

Doll Clothes of Yore

Original, Historical Designs for 18" Dolls

American Civil War Period: Circa 1840-1870

'Unmentionables' Set

History

Why are they called 'Unmentionables?'

The term 'unmentionables' was coined by Queen Victoria. During the Victorian period, it was considered scandalous to show any undergarments, but especially the chemise, corset and drawers. In fact, making mention of any of these garments (especially by men) in polite society was considered taboo. During this period, a lady was considered immodest if her petticoats or any other undergarment showed. It was also considered immodest for the skirts to come very far above the ankles.



Fashion

What is a 'Chemise'?

A chemise was a garment worn next to the skin underneath the corset and dress and tucked into the drawers. During the Civil War, a chemise was a very loose garment that reached to the knees. The style of chemise that we make for dolls is the evening style. The cut of a chemise's neckline depended upon the dress worn over it. A evening chemise would be cut off-shoulder so that it wouldn't show under the low ball gowns.

What are 'Drawers'?

Drawers were what all ladies wore underneath their clothing. Drawers are the 1850's equivalent of underwear. During the Civil War, drawers could be gathered at the bottom and were cut wide and loose. Up until the 1830's, it was considered scandalous for a woman to wear anything between her legs, but by the 1850's it was considered proper.

What is a 'Crinoline'?

A crinoline is another word for hoopskirt. Hoopskirts became fashionable around the 1850's. Up until then, women wore many layers of petticoats to make their skirts larger, but they welcomed the hoopskirt because it made it easier to move around. Women would also wear a few petticoats over the hoopskirt to hide the bones.