

# Baker Street *Elementary*

PRESENTS  
"THE LIFE AND TIMES IN VICTORIAN LONDON"



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THE LIFE AND TIMES IN VICTORIAN LONDON  
# 116 -- DEVELOPMENT OF VICTORIAN COSTUMES -- FEBRUARY, 2022



WELCOME TO TOPIC # 116... TODAY WE WILL BE  
LOOKING AT THE FASHIONS OF THE  
VICTORIAN PERIOD...





*VICTORIAN COSTUMES CHANGED SUBTLY  
DURING THE SIXTY-THREE YEARS THAT QUEEN  
VICTORIA WAS ON THE THRONE.*



**EARLY VICTORIAN FASHION FOR LADIES OF MEANS  
WAS DEFINED BY FULL CRINOLINE SKIRTS.**



BY MID-VICTORIAN TIMES THESE HAD DEVELOPED INTO BUSTLES AND FINALLY IN THE LATE VICTORIAN ERA, VICTORIAN COSTUMES WERE TYPIFIED BY SLIM FITTING SUITS, DRESSES AND S-BEND CORSETS.





**DESPITE THE DEFINED FASHION CHANGES,  
VICTORIAN COSTUMES STILL COVERED THE  
ARMS AND LEGS OF LADIES, RIGHT DOWN TO  
THEIR ANKLES.**



*THIS PERIOD OF EARLY VICTORIAN COSTUME  
WAS FROM 1837 TO 1856.*





**DRESSES HAD LAVISH TRIMMINGS IN  
COMPARISON TO THE PLAINER REGENCY ERA  
FASHIONS... BONED BODICES WERE WORN TO  
EMPHASIZE THE NARROW WAIST AND BUSTLINE  
OF VICTORIAN LADIES.**



**FALSE UNDERSLEEVES CALLED ENGAGEANTES  
WERE FASHIONABLE AND GAVE DRESSES A  
LAYERED LOOK WITH FANCY CUFFS SHOWING  
BENEATH THE FULL SLEEVES.**





BY THE 1840s AND 50s FULL HOOPED SKIRTS  
KNOWN AS CRINOLINES WERE POPULAR AND THEY  
CARRIED ON INTO MID-VICTORIAN TIMES.





FOR EVENING WEAR, MIDDLE AND UPPER  
CLASS LADES WERE BEGINNING TO WEAR  
BOLD BERTHA NECKLINES...



*...WHICH EXPOSED THEIR SHOULDERS IN A MOST DARING FASHION STATEMENT!*



**FROM 1860 TO 1880 FULL CRINOLINE SKIRTS  
GRADUALLY CHANGED AND ALL THE FULLNESS  
WAS BUNCHED AT THE BACK OF THE DRESS IN A  
FULL BUSTLE.**







**THESE WERE INITIALLY SOFT BUSTLES WHICH EMPHASIZED THE HIPS AND THE BACK OF THE SKIRT.**





**CRINOLINES AND RIGID CAGES  
GRADUALLY DISAPPEARED.**



**CONTRASTING UNDERSKIRTS WERE WORN AND WERE REVEALED BY THE TOP OVERSKIRT BEING DIVIDED OR BEING CAUGHT UP AROUND THE LOWER HEMLINE.**







**SHORTER TOP SKIRTS WERE CALLED APRONS AND CREATED A FULL LAYERED LOOK TO THE DRESS.**



**AS FASHIONS CONTINUED TO CHANGE, HARD  
BUSTLES CAME INTO FASHION IN 1883, OFTEN  
WITH FLOWING TRAINS...**



...WHICH TRAILED BEHIND FROM THE JUTTING  
OUT SHELF CREATED BY A SPRING PIVOTED  
METAL BAND.





**DRESSES WERE STRAIGHT DOWN AT THE FRONT  
WITH SEVERELY TAILORED BODICES AND ALL THE  
FABRIC WAS GATHERED BEHIND.**



IT GAVE WOMEN THE LOOK OF THE REAR END  
OF A HORSE.





THE LATE VICTORIAN ERA RAN FROM  
1878 TO 1901.







**TRAINS REMAINED A FASHIONABLE FEATURE  
BUT DRESSES BECAME SLIMMER AND BUSTLES  
FADED OUT.**





**LEG OF MUTTON SLEEVES WITH FULL GATHERS AT THE TOP AND SLIMMER FROM THE ELBOW TO THE WRIST, ACCENTED THE SLIM FITTING FULL LENGTH SKIRTS.**





BY THE 1890S TAILORED SUITS WERE SLIM, PLAIN  
AND FIGURE-HUGGING.





*THIS EARLY POWER DRESSING WAS EMBRACED  
BY VICTORIAN WOMEN AS AN AIR OF  
CONFIDENCE REFLECTED THE GROWING  
EMANCIPATION OF WOMEN.*



**DRESSES AT THIS TIME WERE ALMOST ALWAYS  
MADE OF TWO CONTRASTING COLORS.**





**BOLD PURPLE, ROYAL BLUE, DEEP RED, PEACOCK  
BLUE AND BRIGHT APPLE GREEN WERE POPULAR FOR  
DAYWEAR WITH SOFTER HUES IN THE EVENING.**





**FOR FORMAL SOCIAL EVENTS DRESSES  
WERE EXTRAVAGANTLY TRIMMED IN  
CONTRASTING FABRICS.**





BY THE END OF THE VICTORIAN ERA S-BEND  
CORSETS WERE FASHIONABLE.





*SLIGHTLY HEALTHIER AND EASIER TO BREATHE  
IN THAN THE EARLIER DESIGNS,...*







...THEY WERE LACED UP AND PUSHED THE BUST FORWARD, PULLED IN A TINY WAIST AND THREW BACK THE HIPS, CREATING THE FEMININE S-SHAPE WHICH PERSISTED IN VICTORIAN COSTUMES UNTIL 1907.



SO, WE HAVE COMPLETED TOPIC # 116 IN OUR SERIES...

IN TOPIC # 117, WE WILL BE LOOKING AT NAMES DURING THE VICTORIAN PERIOD.



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## ORIGINAL SOURCE MATERIAL FOR THIS TOPIC:

- [HTTP://WWW.ABOUTBRITAIN.COM/ARTICLES/VICTORIAN-COSTUMES.ASP](http://www.aboutbritain.com/articles/victorian-costumes.asp)





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"THE LIFE AND TIMES IN VICTORIAN LONDON"

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