



THE LATE VICTORIAN AGE

England, c.1870-1900

Queen Victoria & The Bustle Period

- By 1870, Queen Victoria had already spent over 30 years on the English throne. She was the figurehead of a conservative movement that emphasized morality and high standards of conduct. The British Empire had spread around the world, and this was a time of economic prosperity for the recently industrialized nation and a major effort was made to improve living conditions for the working classes. This was a time of peace and stability for England.
- France was not so fortunate. The Second Empire was overthrown in a revolution that followed Napoleon III's defeat & surrender in the Franco-Prussian War. The Third Republic was founded, but civil war broke out between Parisian radicals and the conservative French government in 1871.
- In the United States, however, the Civil War had ended, railroads united the nation and western expansion boomed. A long stretch of peace followed the war. During this time, America dealt with industrialization and the social issues that sprang from this movement. Immigration and urbanization continued to keep pace with the ever-growing labor force.
- The first apartment house was built in New York City in 1870.
- In the 1890s, the American west was won and urbanization continued as metropolitan areas expanded. In Europe, Queen Victoria's popularity had faded as attitudes began to change. The more conservative views of her early reign were viewed as "old-fashioned." Her son, the Prince of Wales, and his generation were more interested in entertainment and the bawdy. He was loved by the people despite frequenting the risqué dance halls and even brothels of the pleasure capital of Europe, Paris.
- Paris was also known for its fashion houses: Worth, Paquin, etc.
- In America, 3.7 million women had joined the work force. This trend meant less women wore elaborately decorative clothing on a daily basis. However, we don't see this in historical collections since women tended to discard "work clothes" and cherish their more seldom worn garments.



Queen Victoria 1875

She was in mourning after the death of her husband Prince Albert in 1861 and wore black until her death in 1901.

Aesthetic Dress

- **Oscar Wilde** was a famous proponent
- Originally donned by the Pre-Raphaelite painters of the 1850s, they painted themes inspired by the costume of the Medieval and Renaissance Periods. Although not entirely historically accurate, the painters began to wear the same fashions they clothed their models in.
- The opening of Japan to the West allowed for heavy Asian influences on this movement.
- No stays or corsets!
- Leg-of-mutton sleeves
- Droopy appearance



Women



◦ Bustle

- Fullness at the back of the skirt was a trend that began at this time
- Tight corseting was needed to achieve this look
- Folds of fabric piled up at the back of the dress

◦ Crinolines

- Undergarments used to help maintain the full shape of a skirt
- Sometimes included hoops
- And some had added fullness at the back to help support the bustle

- 1870-1878; bustle consisted of actual manipulation of fabric

- 1878-1883; there was sheath of fabric covering an understructure – this was known as the cuirass-bodice

- 1884-1890; large shelf bustles



◦ Tea Gowns

- Made to provide relief from the more binding styles of the bustle
- Worn without a corset
- Loose fitting
- Ladies wore tea gowns at home with other female friends





- **Deerstalker**
 - Made famous by Sherlock Holmes
 - 1870s
- **Hamburg**
 - Similar to the fedora but shaped at the brim
 - 1870s
- **Fedora**
 - 1880s



- **Men's Neckwear**
 - **Striped knotted neckties**
 - 1880s
 - **Ascots**
 - 1880s