

Establishing roles and accuracy of historical costume references in select nineteenth century literature with a view to the establishment of a resource guide

by

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A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Science

Department of Clothing and Textiles
University of Manitoba
Winnipeg, Manitoba

2002



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**A Thesis/Practicum submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of The University of
Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirement of the degree
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MASTER OF SCIENCE**

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For my Mom and Dad

Abstract

Historical novels can draw detailed portraits of bygone eras. With the skillful selection of appropriate words, the writer is able to conjure vivid pictures in the mind of the reader. This visual imagery can communicate information on the characters and environment about which a novel is written.

The inclusion of references to clothing and textiles within a novel can provide a wealth of information. However, to what extent can fiction be taken for fact? Where aspects of dress have been accurately recorded, fiction can prove a unique source of information for the historian. An appropriate choice of clothing and its placement within a story can illuminate not only aspects of dress but its place within society as well.

This thesis examines the roles fulfilled by the inclusion of references to clothing and textiles within fictional literature. Application of these ideas was applied to the novel, *Miss Marjoribanks*, written by Margaret Oliphant and first published in 1866. This is an historical study which reinforces the existing body of knowledge and provides insight into past dress and its place within society. The specific objectives of this study were to annotate the references made to the clothing and textiles in regards to two prominent female characters. Secondly, to determine the historical accuracy of these references. And finally, compilation of a guide to resources which could be utilized to amplify education involving historical clothing and textile references found within mid-nineteenth century.

Acknowledgments

Numerous lives have touched mine in the past few years, aiding me in the completion of this thesis. A few people stand out and deserve individual recognition. I would like to thank Dr. Nelma Fetterman and Dr. Joan Walters for their valuable input and unwavering endurance. A special thank you to my advisor Dr. Cecile Clayton-Gouthro for her encouragement, advice and enthusiasm.

Maj, I am very grateful for your faith in the human spirit, particularly mine. Your strength and attitude are an inspiration. Pet, thank you for always leaving the doors to both your home and your heart open to me. Darlene, thank you for sharing my understanding of what humour really is.

Finally, thank you to Ed Morisson for serving as my epitome of success. Your achievements and endeavors inspire me to become more.

Table of Contents

	Page
Abstract	i
Acknowledgements	ii
Table of Contents	iii
List of Figures	v
List of Periodical Abbreviations	vi
Preface	vii
Chapter One - Introduction	1
Purpose	2
Objectives	3
Justification	3
Scope	5
Chapter Two - Literature Review	7
Margaret Oliphant Wilson Oliphant	8
The Chronicles of Carlingford	9
<i>Miss Marjoribanks</i>	10
Fact Into Fiction	11
The Roles of Clothing and Textiles Within the Novel	12
Direct and Indirect References	13
Direct References to Aspects of Clothing and Textiles	15
Validation of References to Clothing and Textiles	16
Classification Systems	19
Chapter Three - Methodology	22
Reference Documentation	22
Historical Examination	27
Author Examination	27
Historical Authentication of References	28
Archival Investigation 1854-1856	29
<i>The Lady's Newspaper and Pictorial Times</i>	29
<i>The Ladies' Cabinet of Fashion</i>	30
Archival Investigation 1863-1866	31
<i>The Queen</i>	31
<i>The Ladies' Treasury</i>	32
Scope of Archival Investigation	33

Chapter Four - Findings 1854-1856	35
The White Dress	36
Waterproof Cloak	42
Hats vs. Bonnets	45
Brussels Veil	48
Handkerchiefs	52
Collar and Gloves	55
Parasols	58
Fans	60
Chapter Five - Findings 1863-1866	62
Mourning Dress	62
Sealskin Cloak	66
Worsted-Work	71
The Rustling Gown	73
Chapter Six - Resource Primer Development	79
Chapter Seven - Context and Conclusions	87
Author Examination	87
Conclusions	90
Future Research	93
References	94
Appendix A	105
Appendix B	109
Appendix C	112
Appendix D	113
Appendix E	114
Appendix F	115

List of Figures

		Page
Figure 1	Diagrammatic expression of Schlick's (1991) classification system	24
Figure 2	Diagrammatic expression of Schlick's (1991) classification system with additional category of <i>textile</i>	26
Figure 3	Advertisement featuring the "Siphonia Paletot"	44
Figure 4	Bridal costume	51
Figure 5	Design for a handkerchief border	54
Figure 6	Design for a collar	57

List of Periodical Abbreviations

- LC* *Ladies' Cabinet of Fashion*
- LN* *Lady's Newspaper and Pictorial Times*
- LT* *Lady's Treasury*
- Q* *Queen*

Preface

With words alone, a portal can be opened into another time and world, allowing one entry into an existence entirely different from his/her own. Fiction has been defined as “literature, esp. novels, describing imaginary events and people” (The Canadian Oxford Dictionary, 2001, p.513). But when these narratives which describe imaginary people and imaginary events are constructed around actual aspects of the physical world, is it then possible to find fact contained within this fiction?

The epigraph on the ensuing page presents but one of many intriguing references made to clothing in the novel *Miss Marjoribanks*, written by Margaret Oliphant in the nineteenth century. One must wonder whether this sentiment, which is uttered by the title character, is indicative of the prevalent ideals of the character in regards to clothing. Similarly, do such words reflect the beliefs of the author who wrote them? It is questions such as these which have initiated this study.

Oh, never mind the fashion. When one has a style
of one's own, it is always twenty times better.

- Margaret Oliphant, *Miss Marjoribanks*

Chapter One

Introduction

This thesis is concerned with the use of dress as a communicative tool within literature.¹ An ancient and enduring art form, the written word has proven to be an invaluable means of communication. Whether it be factual documentation or fictitious tale, the various forms of literature purvey information on the characters and environment about which they are written. One of the greatest attributes of literature is the ability to stimulate visual imagery. With the selection of a few appropriate words, the writer is able to conjure vivid pictures in the mind of the reader.

Historically based fiction can draw detailed portraits of bygone eras. However, one must remember that these are first and foremost invented stories and the visual imagery created within cannot necessarily be regarded as a factual representation of the time. This raises an interesting question for clothing historians as to "how far can we accept the evidence of novels on the dress of their time or the time they portray" (Buck, 1983, p.89)?

The garments which clothe characters in historical novels "have an interest for us now which would not have been shared by such contemporary readers" (Buck, 1992, p.22). These works have become valuable not only as sources of entertainment but of education as well. Novels in which aspects of dress have been accurately recorded provide us with a unique form of historical record. This is of particular interest to clothing historians, as a skilful choice of clothing and its placement within a story can illuminate not only aspects of dress but their place within society as well; past dress becomes re-integrated with past

¹Throughout this study, the terms *literature* and *novel* refer to those of fictional nature.

society (Buck, 1992).

"In every age, human beings use adornment or apparel, *i.e.*, 'dress', as a means of symbolically stating aspects of, conditions of, issues in, or beliefs about their culture, with particular reference to personal, social, political, economic, technological, and artistic situations (Harris & Owens, 1990, p.109). Descriptions of dress in historical novels can transcend that of superficial detail to ultimately communicate such important cultural conditions.

Purpose

Thus far, a review of literature has revealed that references to clothing and textiles can be used to conjure vivid literary imagery. When used in a literal sense, references to clothing and textiles can offer reflections of the past, which in turn can convey varied time periods and social situations (Buck, 1992; Owens & Harris, 1992). This imagery can also be used to aid in the development of character (Buck, 1983; Chrisman, 1998; Worth, 1995).

My research focus emphasizes the roles which references to clothing and textiles can serve within historical literary works. More specifically, this study examines the degree to which a select nineteenth century novel offers factual reflections of dress, in turn establishing the accuracy of the historical portrait which is drawn.

Objectives

There are three main objectives fulfilled by this study.

1. Annotation of the references to clothing and textiles made in regards to two female characters in *Miss Marjoribanks*.
2. Determination of the historical accuracy of these references.
3. Compilation of a guide to resources which could be utilized to amplify education involving historical clothing and textile references found within mid-nineteenth century.

Justification

A variety of source materials exist which document clothing styles of the nineteenth century. Significant numbers of portraits, photographs, engravings, etiquette books, letters, diaries and garments from the nineteenth century have survived the ravages of time. When studying historical dress, "why then should we turn to fiction when we have fact? It would be unwise to rely on the evidence of fiction alone, but used together with the factual evidence the novelists' evidence may reveal the influences and ways of life which are expressed through dress" (Buck, 1983, p.90).

"Most contemporary source materials show the dress of fashionable, wealthy people. The everyday wear of ordinary women is rarely illustrated, nor does it often survive since it would be used until worn out" (Levitt, 1981, p.51). Novels chronicle the daily lives of their characters. Deliberate aesthetic decisions are made in regards to the styles of dress worn, how it was worn, when and where it was worn and how it was put on. While the main intention of historical novels was not to create a comprehensive record of dress, they

can provide a wealth of information through the subtlest of nuances. Thus, knowledge gained from fictional works is of particular interest to clothing historians as it can reinforce existing information or perhaps provide new insights into aspects of dress that were too ordinary and commonplace to be otherwise documented or preserved (Worth, 1995).

This study focuses on an author whose works offer a potential for providing a rich source of evidence on dress and its place within society. Margaret Oliphant (1828-1897) had a prolific writing career, completing 98 novels, over 50 short stories, more than 400 articles and numerous travel books and biographies (Jay, 1990). In 1861, she began a series of short stories and novels which would be published in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*. This collection, which came to be known as the Chronicles of Carlingford, detailed the "middle-class mores of the professional classes in an imaginary English provincial town" (Jay, 1998, p.xi). Amongst these works is *Miss Marjoribanks*, the story of society within the mid-Victorian town of Carlingford. The novel offers insight into a variety of characters' lives as they were lived within this society. This thesis focuses upon two female characters who belong to two separate and distinctly different families; Lucilla Marjoribanks, a doctor's daughter and Barbara Lake, the daughter of a drawing-master. Lucilla and Barbara are truly two distinct individuals, each occupying and aspiring to significantly different positions in society. The study of the clothing and textile references made in regards to these two women offers a variety of pictures, each reflective of their varied characters.

Finally, this study has value as it has illuminated a variety of resources available for the

study of the roles performed by clothing and textiles within historical literature.

Scope

The scope of this research was limited to the sixth work of the Chronicles of Carlingford series, *Miss Marjoribanks*. *Miss Marjoribanks* first appeared in serial format over fifteen editions of *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* and was later conflated into a three volume edition, published in 1866 . For the purpose of this study, the 1998 Penguin Books edition, edited by Elisabeth Jay is examined.

In her notes to *Miss Marjoribanks*, Elisabeth Jay (1998) offered a time line for the novel. Assuming that the final events recounted in *Miss Marjoribanks* are "roughly contemporaneous with the publication of the last episode of the novel in May 1866" (Jay, 1998, p.500), then the storyline would have commenced around approximately 1851. "Problems with the implied dating only arise when we attempt to reconcile the dating of events in this novel, the penultimate tale of the Carlingford series, with the fictional chronology of the series as a whole" (Jay, 1998, p.500). The editor suggests that any inconsistencies which may arise within the Carlingford series are "the result of a double time scheme whereby internal consistency is run alongside the assumption that readers will enjoy references to the real chronological sequence of their reading of these tales" (Jay, 1998, p.500).

The storyline of *Miss Marjoribanks* is set within three distinct time periods. Like Jay (1998), this thesis follows the premise that the concluding events of *Miss Marjoribanks* occur at approximately the same time as the appearance of the final serial in May of 1866.

Through a reverse chronology constructed upon information presented within the novel, the three time periods have been identified as 1851, 1855/1856 and 1865/1866. The scope of this research was limited to the latter two time periods.

The following chapter provides a review of the literature pertinent to this study. A review of Margaret Oliphant and her works, particularly *Miss Marjoribanks*, is provided. An examination of the roles fulfilled by references made to clothing and textiles within literature is included. Finally, models of study and frameworks guiding this thesis are presented.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

The name of Margaret Oliphant is not one to dominate conversations on nineteenth century literature, if it is even brought to mention at all. However, completing close to 100 novels, over 50 short stories, more than 400 articles, numerous travel guides and several biographies, Margaret Oliphant lays "claim to a degree of productivity unrivaled by any serious contemporary" (O'Mealy, 1992, p.45). Her works attracted large audiences in her time and even earned her the honour of being the favourite novelist of Queen Victoria (O'Mealy, 1992). One is left to wonder at how such a popular and proficient author could sink into such relative obscurity.

The most common critique of Margaret Oliphant was that she over-produced (Williams, 1997). In a literary career which extended over 50 years, she averaged an output of two novels per year, not to mention numerous other articles and short stories. What has been commonly questioned is how such a vast quantity of work could be of any significant quality (O'Mealy, 1992). However, Margaret Oliphant does have her advocates who argue that dismissing all of her works based upon this premise would be a grave error. "They admit without hesitation that not all her work is first-rate, but, rather than dismiss her because of it, they single out those works that represent her best efforts" (O'Mealy, 1992, p.46). "“Her best work was of a very high order of merit”, wrote the novelist Howard Sturgis. ‘The harm that she did to her literary reputation seems rather the surrounding of her best with so much which she knew to be of inferior quality’” (as cited in Williams, 1997, p.274). To conduct a comprehensive examination of all of the

works of this prolific writer proves a daunting but rewarding challenge. "If her work is sifted we shall find excellent reviews and essays, penetrating historical sketches, and a number of novels and stories - realistic and 'supernatural' - which deserve to survive" (Williams, 1997, p.275).

Margaret Oliphant Wilson Oliphant

Margaret Oliphant Wilson was born into a clerk's family at Wallyford, Midlothian on April 4, 1828. The youngest child of Francis W. Wilson and Margaret Oliphant, she had two elder brothers, Francis (Frank) and William (Willie). The first ten years of her life were spent living in Lasswade, Glasgow, the family finally settling in Liverpool in 1838. "Her first attempt at writing took the form of a novel written in her teens to secure 'some amusement and occupation for myself' while striving to overcome depression after a broken engagement and acting as the silent nurse and attendant her mother's serious illness required" (Jay, 1990, p. vii). Her literary career would begin four years later in 1849 with the publication of her first novel, *Passages in the Life of Mrs. Margaret Maitland* (Jay, 1998).

In 1852, she moved to London to wed a maternal cousin who was attempting to establish himself as an artist and stained-glass window designer. It was this union with Francis W. Oliphant (Frank), which produced her rather unusual combination of names, Margaret Oliphant Wilson Oliphant. Over the next several years, the couple conceived six children, only three of whom would survive beyond infancy, Margaret Wilson Oliphant (Maggie), Cyril Francis (Tiddy or Tids) and Francis Romano (Cecco). The deaths of her

other three children were followed by a decline in the health of her husband, who had been diagnosed with advanced tuberculosis. The family moved abroad in favour of a climate conducive to the improvement of her husband's health; however, the effort was to no avail and at the end of 1859, Margaret Oliphant found herself alone in Italy, in debt and with three children to support (Jay, 1990).

The Chronicles of Carlingford

The period following the death of her husband proved to be rather unsatisfactory for Margaret Oliphant from a literary point of view as well. "It was a very severe winter, 1860-61, and it was severe on me too....I had not been doing very well with my writing" (Oliphant, 1990, p.90). In fact, Margaret Oliphant had sent several articles to be published in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, only to see them rejected. Despite this, she approached the firm with the suggestion that she complete a novel for serial publication. However, this request was similarly declined (Jay, 1990).

Nonetheless, Margaret Oliphant returned home that evening and began to write. "I sat up nearly all night in a passion of composition, stirred to the very bottom of my mind. The story was successful, and my fortune, comparatively speaking, was made" (Oliphant, 1990, p.91). She completed *The Executor* in time to see its publication in May of 1861. This story was the first in what would become known as the Chronicles of Carlingford series (Jay, 1990). This grouping of short stories and novels detailing life in provincial England were all accepted for publication in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*. The Chronicles of Carlingford became her best known works and were to include: *The*

Executor (May 1861), *The Rector* (Sept. 1861), *The Doctor's Family* (Oct. 1861 - Jan. 1862), *Salem Chapel* (Feb 1862 - Jan. 1863), *The Perpetual Curate* (June - Sept. 1864), *Miss Marjoribanks* (Feb. - Dec. 1865, Jan. - May 1866) and *Phoebe Junior: A Last Chronicle of Carlingford* (1876).

Miss Marjoribanks

In 1864, Margaret Oliphant found herself facing an incredibly similar set of circumstances as she had seen five years previously. Fatality had struck her family again as a sudden death claimed the life of her beloved daughter, Maggie. Shaken by this tragedy, she roamed aimlessly about the continent with her two sons, finally settling in Paris for the winter. Just as she had five years prior, Margaret Oliphant turned to the *Chronicles of Carlingford*; she began to pen the sixth story, *Miss Marjoribanks*. "In these circumstances there was much to be said for returning to the commercially rewarding territory of her *Chronicles of Carlingford* to produce a short story suitable for publication over four numbers in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*" (Jay, 1998, p. xi).

Miss Marjoribanks took on a life of its own and Margaret Oliphant realized early on that it would be a much longer work than was originally conceived. This was of paramount concern to the author who continually requested the advice and criticism of her publisher on the matter. Comments made by Blackwood, such as "had you made it a short condensed story I believe it would have been a much better thing for us both" (as cited in Winston, 1995, p.90) undoubtedly had an impact on the novel's progress. After its completion, *Miss Marjoribanks* had appeared "in fifteen parts in *Blackwood's Edinburgh*

Magazine, vols XCVII - XCIX, from February 1865 to May 1866, the publisher having decided to drop it from the issue for January 1866" (Jay, 1998, p.xxxviii).

Letters documenting the correspondence of author and publisher debunk the belief that all of Margaret Oliphant's works were completed in haste. Rather, the first edition of *Miss Marjoribanks* published in three-volume format by William Blackwood and Sons in 1866 reflects a process of careful and conscientious revisions. "The texts of the serially published novel and the 1866 three-volume edition are substantially different" (Winston, 1995, p.86). And it is this work which has proven to be Margaret Oliphant's greatest success. Of all of her novels, *Miss Marjoribanks* is the one which has received the most consistent praise. As R. C. Terry has stated, "a novel that can stand comparison with the best contemporary novels of its kind" (as cited in O'Mealy, 1992, p.46).

Fact into Fiction

It was invariably the practice of Margaret Oliphant to transfer her life experiences into her fiction (Clarke, 1979; Clarke, 1981; Colby, 1966). "As the range of her personal experience widened, so did her settings and the range of her characters" (Colby, 1966, p.15). Having spent the majority of her time in England, Margaret Oliphant was able to gain a deep insight into English society. As she matured as a novelist, her later works reflected this understanding through their astute portrayals of society (Clarke, 1979). *Miss Marjoribanks* is one such study of English society. Consistently hailed as an ironic comedy (Jay, 1998; Leavis, 1974; O'Mealy, 1992), *Miss Marjoribanks* provides penetrating insight into mid-Victorian English Provincial society (Leavis, 1974).

When her works detailed subject matter with which she was not intimately acquainted, Margaret Oliphant researched her topic scrupulously. Such investigation was necessitated through her workings with the *Cornhill Magazine*. "Looking at the many nonfiction articles which Ritchie and Oliphant in particular contributed, one senses that the very character of the magazine continually encouraged them to identify with key social issues of their own times and with aspects of English and European history" (Harris, 1986, p.389).

Haythornthwaite (1988) acknowledged several aspects of Margaret Oliphant's works for which study is merited. "These areas can be identified as her command of Scots dialogue and the portrayal of Scots character, her portrayal of the position of women in Victorian society, her portrayal of small town social life, her view of the role of the Church and Chapel in the community and finally her unique tone; unsentimental, humorous, detached and worldly, which contributes to her astringent Scots observer's view of English society" (Haythornthwaite, 1988, p.38).

The Roles of Clothing and Textiles Within the Novel

A review of literature reveals that references made to clothing and textiles in fiction can fulfil one of two main purposes. They are used to either (1) literally refer to some aspect(s) of a garment or textile or (2) are employed to serve indirect functions. The difference between the two is explicit and to clearly illustrate this concept, reference is made to a study conducted by Owens and Harris (1992).

Direct and Indirect References.

In "The Fabric's the Thing: Literal and Figurative References to Textiles in Selected Plays of William Shakespeare", the authors conduct an analysis of the references made to textile materials as appearing in 28 plays of the Bard. Two categories were developed into which these references were divided: "*direct*, that is to say, indicators of the literal function of the textile material, and those that were metaphoric or *indirect* in nature, indicators of a secondary, figurative, transformative meaning which can only be understood by drawing analogues and relationships with the direct meaning" (Owens & Harris, 1992, p.57). A sampling of 19 references to textile materials was presented, examples of each as it appeared in discourse were provided. The authors "then provide a definition, an analysis, and a discussion of the item in an exemplifying context" (Owens & Harris, 1992, p.57). To clarify the distinction between direct and indirect references, a practical example from the study is presented below. One of the textile materials included in the authors' analysis was the term *silk*. The following quotations were included in the authors' study, providing an example of the textile reference as appearing in Shakespeare's plays.

Direct "'Let not the creaking of shoes nor the rustling of
 silks betray thy poor heart to woman.'
 (*King Lear*, III, iv, 94-96)"
 (Owens & Harris, 1992, p.59)

Indirect "'Taffata phrases, silken terms precise,
Three-pil'd hyperboles, spruce affection,
Figures pedantical - these summer flies
Have blown me full of maggot ostentation.'
(*Love's Labor's Lost*, V, ii, 406-409)"
(Owens & Harris, 1992, p.59)

The following definition for the textile reference under analysis was offered: "Silk fabrics of various types became such a common-place among the wealthier classes in Elizabethan times that they almost became synonymous with wealth, ostentation, elegance, and grace" (Owens & Harris, 1992, p.59). Thus, in the first quotation the meaning imbued by the word *silks* is unmistakable; the warning is being offered to someone who would have been literally clothed in silk, someone who would have belonged to an upper class. The meaning of the term *silken* in the second quotation is not quite so straightforward. What this indirect reference actually is describing is "overly flowery, smooth-as-silk, pedantic language - a language that was associated with the upper, educated classes of the Bard's time" (Owens & Harris, 1992, p.59).

It is apparent that a significantly different message emerges from the direct quotation than from the indirect quotation. The authors clearly illustrate how "these terms referring to textiles have (a) symbolic, *direct* reference as the representational label for a thing, the literal, and (b) resymbolized *indirect* reference in their most typically metaphoric use, the figurative, in the comedies, romances, and tragedies of William Shakespeare" (Owens &

Harris, 1992, p.56).

While the Owens and Harris (1992) study focussed upon references to textile materials, their classification of references as fulfilling either direct or indirect functions can be applied to references made to aspects of clothing. This idea has been validated in numerous other studies. While the identical terms of direct and indirect may not have been applied to references in other studies, the concept of this distinction has been repeatedly acknowledged.

Direct References to Aspects of Clothing and Textiles.

Where references have been used in the direct sense (to literally refer to some aspect of clothing or textiles), the details provided within a novel can transcend that of mere surface decoration to ultimately create visual imagery wrought full of meaningfulness. The novelist is able to manipulate this visual imagery to create certain impressions as to time, place, culture and even personality. Thus, two primary roles of visual imagery emerge: (1) to set a scene and (2) to aid in characterization. When references to clothing are used to set a scene, fictional works can prove to be a unique source of historical record. Novels become valuable resources for costume historians, as the accurate recording of clothing details can re-integrate past dress with past societies (Buck, 1992).

A study by Corbett offered that "characterization, the kind of people created by authors, may be achieved and conveyed to an audience by various means including descriptions of the characters' manner of dress, facial features, weight, height, stature, and carriage" (as cited in Lennon & Burns, 1993, p.160). The reader can then rely upon this

information about a character's appearance to make inferences about personality.

It is important to note that characterization can fulfil means other than highlighting the varied personalities of individuals. This additional function which can potentially be fulfilled by characterization was most succinctly summarized by Rachel Worth (1995) in her study of the works of Thomas Hardy. She identified that Thomas Hardy was one such novelist who used dress to convey varied personalities, thus emphasizing the individuality of his characters. "Although it could be argued that the way in which Hardy uses dress to portray personality is an artistic device which is essential to the construction of character and hence to the structure of the novels themselves, it is also an indicator of the social reality of the period under discussion" (Worth, 1995, p.64).

This idea is echoed in a study conducted by Kimberly Chrisman, in which she examines the works of Edith Wharton. "Wharton's writings are a valuable resource for dress historians; likewise, a familiarity with dress history is a valuable aid to understanding and appreciating her skillful characterizations" (Chrisman, 1998, p.17).

Validation of References to Clothing and Textiles

Some novels may have been intended to reveal a fashion show through which characters parade a variety of fashions purely for the purpose of entertainment. However, where accurate observation or research has been recorded, the novel can provide so much more. The appropriate selection of dress and its placement within a novel can set a story within a particular historical context, providing a mirror of the social reality of the time. It is then that dress is re-integrated with society (Buck, 1992). Thus, if a fictional work is to

be relied upon as a valid source of costume history, it is imperative that the accuracy of the visual imagery presented be validated.

"In assessing a novel's evidence of the dress of its time we have to look first at its author" (Buck, 1992, p.21). It is important to consider the author's purpose in writing and any potential biases which may have clouded what was written. Also, the background of the author must be considered as their various experiences, or limitations thereof, will determine their frame of reference (Buck, 1992). This is especially important to consider as some authors may choose not to write about their contemporary society but rather about some bygone era (Buck, 1983).

Kimberley Chrisman's (1998) study of the novels of Edith Wharton deals extensively with this idea of author examination. Chrisman consults the letters and autobiography of Edith Wharton to establish the important and pervasive role that clothing played in the life of the author from early childhood on. Chrisman reveals that, born into a family for whom fashion was an inextricable part of life, Wharton's knowledge of dress was primarily firsthand. Any information that Wharton may not have gained through experience, was obtained through intensive research. It was undoubted that "Wharton's personal interest and involvement in the world of fashion helped her to re-create - and populate - that 'amply clad' society in detailed prose" (Chrisman, 1998, p.30).

Thus, through either experience and/or research, accurate portraits of clothing may be drawn, providing a wealth of descriptive evidence. However, substantiating that an author had pure intentions and wrote within an adequate frame of reference is only the first step in validating the accuracy of dress descriptions presented within a novel. It is fortunate

that a variety of sources which detail dress of the nineteenth century are in existence. Each resource harbours its own set of merits and limitations. Just as with novels, an artist's intentions and experience could colour a portrait. Even extant garments are often limited in that they survive without documentation of who wore them, where, when or how (Buck, 1976). However, when the sources of fictional stories and factual documentation are examined in light of each other, dress can then be re-integrated with the time and place within which it was worn (Buck, 1976, 1983).

In her study of the works of Thomas Hardy, Rachel Worth (1995) draws upon numerous resources to validate the references to dress as found in his novels. Worth acknowledges that Hardy wrote about times with which he had limited familiarity. However, careful research was able to compensate for this limitation as Worth established that the dress descriptions presented in his works are found to be highly reflective of the time period and places they portray. Worth includes excerpts from Hardy's various novels which detail references to dress and then compares these to photographs and garments which have survived from the same period. It is through this process that she is able to "place several of the novels in a definite historical context" (Worth, 1995, p.56).

The novels of Thomas Hardy are made even more valuable due to the inclusion of proper terminology by which certain garments were known. By offering functional, as well as aesthetic details of garments, Hardy is also able to illuminate how, when, where and by whom a particular garment would have been used (Worth, 1995).

"Thomas Hardy's novels, in a very specific sense, describe in detail the lives of the rural working classes - artisans and labourers - who, in the creation of history, have become 'the

blind alleys, the lost causes and the losers', and who, without Hardy, might otherwise have been 'forgotten'" (Worth, 1995, p.55)². Also, it may be argued that the dress of these subjects is an area of study which has been equally lacking. Workwear would have been repeatedly repaired and used until it was literally worn out. Consequently, the amount of work clothing that has survived is rather limited and of that which does exist, the condition is often poor. Also, these garments were not considered valuable enough to save, another factor contributing to the low survival rate (Worth, 1995). Thus, the value of Hardy's novels is manifest.

Classification Systems

The main purpose of a classification system is to allow previously unordered information to be organized in a manner which makes it easier to use. Categories are devised which allow information to be separated into appropriate classes to facilitate its identification, dating and retrieval (Schlick, 1991). "Each class [is] identified by a complex of characteristics (McKern, 1939) and is usually considered the most lucid way to present artifact types for publication and comparison (Whiteford, 1947). Objects or artifacts are usually grouped by primary, secondary and tertiary characters or traits in such a way that when the task is done the whole can be assembled in the shape of a sort of genealogical tree (Krieger, 1944)" (Schlick, 1988, p.2). A classification system provides the framework necessary for the organization and standardization of the information

²In Worth's article, this quotation is followed by an endnote referring the reader to the following citation. E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (1963; Pelican, 1968), Preface, p.12.

generated in this thesis.

Classification systems are tailored depending upon the purpose of the study; therefore, a clear definition of end use is essential prior to their creation. For example, the needs fulfilled by a classification system would be very different for that of a historical costume lecturer than for that of a museum's collection manager. For a lecturer it would be logical to organize costume information based upon chronology or even geography and then move on to classify the finer points of detail embodied within the costume. Conversely, a museum's collection manager might begin by organizing specific artifact information into categories in an attempt to place them within the appropriate time frame and location (Schlick, 1991). Thus, the creation of a classification system is dependent upon the nature of the study.

While classification systems are frequently used to impose order upon aspects of historic costume, they are not generally regarded as belonging within the discipline of history. Classification systems do not take historical context into account. It is the various components of a garment that are considered; the role and place of the garment within the past becomes incidental. "The end result of classification is the reduction of the historical object to criteria and categorization priorities imposed by the system (such as time periods). The diversity of social and cultural history as reflected in the varieties of dress of the avant garde and the laggard, the elite and the common, the urban and the rural, and the western and the non-western is not considered" (Pannabecker, 1991, p.163).

This chapter has reviewed several works which have relevance to my thesis topic. The

studies of Worth (1995), Chrisman (1998), and Owens and Harris (1992) serve as models for my study. Various components of their works will be adopted to form the foundation which will guide my research. The framework provided by a classification system provides the structure under which the initial stages of my research were organized. Application of these concepts in regards to my study is expanded upon in the following chapter.

Chapter Three

Methodology

This thesis is an exercise in illuminating the functions fulfilled by references to clothing and textiles within fictional literature, and more specifically within the nineteenth century novel, *Miss Marjoribanks*. Aspects of both non-historical methodology and traditional clothing and textiles historical methodology were utilized to fulfil the objectives of the study.

As previously outlined in Chapter One, the objectives met in this study are:

1. Annotation of the references to clothing and textiles made in regards to two female characters in *Miss Marjoribanks*.
2. Determination of the historical accuracy of these references.
3. Compilation of a guide to resources which could be utilized to amplify education involving historical clothing and textile references found within mid-nineteenth century.

This chapter will define how these objectives were met through (1) documentation using a classification system and (2) historical analysis of extant primary resources.

Reference Documentation

The primary function of a classification system is to organize information in a manner which facilitates its usage. Criteria and categories are developed which permit information to be separated and classified allowing for a systematic means of identification, dating and retrieval. The first objective of my thesis was fulfilled through the implementation of a classification system.

Through a re-reading of the *Miss Marjoribanks* text, references made to the clothing and textiles of Lucilla Marjoribanks and Barbara Lake were documented. Some form of organization needed to be imposed upon these references in order to maintain some semblance of order and standardization of data.

A classification system was employed to facilitate the identification and retrieval of the references made to the characters' clothing and textiles. The classification system was not used in an attempt to date the references, but rather, provided a framework within which they could be documented and more specifically, organized.

As previously identified in Chapter Two, classification systems are tailored depending upon the purpose of the study. As it was my intention to determine the historical accuracy of the references to dress within *Miss Marjoribanks*, a classification system suitable to this end use was identified. Acknowledging the limitation that classification systems disregard historical context, I re-emphasize that the use of a classification system within this study was *solely* to organize the references which were identified. The categorization resulting from the classification system facilitated the ensuing examination which took historical context into consideration.

The classification system which guided my research was developed by Schlick (1988, 1991). The foundation for her classification system rests upon the preliminary works of Chenhall (1978), Horn (1978) and the International Committee for the Museums and Collections of Costume, International Council of Museums (ICOM). In her study, Schlick developed a hierarchy to determine the appropriate classification level for a particular artifact. The highest level of her hierarchy is divided into two primary classes,

those of accessory and garment. "A garment is defined as an artifact that covers all or part of the body. An accessory is worn as decoration or carried in addition to the garment" (Schlick, 1991, p.155). The accessory category is further divided into two secondary classifications: (1) carried, referring to such accessories as purses or parasols and (2) jewelry, that which would be worn for decoration. "The garment category is further divided into torso and extremity (secondary classifications) which are, in turn, divided into artifact sub-types based on their relation to other items of clothing and the body (torso) or their location on the body (extremity)" (Schlick, 1991, p.155). For diagrammatic expression of Schlick's classification system, refer to Figure 1.

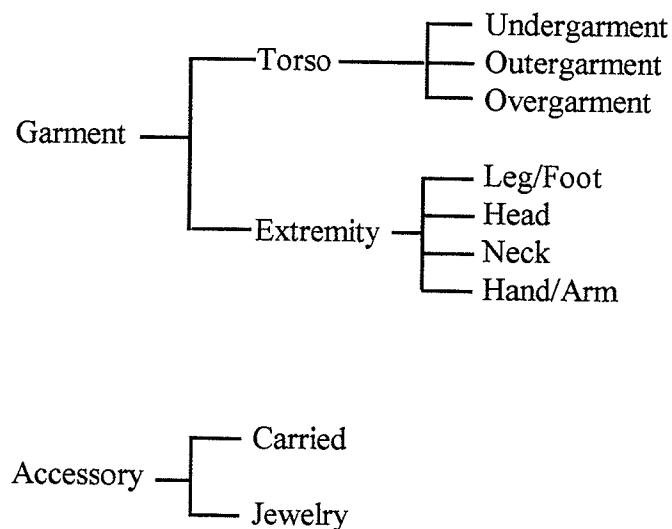


Figure 1. Diagrammatic Expression of Schlick's (1991) Classification System.

The classification system developed by Schlick (1991) was adequate for implementation within my study, with one minor addition. The insertion of a primary category was made and termed, *textile*. This category was used to refer to any material which has not yet been made into or is not intended to be made into any form of garment. The development of this category was intended primarily for the classification of references to handcrafts, such as various types of needlework.

Otherwise, the artifact sub-types (tertiary classifications for garments and secondary classifications for accessories) were of adequately exhaustive levels for the purpose of my study. I employed this classification system so that references to artifacts of a similar nature could be categorized together. For example, any mention of the dresses worn by Lucilla Marjoribanks were classified under Garment/Torso/Outergarment, while any references to such objects as her handkerchief or umbrella were classified under Accessory/Carried.

Thus, the classification system detailed in Figure 2 was employed to annotate and order the references made to the clothing and textiles of Lucilla and Barbara. Upon identification of the references, they were categorized into the appropriate class. A comprehensive listing of the collected references appears in Appendices A and B. The references made in regards to each character were documented in one of two separate, yet identical classification systems. That is to say that the references to the clothing and textiles of Lucilla were documented separately from those of Barbara; each character had her own separate classification system so as to eliminate any confusion as to whom a reference was intended.

References were allotted into the appropriate class at the most exhaustive level (i.e., garment/torso/outergarment or garment/extremity/head, etc.). Information consisted of mentions of singular terms, such as *hat* or of a descriptive phrase, such as *high white frock*. Either type of reference was assigned into the appropriate classification level and was accompanied by the identifying information of chapter, page and line of occurrence. The context in which the references appeared in the novel, facilitated their distribution into appropriate categories.

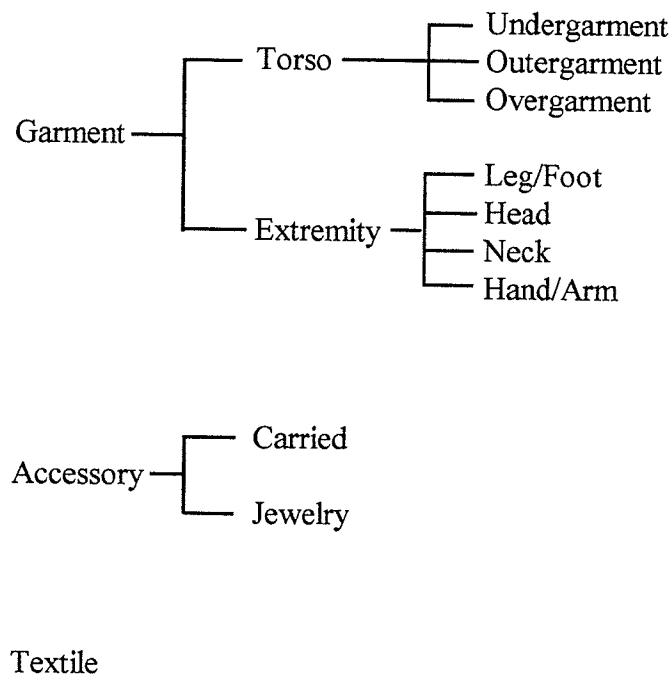


Figure 2. Diagrammatic Expression of Schlick's (1991) Classification System with additional category of *textile*.

Historical Examination

"History can be characterized as an interpretive discipline that uses remaining, often incomplete information" (Pedersen, 1991, p.168). Primary sources are the foundation upon which sound historical research is based. A variety of physical forms exist upon which examination may be conducted, namely written documentation, pictorial sources or actual clothing and textiles. Through the analysis of these extant artifacts, the clothing and textile historian is afforded the opportunity of recreating visions of the past. The second objective of my thesis was fulfilled by conducting historical research.

Through historical research involving various primary resources, the historical accuracy of references to the clothing and textiles of the two aforementioned female characters in *Miss Marjoribanks* was established. This phase of my research was divided into two components: (1) author examination and (2) historical authentication of references.

Author Examination.

As previously identified in Chapter Two, "in assessing a novel's evidence of the dress of its time we have to look first at its author" (Buck, 1992, p.21). What was the author's purpose in writing? Does the author write about his/her familiar contemporary time or some previous period? What is the author's background? Does he/she write within his/her frame of reference?

Williams (1997) identified that in the past twenty five or so years, there has been a modest revival in the reputation of Margaret Oliphant. This has resulted in the generation

of a number of journal articles and books being published on both her life and work. As well, the publishing of her autobiography and letters allows one to chronicle the life of Margaret Oliphant. It is through these means that I have conducted my author examination. Archival investigation of both secondary and primary written sources were undertaken in an attempt to reveal the roles which clothing and textiles played within the life of Margaret Oliphant and within her works. Similarly, through these means the author's intent in writing and her frame of reference were illuminated.

Historical Authentication of References.

As introduced in Chapter Two, the second step in validating the historical accuracy of a novel's references to clothing and textiles is by comparison of those references with extant primary resources. Worth's (1995) examination of dress within the novels of Thomas Hardy provided a model for this phase of my research. The accuracy of Hardy's references to dress is made evident when Worth examines them in light of extant garments and photographs.

This phase of Objective Two was met through archival investigation. The principal type of primary resource consulted was that of women's periodicals from the mid-nineteenth century, viewed in microfilmed formats. As *Miss Marjoribanks* details life in an English society, only those periodicals of English origin were selected for examination. Within each periodical, certain sections were identified as possible sources for fashion information. These portions of the periodicals were examined for any written or pictorial information which would aid in establishing the historical authenticity of the clothing and

textiles references. What follows is an identification of the periodicals examined and more specifically, the principal sections within each, which were chosen for analysis.

Archival Investigation 1854 - 1856

The *Lady's Newspaper and Pictorial Times*.

To establish the historical accuracy of the clothing and textile references made within this section of the novel, two periodicals from the time period were examined, the *Lady's Newspaper and Pictorial Times* as well as the *Ladies' Cabinet of Fashion*. Beetham (1996) identifies the former as the first newspaper to have been produced for ladies. The *Lady's Newspaper* was distributed weekly; having begun production in 1847, it enjoyed a significant run until its merger with another newspaper in 1863.

Several sections of the *Lady's Newspaper* were examined for information which would aid in establishing the historical accuracy of the clothing references found within *Miss Marjoribanks*. "To Correspondents" was a column dedicated to answering questions posed by the readership; these inquiries involved a wide range of subjects, not the least of which could involve fashions. Another section of the *Lady's Newspaper* was devoted strictly to fashions of the day and was entitled the "London and Paris Fashions". The first portion of this section, "Description of the Engravings", included engravings of various fashions, presenting the reader with visual renderings which were accompanied by written descriptions. Following this was "General Information on Fashion and Dress", which provided additional written information as to the fashionable wear of the day; this could either involve general information as to what was deemed fashionable, as well as specific,

detailed mention of new and novel articles. The "London and Paris Fashions" was sometimes supplemented by a "To Correspondents" segment where readers' questions concerning fashion were answered. Another section of the *Lady's Newspaper* which contained information relevant to this study was the "Work-Table". This section focused upon projects which could be worked at home. Generally, engravings of the project (or a portion of) were presented along with a list of requisite materials and instructions for working the design. Finally, the advertisement section of this newspaper proved to be a rich source of information for this study.

The Ladies' Cabinet of Fashion.

The *Ladies' Cabinet of Fashion* was a monthly journal which was published from 1832 to 1870 (White, 1970). The sections examined in the *Ladies' Cabinet* followed formats relatively similar to those detailed in the *Lady's Newspaper* above. The main section in this journal which was dedicated to fashion was entitled the "Toilet". It was here that fashion plates could be found along with written descriptions of the designs presented. The "Toilet" was also the forum where generalized fashion information was documented. The *Ladies' Cabinet* also contained a section entitled the "Work-Table", which provided pictorial and written information much the same as that in the *Lady's Newspaper*. Finally, the section entitled "Answers to Correspondents" was examined for information relevant to this study. Again, like the newspaper mentioned above, this section of the *Ladies' Cabinet* addressed questions submitted by and/or concerns of readers.

Archival Investigation 1863 - 1866

The *Queen*

Two different periodicals were examined in the attempt to authenticate the 1865/1866 clothing and textile references; these were the *Queen* and the *Ladies' Treasury*. The *Queen* was begun as a weekly newspaper in 1861. Two years later, it merged with the *Lady's Newspaper and Pictorial Times* to become the *Queen; the Lady's Newspaper*. It was at the time of this unification in 1863 which found the *Queen* settle upon a structure which would ensure its success³ (Beetham, 1996).

Numerous sections of the *Queen* were examined for pertinent clothing and textiles information. In the "Notices to Correspondents" column, the editor responded to comments or questions submitted by readers. While the submissions which occasioned the responses were not included, the general context of the inquiry could be elicited. The fashion department entitled "Dress"⁴ was divided into two sections, "London and Paris Fashions" and the "Parisian Fashions". While both were dedicated to documenting fashionable ideals of the day, the latter was submitted by a fashion correspondent and was devoted exclusively to those fashions abroad. The fashion information provided within the *Queen* tended to be of a more textual basis. Some issues were accompanied by pictorial renderings of fashions but comparatively not to the extent that the other periodicals did.

³The *Queen* eventually amalgamated with *Harper's Bazaar* and as noted by Beetham (1996) was still available in the 1990s. Beetham (1996) referred to this merged publication as *Harper's and Queen* while Dancyger (1978) termed it the *Queen and Harper's Bazaar*.

⁴The name of this column was later changed to "Dress and Fashions".

Readers could submit fashion inquiries to be printed in the "Notes and Queries on Dress"⁵ section of the *Queen*. In the "Answers" portion, other readers' responses and advice could be found. The department entitled the "Work-Table" presented a variety of projects which could be worked at home. "Work-Table Notes and Queries" and the corresponding "Answers" section followed the same format as that of "Notes and Queries on Dress", only subject matter was geared towards home projects. Aptly named, the "Newest Things in the Shops" also proved to be a valuable source of information, as did the advertisement section of the *Queen*.

The Ladies' Treasury.

The second periodical examined in regards to this time period was the *Ladies' Treasury*. This monthly magazine had a very successful career, beginning in 1858 and running until 1895 (Beetham, 1996; White, 1970). Three sections of this magazine were examined for pertinent clothing and textiles information, one of these was entitled the "Fashions". Of all the issues of the *Ladies' Treasury* that were examined, only two were unaccompanied by a fashion plate. Otherwise, pictorial renderings appeared each month with a supplementary written description. Also to be found within the "Fashions" was general information on the dress of the day. "Needlework" emulated the ideas presented within the "Work-Table" departments of the other periodicals. Illustrations, lists of materials and instructions were provided so that projects could be worked at home. The *Ladies' Treasury* also contained a "Notices to Correspondents" column which also followed the concepts embodied in the other periodicals with similarly named columns.

⁵The name of this section was later changed to "Notes and Queries on Dress and Fashion".

Scope of Archival Investigation

As detailed above, four different periodicals were selected for examination in this study. The following identifies the number of issues which were examined for each of these.

Beginning in October and concluding as Christmas of the following year approached, the first time period examined in this study comprised one full year. It has been determined that it would have been October of the year 1855 and Christmas of 1856 which approached. Thus, essentially the complete year of 1856 was documented in *Miss Marjoribanks*. As the clothing and textile references spanned the full year, it was necessary to examine primary resources which would also span the entire year of 1856. To account for any lag in adoption of fashions, the previous two years were examined as well. Thus, the 1854, 1855 and 1856 issues of the *Lady's Newspaper* (issued weekly) and the *Ladies' Cabinet of Fashion* (issued monthly) were examined.

Ten years have passed when the final time period of *Miss Marjoribanks* commences. Unfortunately the exact month is not mentioned but snow is found to be on the ground and the weather is very wintry. The final events occur just as summer was beginning, which has been assumed to correspond with the final serial publication in May 1866. To encompass a representative time span, the months from November to May were examined, again for a three year period. Thus, issues of the *Queen* (presented weekly) and issues of the *Ladies' Treasury* (issued monthly) were examined from November 1863 to May 1864, November 1864 to May 1865 and November 1865 to May 1866.

Emerging from this study was a significant number of references available which study the role of clothing and textiles within literature. Organizing a framework of references into a resource guide would prove useful for others wishing to acquaint or better familiarize themselves with the general topic.

Also, this study explored various primary resources in the attempt to place the dress of one particular novel within one particular historical context. The primary resources I have consulted each harbour their own sets of merits and limitations. The resources available in the fulfilment of the second objective have been detailed, providing insight into specific avenues which may be utilized in the study of other historical works in illuminating the place of dress within society. Culmination into a guide of resources for such studies would prove useful for future researchers and educators who wish to amplify their literary, historical or clothing and textiles study.

CHAPTER 4

Findings 1854-1856

The story detailed within *Miss Marjoribanks* spans a period of approximately 15 years. As discussed in Chapter One, this thesis assumes a chronology which is in accordance with the one outlined by Jay (1998). Supposing that the final events of the novel occurred roughly around the year of its publication in 1866 means that the storyline would have begun in 1851. Only the first chapter of *Miss Marjoribanks* focuses upon this year, chronicling the life of Lucilla Marjoribanks as she returns home to mourn the passing of her mother. The subsequent two chapters make mention of Lucilla's return to school and a trip abroad. The social climate of Lucilla's hometown of Carlingford is introduced in these chapters as are a variety of the characters living there, familiarizing the reader with the town. Chapter Four details the homecoming of Lucilla, late in the year of 1855. With the return of Lucilla, the bulk of the story commences and the subsequent 31 chapters are devoted to chronicling the next year of life in Carlingford.

Throughout these 31 chapters of the novel, a significant amount of attention is paid to the clothing of Lucilla Marjoribanks and Barbara Lake. Identification of the references to their clothing revealed both literal and figurative descriptions. An examination of both types of references was conducted in order to form a composite of each woman's dress. The resultant images were then researched in an attempt to establish their historical accuracy. The clothing and textile references made in regards to both Lucilla and Barbara are documented in Appendix A.

The White Dress

One aspect of Lucilla Marjoribank's dress which figures prominently within this section of the novel is a distinct lack of color within her wardrobe. This is certainly not to say it is an unimportant aspect of her dress. Much to the contrary, great focus is placed on the monochromaticity of Lucilla's garments. They are consistently described as white; only one other color enters with the introduction of the extraneous adornments, green ribbons.

Used literally, the term *white* conveys information as to the actual color of Lucilla's garments. It also aids in portrayal of character, providing insight into her personality, values and ideals. Of the entries for the term white, in Johnson's Dictionary of 1852, the following were two of five that appeared: "3. Having the colour appropriated to happiness and innocence" (p.1342) and "5. Pure; unblemished" (p.1343). Thus, as early as 1852, the colour white had been associated with qualities such as purity and innocence and the invocation of this color can convey these attributes. This idea is supported by the inclusion of the figurative references, vestal and virginal. Lucilla appears in her "vestal robes" (Oliphant, 1998, p.48) and "virginal white draperies" (Oliphant, 1998, p.259), two figurative references which reinforce the underlying connotations of the color as being that which is pristine and unsullied.

Lucilla's white wardrobe is adorned throughout various seasons, first appearing at the end of October, worn during the Christmas season and even into the summer months. The actual garment worn by Lucilla was referred to as either a dress, frock, draperies or robes. Johnson's Dictionary (1852) defined dress as "1. Clothes; garment; habit" (p.370). Frock was clarified as "1. A dress; a coat" (p.498). For the terms, *robe* and *draperies*,

Johnson's Dictionary (1852) did not provide a definition appropriate to the usage of the words within the novel. Cunningham, Cunningham and Beard (1960) define the nineteenth century female robe as "to signify a woman's dress consisting of an under-dress or skirt with an over-dress; the skirt being open in front and usually long behind, but the term was loosely used for a gown" (p.182). This supports the usage of the term robe as a literal reference to the type of garment worn, whereas draperies fulfills more of a descriptive role. Due to the lack of an appropriate definition in Johnson's Dictionary (1852), the contemporary meaning of the word has been assumed, allowing for a working definition of the word. The Canadian Oxford Dictionary (2001) definition of drapery is "clothing or hangings arranged in folds" (p.423). Thus, it has been construed that Lucilla appeared in a dress which had a voluminous skirt.

Lucilla's dress remained consistently high⁶ in the neck; this aspect of design often being emphasized by the use of italics in the text. Only one mention of Lucilla's dress fabric is made, that of India muslin.

In terms of color, fabric and style, the first dress worn by Barbara Lake would seem to be identical in appearance to that of Lucilla Marjoribanks. However, such a thought could not likely be more erroneous. When Barbara is invited to her first of Lucilla's Thursday Evenings, she is confronted with the glaring question of what to wear. The answer is "nothing but a white frock" (Oliphant, 1998, p.82). At this point, it is necessary to mention that Lucilla had declared the *high white frock* as the standard of dress. However,

⁶According to Cunningham (1958), the term *high* refers to "a dress reaching up to the throat" (p.437).

Oliphant's invocation of the terms *nothing but* implies that Barbara's dress is somehow inferior in comparison to the others. It is remarked that:

and she could not help asking herself why Lucilla, who was not so handsome as she was, had the power to array herself in gorgeous apparel, while she, Barbara, had nothing but a white frock. There are differences even in white frocks, though the masculine mind may be unaware of them. Barbara's muslin had been washed six times, and had a very different air from the vestal robes of her patroness (Oliphant, 1998, p.82).

But she has no choice and must wear that dress to her first Evening, where it is found that:

Barbara's muslin, six times washed, was not more different from the spotless lightness of all the draperies round her than was her air of fright, and at the same time of defiance, from the gay babble and pleasant looks of the group which, by a chance combination, she seemed to form part of' (Oliphant, 1998, p.85).

These quotations imply that the whiteness of Barbara's dress has been diminished by excess washing. Compounding her misery, the adverse effects of the cleaning extend beyond ruined color to also affect the silhouette of her dress. Barbara's dress is limp, limp enough to be observed by a male. Barbara is able to pull out the breadths of her dress, suggesting that it has a fullness equal to that of Lucilla's. However, where Lucilla's draperies are crisp, Barbara's are limp.

Barbara views this dress as but one of her many disadvantages. The remedy is clear, Barbara's father is made to be convinced that a new dress is necessary. The attention that Barbara devotes to the construction of the garment borders on fanatical. "And then it was

only a new dress to Rose, whereas to Barbara it was a supreme effort of passion and ambition and jealousy and wounded *amour propre*" (Oliphant, 1998, p.108). The new dress is white muslin, just like other peoples, but the freshly procured garment reaches fantastical proportions in Barbara's mind. So superior to the old one, this new dress is described by her as one that is fit to be seen, a decent dress. Barbara believes that her new dress is a key which alone can permit her entry into another social world. She equates her self-worth to the quality of her garment. Her dreams are filled with visions of many such dresses as she aspires to be the best dressed woman in Carlingford, which she essentially equates to being the best woman in town.

The consistency in dress which Lucilla Marjoribanks displayed was also advocated as the ideal towards which others should strive when appearing at one of her Thursday Evenings. Lucilla contends that on Thursdays, she hosts what is only an Evening, not a party. Thus, for these friendly gatherings, there is no dress required. Early on she makes her ideals clear "'A white frock, high in the neck,' said Lucilla, with sweet simplicity - 'as for anything else, it would be bad style' (Oliphant, 1998, p.53).

Various sections of the *Lady's Newspaper* as well as the *Ladies' Cabinet of Fashion* were examined to retrieve information regarding the existence of the white muslin dress within the time period of 1854 through 1856. In the *Lady's Newspaper*, the section entitled the "London and Paris Fashions" proved a rich source of information in this validation process. This section of the journal presented engravings of fashions with an accompanying written "Description of the Engravings". This combination of pictorial and

textual formats was invaluable in the identification of the white muslin dress.

White muslin dresses of various descriptions were found in this section of the journal, throughout the years 1854 to 1856. Primarily, the engravings of white muslin dresses and accompanying written information served to establish that a garment of such description could have appeared within the assumed time frame of the novel. The engravings were invaluable in conveying ideas as to a variety of styles and forms of decoration. These renderings were useful in detailing aspects of dress which can be difficult to describe clearly with words. The supplementary written descriptions helped clarify details of the engravings, further enhancing understanding of the subject. For example, some engravings were accompanied by an indication of where, for what event, or time of day the outfit was intended to be worn. Examples of Dress for the Country were noted in 1854 and 1856. These ensembles were more specifically intended for Garden Dress (*LN*, July 8, 1854), Morning Visiting Dress (*LN*, September 9, 1854), Déjeuner Champêtre (*LN*, June 21, 1856) as well as Dinner and Evening Dress (*LN*, July 26, 1856; *LN*, August 2, 1856). White muslin composed Ball Dress (*LN*, January 28, 1854), Evening Dress (*LN*, October 13, 1855), Indoor Costume (*LN*, August 30, 1856) and Dinner Dress (*LN*, July 19, 1856).

The written descriptions of the engravings were important in establishing the colour and fabric composition of the garment presented. As previously identified, the periodicals consulted were of microfilmed formats. As a result, only black and white renderings were presented. Thus, textual documentation was essential in confirming the colour of a garment. Fabric composition was another feature which required written documentation.

While some fabrics have a surface finish which lends itself to visual representation (velvet or satin), such is not the case with muslin. In terms of fabric, some of the written descriptions offered information suggesting that different types of muslin were available. In addition to white muslin, there appeared white organdy muslin, white jaconnet muslin, clear white muslin as well as clear Swiss muslin.

One of the design elements which varied amongst the white muslin dresses was the type of neckline. Of specific interest to this study was a white muslin dress, high in the neck. Again, the combination of engraving and accompanying written description proved essential in identification of this feature. White muslin dresses, *high to the throat*, did indeed make an appearance (*LN*, May 6, 1854; *LN*, June 16, 1855; *LN*, October 13, 1855). The text of these engravings provide validation that high is a term which could have been used to describe a neckline. The engravings provide a valuable visual representation of this term.

Of the engravings examined, a notable feature emerged in regards to the skirt. The engravings exhibit full skirts which stand away from the figure. The volumes of fabric do not hang slackly from the waist, gathering about the ankles. Rather, the skirts have body; their fullness is displayed by being supported away from the figure.

"General Observations on Fashion and Dress" was another section in the Lady's Newspaper which provided support as to the existence of muslin dresses within the time period of 1854 through 1856. Within this section, general information as to fashionable styles and decoration for muslin dresses could be found. Many times, descriptions of new muslin dresses were documented; detailed information was provided on various aspects of

the garment, much like that found in the text of "Description of the Engravings".

The fashion section found within the *Ladies' Cabinet* presented fashion information in a format similar to that detailed above. The "Toilet", typically presented monthly fashion plates with accompanying written descriptions, as well as general information on the trends in fashions of the day. No renderings of white muslin dresses were found in the "Toilet". However, mention of such garments did appear within the general fashion information section, aiding in the validation of this type of garment.

In August 1854, the "Toilet" acknowledged that "Muslin gowns are very beautiful this year" (p.110). This statement is subjoined by an account of one such gown, the written description detailing that it is both white and with a corsage⁷ that is high. In the September 1855 issue of the "Toilet" it is simply stated that "*Gaze de Chambéry, tarlatane*, and embroidered muslin are used for summer ball-dresses" (p.165).

Waterproof Cloak

Only one form of overgarment is introduced in this time period of *Miss Marjoribanks*. It is mentioned three times throughout one of the episodes recounted in the story. This overgarment is donned by Lucilla when she ventures outside into a deluge of rain; the garment is a waterproof cloak. Descriptive information concerning this garment is scanty at best. In its first mention, it is referred to as "a great waterproof cloak" (Oliphant, 1998, p.207) while the second reference sees Lucilla appear simply "in her waterproof cloak" (Oliphant, 1998, p.207). Final mention of this garment is made when Lucilla makes her

⁷Corsage was a term used to refer to the bodice portion of the garment.

return home. At this time she is noted as being "quite resplendent in her waterproof cloak, and utterly indifferent to the rain"(Oliphant, 1998 p.214).

Information found in the July 15, 1854 "Correspondence" column of the *Lady's Newspaper* offers evidence that some method of waterproofing fabric was known by this date. Information is provided in response to a question invoked by a reader who called himself/herself, George Hall. While the question which occasioned the response is not included, the subject matter is clear and perfectly evinced by the first sentence of the reply. "The following process is recommended, to make cloth water-proof, without being air-proof" (p.18). What follows this statement is a recipe and method of application to fabric.

Confirmation that waterproof cloaks were in existence during the time period under examination was found in many issues of the *Lady's Newspaper* throughout the years 1854 to 1856. Advertisements proved a rich source of documentation for this type of garment.

Garments designed to afford protection from the rain were advertised by a number of establishments. In an 1854 advertisement, Messrs. Farmer and Rogers informed the public of the selection of travelling and waterproof cloaks to be found at The Great Shawl and Cloak Emporium. Little information other than this is offered, except that pricing began at one guinea.

Peter Robinson advertised his travelling and waterproof cloaks in 1854 as well as in 1855. Listed amongst the other goods for sale at his establishments, waterproof garments were not the principal article featured.

This was not the case with various advertisements for Edmiston and Son, where

protective garments proved to be the focus. In 1855, some of their advertisements pictured a lady on horseback, donning the “Pocket Siphonia”, one advertisement describing it as a waterproof garment (see Figure 3), another as a waterproof paletot⁸. This article was touted as ideal protection against the rain when travelling abroad. It could be easily contained in the pocket and would also prove useful in the country. Purely textual advertisements appearing in 1854 through 1856 contain similar information. All of the advertisements promote other articles which would appear to have protective features as well. The goods offered by Edmiston and Son provide evidence that not only did waterproofing techniques exist at this time, but they had also been applied to garments that were being made commercially available.

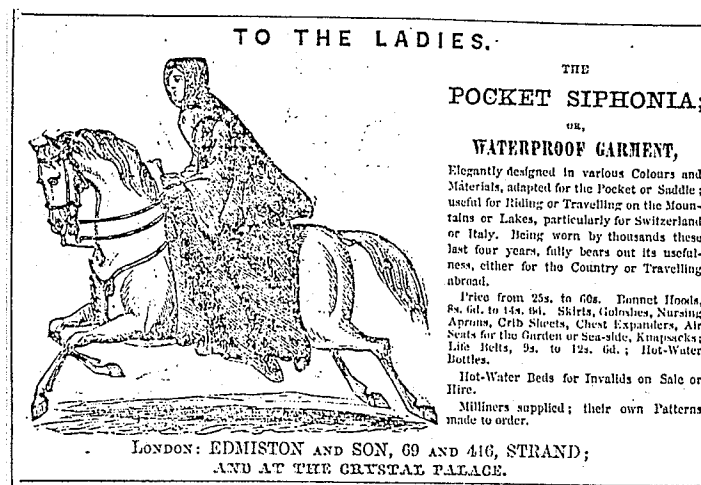


Figure 3. Advertisement featuring the “Pocket Siphonia”. By permission of The British Library. (*The Lady's Newspaper & Pictorial Times*, May 12, 1855, p.303)

⁸Cunnington and Cunnington identify that *paletot* was a general term used to identify an outdoor garment which had sleeves and was fitted to the figure (1959).

In 1855, advertisements for the Warwick-House Company boasted a waterproof department. Two different advertisements for this establishment announced the availability of every requisite article for travelling ladies. One of these went on to list garments available such as capes, jackets, skirts and shawls, all fully waterproof. This same ad promoted their suitability not only for travel but also for walking, riding or the sea-side.

Also in 1855, under an advertisement headed by "ECONOMICAL LUXURIES FOR LADIES", W. Berdoe, Tailor, offered evidence as to the availability of not only waterproof cloaks but also of capes, mantles and habits. These garments could "resist any amount of rain, without obstructing free ventilation, and are adapted for general use, at all times, equally as for rainy weather" (*LN*, September 1, 1855, p.144).

No evidence of waterproof cloaks was found in the *Ladies' Cabinet*.

Hats vs. Bonnets

Throughout this section of the novel, whenever Lucilla Marjoribanks was noted as donning some form of headwear, it happened to be a hat. The references to this clothing accessory were unaccompanied by any description of style or decoration details. The primary information which can be extracted from the novel was the occasion upon which Lucilla would wear a hat. In total, she is noted as putting on her hat six times; five of these times were when she was intending upon venturing outdoors from her home and once upon her departure from a friend's home. Once, Lucilla was noted as removing her hat, this being on one occasion when her intentions to go out were foiled and she was

detained indoors.

Lucilla's hat becomes of particularly significant interest when it is revealed that Barbara Lake wore a bonnet. Barbara's bonnet is mentioned twice in this time period; both times she would have been wearing it when outdoors and both times the bonnet was described as being shabby.

Throughout this research, the amount of information found concerning hats was limited at best, especially when considered in contrast to the frequent appearance of the bonnet. On August 18/1855, the "General Observations on Fashion and Dress" column in the *Lady's Newspaper* began with the following information: "The large broad-brimmed hats of straw or Leghorn, which have hitherto been worn only by children, are now beginning to be adopted pretty generally by ladies, at the seaside, and in the country. The Parisian *modistes* have given them the name of Pamella Hats; and during the present summer they have not unfrequently made their appearance on the fashionable promenades in Paris" (p.100). Pictorial renderings of hats of this description were found in the "London and Paris Fashions". These hats formed components of ensembles specified for particular occasions. Fancy Ball⁹ Costume (*LN*, May 13, 1854) and dress intended for the country (*LN*, July 8, 1854; *LN*, September 15, 1855) exhibited hats of similar design; their most notable feature was that of a broad brim. The hat intended for Fancy Ball Costume is noted as consisting of straw, whereas the other two are more specifically identified as being composed of Leghorn. Of the hats intended for country wear, one is identified as a Pamela hat, the other being termed la Suisse.

⁹Fancy Balls appear to be the equivalent of the modern day costume party or masquerade.

Another specific type of hat noted was that which was worn with riding dress. Engravings of such hats appeared in the fashion section of the *Lady's Newspaper* on July 22, 1854 and May 10, 1856 and were accompanied by written descriptions as to colour, fabric, design and decoration. On September 30, 1854, "General Observations on Fashion and Dress" provided written information on this type of hat which was similar to that presented in regards to the aforementioned engravings. As this type of hat was intended for such specific usage, its style and composition will not be elaborated upon. Its mention in this paper serves to document that of the few hats noted in research, the riding hat was one of the main types observed.

As previously mentioned, this research unearthed a relatively small amount of information on hats, especially when considered in light of the frequency of appearance of bonnets. The *Lady's Newspaper* provided abundant amounts of information on the bonnet in the "London and Paris Fashions" section. Engravings of bonnets, presented singularly or as part of an ensemble, were accompanied by written descriptions clearly delineating aspects such as color, materials, styles, relative size and placement. "General Observations on Fashions and Dress" provided similar written descriptions of bonnets that had been recently seen, as well as general fashionable information concerning bonnets. The advertisements were another portion of this work which provided proof as to the existence of bonnets.

Information regarding bonnets was also found in the *Ladies' Cabinet*. A format similar to that detailed above was followed. The fashion section of this periodical, the "Toilet", presented fashion plates which showed bonnets as forming a part of various ensembles

with accompanying written descriptions. Also, general information regarding fashionable aspects of bonnets was presented in some issues.

Brussels Veil

“If some cruel spectator had thrown into the fire that Brussels veil with which her imagination had so long played, and Barbara had stood heart-struck, watching the filmy tissue dissolve into ashes before her eyes, her sense of sudden anguish could not have been more acute” (Oliphant, 1998, p.261). The Brussels veil referred to in this quotation is one which Barbara Lake has repeatedly envisioned herself wearing as a bride. It is a key component in an elaborate marriage scenario which she has concocted in her mind.

Confirmation that a veil could be included in a wedding ensemble of this time period was found throughout numerous issues of the *Lady's Newspaper* as well as the *Ladies' Cabinet*. In the latter, the fashion section entitled, the “Toilet”, provided information concerning bridal costume in both written and pictorial formats. In January and June of 1854 and February and August of 1856, fashion plates detailing bridal costume appeared, in which all brides can be seen wearing veils. A written description of the bridal ensembles attends each month. However, no description of the veil is included in the January 1854 issue, whereas mention of the veil is made within the other three months. Within the *Lady's Newspaper*, the section of the “London and Paris Fashions” followed a similar format. Engravings presented in the issues of April 29, 1854 and May 26, 1855 as well as July 28, 1855 showed visions of brides adorned in veils. Accompanying written descriptions of each of the costumes made reference to the headwear.

Further confirmation that veils could occupy a position within bridal costume was provided in "General Observations on Fashion and Dress". In this section of the *Lady's Newspaper*, written descriptions of recently constructed wedding ensembles were documented. On January 7, 1854 as well as January 6, April 14, and June 16 of 1855 such accounts appeared, a veil consistently figuring into the description of bridal wear.

In the May 5, 1855 issue of the *Lady's Newspaper*, advice was given in the "To Correspondents" column which directed that "the veil should be a large scarf of lace, tulle, or blonde. It should be fixed by the wreath to the back part of the head, the broad ends hanging down nearly to the bottom of the dress" (p.275). Despite not being provided with the question which furnished such advice, valuable information as to the actual physical composition of veils can be gleaned from this passage. These purported dimensions and fabric constitution are supported by the descriptive information found in the previously identified sections of the *Lady's Newspaper* and the *Ladies' Cabinet*. Written descriptions include a veil "being very large it almost envelopes the whole dress" (*LN*, January 7, 1854, p.9), a veil described as a "magnificent scarf" (*LN*, January 7, 1854, p.10), a "superb scarf" (*LN*, April 29, 1854, p.260), a "large scarf" (*LN*, April 14, 1855, p.233), as "formed of a full breadth" (*LN*, July 28, 1855, p.52) which was also noted as reaching "nearly to the ground" (*LN*, July 28, 1855, p.52). These characteristics were reflected in the aforementioned pictorial renderings which exhibit brides adorned in flowing, voluminous veils of abundant length. While the engravings provided valuable visual information reflecting the dimensions of veils, written descriptions provided significant documentation of the fabric composition. Veils of organdy, Alençon lace, plain tulle, Honiton lace, tulle

illusion and English point were noted. Of particular interest to this study, was that veils of Brussels lace also made an appearance. The fashion engraving which appeared in the April 29, 1854 issue of the *Lady's Newspaper* features a bride wearing a veil of Brussels lace. While detail of the veil's pattern is indiscernible, the accompanying "Description of the Engravings" identifies it as Brussels lace (see Figure 4). Other written descriptions of bridal wear appearing in "General Observations on Fashion and Dress" on January 7, 1854 and April 14, 1855 also mentioned Brussels lace as forming a portion of the bridal headdress, namely that of the veil.

Barbara Lake's veil of Brussels is referred to four times throughout this section of *Miss Marjoribanks*. The significance of this clothing accessory is amplified by the indication that she would wear not only a veil of Brussels but a veil of *real* Brussels.

The value of Brussels lace was documented in an 1856 article entitled "Lace and Lace-Making", found in the September issue of the *Ladies' Cabinet*. This article noted that laces produced in Belgium were well renowned. Of these, it was noted that Brussels lace "has a more extended reputation than that of any other place" (p.144). This sentiment is echoed in the April 8, 1854 "Correspondence" column in the *Lady's Newspaper*. Here, a reply was made to a query posed by someone to be known to other readers simply as Damask Rose. The question which was submitted is not revealed, but the answer speaks volumes, stating that "Brussels lace is the most valuable of foreign laces" (p.210).

"Lace and Lace-Making" documented that "Real or hand-made lace is divided into two distinct classes: that worked with the needle, known for ages as point, and that made on hard cushions by the interweaving of numerous fine threads wound on wooden bobbins"

(September 1856, p.143). Brussels point is of the first category, being made entirely with a needle, while Brussels plait is of the latter class, having its pattern created on a cushion and later attached to a ground. "Before machine-made net had arrived to perfection, the plain groundwork of the Brussels lace was made by hand, on the pillow in narrow widths, united afterwards very dexterously" (September 1856, p.144). This information leads one to surmise that when Barbara Lake pictures her veil of real Brussels, she is dreaming of one that was made entirely by hand.



Figure 4. Bridal costume in which the bride (right) wears a Brussels lace veil. By permission of The British Library. (*The Lady's Newspaper & Pictorial Times*, April 29, 1855, p.260)

Handkerchiefs

In terms of the accessories carried by Lucilla Marjoribanks, three different ones are mentioned in this section of the novel. One of these accessories is a handkerchief and it makes an appearance on three separate occasions. The first reference to a handkerchief is made during a conversation between Lucilla and Rose Lake. In this exchange, Lucilla makes mention of a handkerchief which Rose had made for her a few years prior. Since this handkerchief is from an earlier time, this reference has not been considered within this study.

The second appearance of a handkerchief is made during a rather emotional meeting between Lucilla and Mr Beverly. It is referred to three times, yet descriptive features do not accompany these references. Instead, what can be extracted from the passages are the means for which the handkerchief was employed. In terms of practical purposes, Lucilla first used the handkerchief to dry her eyes after an emotional exchange. At this time, it is noted that "She put her handkerchief to her eyes, and yet she kept watch upon the Archdeacon through one of the corners" (Oliphant, 1998, p.220). The same handkerchief is made use of a second time as a means of prolonging a moment. "All that she said in answer to Mr Beverley's appeal was to hide her face in her handkerchief, which was the only means that occurred to her for the moment of gaining a little time for reflection" (Oliphant, 1998, p.221). The final reference on this occasion occurs when Lucilla removes the handkerchief from before her face.

The third occasion on which reference is made to a handkerchief finds Lucilla and her Thursday Evening dinner guests gathered around the table. While grace is being spoken,

Lucilla drops her handkerchief along with her fan.

Confirmation that the handkerchief could have occupied a place amongst clothing accessories of this time period was found throughout various sections of the *Lady's Newspaper* as well as the *Ladies' Cabinet*. The fashion portions and the home project sections of both periodicals presented pictorial and written information on handkerchiefs. Additional information on this accessory was also found in the advertisement section of the *Lady's Newspaper*.

Handkerchiefs were identified in engravings in the "London and Paris Fashions" in the *Lady's Newspaper* (January 7, 1854; June 30, 1855; September 22, 1855) as well as in the *Ladies' Cabinet* (August 1854; July 1855). The details of these handkerchiefs were difficult to discern; however, they did not appear to be plain creations, some form of decoration was identifiable. This is supported by accompanying written descriptions which revealed these handkerchiefs to be of worked muslin, bordered by venetian guipure¹⁰, decorated with needlework or of English guipure.

A section entitled the "Work-Table" was presented in both the *Lady's Newspaper* as well as the *Ladies' Cabinet*. This proved to be a valuable resource in validating the presence of handkerchiefs within this time period. Throughout the three years examined, information for the execution of various forms of ornamentation for handkerchiefs appeared in the "Work-Table" section of both journals. Generally appearing were an account of requisite materials, general instructions for working the project, as well as a

¹⁰Cunnington, Cunnington and Beard (1960) offer the following definition for guipure as "a lace of large pattern which is held together by connecting threads; without a net ground" (p.258).

rendering of the finished design (see Figure 5).

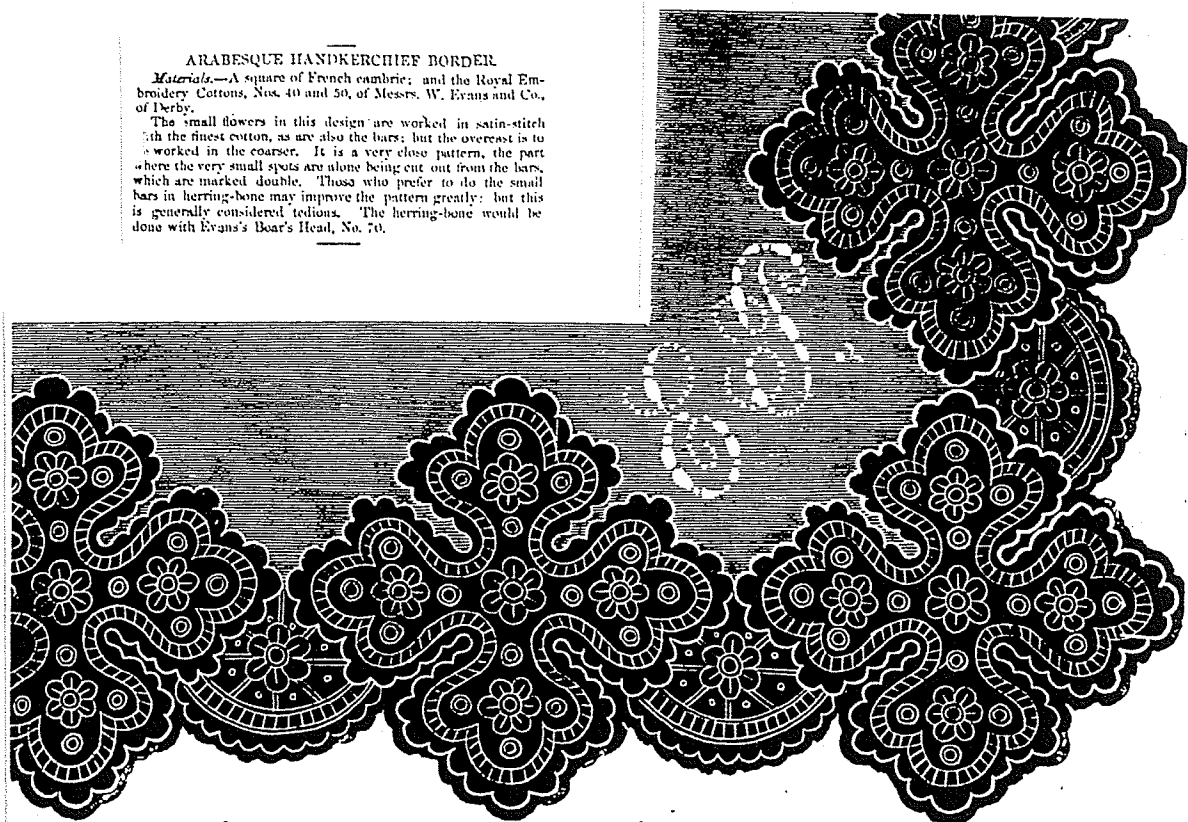


Figure 5. Design for a handkerchief border. *By permission of The British Library (The Lady's Newspaper & Pictorial Times, January 13, 1855, p.24)*

“General Observations on Fashion and Dress” was another section of the *Lady's Newspaper* that provided validation as to the presence of handkerchiefs. In this column, general information as to fashionable designs and forms of decoration for handkerchiefs, appropriate for a variety of occasions, could be found. As well, more specific descriptions

of some of the latest novelties were offered.

The advertisement section of the *Lady's Newspaper* also offered information on the existence of the mid-nineteenth century handkerchief. In 1855, Baker and Crisp advertised the sale of "EVERY LADY'S CHRISTIAN NAME BEAUTIFULLY EMBROIDERED On FINE FRENCH CAMBRIC HANDKERCHIEFS (*LN*, April 7, 1855, p.223). In the same year, Rumbell and Owen announced their sale of "THE REAL CHINA GRASS HANDKERCHIEFS. EXQUISITELY FINE, BEAUTIFULLY VARIEGATED-COLOURED WREATH BORDERS, WITH LADIES' CHRISTIAN NAMES ENCIRCLED IN THE CORNERS" (*LN*, May 12, 1855, p.303).

Collars and Gloves

Well into this section of the novel, some concern arises over the behaviour of Barbara Lake. In a fit of utter desperation Barbara's sister, Rose, consults Lucilla with what she believes to be catastrophic news. Rose tells Lucilla that Barbara has been going out at night, presumably to meet with a man.

'And then she has taken to making herself *nice* before she goes out. I don't think she ever cared much for being nice - not at home, you know; but now she has pretty collars and gloves and things, and I can't tell where she gets them,' cried Rose, her eyes lighting up passionately. 'She has no money to spend on such things. Lucilla, I should die if I thought she would accept them from *him*.' (Oliphant, 1998, p.237)

Rose is horrified at the thought that the person who has bestowed these tokens of affection is a man to whom Barbara is not engaged. No further description or mention of

these collars or gloves is made. The only other time when Barbara is noted as having donned either of these articles is much earlier in the novel when she is noted as biting her gloves in irritation.

Both the *Lady's Newspaper* as well as the *Ladies' Cabinet* provided evidence as to the existence of collars within the time period of question. The fashion section of each periodical provided a wealth of information. The "London and Paris Fashions" of the *Lady's Newspaper* as well as the "Toilet" in the *Ladies' Cabinet* presented renderings of fashions of the day, collars adorning a number of the ensembles. These pictorial renderings were very valuable in that they revealed aspects of the collar such as size and placement, details which can be difficult to describe in text. Accompanying written descriptions enhanced the information presented within the engravings by detailing such aspects as fabric composition, decoration techniques employed, as well as specific names assigned to certain styles.

The "Work-Table", a section found in both periodicals, also provided evidence as to the existence of collars within this time period. Throughout numerous issues of both periodicals, the "Work-Table" presented designs for collars that could be worked at home. Engravings provided a glimpse of the design while accompanying text would generally detail requisite materials and instructions (see Figure 6).

The "General Observations on Fashion and Dress" section in the *Lady's Newspaper* also proved to be a source of information on collars. Information as to what was generally considered to be fashionable for collars as well as the introduction of new and novel collar designs were noted within this portion of the newspaper.

MEDALLION COLLAR.

Materials.—Nansouk Muslin, and the Royal Embroidery Cotton, No. 40, of Messrs. Walter Evans and Co., of Derby.

This shape will be found a particularly nice one; and the pattern is very easy to work. A series of medallions, one within the other, are connected by bars of buttonhole stitch; the centre is edged with fine buttonhole; and the flower within it is merely pierced and sewed over. All the bars must first be done; then the inner medallion; after this the overcast, which should be considerably raised.

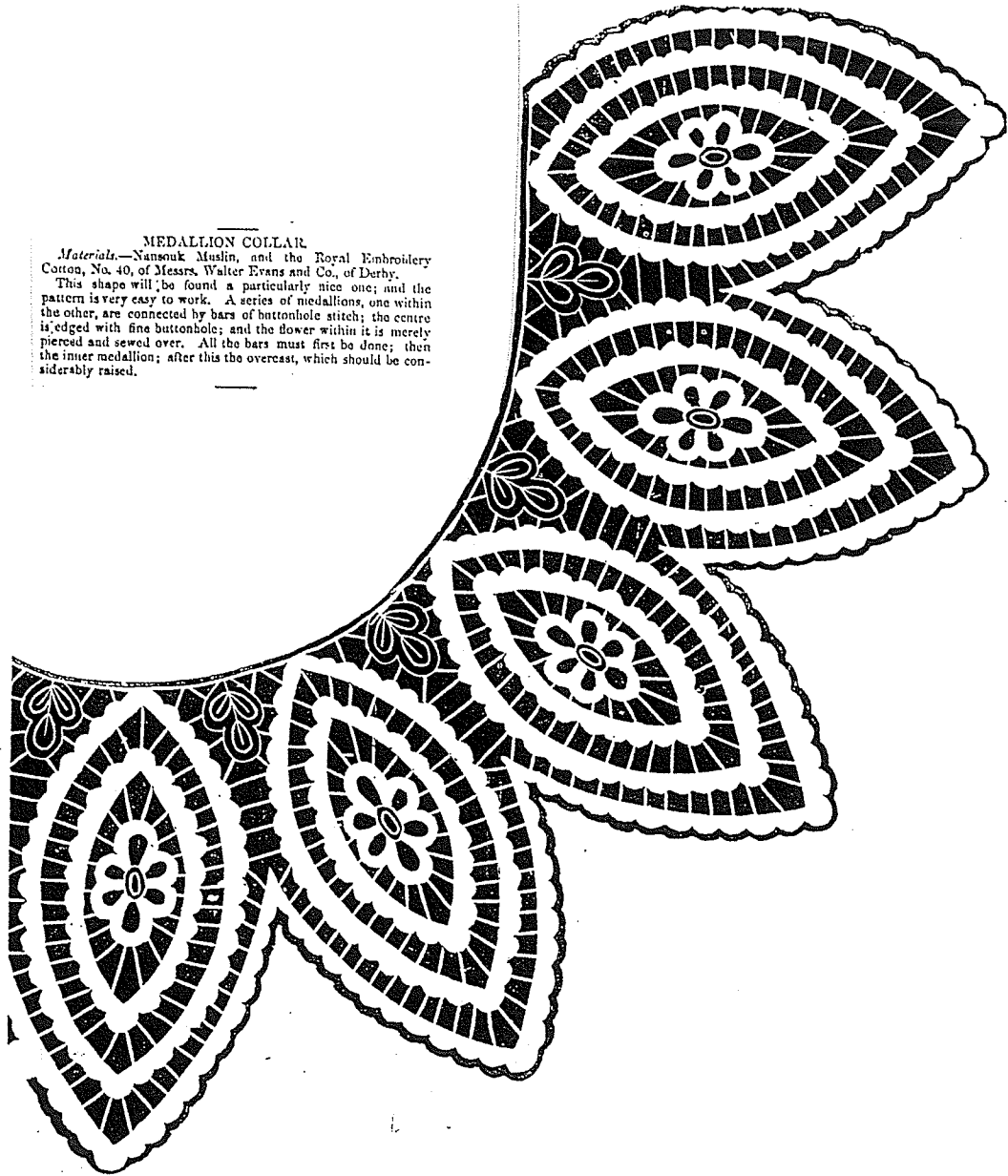


Figure 6. Design for a collar. By permission of The British Library (*The Lady's Newspaper & Pictorial Times*, January 13, 1855, pp.24-25)

The pictorial renderings of fashions in both the *Lady's Newspaper* and the *Ladies' Cabinet* provided evidence as to the appearance of gloves within this time period. The presence of gloves was not always distinguishable simply by looking at the picture. Here again, the supplementary written descriptions were invaluable in identifying these accessories. They were also helpful in detailing information such as color and material.

Advertisements were another source of information on gloves. Throughout 1854 to 1856, this section of the *Lady's Newspaper* presented various advertisements which documented information such as availability, material, colour and price of gloves.

Finally, the correspondence section of the *Lady's Newspaper* was found to contain information which attested to the presence of gloves within this time period. In an 1854 column, a reader was advised as to how to clean white kid gloves (February 4, 1854) while an 1856 column saw advice given as to the etiquette of removing gloves on a morning call (January 19, 1856).

Parasols

Of the accessories carried by Lucilla Marjoribanks, a parasol was the first to be mentioned in the novel, appearing simply as a pretty parasol. Descriptive information as to the physical attributes of the parasol does not appear. However, this accessory is presented in a clearly detailed scene from which a wealth of information may be extracted. Having donned her hat before leaving the house, the reader follows Lucilla out for a walk, "at that hour in the morning the sun was shining on the little gardens on the north side of the street, which was the plebeian side; and as it was the end of October, and by no means

warm..." (Oliphant, 1998, p.32). It is in this setting that Lucilla is found "walking along under the shade of her pretty parasol" (Oliphant, 1998, p.32).

The *Lady's Newspaper* as well as the *Ladies' Cabinet* provided both written and pictorial evidence as to the presence of parasols during this time period. Engravings appearing in the "London and Paris Fashions" and the "Toilet" offered views of parasols, appearing open and in use as well as closed and carried in the hand. These engravings were useful in establishing an idea as to the size and proportions of the parasol. Accompanying written information documented aspects such as what fabric the parasol was made of, applied decoration or material composition of the handle and stick, details that were not possible to discern from the engravings.

Written information in "General Observations on Fashion and Dress" in the *Lady's Newspaper* offered further proof that parasols were an accessory carried during this time period. This column offered precisely what its title implied, providing descriptions of fashionable parasols of the time.

The advertisement section of the *Lady's Newspaper* also presented information attesting to the presence of parasols. W. & J. Sangster advertised their parasols in 1855 in the *Lady's Newspaper*. Two women carrying parasols appeared in the advertisement with a portion of the accompanying text reading "A Parasol, if well-selected, forms not only one of the most conspicuous but one of the most ornamental parts of a lady's dress, due regard being paid to the colour, as also to the quality of the material" (May 19, 1855, p.318).

What appeared to be the same two women, resurfaced in an 1856 advertisement for the

'Persian' Parasol, W. & J. Sangster appearing listed as the patentees. A small column, simply entitled "Parasols" appeared in the April 12, 1856 issue, providing information as to this novelty.

Fans

Amongst the accessories carried by Lucilla Marjoribanks is a fan. No descriptive information accompanies the one reference made to this article. It appears at one of Lucilla's Thursday Evenings when everyone has gathered around the dinner table. Grace is being spoken when Lucilla accidentally drops her fan along with her handkerchief.

The pictorial renderings in the *Lady's Newspaper* and the *Ladies' Cabinet* proved to be valuable sources attesting to the existence of fans within this time period. Fans which were spread open could be readily identified as such (*LC*, March 1856; *LC*, June 1856); however, when these accessories were in a folded up or closed state, they were not as easily recognized as fans. In such cases, the written descriptions became invaluable. Identification of specific fan names were documented in some of the accompanying written descriptions, as were some concise explanations of varied composite materials. The fans accompanied ensembles identified for such occasions as Ball Dress (*LN*, January 14, 1854; *LN*, March 18, 1854; *LN*, March 3, 1855; *LN*, June 30, 1855; *LN*, July 7, 1855; *LC*, August 1854; *LC*, February 1855; *LC*, July 1855), Court Costume (*LN*, February 4, 1854) and Evening Dress (*LN*, January 6, 1855; *LN*, May 19, 1855). It was these written identifications which were invaluable in establishing that the hand-held objects were indeed fans, allowing them to be distinguished as being in their closed states. This clarification

aided in the identification of other fans, which were not detailed in the accompanying written text. A number of engravings presented what resembled closed fans but the accessory was not documented in the supplementary written portion. These fans also accompanied ensembles intended for Ball Dress (*LN*, January 28, 1854; *LN*, March 24, 1855; *LN*, April 28, 1855) and Evening Dress (*LN*, February 24, 1855; *LN*, December 22, 1855) as well as variations of Mourning Costume (*LN*, February 3, 1855; *LN*, February 10, 1855) as well as Dinner Costume (*LN*, February 3, 1855; *LN*, August 18, 1855).

General information contained within the fashion section of the *Ladies' Cabinet* also made mention of fans. In April 1855 this accessory was deemed to be indispensable. In September 1855, the fashion for fans was noted, including mention of fabric, colour and design.

Upon completion of Chapter 35 in *Miss Marjoribanks*, a major segment of the novel comes to an end. The reader leaves Carlingford at the close of 1856, not only because it is winter and the onset of the new year looms overhead but because the storyline of the novel advances ten years. The following chapter deals with these years.

Chapter 5

Findings 1863 - 1866

Chapter 36 of *Miss Marjoribanks* forms a sort of recapitulation of the previous chapters which had documented life in Carlingford throughout 1855-1856. The subsequent ten years of activity are not chronicled, rather, in chapter 37 the reader is supplanted into Carlingford of 1865/1866. Lucilla is found still living at home with her father, 29 years of age and unmarried. The clothing and textile references which were found throughout this second time period are documented in Appendix B.

It would have been difficult not to remark on the white muslin dresses of Lucilla Marjoribanks and Barbara Lake within the previous chapters of the novel. However, only one mention of such a dress is made within this new time period. This reference is made in regards to a garment worn by Lucilla Marjoribanks and consists solely of a *white dress* with a greater amount of attention garnered by the green and violet ribbons which adorned it. Thus, a striking contrast between the number of references to this type of garment exists between the two time periods. Another distinction between the two time periods which cannot escape unnoticed is the complete change in colour of Lucilla's wardrobe. These changes are explained by a momentous event in the 1866 time period, the death of Lucilla's father, Dr Marjoribanks.

Mourning Dress

The first reference to Lucilla's new form of dress is made the day following the death of her father. At this time, the reader finds Lucilla cloistered in her room "with articles of

mourning piled about everywhere” (Oliphant, 1998, p.401). Several days later, it is noted that Lucilla has an “entire wardrobe of new mourning” (Oliphant, 1998, p.406), as her Aunt Jemima commented, there was nothing else that could have been wanted. Later, when Lucilla is seen wearing these garments, she is described as *in her mourning* and *in deep mourning*. These references are significant in that they provide documentation of terminology. Lucilla’s new wardrobe is black in colour and one reference makes mention of the fabric, crape¹¹.

In total, there are six references made to the mourning headwear worn by Lucilla. Four of these find her wearing a veil while in her mourning. The information contained within these references reveal that her veil was black, thick and made of crape. The final two mourning headwear references make mention of a bonnet. No descriptive information concerning this bonnet is presented.

Within the novel, descriptive information concerning Lucilla’s mourning wear was relatively limited. The main components that were subject to historical authentication were the colour and material of her garments.

A variety of sections within the *Queen* contained information on mourning which was useful in verifying the historical accuracy of the colour and material which described Lucilla Marjoribank’s mourning wear. Black is the colour traditionally associated with mourning wear and information found within “London and Paris Fashions” of the *Queen*

¹¹Taylor provides the following definition of crape fabric. “It was a lightweight, semi-transparent, black silk fabric, crimped into three-dimensional patterns. Every hint of the beautiful sheen and softness of silk was carefully removed by an elaborate process, giving the fabric an extraordinarily lugubrious and hard finish” (1983 pp.203-204).

supported that this idea held true in the time period examined. On December 3, 1864, it was reported that black dresses, which had previously been reserved for mourning, were now being adopted outside of mourning. This sentiment was echoed in the following year, where it was noted that "Fashion remains faithful to black dresses trimmed with white, and to half-mourning toilettes, even if the wearer is not necessitated by a recent bereavement to wear black" (*Q*, January 21, 1865, p.39).

An inquiry concerning deep mourning, made by a reader named Louisa, appeared in an 1865 column of "Notes and Queries On Dress and Fashions". In this submission she asked for advice on any novel ways of trimming a deep mourning dress with crape (*Q*, February 25, 1865). The column entitled "New Things" reported upon a new material intended for mourning wear. "It is a kind of woollen varathea, and resembles crape so exactly that a close inspection is necessary to discover the difference" (*Q*, November 19, 1864, p.332).

However, the most prolific source of information concerning mourning was that contained within the advertisement section of the *Queen*. As early as 1863, a Mourning Department was being advertised by Grant and Gask from which was available "every requisite for family and complimentary mourning" (*Q*, November 7, 1863, first page). In early January of the next year, the same firm let readers know that mourning orders could be "completed on the premises by experienced dressmakers on the shortest notice" (*Q*, January 9, 1864, first page). Also noted at this date was an advertisement for the millinery and dressmaking services available at the establishment of Mrs. Plaister. Mourning articles were available, dresses, bonnets and caps mentioned specifically (*Q*, January 9, 1864).

The following winter season, the attention of readers was again directed towards the mourning collection advertised by Grant and Gask. Amongst the fabrics being promoted was one identified as Balmoral Crape. Also advertised was that prompt and careful service was available not only to those in town but also to those in the country (*Q*, November 5, 1864). Also noted throughout this season, were advertisements for women's bonnets and hats available at the showrooms of Mrs. Hall. Orders for mourning would be promptly looked after (*Q*, November 5, 1864). The establishment of Baker and Crisp announced that they had a stock of the new mourning fabric as well as economical mourning fabrics; however, they did not clarify what these may have been (*Q*, November 5, 1864). Also during this winter season, several advertisements appeared for the mercers Messrs. Jay, whose wares could be had at The London General Mourning Warehouse. In one of their advertisements, this establishment boasted a department dedicated to deep mourning. They advertised crape as amongst the fabrics available at their establishment (*Q*, February 4, 1865) as well as specifying that bonnets were to be had amongst their goods (*Q*, March 4, 1855). Later that year, Baker and Crisp announced they carried "The New Crape Laine" (*Q*, April 1, 1865).

The above is by no means a comprehensive listing of all the establishments that held mourning goods. The frequency with which advertisements for mourning wear appeared was extensive; several establishments would even display more than one ad within a single issue of the *Queen*. The above discussion of advertisements serves to exhibit that bonnets intended specifically for mourning as well as various crape fabrics were available at assorted establishments throughout 1863 to 1866. It is significant to note that these

goods were accessible not only to those living in town but also those in the country as well.

Unfortunately, no pictorial documentation of mourning wear was found in either the *Queen* or the *Ladies' Treasury*. No information concerning mourning wear could be found within the *Ladies' Treasury* with one small exception. In the fashion section of April 1864, a description is made of the people attending the christening of the Prince and Princess of Wales' son. The description which attends the Queen¹² is reflective of mourning wear. She is identified as wearing "a black silk dress, covered with deep black crape...a cape of white crape lisse...with diamonds round it, and a long white crape lisse veil attached to it" (p.126).

Sealskin Cloak

There is only one type of overgarment introduced in this section of the novel, it is Lucilla's sealskin cloak/coat. This garment is mentioned seven times throughout one episode in the novel. Lucilla dons her sealskin cloak when she ventures outdoors to walk to the Chiley residence. At this time, a light snow was falling and in general it was denoted as being a *very wintry day*. The next reference to Lucilla in her sealskin cloak appears when she is departing from the Chiley residence. At this time Lucilla remarks how cold the weather is outside. However, this cold and snowy winter day proves no match for Lucilla. "She went up Grange Lane again cheerful and warm in her sealskin

¹²Queen Victoria witnessed the passing of her husband in 1861 (Cunnington & Lucas, 1972). She adopted mourning wear and never abandoned it (Taylor, 1983).

coat. It was a thing that suited her remarkably well, and corresponded with her character, and everybody knows how comfortable they are" (Oliphant, 1998, p.365). Lucilla's sealskin affords her more than adequate protection from the elements as she is kept comfortable and warm, a sentiment which is intimated by the subsequent reference as well.

The suitability and desirability of Lucilla's sealskin is emphasized in the final three references. On her return trip home, Lucilla encounters Mrs Woodburn who is wrapped up only in a shawl. Lucilla's sealskin coat provides quite a contrast to the other woman's shawl; Lucilla's utter indifference to the weather, which is attributed to her sealskin, is heightened. When the two women part, they kiss and it is noted that the face of Mrs Woodburn was cold in contrast to the warm cheek of Lucilla. This quality being attributed to her clear conscience as well as her sealskin cloak. With the final reference, the reader sees Mrs Woodburn looking back at Miss Marjoribanks after they have parted; "...she looked back a little wistfully at Lucilla going home all comfortable and independent and light-hearted, with no cares, nor anybody to go on at her, in her sealskin coat" (Oliphant, 1998, p.368).

The various issues of the *Ladies' Treasury* which were examined were useful in establishing that furs were used during the period of study. General fashion news presented in November 1864 detailed the main furs in usage, while in January and March of 1865, fashion plates were presented which showed various garments trimmed with ermine. In January of the following year, general fashion information recognized the suitability of fur trimmed paletots. Finally, the "Notices to Correspondents" column in the February 1864 issue of the *Ladies' Treasury* made mention of fur. In a response directed

to a reader named Nelly, suggestions for cleaning a fur were offered. While information found within the *Ladies' Treasury* did serve to document the presence of fur, it is unfortunate that sealskin was not referred to specifically.

However, a variety of sections within the *Queen* did provide evidence as to the existence of a sealskin overgarment within this time period. The advertisement section of this periodical proved to be a rich source of documentation for this type of garment. Each of the three seasons examined presented advertisements promoting the sale of furs, specifically that of sealskin. The merchants Grant and Gask were repeat advertisers during these three seasons, publicizing information on the contents of their fur department through numerous ads. In the early portion of the 1864 season, seal-skin mantles and jackets were touted as belonging amongst their wares. A January advertisement declared these garments to be "GREATLY REDUCED IN PRICE, in consequence of the advanced state of the season" (*Q*, January 9, 1864, first page). Sealskin garments continued to be advertised by this establishment during the following two seasons.

Numerous other establishments promoted their sealskin furs as well. In the 1864 season, the fur manufacturers of Poland and Son specifically mentioned their stock of *Fur Seal Jackets*. Nicholay and Son, noted as the Court Furriers, advertised their involvement as creators of "the rich fur seal suites for the Princess of Wales and the Empress of the French" (*Q*, January 9, 1864, first page). The 1865 season saw the Paris and London Saloon of Fashion list the seal-skin croquet jacket amongst its novelties for the season. Proclaimed as "TAILORS TO THE QUEEN, Royal Family, and Courts of Europe" (*Q*, January 6, 1866, first page), H.J. and D. Nicoll offered real fur seal jackets and waistcoats

in their 1866 advertisements.

The above account does not presume to be a comprehensive listing of all the establishments which may have advertised sealskin garments throughout these three seasons. The firms mentioned here ran a significant number of advertisements to register their appearance. These varied establishments are mentioned here as the appearance of more than one place offering the sealskin for sale lends greater credence to the actual existence of such a garment.

The section of the *Queen*, entitled "London and Paris Fashions", also proved to be a source of information on sealskin overgarments. This portion of the *Queen* relayed fashionable news of the day. Late November of 1863 must have experienced mild weather as the "London and Paris Fashions" report indicated a preference for velvet coverings over sealskin paletôts when driving, as the latter would have proven too warm (*Q*, November 21, 1863). However, a few weeks later, the vogue for fur was reported as the cold weather set in. This report was accompanied by descriptions of some of the latest sealskin garments, information occasioned by a recent trip to the establishment of Mr Nicolay, reputed for his work as Court Furrier. On this excursion, a sealskin paletôt intended for the Empress of the French as well as various other sealskin paletôts numbered amongst the articles that were viewed (*Q*, December 12, 1863).

Amid the articles of fur that were sought in the cold weather of January, the "London and Paris Fashions" reported that "sealskin paletôts and muffs are, in great request" (*Q*, January 9, 1864, p.46). The fresh attire of spring waited in the folds in early March as the bitter weather still warranted the appearance of sealskin jackets (*Q*, March 5, 1864), a

similar report appearing the following month as “The cold winds which have bitterly prevailed make us still cling affectionately to our seal-skin paletôts and our short velvet mantles edged with fur, and to defer the putting on of that fresh spring attire which, although more attractive looking, is certainly, for the present, less comfortable” (*Q*, April 2, 1864, p.270).

Questions and concerns occasioned by readers of the *Queen* were addressed in various columns. Of these, at least two were found to contain information concerning sealskin garments. In the segment, “Notes and Queries on Dress and Fashions”, information was sought as to how to select quality sealskin (*Q*, February 20, 1864), as well as to where a good sealskin jacket could be purchased (*Q*, November 5, 1864). Several replies to the latter inquiry were made, appearing in the subsequent issue of the *Queen*. Three responses appeared, two of which offered direction based upon personal experience (*Q*, November 12, 1864).

Finally, the column entitled “Notices To Correspondents” proved to be an outlet for information on sealskin. Relatively similar in format to “Notes and Queries on Dress and Fashion”, this segment of the *Queen* documented responses to inquiries made by the readership. However, unlike the former, “Notices to Correspondents” did not provide notation of the question or concern which gave rise to the response. Fortunately, the general context of the reply can be elicited, providing much valuable information. A question submitted by a reader named Meta received the answer that a wornout sealskin cannot be renewed (*Q*, December 9, 1865). Ella was reassured as to the value of a quality sealskin while E.L.S. was told that her sealskin jacket had become worn while also

receiving information as to proper care (*Q*, March 31, 1866).

Worsted-Work

In terms of textile references, several were found which detail the needlework of Lucilla Marjoribanks. The first reference finds Lucilla settled in the drawing-room on a blustery winter day. Her intent is to spend the afternoon talking with her aunt and as well “Lucilla had some very interesting worsted-work in hand” (Oliphant, 1998, p.369). The second textile reference also makes mention of worsted-work. In this scenario, Dr Marjoribanks reflects upon Lucilla’s capabilities and laments the fact that she wasn’t born a boy. He ponders how this would have opened up so many more opportunities for her, “whereas just now it was quite possible that she might drop down into worsted-work and tea-parties like any other single woman” (Oliphant, 1998, p.395). Four subsequent references also make mention of Lucilla’s worsted-work. On this occasion, Lucilla is at home, eagerly anticipating the results of an election and she picks up her worsted-work as a means of occupying herself. The first three of these references find her with worsted-work in hand, the fourth reference finds her putting it away. The final three “textile” references in the novel detail the needlework that Lucilla takes up on another evening. Again, one of these references consists of worsted-work while the term embroidery is used twice to refer to this same project.

Worsted Work¹³ is a form of needlework which has been known by a variety of names.

¹³Worsted Work was executed upon a woven canvas and was distinct from embroidery in that the entire surface was covered in stitches, whereas the latter was often worked upon a surface which did not need to be concealed (Caulfield & Seward, 1972).

It has been referred to as Opus Pulvinarium, Cushion Style, Worsted Work and finally Berlin Work. In 1804, designs were printed upon point paper, detailing the placement and colour of stitches. This format was introduced by a printer in Berlin and with the introduction of Berlin wool in 1820, the name Berlin Work was adopted (Caulfield & Saward, 1972).

The “Work-Table” is a segment of the *Queen* dedicated to presenting projects which could be worked at home. It is amidst this column that textual and pictorial evidence was found which attests to the presence of needlework such as Lucilla’s. A design for a Banner Hand-Screen appeared in the December 23, 1865 issue of the *Queen*. This presented an excellent example of a Berlin Work pattern as the differently marked squares which denoted specific colours were evident. Accompanying this Banner Hand-Screen pattern was a Berlin Work pattern for the letters of the alphabet; thus allowing varied initials to be worked on the Hand-Screen. A listing of requisite materials as well as instructions for working the design were included. Two patterns for ornamental squares appeared in the “Work-Table” on November 4, 1865 presented as “DESIGNS FOR EITHER CROCHET, NETTING, OR BERLIN WORK” (*Q*, p.316).

Also contained within the department of the “Work-Table” was a section entitled “Work-Table Notes and Queries”, where readers could submit questions, concerns or just general information to be shared with other readers. Berlin Work certainly enjoyed some popularity at this time, evidenced by the various submissions within “Notes and Queries” which concerned this subject. Information concerning many different aspects of Berlin Work was requested. A reader named Etenna sought the address of someone who could

create the Berlin Work pattern of her family crest, which she would then work onto chairs (*Q*, December 12, 1863). Another subscriber wished to know if Berlin Work patterns of subjects in the Scripture could be had (*Q*, January 21, 1865). Questions concerning the procurement of Berlin wool (*Q*, February 6, 1864) and printed Berlin pattern paper (*Q*, December 3, 1864) were immediately addressed by fellow readers (*Q*, February 13, 1864; *Q*, February 20, 1864; *Q*, December 10, 1864). Likewise, an inquiry as to "HOW TO STRETCH OR FLATTEN WORSTED WORK" (*Q*, January 21, 1865, p.41) received multiple suggestions (*Q*, February 4, 1865; *Q*, February 11, 1865; *Q*, February 25, 1865).

Information regarding items of Berlin Work was also documented in the "Notices To Correspondents" column. Here readers requested information from the editor as to Berlin Work designs which they believed to have appeared in previous issues of the *Queen* (November 28, 1863; January 6, 1866).

Finally, the existence of Berlin Work was documented in the advertisement section in 1864. Advertisements announcing a half price sale of Berlin needlework included articles such as cushions, banners, slippers, chairs and fender-stools (*Q*, March 12, 1864).

Unfortunately, no accompanying information concerning Worsted Work was found in the portions of the *Ladies' Treasury* which were examined.

The Rustling Gown

Barbara Lake is re-introduced into the story dressed in a gown that commands a considerable amount of attention. She presents herself in this particular gown on three separate occasions; in total, seven references are devoted to documenting this garment.

The first account of Barbara found her wearing a “peculiar kind of faded silk gown which looks and rustles like tin, or some other thin metallic substance” (Oliphant, 1998, p.439). The second occasion on which this gown is referenced occurs when Barbara attends church and it is noted that she wore “the same silk dress which rustled like tin, and made more demonstration than the richest draperies” (Oliphant, 1998, pp.447-8). On this same occasion, when Barbara takes a seat near Lucilla, the inappropriateness of her gown is heightened by a contrast to the garments of Lucilla, who “sat in deep mourning, a model of every righteous observance” (Oliphant, 1998, p.448).

The final occasion on which Barbara appears in her rustling gown is at the election for Member of Carlingford. Here, it is relayed that this tin dress happens to be Barbara’s best. The sight and sound of her dress are clearly documented as are the feelings and attitudes towards her appearance. On this occasion, her gown is described as long, so long that it forms a train behind her. However, it is not the style of her dress which was viewed with derision, but rather Barbara’s careless treatment of what was her best garment. She paced the street awaiting the election results, carelessly allowing her gown to drag over the stones and “...as Barbara scorned to tuck it up, [her dress] was continually getting trodden on, and talked about, and reviled at, on that crowded pavement” (Oliphant, 1998, p.455). The ladies of Carlingford noticed not only the way Barbara treated her dress but they could almost hear the sound made by the metallic gown.

The much talked about gown of Barbara Lake provides the reader with a wealth of descriptive information. Varied aspects of her costume are detailed, namely the material and style. To verify that Barbara Lake could have worn a silk dress is not a difficult thing,

as it can be validated by viewing any number of fashion plates or referring to general fashion information presented at the time. What deserves special attention is the quality of Barbara's gown. She appears in a faded silk gown which is distinct in the sound that it makes. The sound made by Barbara's skirts is reiterated in the novel; her gown not only rustles, but it "rustles like tin, or some other thin metallic substance" (Oliphant, 1998, p.439).

A short series of essays entitled "Suggestions On Female Costume" appeared in the *Queen* (November 14, 1863; December 5, 1863; January 2, 1864), in which two authors debate the merits and disadvantages of that present day female costume. Aspects such as the corset, crinoline as well as the trained skirt are enthusiastically discussed. While one author (J.M.) advocates the idea of a dress reform, the other (A.H.T.) is clearly against it. However, it is very interesting that they are able to agree on one point and that is the delight felt in regards to the sound made by the movement of the skirt's draperies.

The following excerpt appeared in the essay submitted by A.H.T., "...but only a woman knows what it is to experience a soft feeling of satisfaction in the sound of a dress that rustles like the autumn leaves that "through the forest-paths come drifting." The dress must not creak or crackle, it must just rustle like falling leaves as it passes over the floor behind you. It is as seductively soothing this sound as is the purr of a pussy-cat, or the hum of a tea-kettle..." (*Q*, December 5, 1863, p.375).

In response to this article, the second author accuses A.H.T. of romanticizing that present day costume while ignoring more important concerns associated with health and safety. One point that J.M. does seem able to concede to A.H.T. is the pleasure found in a

well sounding garment. "I admit - I will even own to a great weakness for "the sound of a dress that rustles like the autumn leaves that "through the forest paths come drifting," and never feel as thoroughly complacent with my attire as when making the music "A.H.T." describes" (*Q*, January 2, 1864, p.26).¹⁴

The authors are specific as to the type of sound which the skirts must make. While Barbara has achieved the desirable "rustle", hers is the rustle of a metallic substance, far from the glorious melody advocated, the rustle of falling leaves. Barbara's gown makes noise, not music.

In regards to the shape of Barbara's garments, it is mentioned that according to what was fashionable, her skirts were made long. It is also documented that this ample drapery extends into a train at the back of her skirt. That Barbara's long, trained skirt could have occupied a place amongst fashions of the day was quickly verified by examination of visual images presented within the *Queen* and the *Ladies' Treasury*. As well, several issues of the *Ladies' Treasury* included general fashion remarks which mentioned the make of skirts. In the November issue of the *Ladies' Treasury* for 1863, winter fashions had already been settled upon; amongst the characteristics of skirts, the terms long and full appeared. The style of skirts did not witness any change throughout the winter as their length and fulness is still recounted the following April 1864. Even into the next year, skirts are noted as being as "long as ever" (*LT*, March 1865, p.94).

¹⁴J.M. does go on to indicate that a price is paid to achieve the desired rustle, not only in monetary terms but also possibly in terms of health and safety. "She may sweep up and down her drawing-room listening to the delightful music, and, in her perambulations, there is quite as much probability of her sweeping the bars of the grate and igniting the rustling train as not; and though a forest on fire is a very grand sight where the autumn leaves alluded to blaze up as delightfully as they rustle, a lady on fire does not fill us with the same poetical sensations" (p.26).

Allowing her train to flow behind her, Barbara's best garment is swept along over the stones. Her shoddy treatment of this, her best garment, is emphasized through contrast with the care taken by another woman. Lady Richmond is noted as tucking up her dress even though she had a minimal number of steps to make outside, while Barbara continually trods up and down the street, dragging her skirt behind her.

How to manage the trailing skirts when outdoors was certainly an issue which occasioned much discussion in the *Queen*. While long, flowing trains may have generally been regarded as graceful for indoor wear, a number of problems arose when these garments were taken outdoors. The section of "London and Paris Fashions" in the *Queen* reported upon this issue. The sweep of the skirts along the ground were noted as creating an annoying dust (*Q*, April 15, 1864) while the dirt and mud of the streets gave rise to issues of uncleanness (*Q*, April 15, 1864, *Q*, December 23, 1865).

To combat this crisis, numerous means were attempted at "looping up" the skirt. Questions and information concerning various manners of looping up the skirt frequented the "Notes and Queries on Dress"¹⁵ column of the *Queen*. A submission from H.W. provided support for the ideals proclaimed by the aforementioned A.H.T. in terms of the attractiveness of long skirts. H.W. promoted that these long skirts are protected easily enough from the dirty streets by drawing them up with the use of rings and cords (*Q*, December 12, 1863). Another reader (M.M.) was quick to write in and inquire as to how this ring and cord system was arranged within the skirts (*Q*, December 26, 1863). An astonished H.W. replied with the instructions and was not but a little dismayed that "the

¹⁵The name of this column was later changed to Notes and Queries on Dress and Fashion.

drawing-up of skirts by means of cords and rings being so general to find information wanted on the subject" (*Q*, January 2, 1864, p.26).

However, the search for the best way of drawing up the skirt was by no means resolved. Requests which sought the newest and most efficacious methods continued to appear (*Q*, November 12, 1864; *Q*, February 17, 1866) while suggestions also continued to be submitted (*Q*, January 23, 1864; *Q*, December 24, 1864). In addition to the rings and cord suspension system, readers advocated an apparatus consisting of a watch-spring crinoline steel hoop covered in velvet (*Q*, December 24, 1864; *Q*, February 25, 1865; *Q*, February 24, 1866). The "Notices to Correspondents" column also fielded inquiries as to the various methods of keeping skirts from the dirt and mud (*Q*, January 23, 1864; *Q*, March 17, 1866).

A column in the *Queen*, entitled "The Newest Things At The Shops", presented a device called the Croquet Dress Suspender. It was advocated that "These 'supporters' are useful not for croquet only, but for the promenade or garden; at all times, in fact, when it is advisable to suspend the dress skirt" (*Q*, January 7, 1865, p.7). Advertisements for the Croquet Dress Suspender appeared consistently throughout the months of the *Queen* examined for the years 1865 and 1866.

In this study, the two chapters of findings have documented many similarities between the fashions of the periods examined and the clothing references detailed within *Miss Marjoribanks*. Numerous references of interest emerged from the historical examination and from these it is possible to draft a resource primer for study associated with these periods of the nineteenth century. The following chapter details this concept.

Chapter Six

Resource Primer Development

This study has examined a number of primary resources in the attempt to establish the historical accuracy of the clothing and textile references presented within *Miss Marjoribanks*. As a result, numerous pictorial and written sources have been identified which provide information relevant to achieving this goal. This chapter forms a sort of primer whose main purpose is to document such resources and references. This information would prove useful in supplementing study of the clothing and textiles within *Miss Marjoribanks*, enriching any study of the novel as well as other works which portray a similar time period.

Emerging from this study are a number of references which provide a visual component which can supplement and perhaps clarify those written ideas presented within the text. As well, a number of references were documented which provide insight into some thoughts and ideas which were presented during the time periods examined. The following culmination of references provides a starting point for other students, researchers and educators who wish to amplify their literary, historical or clothing and textiles study, thus meeting the third objective of this study.

A number of the references which appear in this chapter have been previously documented in the findings section of this study, where they served to provide support for the ideas being presented. In addition to some of these, this primer contains many references which did not appear in earlier portions of this study. In this capacity, this chapter serves as an addendum which documents information of significant interest but

which did not have direct relevance to the work presented in prior sections.

Many of the references included in this chapter are specific to those articles of clothing and accessories which were identified in *Miss Marjoribanks*. For this reason, this chapter is organized in a manner similar to that of the findings sections of this study. Also to be found within each time period is a heading of "General" which incorporates references to fashions in general. Concise introductions precede each section in order to identify what type of information is contained within the subsequent references.

1854-1856

General Fashion

Ranging anywhere from colour to style, there was no part of fashion which seemed to be exempt from scrutiny. From 1854 through to 1856, a number of short dissertations were found which document various thoughts and ideas on the different aspects of fashion.

- LN "Philosophy of Colour For Ladies' Dresses" November 4, 1854 p.280
- LN "Colour And Dress" September 16, 1854 no.403 p.167
- LN "The Toilette Table. Hints on the Art of Dress" October 6, 1855 p.215
- LN "How Far Should The Fashions Be Followed?" July 7, 1855 p.12
- LN "Flounces or No Flounces" August 11, 1855 first page - p.82
- LN "On The Harmony Of Colours In Dress" September 22, 1855 p.179
- LN "The Jupe" February 2, 1856 p.67
- LN "To Correspondents" June 7, 1856 p.355

White Muslin Dresses

The white muslin dress appeared in a number of engravings featuring a variety of styles, specified for a variety of occasions. The following references document engravings which highlight the white muslin dress. The first three references provide examples of white muslin dresses which are finished high to the throat. The third reference is described as an evening dress while the subsequent three references document variations of dinner dress. Finally, an illustration of 1854 which highlights a white muslin dress is located at the end of this study in Appendix D.

- *LN* May 6, 1854 p.276
- *LN* June 16, 1855 p.372
- *LN* October 13, 1855 p.228
- *LN* June 14, 1856 p.377
- *LN* July 19, 1856 p.37
- *LN* August 2, 1856 p.69

When washing a white muslin dress, one need not have worried about colourfastness. However, if the dress was coloured or printed, it was a different matter. In the following references, readers are instructed as to how to clean their bright blue or printed muslin dresses.

- *LN* "Correspondence" March 25, 1854 p.178
- *LN* "To Correspondents" August 4, 1855 p.66

Waterproof Garments

As early as 1854, waterproof garments had become commercially available, as evidenced by numerous advertisements. However, techniques were also available which would allow the process to be carried out at home. Recipes and instructions to complete this procedure were directed to various readers and documented in several correspondence columns. The third through fifth references below, detail how to waterproof shoes with the third reference also including a procedure for waterproofing cloth.

□ *LN* Advertisement - Waterproof Cloaks August 12, 1854 - October 7, 1854

□ *LN* Advertisement - The Pocket Siphonia May 12, 1855 - July 28, 1855

□ *LN* "Correspondence" July 15, 1854 p.18

□ *LN* "Correspondence" August 12, 1854 p.82

□ *LN* "To Correspondents" April 14, 1855 p.226

The fifth reference detailed above had listed Gutta Percha as a key ingredient in the waterproofing process. Information as to the introduction, obtainment and method of applying Gutta Percha is documented in the following.

□ *LN* "To Correspondents" August 23, 1856 p.114

□ *LN* "To Correspondents" March 29, 1856 p.195

Brussels Lace Veils

The long, flowing veils documented in the engravings and fashion plates of 1854 to 1856 would have provided the perfect outlet for the display of luxuriant laces. The following four references present images of brides wearing veils, the final one specifying it to be a veil of Brussels lace.

□ *LC* June 1854

□ *LC* February 1856

□ *LC* August 1856

□ *LN* April 29, 1854 p.260

The following references document aspects of various laces and their production, including that of Brussels. Named after the location of where it was produced, the final reference details one novel means of its importation into England.

□ *LC* "Lace and Lace-Making" September 1856 pp.143-147

□ *LN* "Smuggled Boots and Lace" January 12, 1856 p.28

Headwear

The following references detail discourses made on the bonnet. With the final reference, one is afforded a view of the interior of Madame Parsons', where a selection of new bonnets for the spring season are displayed.

□ *LN* "A Few Remarks on Ladies' Bonnets" November 18, 1854 p.309

□ *LN* "The Toilette Table. The Bonnet" January 19, 1856 p.35

□ *LN* April 7, 1855 p.213

Handkerchiefs, Collars and Gloves

Both the *Lady's Newspaper* and the *Ladies' Cabinet* contained a section entitled the "Work-Table" which presented projects which could be worked at home. Details such as necessary materials, instructions and an image of the project would be presented. As found within the following references, many issues contained designs which involved the ornamentation of handkerchiefs and collars.

- *LC* "Embroidered Handkerchief" October 1854 p.204
- *LN* "Arabesque Handkerchief Border" January 13, 1855 p.24
- *LC* "Corner For A Handkerchief" December 1855 p.319
- *LC* "Embroidered Handkerchief-Box" June 1854 pp.317-318
- *LC* "Point Lace Collar" September 1854 p.151
- *LN* "Medallion Collar" January 13, 1855 pp.24-25
- *LC* "Embroidered Collar" May 1856 p.262
- *LN* "Embroidered Glove Box" April 22, 1854 p.252

1863-1866

General Fashion

Fashions of the day occasioned much discussion, from the aesthetics of dress to its auditory components. The following culmination of references document such concerns. The first grouping of references contain hints on how to dress well, as well as a dissertation on the duty of doing it properly. The second grouping of references feature fashion plates which provide excellent examples of walking dress, clearly delineating the long, trailing skirts of the day. An example of one such dress is found in an illustration located at the end of this study in Appendix E. Finally, the last grouping of references consists of discourses which reflect upon the trained skirts so in fashion.

□ *Queen* "Remarks on Colour in Relation to Dress" February 3, 1866 p.92

□ *Queen* "The Duty of Dressing Well" March 24, 1866 p.223

□ *Queen* "Colour in Dress II" April 21, 1866 p.311

□ *LT* November 1, 1864 p.349

□ *LT* March 1, 1865 p.93

□ *LT* November 1, 1865 p.349

□ *Queen* "Suggestions on Female Costume" December 5, 1863 p.375

□ *Queen* "Suggestions on Female Costume" January 2, 1864 p.26

□ *LT* "The Fashions" February 1, 1864 p.62

Needlework

Berlin Work designs appeared amongst those presented within the section of the "Work-Table". The following two references provide excellent examples of such projects. Dissertations on needlework are documented in the final three references, comments specific to Berlin Work appearing in the final two references.

□ *Queen* Designs -Berlin Work November 4, 1865 p.316

□ *Queen* "Banner Hand-Screen - Berlin Work" December 23, 1865 p.436

An image of the banner hand-screen supplemented this issue but is without page number.

□ *Queen* "The Solace of Needlework" January 6, 1866 p.3

□ *Queen* "The Art of Embroidery No.I" February 3, 1866 pp.90-91

□ *Queen* "The Art of Embroidery No.IV" March 17, 1866 pp.209-210

Throughout the past few years the internet has certainly increased in usage.

Concluding this resource primer is a selection of internet sites which offer a potential source of information on nineteenth century fashions. A notable feature of these sites is that they provide pictorial renderings of fashions of the time, ranging from illustrations to fashion plates to photography. This listing of internet sites can be found in Appendix F at the end of this study.

Chapter Seven

Context and Conclusions

Author Examination

An examination of Margaret Oliphant's background was undertaken with the aim of identifying any ideals or beliefs that the author may have held in regards to clothing. Four primary questions motivated and directed this portion of the study. What was the author's reason for writing? Did she write about a time period and place which she had actually experienced? Had dress occupied a prominent position or role within her life? Did Margaret Oliphant overtly express any prevailing sentiments in regards to fashions?

Two main resources were examined for information which could provide answers to the above questions. The first of these was the *Autobiography and Letters of Mrs Margaret Oliphant*, edited by Mrs Harry Coghill and originally published in 1899. The Victorian Library edition, published in 1974, was examined in this study.

Due to varied familial circumstances, Margaret Oliphant found herself the main provider, not only for her immediate family but for extended members as well. Thus, her writing was at least partially motivated by necessity¹⁶.

In addressing the question as to the adequacy of Margaret Oliphant's frame of reference in writing *Miss Marjoribanks*, it was necessary to examine her background. To fulfill this purpose, a timeline was constructed with information supplied in the

¹⁶In her introduction to the *Autobiography and Letters of Mrs Margaret Oliphant*, Q.D. Leavis identifies a pertinent quote made by Margaret Oliphant in a work identified as Cross's *Life*. Here, Margaret Oliphant is quoted as saying that writing came to her naturally and that she found it pleasurable; she continues to state that monetary gain was not her primary motive for writing.

Autobiography and Letters of Mrs Margaret Oliphant. A preliminary examination of Margaret Oliphant's life had been conducted in the second chapter of this study and information from that was extracted to supplement the timeline. Appendix C consists of this timeline, clearly delineating information as to when and where Margaret Oliphant lived. The timeline extends from the author's birth in 1828 until 1866, the year of publication of *Miss Marjoribanks*.

The time periods of particular interest were those surrounding 1855 and 1866, those being the two from *Miss Marjoribanks* which were examined in this study. It is noteworthy that *Miss Marjoribanks* encompasses a time frame occurring within the life span of Margaret Oliphant, the author was not writing about a time which she had not experienced. Similarly, she wrote about a place with which she was acquainted, not some far away land. By 1855, Margaret Oliphant had spent the greater portion of her life in England. As well, the majority of the next 11 years were also spent in England. Her time spent travelling abroad is significant to note as it may have provided some point of reference regarding Lucilla Marjoribank's year spent abroad.

Within the *Autobiography and Letters of Mrs Margaret Oliphant*, there are contained recollections of general aspects of her dress as a child and a widow, as well as of her family, friends and acquaintances. The content of these references is limited at best. And these remembering are perhaps subject to the same sort of historical scrutiny which has been applied to those references in *Miss Marjoribanks*. These simple mentions of dress within her autobiography seem to imply that fashions did not occupy an extensive position or role within the life of the author.

With that bold statement, it is fitting to introduce the second resource consulted. *Dress* was a book written by Margaret Oliphant and published in 1879¹⁷. This work, consisting of six chapters, dealt with a number of areas concerning fashion. Unfortunately, personal information regarding any relationships between the author and the subject was lacking. Rather, topics such as the origins, evolution and functions of clothing were addressed. The author did express some opinions in regards to past and present dress; however, these sentiments were not of the nature to provide insight into the roles or place that clothing may have occupied within the author's life.

What was of particular interest to this study was the third chapter of *Dress*. It is here that Margaret Oliphant discussed dress as found within various English poetic works. "From the earliest times there have been found, in the tales of the minstrel and the primitive chronicler, references to dress, descriptive and satirical, which have been of the utmost importance to that branch of historical study" (Oliphant, 1879, p.19). Margaret Oliphant's identification of the utility of poetry as a source of dress history is an idea equivalent to that which forms the fundamental basis of this thesis. This third chapter of *Dress* suggests that the idea of finding fact within fiction is not such a novel idea, as this possibility was recognized as early as 1879 by Margaret Oliphant. She expressed a recognition of not only the presence but value of history records other than those compiled by antiquarians. While she may not have overtly proclaimed a love for fashions and it may not have occupied an intrinsic part of her life, Margaret Oliphant did recognize

¹⁷ The microfilmed copy of *Dress* which was examined documents the original date of publication as [1879?]. Other sources place the date of publication at 1876.

and acknowledge its value as a subject. Her awareness as to the value of the inclusion of dress references within a work, may lend credence to the supposition that her use of clothing references was more than just incidental, and perhaps, maybe even consciously made.

Conclusions

The initial question which gave rise to this study inquired as to whether fact could be found within fiction. More particularly, this question was concerned with that of historical clothing and textiles. Within a novel, references to clothing and textiles can be used to create visual imagery in the mind of the reader. The two primary roles fulfilled by this are (1) to set the scene and (2) to aid in characterization. Thus, the potential exists for the novel to become a unique source of historical record. However, it is imperative that the accuracy of the visual imagery first be validated. My research focuses upon the application of this concept to *Miss Marjoribanks*.

A series of objectives was developed which provided guidance for this study. The first of these involved the annotation of the clothing and textile references made within *Miss Marjoribanks*, concerning either Lucilla Marjoribanks or Barbara Lake. This objective was met through several readings of the text. Organization of the references into a classification system facilitated their future use. Documented separately, the references made in regards to Lucilla Marjoribanks were held distinct amongst those made in regards to Barbara Lake. Once compiled, these classification systems were examined to form a composite of each character's dress. Any similarities or differences between the two

became apparent. Also, this allotment allowed for a simple quantification of references.

The second objective of this study aimed to determine the historical accuracy of the references. This was accomplished through the examination of the actual references, as well as of the author who created them. Substantial information was found to support the historical authenticity of the clothing and textile references examined. The roles fulfilled by the clothing and textile references in *Miss Marjoribanks* include both (1) to set the scene and also (2) to aid in characterization. Research revealed that the type of garments displayed by Lucilla and Barbara certainly could have been worn within the time periods portrayed. In this novel, Margaret Oliphant has documented important aspects of dress including fabric, colour, styles and terminology. The clothing and textiles described aid in supporting the supposed time period, which fulfills the first role identified.

Characterization is enhanced through contrasts between the garments of Lucilla and Barbara. This is made evident in the latter portion of the novel when Barbara appears in her tin dress. This noisy gown of hers, coupled by the disdain with which she treats it marks a striking contrast to Lucilla who is in her deep mourning, “a model of every righteous observance” (p.448). Earlier in the novel, even when both women are attired in simple white muslin, a glaring contrast is made between the two. The clothing of each character speaks volumes about who they are and in the case of Barbara and her dreams of a real Brussels veil, who she wishes to become. Thus, the second role is fulfilled as the references to clothing and textiles aid in characterization.

Examination of the life of Margaret Oliphant revealed that she did write within an adequate frame of reference. No information was found which suggests that she had a

special interest in clothing and textiles. However, Margaret Oliphant did express an awareness as to the value of the inclusion of clothing and textile references within a work.

The third objective of this study sought to compile a guide to the resources which could be utilized to better understand the functions fulfilled by the use of references to clothing and textiles within literature. The sixth chapter of this study is dedicated to the development of a resource primer. Appearing within this chapter, are numerous primary references which are intended to amplify understanding. Written descriptions of garments and visual renderings found in fashion columns provided valuable information as to aspects such as style, colour and fabrication of garments. However, what also proved to be invaluable were the sections of journals which presented advertisements and columns which documented correspondence. It was here that one could hear the questions that people were asking and even sometimes, their answers.

This study has revealed that of the references examined, the clothing and textiles presented within *Miss Marjoribanks* appear to be historically accurate. One is left to question whether these references were carefully constructed by the author with historical accuracy in mind. Or were they merely aspects of dress so very ordinary and commonplace that they naturally found their way into the story? With the absence of some form of overt declaration, we are left to wonder which of these scenarios contains the truth. At the same time, the answer to such musings would probably not contribute a great deal. Really, the answer doesn't matter as the ramifications would prove the same for each. In *Miss Marjoribanks*, Margaret Oliphant has created a most entertaining novel which also fulfills educational purposes. In essence, she has drawn a picture which

captures the essence of the clothing and textiles of the time portrayed.

Future Research

This study provides the introductory stages for creation of a resource guide which could be utilized in the study of *Miss Marjoribanks* or with other works portraying a similar time period. Future research examining supplementary resources would contribute and strengthen the references detailed within this study.

This study was limited to the examination of clothing and textile references in regards to two female characters in *Miss Marjoribanks*. The potential exists for further study of the same novel, examining the references made in regards to the other characters.

Finally, the findings of this study lead one towards the other works of Margaret Oliphant. The vast number of works completed by this author offer a seemingly endless potential for further contribution to the field of historical clothing and textiles.

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APPENDIX A

1855 - 1856

Lucilla Marjoribanks

Garment - Torso - Outergarment

Page	Line	
48	33	white dress
48	37	vestal robes
53	23	white frock, high in the neck
79	17	white frock high
82	6	gorgeous apparel
82	10	vestal robes
82	16	white frock, <i>high</i>
89	14	white frocks, <i>high</i>
114	20	<i>high</i> white frock
118	25	India muslins
131	25	white draperies
194	23	crisp summer draperies
254	3-4	white dress, <i>high</i>
259	16	virginal white draperies
259	25	white robes
260	27	white garments
261	3	white dress
261	31	white dress
266	8	white dress
286	6	draperies

Garment - Torso - Overgarment

Page	Line	
207	8	waterproof cloak
207	15-16	waterproof cloak
214	17	waterproof cloak

Garment - Extremity - Head

Page	Line	
31	37	hat
53	6	hat
63	14	hat
63	28	hat
126	5	hat
259	5	hat
286	10	hat

Garment - Extremity - Neck

Page	Line	
72	24	scarf

Accessory - Carried

Page	Line	
32	30	pretty parasol
146	2	handkerchief
220	26	handkerchief
221	33	handkerchief
222	9	handkerchief
296	4	fan
296	4	handkerchief

Barbara Lake

Garment - Torso - Outergarment

Page	Line	
82	7	white frock
82	9	muslin, washed six times
82	26	breadths of her white dress
85	14	muslin, six times washed
86	25	dress was limp
86	36-37	limpness of her dress
87	34	limp dress
108	21	simple muslin
108	36-37	white muslin
118	18-19	a dress that was fit to be seen
118	26	decent dress
118	29	white dress
120	35	white dress
278	9	crumpled dress

Garment - Extremity - Head

Page	Line	
86	35	shabby bonnet
94	22	shabby bonnet
111	36-37	prospect of unlimited millinery
178	9	veil of real Brussels
179	13	pattern of real Brussels
257	32	veil of real Brussels
261	21	Brussels veil

Garment - Extremity - Neck

Page Line

237 18 collars

Garment - Extremity - Hand & Arm

Page Line

112 27 gloves

237 18 gloves

The 1998 Penguin Books edition of *Miss Marjoribanks* was utilized in the documentation of the clothing and textile references in this study.

APPENDIX B

1865-1866

Lucilla Marjoribanks

Garment - Torso - Outergarment

Page Line

401	8	articles of mourning
406	29-30	entire wardrobe of new mourning
408	26	black dresses
417	4	deep mourning
417	9	in crape
426	9	mourning
434	4	mourning
434	5	black
448	6	deep mourning

Garment - Torso - Overgarment

Page Line

359	37	sealskin cloak
364	2	sealskin cloak
365	10-11	sealskin coat
365	24	sealskin coat
367	17	sealskin coat
368	11	sealskin cloak
368	36	sealskin coat

Garment - Extremity - Head

Page	Line	
339	19	hat
359	11	bonnet
374	20	hat
419	21	bonnet
419	31	bonnet
420	5	blackness of her crape veil
421	2	veil
421	8	thick black veil
495	4	veil

Garment - Extremity - Neck

Page	Line	
423	6	shawl

Accessory - Carried

Page	Line	
484	3	handkerchief

Textile

Page	Line	
369	24	worsted-work
395	4	worsted-work
454	30	worsted-work
456	30	worsted-work
457	2	worsted-work
457	10	worsted-work

463	3	embroidery
464	25	embroidery
464	36	worsted-work

Barbara Lake

Garment - Torso - Outergarment

Page Line

439	2-3	faded silk gown, looks and rustles like tin, or some other thin metallic substance
447	37	same silk dress which rustled like tin
448	5	rustling silk
449	34-35	tin gown, and rustled up the middle aisle
455	24-25	arrayed in the tin dress- her best available garment - which was made long, according to the fashion
455	28	the sweep of the metallic garment
456	3	rustling train

Garment - Torso - Overgarment

Page Line

438	36	large shawl
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Garment - Extremity - Head

Page Line

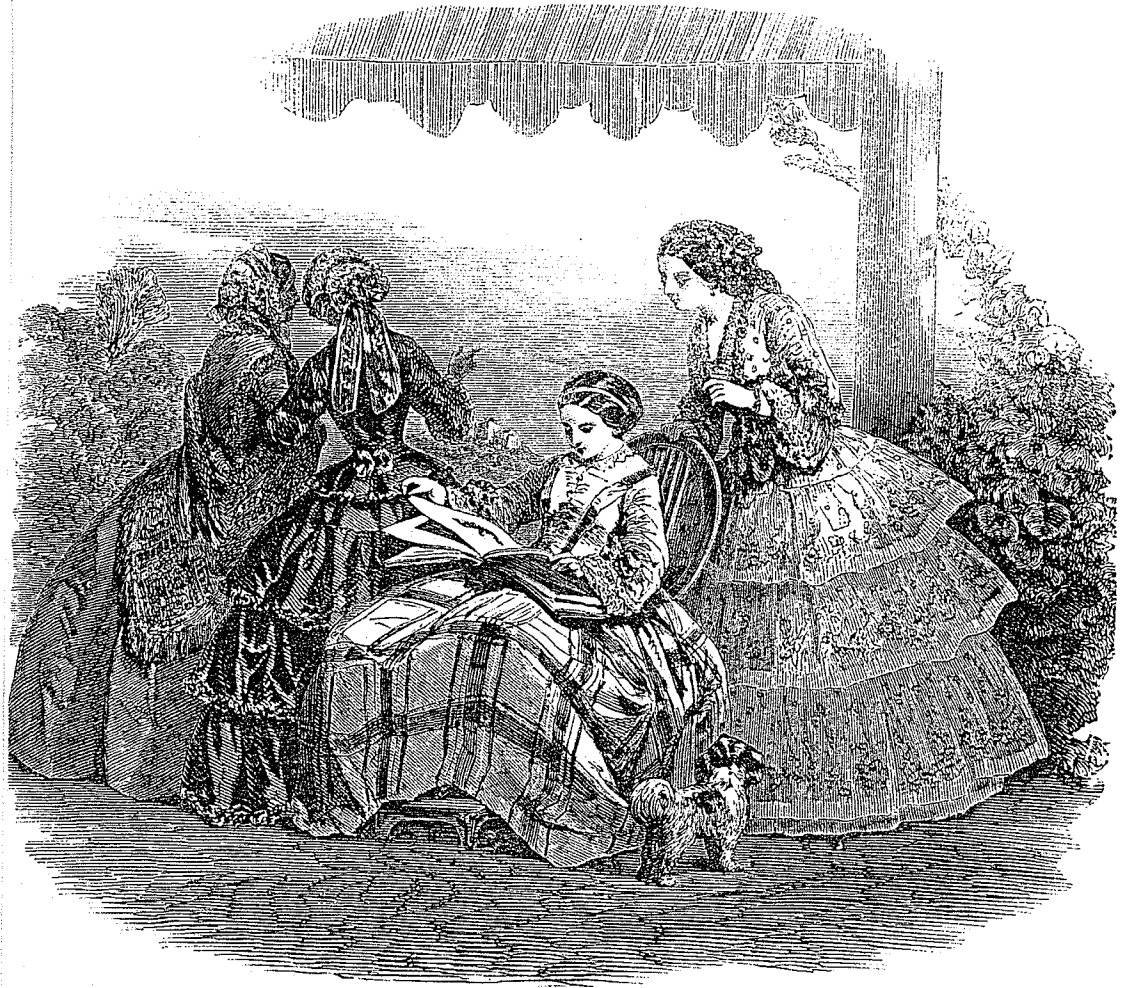
455	12	Brussels veil
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APPENDIX C

- 1828 Birth of Margaret Oliphant in Wallyford. The first ten years of her life are spent living in Scotland.
- 1838 The family moves to Liverpool.
- 1849 The family moves to Birkenhead. With the exception of a three month stay in London, Margaret Oliphant resided here until her marriage.
- 1852 Margaret Oliphant marries and relocates to London.
- 1859 Margaret Oliphant takes her family to Italy where her husband dies.
- 1860 The family returns to England and roughly the next year is spent in Scotland.
- late 1861 Move to Ealing.
- late 1863 Trip to Italy where Margaret Oliphant's first daughter dies. Approximately the next year is passed in Italy, Switzerland and France.
- late 1865 Return to England, settling in Windsor.

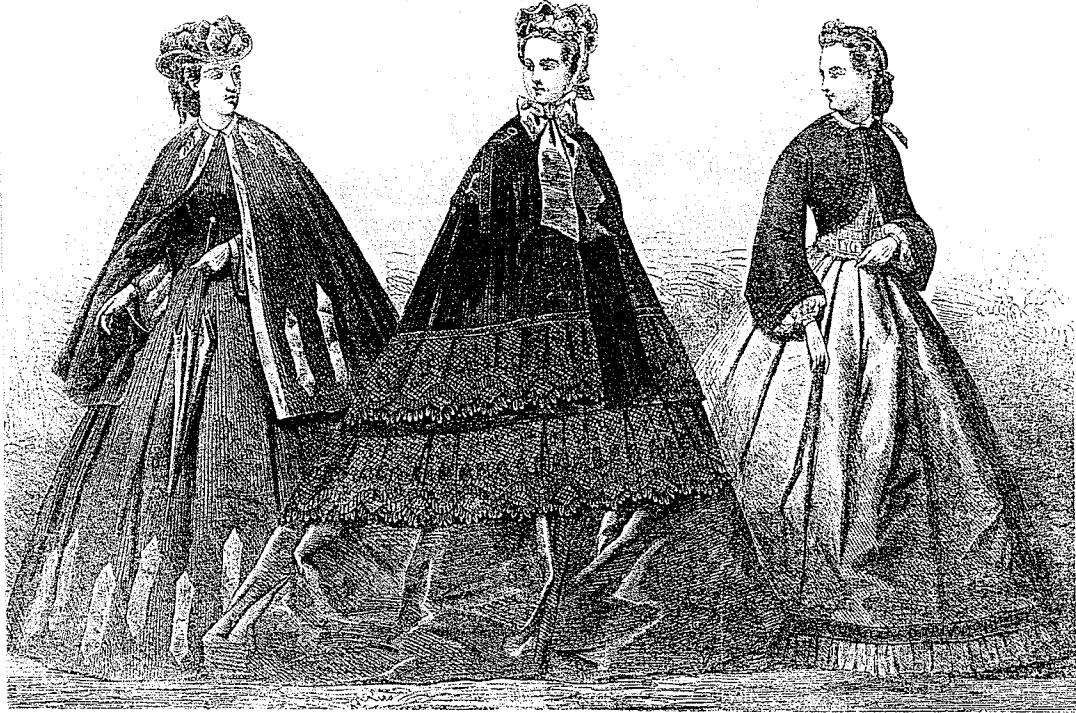
APPENDIX D



White muslin dress (right) decorated with pink or blue spots.

Paris Fashions For July. (1854, July 1). *The Illustrated London News*, pp. 615-616.

APPENDIX E



Walking dress (middle) exhibits the trained skirt of the time.

Paris Fashions For November. (1863, October 31). *The Illustrated London News*, p.441.

APPENDIX F

Internet sites viewed as of August 21, 2002.

<http://www.costumes.org/>

<http://www.geocities.com/victorianlace10/home.html>

<http://www.victorianscostume.org.uk/>

<http://www.fashion-era.com/>

<http://65.107.211.206/victov.html>

<http://locutus.ucr.edu/~cathy?weev.html>

<http://www.vam.ac.uk/>