to merit their complete approbation and suffrages. Ladies will always find at Mrs. M's Establishment the newest and most fashionable Patterns and Trimmings, for Walking & Evening Dresses, Douillettes, (Pelisses) Redingottes, regulated by the Havre Packets, from Mesdames Hippolyte and Victorine. Also, all the latest of the last fashion of Paris, which Mrs. M. is most happy to show to the Ladies who may do her the honor of a call.

Orders for Dresses, Pelisses, and Cloaks gratefully received and punctually executed, in the most finished style.

Just received one Cartoon elegant Trimmings, all ready made, of the newest descriptions, and some real Camel's Hair Shawls. Also, one case rich Genoa Silk Velvets, in Garnet, Plum, Blue Black, and other fashionable colors.

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Ad. for Mrs. Martineau,  
Fashionable Dress Making:  
'Walking and Evening  
Dresses, Pelisses and  
Redingottes, imported from  
Mesdames Hippolyte and  
Victorine, Paris, (*New York  
Evening Post*, 19<sup>th</sup> Dec. 1831,  
p.3)

Pelisse, quilted silk, 1830,  
English, (Met. NY, no 13.49.18)



'Increased Import tariffs on textiles, 5% in 1789. 33.3% in 1825'

'Tariff Plaids'

J. Hunter & Co. ad, *The Evening Post* (NY, NY), 15 Jun 1832 p1;

**PANTALOON STUFFS**—The following comprise a part of an extensive assortment of Stuffs for gentlemen's and boy's summer wear, now opening at 187 Broadway, by **J. HUNTER & CO.** and for sale by the piece or yard :—Otho Plaids, a new article; Lama's Cloths; Erminets, a great variety of fancy colors; Cassinets; Merino Cloths; Thibet Cassimeres; Cantoons, white & brown Linen Drillings; Ancona Stripes; Grass Cloth, a beautiful article for thin coats; striped Satin Jeans; dark Stripes for children, of fast colors; Beaverteens; Fustians.

Also a great variety of 'Tariff Plaids, French Bombasin, &c.

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**MEMORIAL**

OF CERTAIN

MERCHANT TAILORS OF BOSTON,

PRAYING THAT

ADDITIONAL DUTY BE IMPOSED

ON

**READY MADE CLOTHING,**

When Imported into the United States.

Call to increase tariff on ready-made clothing to keep pace with tariffs on textiles.

20<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1<sup>st</sup> Session [190]

‘Memorial of Certain Merchant Tailors of Boston Praying that Additional Duty be imposed on Ready-made Clothing when Imported into the United States.’

May 5, 1828, printed by order of the Senate of the United States, (Washington, DC: Duff Green, 1828)

## Examples of ready-made tailored clothes for women in America

- Josephs from James G. Wilson, New York, 1835;
- ladies travelling suits, and winter cloaks at 'one half' the cost of imported garments, by Gregson and Elliott, Broadway, New York, 1861.

James G. Wilson, Fall & Winter Fashions, New York, 1835-36.  
Black Riding Habit, and on right, green walking dress or 'Joseph',  
- an early example of specific tailored walking dress for women.  
(Collection of New York Historical Soc. )





Ad. 1861, Bulpin, Gregson & Elliott bankruptcy sale, 361, Broadway, New York: *'Ladies travelling suits complete'*. (*Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 25 Feb 1861, p3)

AT ONE-HALF THE COST  
OF IMPORTATION AND MANUFACTURE,  
TO CLOSE THE ESTATE  
FURS WILL BE SOLD VERY CHEAP.

500 Misses' and Children's Cloaks at 62½ cents, \$1, \$2, \$3—many worth three times the amount.

500 Ladies' Spring and Summer Cloaks at \$2, \$3, \$4—worth \$8 to \$12.

300 Ladies' Arab Cloaks \$5 and \$6—worth \$12 to \$20.

250 Ladies' Travelling Suits complete, Robe and Cloak \$3 50, \$4 50 and \$5 50—worth \$10 to \$16.

7,000 yards Materials for Suits, from 10 cents to 35 cents yard—all at one-half the cost of importation.

100 Lyons Velvet Cloaks at \$16 50, \$20, \$24, \$30—worth \$30 to \$60.

500 Winter Cloaks in Black Beaver and other Cloths prices ranging from \$6 to \$20—all reduced.

450 fine French Lace Mantillas and Points, of fashionable shape and design, at prices which will well repay an investment at this early season.

A miscellaneous collection, including odd Cloaks remnant Cloth and Velvet, Trimmings, Fringes and Laces, worthy attention of Storekeepers and Mantilla Manufacturers, all closed out at any sacrifice.

American department stores as manufacturers of tailored clothes for women from the 1860s: James McCreery, Broadway, New York: 'Ladies Alpaca Suits - \$16.00. (*The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 11<sup>th</sup> Oct. 1869, p.2)

**JAMES McCREERY & CO.,**  
BROADWAY AND ELEVENTH STREET,  
ON MONDAY, OCT. 11,  
WILL OPEN A SPLENDID ASSORTMENT OF  
SUITS, UNDERCLOTHING, &c.,  
AT THE FOLLOWING POPULAR PRICES:

LADIES' ALPACA SUITS.....	\$16 00
LADIES' POPLINETT SUITS.....	\$16 00
LADIES' DELAINE ROBES.....	\$10 00
LADIES' TUCKED SKIRTS.....	\$1 25 and \$1 50
LADIES' FINE TUCKED AND RUFFLED SKIRTS.....	\$2 50 and \$2 75
LADIES' FINE TUCKED SKIRTS, WITH EMBROIDERY.....	\$5 00

INFANTS' WARDROBES,  
MISSIS' AND CHILDREN'S DRESSES AND SUITS,  
AT POPULAR PRICES.

South, Fulton and Wall street Ferry stages pass the  
door every five minutes.

Left: *Mme. Demorest's Mirror of Fashions*, riding habit in green, 1862.  
(<https://www.mcny.org/story/madame-demorest-woman-top-19-century-fashion-empire>)

Right: Walking Dress, 1863-65, Europe or USA, (MET, NY, no 1977.292.10)



Lord and Taylor Dry Goods Store, at Grand and Chrystie Streets, NYC, location in 1853  
Founded in 1826 at 47 Catherine Street  
(<https://pinsndls.files.wordpress.com/2013/09/lt-grand-and-chrystie.jpg>)



**Top:** Lord and Taylor, Broadway, New York (1824-2020). Ad. 1869: 'NOVELTIES IN SUITS, Fall Walking Suits, \$20 and \$25'.

(Brooklyn Daily Eagle, 11 Oct. 1869, p.2)

**Bottom:** Wanted Ad 1869 for 'ladies suit trimmers.' (NY Daily Herald, 28 May 1869.p.12)

**NOVELTIES IN SUITS.**  
**WE WILL OFFER AT RETAIL ON MONDAY OCT. 11,**  
*150 elegantly trimmed*  
**FALL WALKING SUITS, \$20 AND \$25 EACH.**  
**These goods are ontirely new to this markot, and are con-  
fined exclusively to ourselves.**  
**LORD & TAYLOR,**  
**BROADWAY AND GRAND ST.**  
oc11 2t

**F**IRST CLASS TRIMMERS ON LADIES' SUITS—ALSO  
cloak hands wanted at Lord & Taylor's, corner of Grand  
and Chrystie sts.

# Other examples of tailored garments for women from early to mid. 19<sup>th</sup> century:

Left. 1816, Carrick Coat, Paris, *Costume Parisien*.

Centre: 1862, Mrs. Lincoln's Walking Dress, USA, Chicago Mus.

Right: 1870, Dolman worn by Anna Schulz, Berlin, photo by H. Lehman and Co.

(State Museum. Berlin, no 14135,)





Dr Marie McLoughlin.  
[M.Mcloughlin@brighton.ac.uk](mailto:M.Mcloughlin@brighton.ac.uk)

## English Tailoring and French Couture



Left. Creed

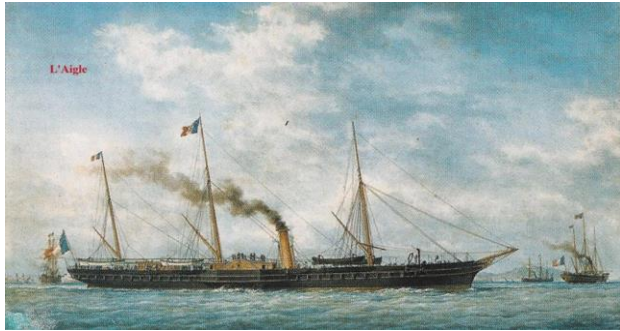
Right, Redfern,



Creed had a Paris establishment from 1854  
Redfern had one from c1880

**Tailored outfit** worn by Empress Eugénie to the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869.

1869, by Henry Creed & Co, Paris.

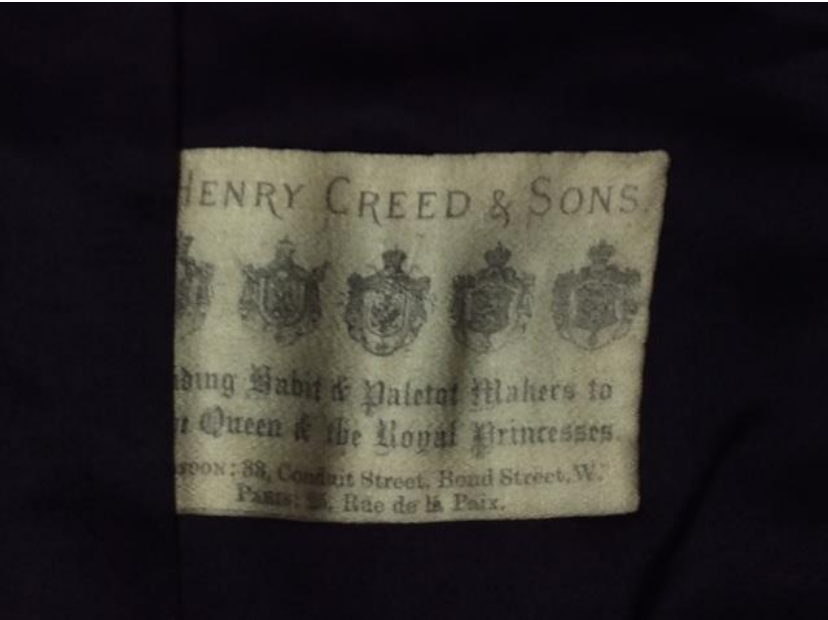


She and her husband Napoleon III, sailed to the canal on the Imperial yacht, *L' Aigle*.





1860 Creed Riding jacket. Museum of London



**HENRY CREED & SONS, Conduit Street London and Rue de la Paix, Paris.**

**Riding Habit and Paletot makers to the Queen and the Royal Princesses**



‘...it was, in fact, my father who created the vogue for tailor-mades for women’... Charles Creed

During the First World War Carmel Snow had her Red Cross uniforms made at Creed. ...‘known for its crisp, elegant tailoring *‘a la Anglais’* and beautiful fabrics.



1918 H.Creed and Co.  
(Met Museum, NY C1.43.7.7)



1917 Drawing from a sketch in Creed archive of suit in which Mata Hari was shot.

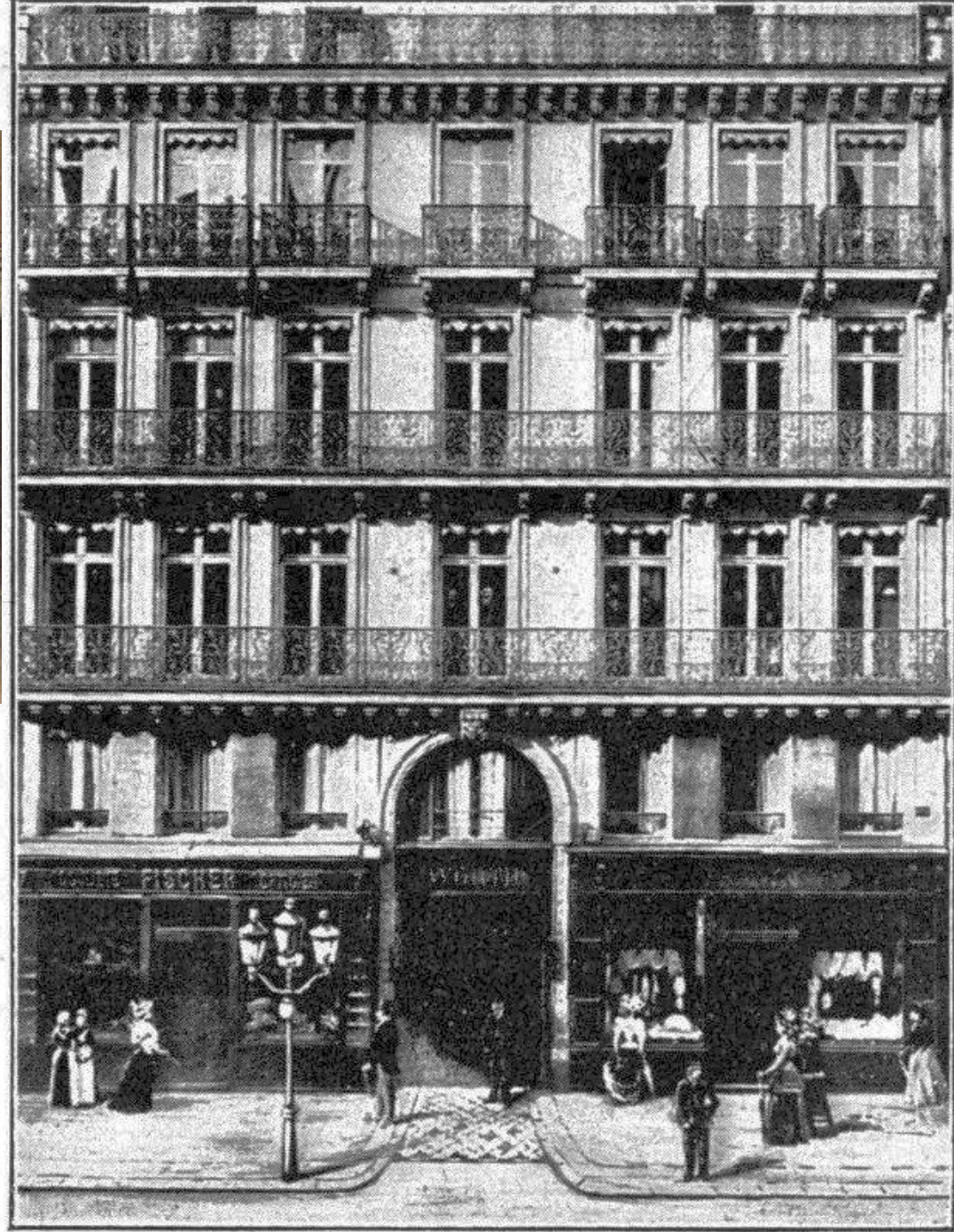
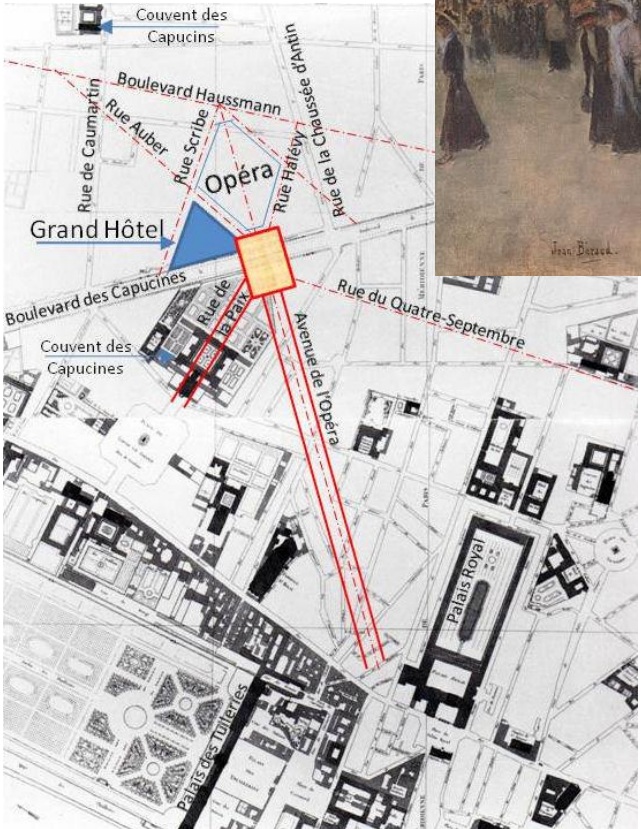


# Rue de la Paix

Birthplace of French couture. Home to English Tailoring from 1854



Above. Jean Béraud. 1907



Right. Worth. Rue de la Paix

M. WORTH'S ESTABLISHMENT—PARIS.

# JOHN REDFERN: Trans Atlantic Diffusion of Couture

Left: 1887, London. (John Williamson Cutting Book Univ. of Brighton).

Centre: 1885-9, New York, Advertisement, 210, Fifth Ave, and also in n. Rhode Island and Saratoga Springs. (Wikimedia Commons.)

Right: 1887-9 walking dress and label, Paris 242, Rue de Rivoli,

(Met. Mus. No 49.3.32)



An advertisement for John Redfern &amp; Sons. At the top left is a royal coat of arms. To its right, the name "REDFERN" is written in a decorative, arched font. Below that, "LADIES TAILOR" is written in a large, stylized font. The address "210 FIFTH AVENUE, (NEXT DELMONICO'S), 1132 BROADWAY, FURS New York." is listed. The name "JOHN REDFERN &amp; SONS" is prominently displayed, with "LONDON. PARIS. COWES." underneath. A paragraph of text describes their business: "BEING large purchasers of FURS in the natural state, and having them dyed and dressed under their own direction, are enabled to offer Fur Trimmings for Cloth Jackets and Fur Jackets and Cloaks at very moderate prices. 'Redfern Fur Jackets' are fitted and made by the same practical tailors and in the same way as their Cloth Coats and Ulsters, ensuring a perfect fit." Below this text are two illustrations of women in elaborate fur-trimmed dresses. At the bottom, the address "REDFERN, 210 FIFTH AVENUE AND 1132 BROADWAY, (NEXT DELMONICO'S), NEW YORK." is repeated. Small "COPYRIGHT" notices are visible at the bottom corners.



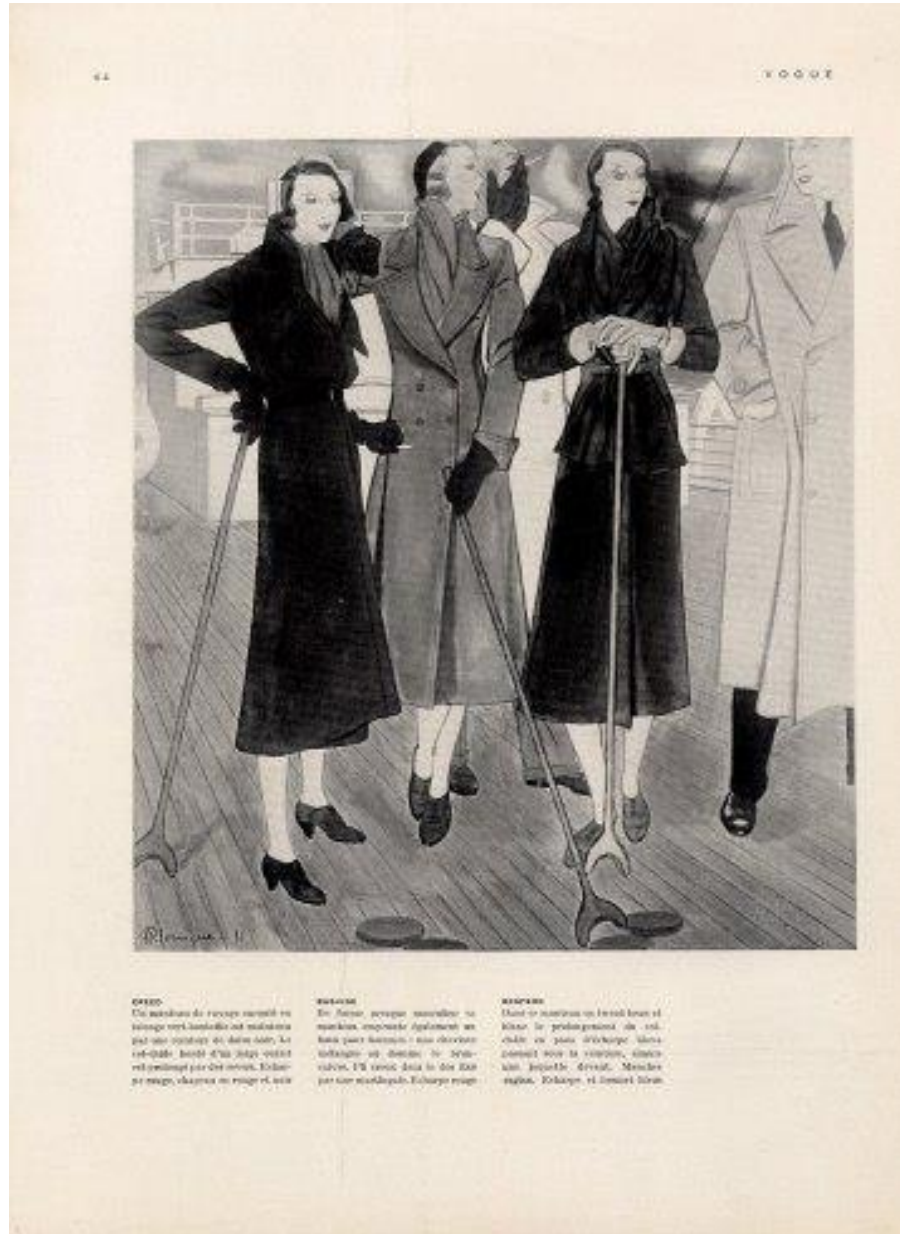
# Assorted Redfern designs – London, Paris, New York.



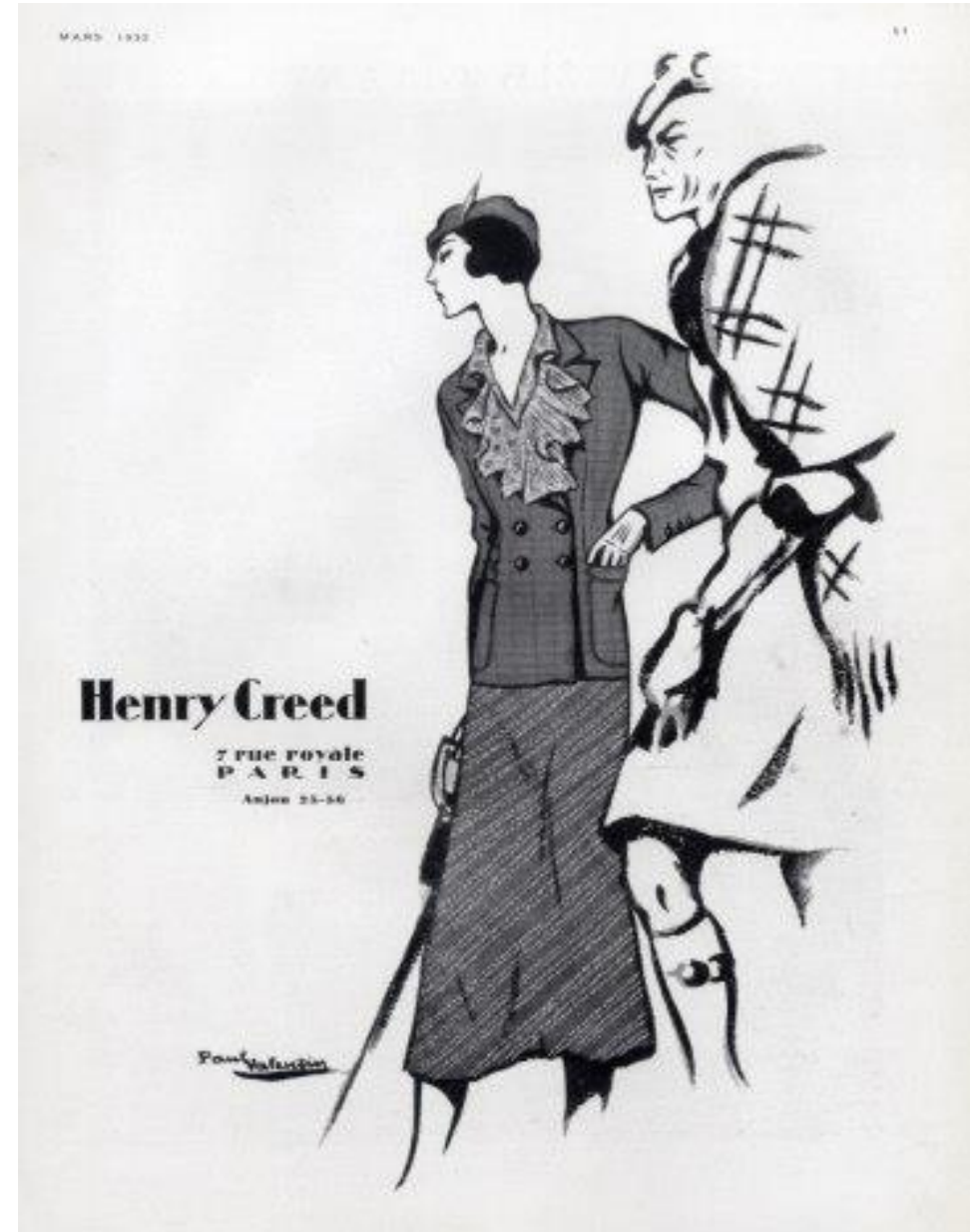
From Left: Jacket, 1888, Goldstein Mus. Minnesota; Ulster worn by Fanny Farwell, 1888, Chicago Historical Society, no 1987, 471; Grey tweed Walking Suit for Heather Firbank, 1911, V and A, no 28.1960; Brown Walking Suit, c 1915, Heather Firbank Coll. V and. A

**1931 Creed, Busvine & Redfern**  
Illustration by Pierre Mourgue

English  
Tailoring  
dominates  
French  
Couture for  
100 years



**1932 Henry Creed Sport Fashion**  
Illustration by Paul Valentin




# Dr. Hannah Rumball: The Ulster and Waterproofing



THE "ULSTER"  
A NEW OVERCOAT,  
MADE OF IRISH FRIEZE,  
PERFECTLY WATERPROOF.  
*Invaluable to Gentlemen for Travelling or Driving to the Covert Side.*  
Price 3 Guineas and a-half. With Windermere Lining, 5 Guineas.  
ONLY MEASURE REQUIRED IS THE WIDTH ROUND THE BREST, AND HEIGHT.

**JOHN G. MCGEE & CO.,**  
BELFAST, IRELAND.  
*Who will forward Patterns and Orders to any part of the Kingdom.*



With Hood, 10s. extra.

METROPOLITAN FIRE BRIGADE, WATLING STREET, LONDON, E.C., November 4th, 1869.  
Sirs, - I never gave a testimonial about anything in my life before, but I cannot refuse your request.  
The "Ulster" Coat is, without any exception, the best driving Coat I ever possessed. It is quite impervious to wind and rain; and even in the present weather I come home warm and comfortable every day, although I drive some four or five hours at least almost every time I go out. Congratulating you on your success,  
I am, Sirs, yours truly,  
W. EYRE M. SHAW.

Messrs. J. G. MCGEE & Co. (Signed)

Even. 6629

**MACINTOSH WAREHOUSE.**

REMOVED FROM 46 TO 34a, HIGH HOLBORN,  
(OPPOSITE CHANCERY LANE) 883

**E. RUSSELL & CO.,**  
INDIARUBBER WATERPROOF MANUFACTURERS.

WATERPROOF RUGS, FROM 10s. 6d.  
WATERPROOF COATS, CAPES, HATS, AND LEGGINGS.

Ad, John G. McGee, Waterproof Ulster, Belfast, 1869

Ad. Mackintosh Warehouse, Waterproof Coats, Capes.. 1883 (BR.LIB. Evan 6629)



The Ulster is a style of tailored overcoat that has been available to men since 1866 and to women since at least 1871. It, “fitted close at the chest, buttoned down the front and fell to either three-quarters length, or fully to the ankles.” In its early incarnations, the coat regularly featured a detachable hood, or a cape covering the shoulders and yoke. In fact, its popularity proved so total that by the early 1870s, McGee & Co. had extended their own Ulster Coat designs to include a version for women, known as the Ladies Ulster. The earliest example I have been able to find is an advert for it from 1871 – here on the right. Born as a practical, waterproof men’s overcoat, it became, by the end of the long nineteenth century, a highly fashionable item in a woman’s active-wear wardrobe.

Jack McCoy, “The Ulster Coat” *Irish Arts Review*, 2.4. (Winter 1985): 19. By the time of the invention of the men’s Ulster coat, McGee & Co. had, according to McCoy, been established for over twenty-years and was already a flourishing, well reputed tailor and gentleman’s outfitters.

**THE “ULSTER,”**  
A NEW OVERCOAT  
MADE OF IRISH FRIEZE, PERFECTLY WATERPROOF,  
INVALUABLE TO GENTLEMEN FOR TRAVELLING OR DRIVING TO THE COVERT SIDE.

PRICE: THREE GUINEAS AND A HALF; WITH WINDERMERE LINING, FIVE GUINEAS.

Only Measure required is the Width round the Breast, and Height.

**JOHN G. MCGEE AND CO., BELFAST, IRELAND,**  
WHO WILL FORWARD PATTERNS AND ORDERS TO ANY PART OF THE KINGDOM.



Metropolitan Fire Brigade, Watling-street, London, E.C., November 4th, 1868.  
Sirs,—I never gave a testimonial about anything in my life before, but I cannot refuse your request. The “Ulster” Coat is, without any exception, the best driving Coat I ever possessed. It is quite impervious to wind and rain; and even in the present weather I come home warm and comfortable every day, although I drive some four or five hours at least almost every time I go out. Congratulating you on your success, I am, Sirs, yours truly,  
Messrs J. G. MCGEE AND CO. (Signed) W. EYRE M. SHAW.

Image: John G. McGee & Co advertisement, for the men’s Ulster overcoat. *The Field, The Country Gentleman’s Newspaper*. November 20, 1869.

Waterproof fabrics were crucial in the garments' production because they realised the Ulster's full potential as a practical, utilitarian, winter overcoat; transforming the garment from an item consumed for warmth and later fashionability, to one which could boast of its ability to keep the wearer dry. Its waterproof qualities were crucial in its advertisement.

This 1876 Ladies Ulster with Russian Hood in *Harpers Bazaar* was recommended to be made up using "cloth in blue or gray" and "English water-proof cloth."

"Lady's Ulster with Russian Hood" *Harpers Bazar*, 12<sup>th</sup> September 1876: 797





*A Plaid wool coat with detachable postilion cape,  
c.1889. Sold on AntiqueDress.com as 'item 3809'.*

**By the 1880s,  
*everyone* was  
making Ladies  
Ulster's...**

**But they all  
seemed to be  
tweed, or quite a  
'woolly' textured  
material...**

## My questions:

Was rubber involved at all in the production of Ulsters? Perhaps via the “double texture method”?

If it wasn't, a) why did McGee buy a rubber warehouse?

And b) why does most academic waterproofing literature emphasise rubber as the waterproofing mechanism of choice in C19th?

If only alum was being used, was the Ulster really “waterproof”, as we would understand the notion today? (How can I find out?)

Or was rubber used in the 1870s, and then dropped in the 1880s for alum treated tweed fabrics, and if so, why?

Dr. Suzanne Rowland: Research Fellow,  
Univ. of Brighton: [s.rowland3@brighton.ac.uk]



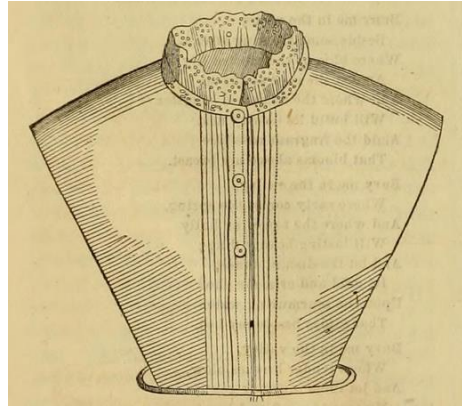
‘The Development of Blouses  
worn beneath womens’ tailored  
clothes, c.1750-1914’.



# The riding habit shirt, from c.1750



Muslin shirt,  
c. 1880. Killerton, Devon.  
NT 1359348.



Godey's Lady's Book,  
Habit-shirt, 1861

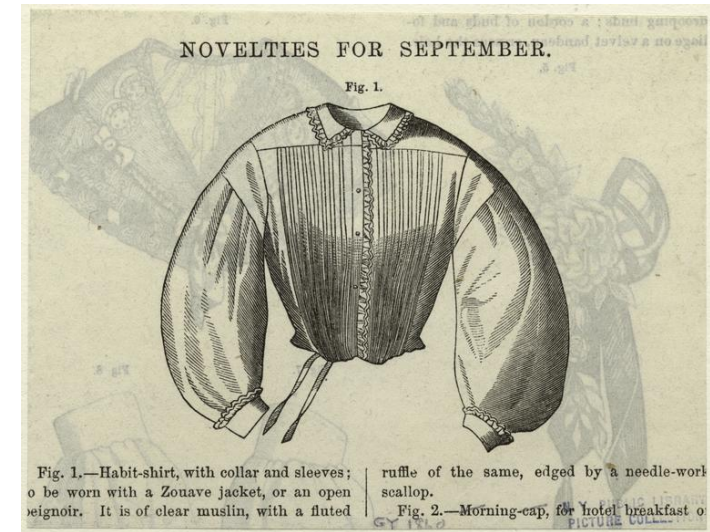


Back view



Wool riding habit (269 to B-1890)  
English, 1770-1775 (made), V&A

Fine linen riding habit shirts, worn in Britain from around the mid-18th century, were undergarments first designed to be worn under equestrian tailored costumes. The front opening habit shirt had a narrow band collar which was covered by a separate stock or cravat tied around the neck. Some shirts were bibs, secured around the waist with ties, others were bodices with sleeves.



Habit-shirt, 1850. NYPL

# Garibaldi bodice c.1860

The Garibaldi was the first blouse-type bodice worn as fashionable outerwear. Named after the Italian military commander Giuseppe Garibaldi whose troops famously wore red woollen shirts, the fashionable Garibaldi first appeared in the early 1860s.

In 1861 London department store Peter Robinson's advertised 'upwards of two hundred' Ladies' Garibaldi shirts at a cost of 6s. 6d, which indicates their popularity with the British middle classes. A Garibaldi at Worthing Museum reveals a fashionable, yet practical garment made from medium-weight linen with a high round neck, and long, full sleeves, lined with stiff muslin to help keep their shape.



Giuseppe Garibaldi  
c.1861



Garibaldi bodice 'made of blue Cashmere and studded with jet beads,' *The Queen*, 2 Feb. 1867.



Garibaldi bodice, Worthing Museum, c.1860

# The tailor-made shirt, worn c.1890-1920

Masculinised shirts, many worn with suits and a version of the male tie, were key signifiers of the 'New Woman.' This new kind of independent young woman keenly adopted the tailor-made shirt as part of her professional and sporting wardrobe.

The tailor-made shirt remained in fashion from at least the early 1890s to the end of the 1910s with little change in its design and construction. Sleeves were its most changeable feature. In 1895 full, leg-of-mutton sleeves, that narrowed into deep cuffs reflected dominant fashion trends. Although plain in cut, this type of shirt was also manufactured in fancy prints and stripes.



Unknown sitter. c.1895 printed shirt-style blouse, with leg-of-mutton sleeves. Norfolk Museums Collection.



Advertisement for "Kremlaine" practical tailor-made shirts, *The Drapers' Record*, 1913





# The Magyar blouse - impractical for wearing under a jacket

Unlike its elaborate Edwardian predecessor, the blouse of the 1910s was simpler in style and shape. All-in-one sleeves, cut to fall to the mid-forearm, were commonly known as Magyar cut blouses in reference to the origin of this style in Hungarian folk blouses.

Due to discomfort when worn under jackets, Magyar sleeves were not universally popular with consumers. By 1914, the need for practical working clothes prevailed and the Magyar shape was rejected in favour of the set-in sleeve.



Blouse with Magyar sleeves c.1912  
Worthing Museum.



Front view. Dressmaker made royal blue silk chiffon blouse, c.1912. National Museum of Wales.

‘Perhaps it is a case of “other towns other tastes,” but our experience in this matter is that 50% of our customers object to this cut.’ *The Drapers’ Record*, July 27, 1912, 488.

# Conclusion:

The blouse is a direct descendent of male and female underwear and dress bodices, and a product of rolling innovation rather than Edwardian invention. For all classes, the blouse offered a practical and versatile alternative to the fitted bodices of the late 19th century.

By the Edwardian period the highly decorative blouse was a garment of excess and experimentation for designers and makers, while the smart tailor-made shirt offered continuity and functionality. By rejecting the Magyar cut as uncomfortable and impractical to wear under a jacket or coat, customers encouraged designers and manufacturers to produce neat semi-fitted styles.

Thus, the development of the blouse cannot be separated from the changing roles of women and their working and sporting activities.



**PRACTICAL  
WASHING  
BLOUSE**

Made by our own workers in fine Spot Muslin that can be recommended to wash thoroughly well, entirely made with hemstitching and double roll-over collar.

SPECIAL PRICE,  
**18 9**

Also in rich-quality Silk Georgette, in all colours, including a large range of new "putty" colourings.  
**29 6**

*Catalogue post free*

**Debenham  
& Freebody**  
(DEBENHAM LIMITED)  
Wigmore Street,  
(Cavendish Square) London W.

Famous for over a Century  
for *last* for *Quality* for *Value*.

'Practical washing Blouse'  
manufactured by Debenham &  
Freebody. *The Queen*, 1917.

Lou Taylor: The development of cheaper made-to-measure and ready-made Tailored garments for Middle Class women. This grew from c. 1850-1880s out of the masculine tailoring trade, on both sides of the Atlantic..

Liz Tregenza, Laura Jones, Clare Rose, Sarah Johnson, Lou Taylor, Mary Charlton are looking at UK developments.



H and D. Nichol, Regent St. and Cornhill, London and Manchester, 1862. Nov. 8, the Lady (NYPL DIG.COLL no 803559)

As upper and middle middle class women grew more active – travelling, walking, playing sports, demanding emancipation, and the right to higher education etc.. the demand for more practical walking/travelling clothing grew through the 1860s-80s.

Left: July 1870 Petersons, USA (NYPLDIG COLL,828143 )

Centre: Hunting Jacket, 1881, Revue de la Mode, Paris, Frick Museum

Right. 1881 travelling - unknown magazine. Univ. of Brighton DHTC



Charles Baker, wholesale clothier, product for cheaper end of middle class market: 1883, Fleet Street, Tottenham Court Road and Holborn, London - Ladies Ulsters from £2.14.6d to £1.19.6d

OPENED TO KEEP PACE WITH THE CIVIL SERVICE STORES  
REGISTERED ACCORDING TO ACT OF PARLIAMENT.  
**CHAS. BAKER & CO'S**  
STORES  
NO TICKETS REQUIRED  
NO COMMISSIONS CHARGED

ONLY LONDON ADDRESSES AS UNDER

CITY BRANCH  
82, FLEET STREET  
NEW DOORS FROM LUDGATE CIRCUS ON LEFT HAND SIDE

HEAD DEPOT  
WEST OF ENGLAND  
CLOTHING AT TRADE PRICES  
271 & 272, HIGH HOLBORN

NEW BRANCH  
137 & 139, TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD  
CORNER OF EUSTON ROAD.

REAL WEST OF ENGLAND  
CLOTHING AT TRADE PRICES

VIEW OF INTERIOR OF NEW BRANCH, FLEET STREET  
VIEW OF INTERIOR OF HEAD DEPOT, HIGH HOLBORN  
VIEW OF INTERIOR OF NEW BRANCH, TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD, CORNER OF EUSTON ROAD.

Sole Proprietors, **CHAS. BAKER & COMPANY**  
WEST OF ENGLAND MANUFACTURERS. ESTD 1864.

CHAS. BAKER & CO.



**LADIES' ULSTERS**  
To measure,  
39/6 44/6 49/6  
Other styles,  
29/6 39/6

# Catering to middle class women in the USA and Canada:

**Left:** Three piece, 1878, (Maryland Historical Soc. 1946.54.15)

**Right:** Carriage dress-1885, (C.62.552.2a-b. Agnes Etherington Coll. Queens Univ. Kingston, Canada.





Right: Louis Adler, Chicago, 1885-6 (Chicago Hist Soc.)

Left: Catalogue: H. O'Neill and Co, NY, 6th Ave 1890-91

(Winterthur library no 18909100hone)



Bust Measures, 34, 36, 38, 40 and 42 inches : Length of Skirts, 40 to 42 inches.

No. 671. Fine Gros Grain Silk Suit, plaited skirt, front trimmed with some silk ornaments, stylish draped bodice, pretty pointed waist, front trimmed on one side with plaits of silk, or ribbons on the other, standing collar, sleeves finished with ornaments to top, in black or colors, \$22.50.  
No. 672. Stylish Suit of fine gros grain silk, plaited front with plaits and panels to side, long graceful drapery in back, pointed waist with full puff of silk, each side, full sleeves, high shoulders, standing collar, in black and all the new shades, \$27.50.  
No. 673. Elegant Costume of fine gros grain silk, stylish plaited skirt, front trimmed with handsome jet ornaments, full plaited drapery in back, pointed waist with puffing of silk on one side, jet ornaments on other, full sleeves with jet epaulets, standing collar, tab back, in black only, \$35.00.  
No. 674. Pretty costume of Gros Grain Silk, side plaited skirt trimmed around bottom with bands of Moire ribbon, artistic draping in back, pointed waist in newest design with Moire ribbon finished at waist with bow to match, standing collar, in black and all the new shades, \$24.50.  
No. 675. Handsome Costume of fine quality gros grain silk, panel front with jet ornaments at bottom, plaits on side, trimmed with jet, stylish draped back, pointed waist with V of jet on front, soft folds of silk on each side, full puffed sleeves finished with jet to match, standing collar, tab back, in black only, \$29.75.

**LATEST FASHIONS, FALL AND WINTER, 1885-6.**

An advertisement for Louis Adler's cloaks. It features a grid of 40 small illustrations of different hooded cloak styles, arranged in four rows of ten. Each illustration shows a woman wearing the cloak, highlighting its unique features like the hood, collar, and trim. The text at the top reads "LATEST FASHIONS, FALL AND WINTER, 1885-6." and at the bottom, "LOUIS ADLER, Manufacturer of Cloaks, 127 & 129 Market Street, CHICAGO, ILLS." Below the name, it says "Do not fail to Visit us when in the Market. We offer Great Inducements to Buyers." There are also small phrases "FINE LADY ENVELOPE" and "PURE CONFIDENCE" on the bottom left and right respectively.

As technology improves and social demand broadens, factory production widens into mass wholesale tailoring for women, at cheapest levels from the 1890's, across UK, Europe and USA.

Left: J. and W. Campbell, Garment Factory, Glasgow, Scotland, 1898.

Right. Richman clothing factory Cleveland Ohio, 1918.



Development of mass –made cheap wholesale tailored clothes for working class women from c 1890-95 in Britain... John Noble, Manchester, 10/6d costume in Cheviot serge, 1897. (Univ. of Brighton Teaching Collection)

**THE JOHN NOBLE**

**COSTUMES and DRESS FABRICS**

have won the amity of the  
Women of all Nations.  
Their worth is defined by the  
Public Press as  
**UPREME VALUE FOR  
MONEY,**  
and the praise of Ladies of  
every degree, who wear them,  
has no boundary at all.

**TWO GOLD MEDALS.**



10/6



**MODEL 647.**  
**A Smartly Cut Design.**  
In John Noble Cheviot Serge,  
full wide Skirt, **10/6**  
full-fronted Bodice shaped to figure at  
back and worn inside or out-  
side skirt, latest sleeves;  
saddle and sleeves lined.  
Price only 10/6 complete;  
carriage 9d. extra. Skirt  
only, as sketch, 5/6; carriage  
6d. extra.

**MODEL 644.**  
**A Very Becoming Mode.**  
In John Noble Cheviot Serge, with  
Bodice made Norfolk  
Fashion; the centre **10/6**  
boxpleat being carried to the  
neck. Shaped saddle back and  
front; saddle and sleeves lined.  
Price only 10/6; carriage 9d. extra.  
Skirt alone, 5/6; carriage 6d. extra.

**THE JOHN NOBLE**  
**AL "GUINEA" SUIT**

Consisting of Double-  
Breasted Coat and  
Costume Skirt, made  
to measure.  
A particularly smart  
tailor-made Coat,  
with square corners,  
pointed revers, and  
two pockets.





Allen Foster, Golden Square London. 'Walking Suit' in serge, at 10/6d, 1897.

Right:

# Allen Foster & Co

SOLE MAKERS OF THE 'ALFOSCO' COSTUMES

BUY DIRECT AT FIRST COST FROM THE LEADING FIRM OF LONDON MANUFACTURERS.

ALLEN FOSTER & CO. have registered the word "ALFOSCO" in connection with the Costumes and Mantles to distinguish them from the ordinary run of goods advertised by Provincial and other Firms.

Design No. 326.  
**10/6**



**DESIGN No. 326. 10/6.**

A Costume any lady can wear.—Prettily and neatly trimmed with tucks of velvet and cloth. **Sterling Value.** The bodice has a tight-fitting back with full front. The Skirt is cut to drape gracefully. Made in the **Specialite Serge** or **Venetian Cloth**—two splendid wearing materials. Colours: Black, Navy, Grey, Light and Dark Fawn, Brown, Green, Royal Red, Purple, Blue-Grey, etc. **Good fit guaranteed.** Price only **10/6**; carriage paid, 6d. extra. Skirt alone, **5/6**; Carriage paid, 5d. In sending order, please give bust measurement under arms, size of waist, and length of Skirt in front.

**10/6**



**6/6**      **6/6**

**DESIGN No. 323. 6/6.**  
The New and Fashionable Costume Skirt.

This Skirt has proved an immense success. It is made in all the colours of the two splendid wearing fabrics—the **Specialite Serge** and the **Venetian Coating**. All sizes in stock. This Skirt is cut in the new Circular Shape, and has a 16in. flounce round bottom, which is lined with good linenette. A bargain for **6/6**; carriage paid, 5d. extra. **SEND FOR ONE.**

**PATTERNS FREE.**

COLOURS in the **Specialite Serge** and **Venetian Cloth** are: Black, Navy, Grey, Light and Dark Fawn, Brown, Green, Royal Red, Purple, Blue-Grey, etc.

**FULL DRESS LENGTH** of 6yds., 52in. wide, for **7/6**; carriage paid, 8d. extra.

Design No. 327.  
**10/6**



**DESIGN No. 327. 10/6.**

Ladies' Walking Suit.—A new and fashionable Reefe Coat and Skirt Costume. **Splendid Value.** It has a velvet collar with smart lapels. The Skirt is cut in the latest approved shape, and drapes gracefully. Made in the famous **Specialite Serge** and the **Venetian Coating**. All colours and sizes in stock. This Costume will give supreme satisfaction. Price only **10/6**; carriage, 6d. Skirt, by itself, **5/6**; carriage 5d. This Costume made in Allen Foster & Co.'s excellent Melton Coating, will be **17/6**. Patterns free. Any coat can be lined through with good mercerised Italian for 3/6 extra. Skirt lined good linenette for 2/6 extra.

**WRITE FOR CATALOGUE OF BARGAINS.**

**PATTERNS & SKETCHES POST FREE.**

**IMPORTANT NOTICE.**

Write for our **NEW ILLUSTRATED SKETCH-BOOK and CATALOGUE OF BARGAINS** for the Autumn Season. Sent post free.

ALLEN FOSTER & Co. invite ladies to call and inspect their Novelties for the Autumn Season—Jackets, Capes, Costumes, Furs, Blouses, &c.

**Left:** Garment worker strikers, New York, 1909, in mass-made, tailored ,ready-to-wear (Kheel Centre archives, Cornell Univ. Lib. )

**Right:** Costermonger fruit seller, East End of London, drawn by Phil May, 1896, in ready-to-wear tailored coat, prob. made locally.



# Lou Taylor, Univ of Brighton

[E.P.Taylor@brighton.ac.uk]



Second Hand Tailored Clothes for Women: Collecting, Renovating, Consuming in France, England and America. ... a huge and largely Jewish Trade, catering to poorest in society; building on research of Madelaine Ginsburg, Beverly Lemire, Manuel Charpy, Lucy Norris....

*Carreau du Temple* – Paris

Mid 19<sup>th</sup> century



Gustave Dore, *London Pilgrimage*, 1872

Left Wentworth Street, Whitechapel

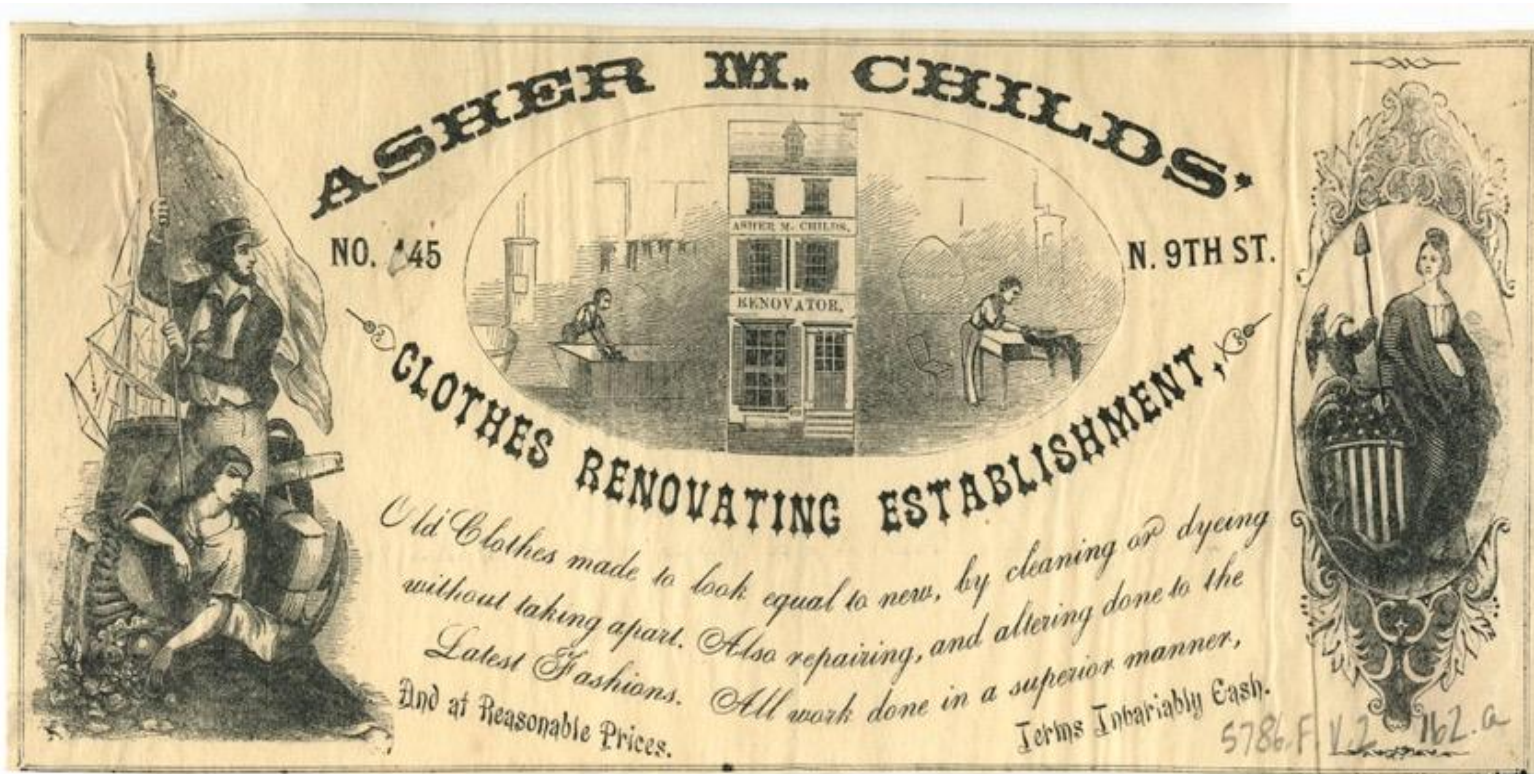
Right: Dudley Street Seven Dials. (British Library Wf1/1856)



Cleaning, redyeing, patching... nothing was wasted: Ladies riding habit skirts could be remodeled into children's coats....

Left: USA: 1863 . Asher M. Childs - Clothing Renovator, 45, N. 9th St.  
Philadelphia.

Right: 1872, London, Harrow Alley, Gustave Doré, London Pilgrimage.





## Concluding Comments:

We have been surprised at how little international published research we have found on some of the themes discussed here.

We hope to develop a clearer understanding of the diffusion of tailored clothes for women, Trans-Manche and Trans-Atlantique, 1750-1930, related to styles, functions, people, making, retailing, new technologies and related gendered and economic social consequences.



We will hold a virtual international conference on Sept 18<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> 2021:

# ‘Women’s Tailored Clothes across Britain, Europe and America, 1750-1920.’

Day 1 Sept. 18<sup>th</sup> *‘Tailored clothes for women in Ireland-1750-1920 in the context of Irish social history.’*

Day 2: : *‘The Transnational Diffusion of Women’s Tailoring style across Britain, Europe and America: 1750-1920.’*

We thank ACORSO for some financial support.

For further information contact the conference organiser, Dr. Suzanne Rowland:

[S.Rowland2@brighton.ac.uk](mailto:S.Rowland2@brighton.ac.uk)

# Final Outcomes – Résultats:

- Learned journal articles by members of our RIG
- A special edition of *'Apparences'*?
- A Second Research day
- A final conference
- Possibly a book.

We hope to make new contacts with curators in museums across Europe- to help us.

Si vous souhaitez travailler avec nous,  
veuillez contacter Lou Taylor:  
[E.P.Taylor@brighton.ac.uk]

Merci de votre attention

