**Federal/Empire/Regency Clothing Resources**

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***Images***:

Searching museums for Austen-era clothing is often a painstaking endeavor. You’ll find both the terms dress and gown used, and since it is rare to be able to date garments precisely you can’t search for a specific year. Certain articles are easier to find using terms like pelisse, spencer, reticule, turban, morning cap, etc. but even that will not get everything: one of my favorite spencers is actually named “Ensemble” because it includes the gown. Pinterest, for all its irritating limitations, often provides a good starting place for finding things in museums (but watch out - Pinterest collections are wildly inaccurate about dates and sloppy about linking to original sources!).

* Ackermann’s Repository of Arts: 1809-1828, all volumes including 2 fashion plates with descriptions as well as additional fashion information, at the Internet Archive (go to [https://archive.org](https://archive.org/) and search on Ackermann repository arts
* The Bibliothèque national de France has published many of the *Journal des dames et des Modes*, a periodical published every 5 days from 1798-1839. Each issue has 2 fashion plates: [https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/cb32799510k/date](https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark%3A/12148/cb32799510k/date)
* Metropolitan Museum of Art - <http://www.metmuseum.org/collection>
* Victoria and Albert Museum - <http://collections.vam.ac.uk/>
* Museum of Fine Arts, Boston - <http://www.mfa.org/collections/textiles-and-fashion-arts>

***Books***:

* Arnold, Janet. *Patterns of Fashion; Englishwomen's Dresses c.1660-186*0. London, 1964/1972. [Includes information and scaled patterns. Invaluable for seeing how to shape and cut gowns from this period.]
* Bradfield, Nancy. *Costume in Detail, 1730-1930*. Kent: Eric Dobby Publishing, 2003. [Includes hand drawn sketches, with measurements, from a number of gowns, arranged chronologically. Fantastic detail.]
* Ginsburg, Madeleine, Avril Hart, Valerie Mendes and Natalie Rothstein. *Four Hundred Years of Fashion*. London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 1993. [Mens and womens clothing, a great overview.]
* Hunnisett, Jean. *Period Costume for Stage and Screen: Patterns for Women's Dress 1800-1909*. Players Press, 1991. [Designed for stage sewing but provides sewing techniques and great patterns.]
* Kyoto Costume Inst., *Revolution in Fashion: European Clothing 1715-1815*. New York,1990. [Any books from the Kyoto Costume Institute are well worth it. Glorious pictures.]
* Johnstone, Lucy. *Nineteenth Century Fashion in Detail*. London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 2009. [Mostly from later in the century, but this series has unbelievably gorgeous close-up details.]
* le Bourhis, K. *The Age of Napoleon: Costume from Revolution to Empire, 1789-1815*. New York: Metropolitan Museum, 1989.
* Shep, R.L, *Corsets: A Visual History*. Mendocino CA, 1993. [Pictures, pictures, pictures...and details.]
* Steele, Valerie. *The Corset: A Cultural History*. New York: Yale University Press, 2001. [An overall look at the role of corsetry in women’s fashion through time. Steele has fascinating ideas about how and why women have been determined to reshape their bodies.]

***Favorite Fabric, Sewing, and Millinery Suppliers:***

* Delectable Mountain Cloth must top any list even though, sadly, just until the end of 2019.
* **Puresilks** - [puresilks.us/](http://www.puresilks.us/) - they ship from Mumbai so take a bit longer to arrive. Their prices have crept up a bit. I’ve used their taffetas in bonnets. The lightweight taffetas are heavier than Delectable Mountain’s light/tissue taffetas but not bad. Colors are sometimes hard to tell—and they have models in gowns that are not the same shades as the swatches they depict on the same page but are simply intended to show drape or provide ideas. Go with the colors in the samples. Also, get what you need – dye lots vary considerably from one order to another. You can order swatches.
* **Fabrics Store** - <https://fabrics-store.com/>- my go to place for shift linen. I use the 3.5 oz and it really lasts. The 2.8 or 2.5 are lighter because the thread count is not as high so it feels more like gauze or cheesecloth. You can try using the code “ilovelinen” for a 7% discount or better yet sign up for their email and you’ll get notices of sales. If you want super sheer and very smooth linen (like for chemisettes) you have to look elsewhere but for shifts they are great and also make good lining for all but the lightest fabrics.
* **Fabric-mart** - <https://www.fabricmartfabrics.com/>- another one I get email notices for because they do have good sales though not a wide selection for historic-type fabric. Every once in a while you can find something good, though.
* **Dharma Trading** - <https://www.dharmatrading.com/>- They specialize in dyes so most of the fabric they sell is white. However, if what is what you are looking for you will probably not find better prices. They do have some silks that are pre-dyed but only charmeuse and habotai (china) silks which don’t work well for historic gowns (charmeuse is too drapey/clingy and their 8mm habotai is too lightweight. I vaguely recall getting some of their linen long ago but I didn’t like it as much as fabrics-stores linen.
* **Burnley and Trowbridge** - <https://www.burnleyandtrowbridge.com/index.aspx>- the familiar historic event vendors. Pricy but nice (and if you don’t get fabric there you can always buy stockings and accessories instead!)
* **Renaissance Fabrics** - <https://www.renaissancefabrics.net/>- some lovely choices and don’t forget to look at their trims, too.
* **Reproduction Fabrics** - <http://www.reproductionfabrics.com/>- I’ve been tempted by these and once got some swatches. I was afraid the fabric would be too heavy and fuzzy like most quilting fabrics are, but certainly worth a look.
* **Mood Fabrics** - <https://www.moodfabrics.com/> - Fun to go to when in the city but their prices have skyrocketed over the years. They sometimes have nice silks but generally not the kinds of lightweight taffetas I prefer. That said, they often have some wonderful striped or solid color Italian cottons (my blue spencer gown is from there) but generally they don’t have much in terms of cotton prints.
* **New York Elegant** (used to be on West 40th, now at 242 West 36th St between 7th and 8th). My first stop when in town. They have nice cotton prints, or to be more specific, cotton stripes. It’s meant for men’s shirting but some work well for gowns. Their silks tend to be more expensive and modern (but I did get a lovely striped taffeta there) but they have a lot of white cottons in all weights—I’ve gotten cotton organdy for chemisettes and ruffs there as well as white-on-white stripes and such.
* **The Textile Company** - 21 Power Square, Greenfield. MA - <https://www.yelp.com/biz/the-textile-company-greenfield> for directions and hours - Tucked away in a corner of a residential area, this old, creaky, former textile mill has a wonderful collection of prints. They tend to be quilter’s cottons so you may want to watch the weight and “hand” but several prints are historic reproductions. Always fun to visit. But look for their hours of operation and bring cash or a checkbook as they do not take credit cards.
* **M and J Trimming** - <http://www.reproductionfabrics.com/>- (1008 Sixth Ave. between 37th and 38th NYC) There are so many trim stores in the 6/7/8 Avenue 36th-40th St (NYC) area but this one is a treat to visit. Large selection, beautiful trims, and even the prices on silk ribbon are not bad. Sadly, they seem to have little to no more taffeta ribbon but I’m tempted by their butterfly pleat taffeta even though it is expensive!
* **Judith Millinery** - <https://www.judithm.com/> - There may be cheaper places but this place has always been reliable. I get covered wire (#21 for light silk bonnets, #19 for heavier bonnets—the lower the number the heavier the wire), crinoline bias tape (for edging), and buckram (one-ply heavy for heavy fabrics or for the crown; one-ply medium for most bonnets of lighter silk).
* **Timely Tresses** - <https://www.timelytresses.com/> - Danielle Perry’s patterns and kits are wonderful! Or you can just buy a complete custom bonnet. She also carries wonderful ribbons, flowers, feathers, and materials.
* **Shocking Bad Hats** - For beautiful, unique, custom bonnets and hats, find Rebecca Burnham’s store at <https://www.facebook.com/shockingbadhats/?rc=p>

And a few more:

*Lace and Ribbon*

* Chadwick Heirlooms - my favorite for eyelet, fine lace, insertion lace - but by no means cheap - <https://www.chadwickheirlooms.com/products/white-embroidered-edging-0>
* Martha Pullen - <http://store.marthapullen.com/> - lovely $tuff
* Farmhouse Fabrics: <http://www.farmhousefabrics.com/>
* Heirloom Sewing: <http://www.heirloomsewingforchildren.com/fabric_index.htm>

*Feathers*

* Ostrich wing, wing tips ($1.65-5.00) - wing tips curl better than tail feathers and drabs - <http://fancyfeather.com/feathers?cat=9&price=1%2C10>

*Millinery*

* Straw Bonnets (undecorated): <http://www.austentation.com/boutique/bonnets.html>
*Shoes*
* A blog post with some good ideas - <http://bellamissella.blogspot.com/2011/11/regency-accessories-shoes.html>(See Amazon: Sansha Soho Lace-Up Jazz Shoe and for dancing look for Touch Ups Dyeable Ballet Flats - sew on some ribbon and voila!)
* Jessamyn’s article on shoes:  <http://www.songsmyth.com/shoes.html>
* American Duchess – does the job but makes you pay for it -
<http://www.american-duchess.com/>