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THE DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN'S DAY-TIME HEADWEAR

FROM 1800 TO 1914

by

Janice McHugh

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

I have chosen to base my thesis on the period in history which spans from 1800 to 1914. I am interested in the changes that took place throughout this era. Industry, society and fashion are three areas which underwent a great metamorphosis, but it is the changes in fashion, and in particular, changes in women's daytime headwear that I wish to discuss and analyse. Headdress was the most elaborate and decadent item in any woman's wardrobe especially in the late nineteenth century. Hats and bonnets however, were restricted to daytime wear because women ^{of the upper classes} wore delicate ostrich plumes or small floral arrangements incorporated into their hairstyles for evening wear. The period from 1800-1914 gave rise to a great many bonnet and hat styles and variations of these, many of which I feel, through my research, are not only functional and decorative but are important indicators of a woman's position in society, her age and in some cases her marital status. Many wealthy women adorned their heads with hats and bonnets abundantly trimmed with flowers, plumes and ribbons. Women of the 1800's appear to me to have been infatuated with elaborate and costly headdresses, particularly nearing the end of the nineteenth century and through my research I have been amazed by the lengths women have gone to, and the costs they incurred, to purchase new and more exotic types of headdress.

The nineteenth century was remarkable even when compared to our own era of sophisticated technology and it is hard not to be impressed by the ferment of ideas and high degree of energy that was engendered. It was an age of inventions and technological development which inevitably quickened the pace of life and transformed the nature of communications. The building of canals, roads, railways and

steamships plus the invention of photography, the telephone and wireless, the typewriter and sewing machine, the bicycle and by the end of the century the motorcar, all revolutionised different aspects of daily living.

The rate of fashion change in particular, accelerated as the century progressed, so that by the late 1880's styles appeared and disappeared so quickly and with such bewildering speed that only the most dedicated and wealthy of fashion followers could keep up. Supply created demand and in order to satisfy the need for the new, milliners forced their imaginations to range back and forth across the centuries, pillaging past eras for fresh ideas. It is here I propose to begin by looking at and analysing different styles in daytime headdress and how they changed and evolved throughout the period which spans from 1800 - 1914.

Wealthy Irish women were keen fashion followers during the 1800's and early 1900's. Most of the Irish headwear I have seen while researching my thesis is equally as elaborate and fashionable as English and other foreign styles would have been. During my research of Irish millinery written information was very difficult to find, therefore, I have tried to work from photographs and illustrations to build up a picture of what was worn during the 1800's. I have also used and assessed information on English headdress which for the wealthy English and Irish classes was very similar. My assessment and evaluation of Irish women's headdress is based on these sources of information. Irish women used women's magazines, fashion plates and postcards as a means of keeping in touch with new styles in headwear, and in some cases would have travelled abroad themselves. Wealthy Irish families also led similar lifestyles to their English

equivalent. In contrast to this, many of the poorer Irish families were struggling to survive due to the famine and lack of industrial and agricultural education. They had little, if any, money to spend on headwear, whereas their English poor equivalent would have spent what they could afford on imitating the fashionable society figures. As the century progressed, however, the industrial revolution brought with it improvements in industry, agriculture, communications and transport, gradually the poorer classes began to benefit financially from the improvements in wages and in working conditions.

In the nineteenth century the appearance of a woman's headdress was regulated not only by fashion but also by social rules of etiquette. I propose to discuss and analyse how etiquette effected the type of headdress worn, and when it was worn. The social rules of etiquette used by both the English and Irish aristocracy were very similar especially in relation to fashion and headdress. There were specific types of headwear to be worn on different occasions and at different times of day. For any woman who wished to stand well in society, it was essential for her headdress to be appropriate to her station in life, to the occasion and to the time of day. An understanding and observance of such conventions had long been accepted as a social duty among the middle and upper classes, as important as good manners and correct behaviour. In the nineteenth century the world of fashion was for the first time arbitrated by the middle classes. Up until this time only the wealthy elite could afford to be fashionable. The differences between classes was marked by different levels of elaboration in headdress and modes of conduct. Headdress slowly filtered down through society by the use of women's magazines and society manuals. These would have been invaluable to the less well off women who would, have through looking at the

illustrations in magazines, created their own headwear at a much cheaper cost.

A woman's role in society was changing too. Women would no longer tolerate being dependent on or dominated by men. Her role in society changed from that of a decorative, non-intellectual, inactive woman to an independent, self-supporting woman at the close of the period. These changes came about slowly and it was only through women's relentless perseverance that the constraints of society on their working and dress habits greatly altered. The changes in women's roles which occurred at the end of the 1800's applies to middle and upper classes, these were the families who could afford to educate their daughters and as a result these women were prepared to partake in careers such as secretarial and teaching positions. These were the first steps taken to allow women financial independence. Women's headdress and clothing changed to accommodate their new working habits, they became simpler and more practical as a necessity for work. An increased participation in sport also helped to liberate women's headdress. It is the relationship between changing social roles and changing headdress that I propose to analyse in this thesis. Many of these liberating changes in women's headwear came near the end of the 1800's and it was World War I in 1914 that brought with it the greatest changes of all. Women's clothing and headdress lost their formality and stiffness, to allow women to partake easily in working and leisurely activities.

CHAPTER 1.

CHANGES AND DEVELOPMENTS
IN
DAYTIME HEADDRESS (1800 - 1914)

CHAPTER 1.

For the fashionable woman about town at the beginning of the nineteenth century there was a wealth of styles in headdress from which to choose. A desire for the classical principles of order and an increased personal awareness had been stimulated by the social and political turmoil in the recent past. In the international scene the European revolutionary wars, and the Napoleonic wars in particular, were turning attention to the cultures and ways of life of different countries. By the early 1800's the trend towards simplicity and classicism was effecting the whole of woman's appearance. Slimfitting highwaisted dresses in pale shades recalled the tunics of ancient Greece and Rome as can be seen in illustration 1. With a new 'democratic' informality in manners, hats and caps began to be worn more for effect than for etiquette and convention, though these were increasing factors in the lives of most women. The Countess of Brownlow, though writing much later, speaks of the styles she saw in her younger days,

The peace of 1802 brought, I suppose, many French to England, but I remember only one, the celebrated MME Recamier who created a sensation by her dress which was vastly unlike the unsophisticated styles of bonnet worn by the English women. She appeared at Kensington Gardens a la antique, a muslin dress clinging to her form, like the folds of drapery on a statue, her hair in a plait at the back and falling in small ringlets around her face and greasy with huile antique. A large veil thrown over her head completed her attire and not unnaturally caused her to be stared at(i).

During the European revolutionary wars, English and French fashions had developed independently despite the 'fashionable intelligence' in the form of business and tradesmen from Paris selling

fabrics, ribbons and fashion plates who crossed the battle lines when possible to promote new forms and styles. In 1815 when various internationally fashionable women met at social functions, the differences in French and English styles were greatly noticed. Initially the English were shocked at the simplicity of French fashions and the French at the formality of the English. Lady Charlotte Bury said in 1815,

"the ugliest part of the habillements was the high chimneys on their heads, which chimneys are covered with feathers and flowers"(ii).

She was referring to the poke bonnets worn by English women which looked clumsy in comparison to the delicate and modestly trimmed bonnets worn by the French. Some years later the Jury report on the great exhibition of All Nations (1851) could note that,

though the hat is an article of fashion it is of such constant use it does not appear to be easy to change the habits and tastes of wearer's or to include them in adopting a new costume(iii).

This quote was referring to the English top hat worn by men and the bonnet which was the headdress of women at this time. These forms of headdress have been seen as symbols of the Victorian world. Illustration 2 is a caricature of a top hat and bonnet. Aspects of each are exaggerated like the tilt of the man's top hat and the trimmings on the bonnet. These were the most characteristic features of English headdress in the early 1800's.

The top hat was considered to convey authority and ambition, its shape to be a monument to the chimneys of the industrial revolution. The bonnet was seen as essential to the formation of the ideal Victorian woman, dependent, decorative, non-intellectual and

submissive. Through changing these styles in headdress the English may have been afraid of losing the values which they represented and because of this they shunned away from change. This may have caused them to be very cautious about incorporating French luxurious and fanciful fashions in headwear into their serious and formal attire.

Bonnets were the most popular form of headdress for women from the beginning of the century right up until the mid 1860's, when the hat began to be worn. Bonnets were always worn for outdoor activities in the early 1800's when the classical principles of order and simplicity prevailed. There were few classical models from which to draw inspiration therefore, bonnet styles were based on the essence of rural, military and romantic influences.

The rural influence gave rise to country style bonnets made from straw which were simply decorated. This was similar to the romantic influence which had a wild and fresh gypsy feel. The military style was quite plain and was based on what soldiers and military leaders were wearing. One of the earliest types of bonnet was the 'gypsy' bonnet which can be seen in illustration 3 and was very popular at the beginning of the nineteenth century¹. It blended the rural and romantic trends. It was tubular and had a ribbon tied across the crown, bonding it into what we now consider the bonnet shape.

The 'Poke' was another popular style of bonnet and was all the rage in England, an example of which is shown in illustration 4. Poke bonnets took various forms, from the tallest resembling upturned wastepaper baskets to low coal scuttle shapes. Illustrations 5, 6 and

1. The 'Gypsy' Bonnet was a simple rural style bonnet, which was usually made up of straw and was worn outdoors.

7 show a range of 'Poke' bonnet shapes and styles. The basic bonnet shapes were decorated with elaborate trimmings. In these illustrations a combination of ribbons and floral arrangements seems to have been popular. Illustration 5 appears quite plain in comparison to the others, which are heavily decorated. This was typical of nineteenth century headwear, as the century progressed headwear became more and more elaborate.

In the 1820's bonnets became wider as dresses developed a new horizontal emphasis. The sleeves broadened, the waist dropped and the skirt widened. Changes in the width and height of bonnets were related to and sometimes were caused by changes in dress. Bonnets became wider in order to act as a balance for wider skirts and sleeves. Illustration 8 is an example of how the bonnet extended to accompany changing styles of dress. It is made of a mixture of what appears to be satin and chiffon fabrics and ribbons.

From the mid 1800's onwards most bonnets came down low at the sides of the face. Bonnet brims almost met beneath the chin and were often lined with gauze or gathered net or tulle and trimmed with flowers inside the brim, framing the face. This was a pretty fashion that lasted many years right up until the early 1880's. Illustration 9 shows a woman wearing such a bonnet. She is wearing a bonnet with floral trimming inside the brim at ear level. Her bonnet also consists of a panel of fabric extending from the back to cover her neck. The first woman to venture out in a bonnet without a panel of lightweight fabric hanging from the back, which was known as a 'bavolet', was Madame Worth. Her husband's first important customer Princess Metternich, always in the advance of fashion, considered the curtainless bonnet charming, but everyone else was shocked because it revealed the back of her neck.

"I never saw anything so perfectly disgusting", objected one woman.
"That hat is simply indecent"(iv).

This remark only goes to prove how relative decency really was, for at the same time exceedingly low necked evening dresses were in fashion. Such grave differences would have been based on rules of etiquette. While the bonnet without its bavolet was considered intolerable, etiquette made revealing evening wear very acceptable although they appear to contradict one another.

I have mentioned two types of bonnet in this chapter, the Gypsy and the Poke bonnet. These were the main types of bonnet which existed throughout the 1800's, yet I would like to point out that each type existed in a huge variety of styles. This was due to the types and amounts of trimmings applied to the basic bonnet shapes. As the century progressed trimmings played an increasing role in the decoration of headwear. The consumption of feathers for the decoration of headdresses was enormous, not only single feathers and small tufts, but wings and whole birds were a significant feature in the decoration of bonnets. I have chosen not to discuss millinery trimmings in great detail as it is a very wide field which would require a thesis all to itself. However, I will from time to time make reference to certain types of trimmings commonly used.

It's long enough since a bonnet meant shelter to the face and protection the the head. That fragment of a bonnet which at present represents the headgear now poised on the front, and ornamented with birds, portions of beasts, reptiles and insects. We have seen a bonnet composed of a rose and a couple of feathers, another of two or three butterflies or as many beads and a bit of lace, and a third represented by five green leaves joined at the stalk(v).

This extract shows the protests of Mrs. Lynn Linton, who obviously is not impressed by the extent to which women use trimmings on their bonnets. The idea of covering the head seems to have given place to the desire to adorn it.

'A bonnet', wrote Charles Blanc, is simply an excuse for a feather, a pretext for a spray of flowers, the support for an aigrette. The fastening for a plume of Russian cocks feathers, it is placed on the head not to protect it but that it may be seen better. Its great use is to be charming(vi).

These extracts fully illustrate the point that women became excessively indulgent in trimmings for their headwear to the extent that blood curdling stories of birds massacred by the millions were in circulation. In 1875 the preservation society reported in its literature that a single consignment of 40,000 humming birds was a common order for the millinery trade. The campaign set up to prevent this from happening attracted influential patronage and in 1906 Alexandra, when Queen, agreed to forbid the use of osprey plumage at court. It is sad that so many birds were destroyed for the colour and texture of their plumage, just at a time when dyestuff technology made it feasible to recolour feathers easily and effectively. Illustration 10 shows an advertisement from a woman's magazine which shows us how extensively birds plumage was used. Some of the headdresses in this advertisement are composed of feathers and plumes. Trimmings on hats not only included those insects and birds which appeal to our sense of beauty but those which cause revulsion of feeling such as spiders, waterbeetles, caterpillars, even lizards and toads.

Until now I have referred only to bonnets and their evolvement. It was not until the 1870's that hats became a popular form of headwear. Until this time hats had only been worn by small children

and some young women. Illustrations 11 and 12 give us an idea of how advertisement dated 1861 for Todd Burns & Co., in which almost every woman is wearing a bonnet. The advertisement in illustration ¹²10 is dated 1893 in which all the women are wearing hats. From this we can see that over this thirty year time span the transition from bonnets to hats had been established. The bonnet, however, was still considered most appropriate for formal occasions and was worn almost always by old women on all occasions who did not agree with the change and considered hats to be vulgar. It is from the 1870's onwards that the hat form as we know it evolved from the bonnet and began its development.

The basic hat shape remained constant throughout the 1800's and into the 1900's. Like the bonnet, variations in the size and height of the crown and width of the brim did occur causing new styles to develop. One of the first hat styles introduced was the Gainsborough hat in 1877. It was made of velvet or plush with a carved brim and a feather, and was worn at a tilt. The fact that it had a brim at all made it seem large in comparison with bonnets, though it was far from the wide hats of other ladies in Gainsborough's portraits. The Gainsborough hat found favour with the aesthetes who refused to spend a couple of extra guineas on a bonnet². Illustration 13 is an example of a Gainsborough hat.

In the early 1880's hats were commonly worn. Extremely high crowned hats had become popular. They were shaped like flower pots and were less attractively trimmed than those in the seventies, being sometimes decked with whole owls or other birds or bright winged beetles. Straw hats were particularly popular for the summer season. Due to improvements in travel etc. people would take summer vacations

at the seaside and straw hats were almost always worn to shelter a woman's complexion from the sun and wind. An example of this type of straw hat is shown in illustration 14.

By now bonnets were rarely worn except on the most formal occasions as I have already mentioned. The bonnet as a fashion article died with the nineteenth century. The hat and its many variations remained popular up until the First World War in 1914. Tailored coats, skirts and small plain hats were worn in the 1890's. This tailored style usually consisted of a threequarter length coat and long fitted skirt accompanied by a small military style hat perched high on the crown of the head. This style was a classic for the country, sport, travel and even morning wear in town, as can be seen in illustration 15. This new tailored look was considered unladylike and unattractive by men and in fact was the form of dressing adopted by many suffragettes in the late 1890's.

As the twentieth century progressed, women's dress was reduced to a white blouse and a long dark coloured skirt, especially for those who were working. Even though clothing had been greatly simplified it was often accompanied by a large decorative hat. This was especially so nearing the end of the Edwardian era, as can be seen in illustration 16. Here we can see that women's clothing was greatly simplified. However, many retained their large cartwheel shaped hats to keep an attractive feminine touch perhaps.

Large hats were still worn regularly and the variety of hats during the Edwardian period was immense, their common feature being

2. These aestheticians were a group of educated wealthy people who were knowledgeable in the field of art, music, poetry and fashions.

lavish trimmings. The Edwardians liked to dress up on every occasion but this was stopped by the First World War, after which women had less leisure time and opportunities to parade in finery during the day time. The illustrations 17 and 18 are postcards from 1905 showing women in elaborately decorated hats which were typical of the time. In illustration 17 the large plumes are the most notable feature of this woman's hat and 18 shows us a roushed brim of chiffon which is used in collaboration with a large plume.

In the early 20th century women had role models in the form of professional beauties, of which Lilly Langtry was the most renowned. These women's photographs appeared on billboards, which were forerunners in the fashion world and were what many women modelled themselves on. Fashion ideas disseminated down from these women to the masses of women struggling to keep up with changing trends. Illustrations 19 and 20 depict Edwardian actress Maxine Elliott and Lilly Langtry dressed in elaborate fashionable attire of the time.

In sharp contrast to the elaborate flower laden hats favoured by the Edwardians, small hats and brimless cap-like toques, like those in illustrations 21 and 22, began to be worn. Everyone was beginning to get tired of large hats except those used for summer wear until the late 1920's. This may have been due to the fact that the late 1920's was the period when for the first time, brown skin instead of fair skin was found attractive in European women, being visible proof of Mediterranean or winter sports holidays. The small hats of 1912-1914 were mostly rather undistinguished round or oval shapes trimmed with upstanding aigrettes or osprey feathers. They provided a strong contrast to the exhuberant curled ostrich plumes that had been in favour for so long. Small undecorated hats were what working women

now required. More and more women had joined the workforce because many of the men had gone to war therefore comfort, practicality and protection were what women now looked for in their headdress.

There were many changes in styles of headdress through the period from 1800-1914, yet the basic bonnet and hat shapes remained constant. Bonnets were the most popular form of daytime headwear for the greater part of the 1800's. It was only in the 1870's that the hat began to be worn and eventually overtook the bonnet as the most popular form of headwear. Hats and bonnets evolved and changed on a parallel with changes in industry, society and fashion in the 1800's. With the industrial revolution came better travel and communications which were invaluable to the millinery industry. New materials and trimmings were made available and many women themselves travelled abroad to keep up with current trends in headdress. Many of the changes in headdress were based on changes in skirt and sleeve widths. Headwear in this instance would act as a balance for the changes in dress. For example in order to counterbalance the bustle the hat was worn to the fore of the crown with a brim jutting out over the forehead. Having looked at the changes that occurred during the evolvement of bonnets and hats, plus the time and money devoted to headdress, I find that a woman's hat was not simply for protection or for decoration but showed her wealth, her position in society, her individuality, her marital status and her age. For these reasons I have come to appreciate the time and energy women devoted to their headdress and to understand how important it was to her position in life.



Illustration 1.

Evening Dress. Muslin Embroidery on
Cotton, French 1806.





Illustration 2.

A Caricature of Typical English Headdress,
A Top Hat and a Bonnet, Early 1800's.



Illustration 3.

A Gypsy Bonnet With a Veil, 1806.

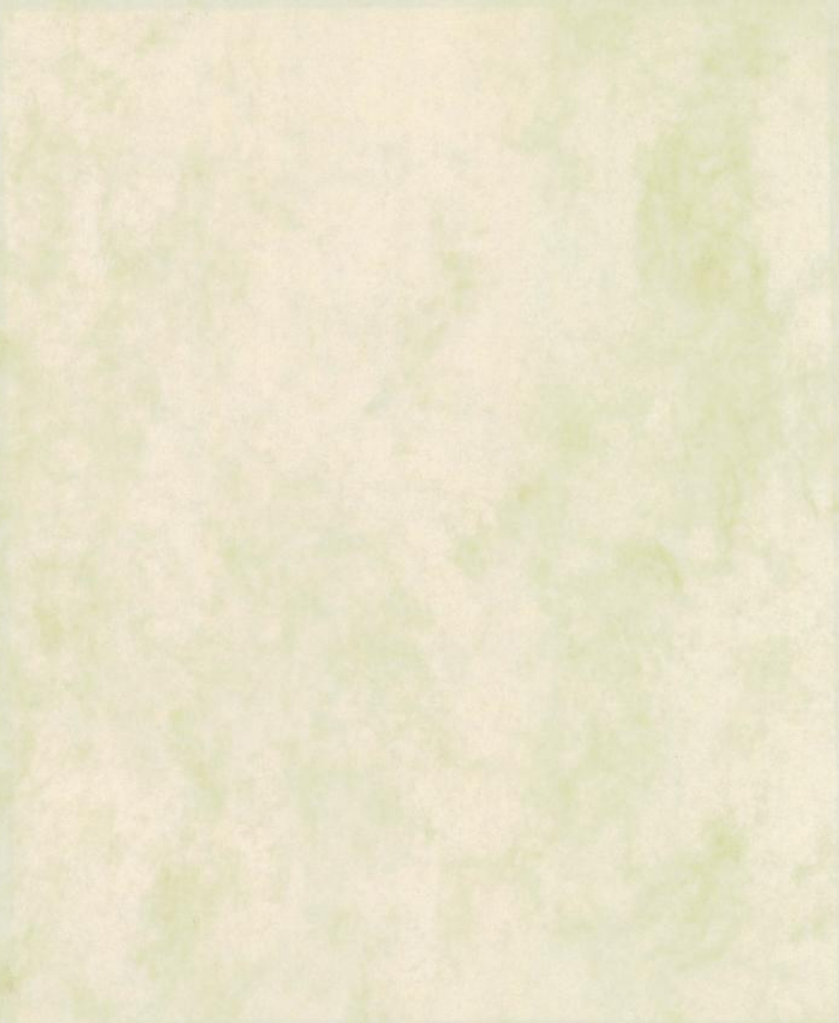




Illustration 4.

Coat Dress and Poke Bonnet,
English, About 1820.



Illustration 5.



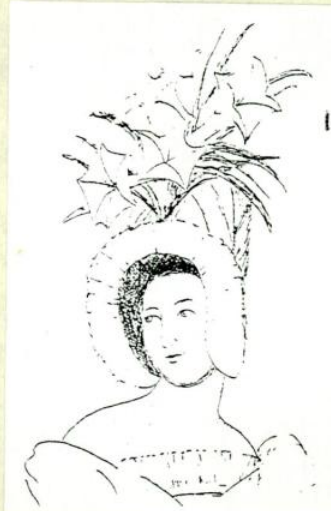
French 1802.

Illustration 6.



Swedish 1810.

Illustration 7.



French 1810.



Illustration 8.

A style of Poke Bonnet, which had an extended brim to balance the volume of the skirt.





Illustration 9.

This Daguerreotype is of an unknown lady in the mid 1840's,
who's bonnet brim has been trimmed with flowers.



SOME ATTRACTIVE SPRING HATS

1. PALE LAVENDER FANCY STRAW BRAID, LAVENDER VELVET AND PLUME. 2. WHITE ROSES, FORGET-ME-NOTS, BLUE RIBBON. 3. ÉCRU STRAW, BUTTON, BRAID, WHITE PLUMES. 4. WHITE HORSEHAIR STRAW, YELLOW DAISIES AND BLACK VELVET RIBBON. 5. WHITE SILK MULL AND LACE, WHITE BIRDS. 6. PALE BLUE STRAW, PINK BUDS, FORGET-ME-NOTS, BLACK VELVET RIBBON. 7. BLACK AND WHITE STRAW, WHITE SILK, COQ FEATHER BREAST. 8. ÉCRU STRAW, BROWN STRAW BRAID, BROWN WINGS.

Illustration 10.

An advertisement showing the type of trimmings that were available for women's headwear.

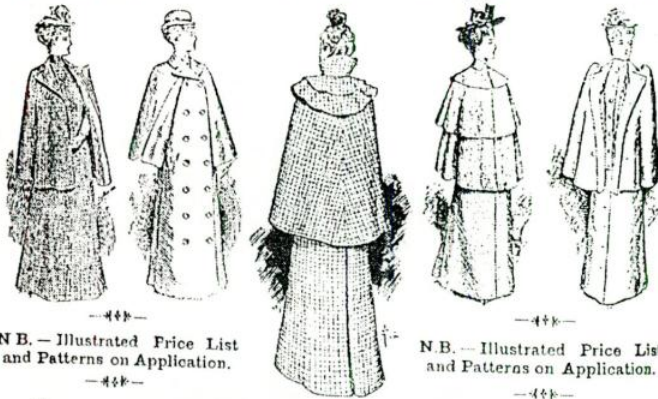


Illustration 11.

This advertisement of 1861 displays only bonnets.

J. W. ELVERY & CO.

LATEST NEW BOND STREET FASHIONS
IN
Ladies' Waterproofs.





ELEPHANT HOUSE.

46 Lr. Sackville Street,
AND
18 Nassau Street, DUBLIN.

78 Patrick Street, CORK.

31 Conduit Street,
New Bond Street, W. LONDON.



Illustration 12.

In 1893 when this advertisement was printed
only hats were displayed.





Illustration 13.

A Gainsborough Hat 1877.





Illustration 14.

A Summer Day Dress and accompanying Straw Hat
which was popularly worn as beachwear
in the late 1800's.



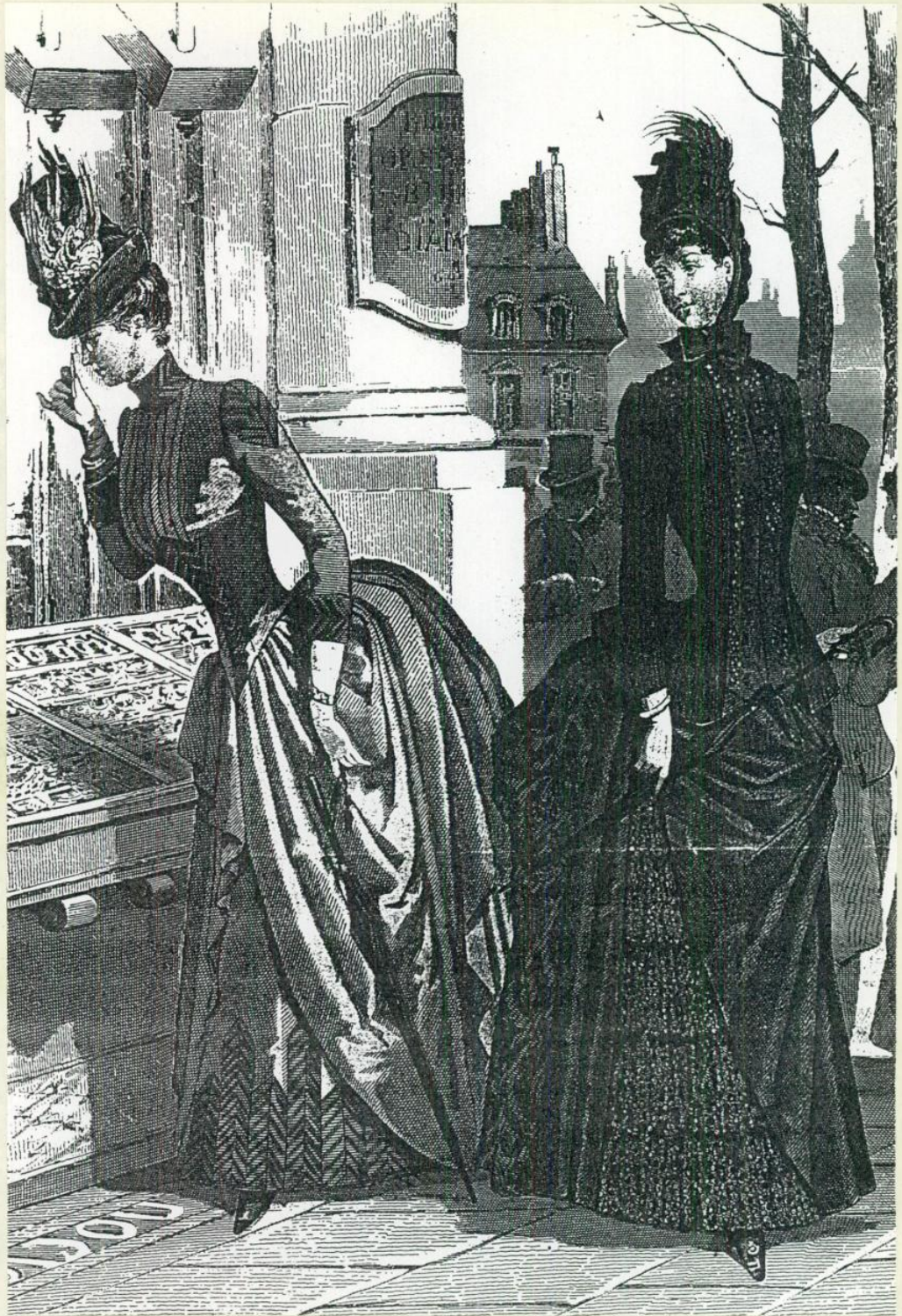


Illustration 15.

This illustration features the meticulously tailored jackets with flaring pelum, which helped accentuate the bustle.

Their hats were laden with feathers and look as if they might threaten to take flight themselves.



Illustration 16.

Cadbury's Forewoman's Outing, 1906.





Illustration 17.

A hat from 1905 which was heavily decorated
with a large ostrich plume.



Illustration 18.

An excessively trimmed hat of plumes
and chiffon, 1905.



Illustration 19.

A flat wide brimmed cart-wheel
shaped hat with decorated crown.





Illustration 20.

Lilly Langtry, the most renowned of all
the professional beauties in the late 1800's.

best?



Illustration 21.

English 1870.



Illustration 22.

English 1870.

CHAPTER 2.

DAYTIME HEADDRESS OF IRISH WOMEN

(1800 - 1914)

CHAPTER 2.

In the beginning of the 1800's the great expansion of textile industries in Ireland suffered through strong competition from cheaper British textiles, of which there were a great variety. The silk, woollen and printed linen industries were virtually destroyed by about 1800, while the linen weaving industries survived only in the Belfast hinterlands after 1830, and the poplin industry survived only in Dublin. Because of the collapse of Irish textiles, British and other foreign materials were imported and with them social and fashion influences. During the great famine (1845-7) disease and emigration reduced the population ^{by} to 2 million before 1850. So troubled by the harshness of the famine were the majority of Irish women that they had little or no time or money to spend on luxuries such as headwear. Their primary concern was to keep food in the mouths of their families. Arthur Young, the noted agriculturalist, who travelled around Ireland shortly before the 1800's began, commented that,

the majority of the Irish who lived in miserable, smoke-filled dark hovels or cabins preferred to spend their money on food, while the equivalent poor in England spend it on clothing(vii).

This helps to illustrate my point that standards of living in early nineteenth century Ireland were such that most poor women could by no means afford to purchase any form of headwear. In order to look at Irish women's headdress, I propose to classify them under four headings, urban wealthy, urban poor, rural wealthy and rural poor. Following Mairead Dunleavy's text in her book 'Dress in Ireland'. Due to the lack of published information on this subject I will use photographs to illustrate my points and to help clarify any

assumptions I make, based on my research. I have chosen to deal with women's daytime headwear especially as many Irish women would have had only one hat, if any, except for the upper classes. The history of Irish women's headdress for most of the century appears scarce and plain in comparison to the fashions in London and Paris. There were society women who kept in touch and wore the most up-to-date fashions but the majority of Irish women could not afford to follow fashion.

Illustration 23 shows the differences that existed between the rich and poor. It is a print of the Rotunda Lying-in hospital in Dublin. Wealthy women walk the streets in elaborate bonnets trimmed with flowers and tied with ribbons, whereas the poorer women wear caps and carry heavy baskets through the streets. This helps to highlight the extreme differences in the distribution of wealth that existed in Ireland at the time.

Most of Ireland's ^{population?} wealth was concentrated in its largest urban centres such as Dublin, Cork and Belfast. Therefore I assume that many of Ireland's wealthy society women lived in these centres or alternatively on large farming estates dotted around the countryside. This type of Irish woman would have been very conscious of, and up-to-date with current fashions in headdress at the time. They would receive fashion information through women's magazines, e.g. 'The English Woman's Domestic Magazine', (which was what English women were reading at the time also), fashion plates, postcards, shop catalogues and by travelling abroad themselves, this was especially true nearing the end of the nineteenth century. Women were required to change their clothes regularly throughout the day, just as English and French women did. They required different costumes for morning and day wear, for informal or ceremonial visits, private or formal dinners, opera,

theatre and garden parties etc. Each change would be complimented by a change in headdress, this was also true for leisure outfits for walking, riding, tennis, yachting, cycling and travelling. As many changes as possible were considered essential for the fashion conscious elite. To illustrate the point of how extensive their wardrobes were, Anna Pim who married Edward Jacob in 1878, had the following trousseau list -

2 'batwing' skirts	6 white petticoats
2 doz. pocket handkerchiefs	1 down skirts
1 doz. balbriggan stockings	3 pairs of satin + velvet boots
6 pairs of woollen stockings	1 pair of shoes
8 pairs of drawers	3 pairs of walking boots (bought in Waterford)
1 dressing gown	1 hat
1 dressing gown (sic)	2 bonnets
8 nightdresses	1 umbrella
8 chemises	1 trunk
9 bodices	1 phf cambric (marked wedding)
2 dressing jackets	1 velvet jacket
1 flannel jacket	1 waterproof cloak
1 striped summer petticoat	1 tulle veil (wedding)
2 poplin dresses (making)	2 cloth jackets
1 doz. linen collars	9 pairs of kid gloves
1 doz. linen cuffs	5 scarves
3 sets of collars and cuffs	1 pair of white stockings (wedding)
1 silk dress (making)	2 pairs stays
1 serge dress (making)	

(viii).

Anna Pim's wardrobe is very extensive in comparison to that of a typical cottier's wife, a list of who's clothes is made further on in this chapter. Miss Pim owns one hat and two bonnets in comparison to the six caps a cottier's wife would have owned over a three year period. Headwear appears to have been restricted to the wealthy classes and as a result would have been considered a form of status symbol.

As the middle classes became more prosperous, ladies were required by society to reflect the wealth and social status of their

husbands and fathers by withdrawing from salaried occupations and frequently even from housework. This echoed the society changes in England. The urban and rural wealthy of Ireland led a very similar lifestyle to their equivalent English and European counterparts. They now had the time and the wealth to keep up with all changes in fashions and headdress. Most of these wealthy women would visit a milliner and have their hats and bonnets designed especially for themselves. It was therefore important for all the milliners to be aware of court fashions, so they could keep their customers as up-to-date as possible. Hats could also be purchased ready-made from the larger department stores. Women belonging to the poorer sector of the community would buy the necessary materials and trimmings and make their own headwear according to what they saw their mistress or other wealthy women wearing at the time.

As I have already mentioned there was a very uneven distribution of wealth in Ireland resulting in a vast difference between the lifestyles led by the poor in comparison to the wealthy. The urban and rural poor dressed in a similar fashion, but the main difference was that those in urban areas followed closely the example of the wealthier citizens in wearing styles based on imported fashions. In doing so, fashion trends slowly filtered down through society, eventually reaching the poorest of families. The poorer women in rural areas were too concerned with supporting their families to consider fashion changes in headdress. Most of the women from deprived rural areas such as the West of Ireland would have worn a shawl over their heads for protection from the weather, this can be seen in illustration 24. This photograph was taken of a servant woman in 1900. She has no hat, and as if to compensate for this she wears her shawl about her head for protection. Her hands and face look as

if they have been subjected to exposure for many years so there was a need for a head covering of some kind. Wearing their shawls like this was the only protection available to many Irish women in this financial situation.

Throughout the nineteenth century the wearing of hats and bonnets was greatly confined to the Irish upper and middle classes. Illustration 25 shows both upper and working class women together. Mrs. Cavendish Butler wearing the flower laden hat, who was mistress of the estate, and Mrs. Britten who wears no headwear is probably a tenant on the estate. Mrs. Butler shades her face from the sun with a large umbrella while Mrs. Britten seems unconcerned by it. She is wearing a shawl about her shoulders which she would use to cover her head in case of rain or going to church. The difference in their headwear and dress goes to show their differing financial situations.

Illustration 26 is one of the earliest recordings of Irish women's headwear I have found in my research. It was taken some time in the 1860's. The woman in the photograph would have been a rural middle class woman. She is wearing a bonnet tied beneath her chin by what appears to be a satin ribbon. Bonnets were the preferred form of headwear, especially by older women, they considered them to be more formal and respectable than hats. Her bonnet is worn to the back of her head and has a bavolet trailing from the back to conceal her neck. This was conventional for all bonnets at this time. However in some cases such as the example mentioned in chapter 1 wearing a bonnet without a 'bavolet' was considered to be a disgrace by other women. Her bonnet is decorated with flowers probably made of silk which are restricted to the crown of the bonnet. Although this woman appears to be of a comfortable financial standing I must state that what she is

wearing would probably have been her 'Sunday best' bonnet. She would not have dressed so elaborately for everyday wear. This was usual, especially so among the urban lower classes, they would wear their best attire on special occasions to suggest they were of a higher social standing than was actually the case. Reference (ix) is a list of clothes which a cottier's wife could expect to purchase over a three-year period, taken from Mairead Dunleavy's text in 'Dress in Ireland'.

One cloak	9.6
One gown	6.0
3 shifts	3.9
6 caps	3.9
3 aprons	3.0
2 handkerchiefs	3.0

£ 1.10.11 (ix)

It is easy to see from this list the huge difference between what this woman wore and that which Anna Pim wore. These garments would have started out as 'Sunday clothes' but be worn as everyday wear when replaced by new ones. I notice that the only headwear she possesses are caps, in comparison to the two bonnets and hat owned by Miss Pim, again illustrating the great unevenness in the distribution of wealth in this country. The headwear owned by this cottier's wife amounts to six caps spread out over a three year time span. Other women of this economic standing would have worn caps of muslin or cambric. Illustration 27 is a painting by George Grattan dated 1810 which shows rural women wearing white mob caps, further evidence that headwear was part of these women's wardrobe. Straw hats may also have been worn by the rural Irish woman. The manufacturing of straw hats at Newport in County Mayo was recorded in the Dublin society transaction 1802. It is recorded as having two hundred children in employment and hats were

mass produced giving even the lowest classes the opportunity to possess a hat.

It took a great deal of time for changes to come to rural areas for financial and communication reasons but also because of the fact that there was resistance in some districts to change. The pace of change in general was slow.

This may be seen when a County Kilkenny girl was asked in 1847 by an American visitor why she did not wear a bonnet, as she had done in New York. Her reply was that as she returned to live in a cabin - 'I must not put myself above others who associate with me(x)'.^(xi)

Her bonnet would have been a status symbol, which unlike the Americans, her neighbours would have found unacceptable for their way of life.

In illustration 28 the photograph is a portrait of a couple. The woman's bonnet is worn to the back of her head as was customary in the earlier half of the nineteenth century. Her bonnet is secured by a ribbon tied in a bow under her chin. She appears to be wearing a white cap under her bonnet which was probably used to protect a her hair style. Again I reiterate the point that the bonnet in the photograph would have been reserved for Sunday and occasional wear, this would not have been everyday wear.

Communications and transport were greatly improved by the mid 1800's. As a result many of the wealthier class families would take vacations at the beach or in the countryside, especially those living in urban areas. Illustration 29 is a photograph which was taken of two young Irish women whilst on holiday in Waterford in 1910. They were dressed in walking wear and were both wearing handsomely

decorated hats. Their hats were worn on the crown of the head with a slight sideways tilt. The hat to the right of the photograph is lavishly decorated with flowers to the fore of the brim whilst the other appears to have its trimmings coming downwards from the back.

Illustration 30 is a photograph taken around the same time in 1910. It is a studio portrait of two English ladies who are dressed in what would have been considered the height of fashion at this time. On comparing the hats seen in both photographs they appear to me to be quite similar. The English women's hats also have a slight sideways tilt and on the right of the photograph the trimmings on the hat are extending downwards from the back of the brim just like the Irish woman's. The headwear of the English women is more elaborately decorated than those worn in Ireland. The strong similarities lead me to believe wealthy Irish women were just as fashionable as English women of an equal status.

For many wealthy Irish families holidays at the seaside were popular especially in the early 1900's. Illustration 31 is a photograph which was taken in 1900 at Killiney Beach, Dublin. Whilst looking at this photograph I noticed that every woman is wearing a hat, reiterating the point that even on occasions as relaxed as this headwear was never abandoned. In this instance straw hats with wide brims are worn to protect the women's complexion from the sun. The decorative trimmings on the hats were few and were confined to the brim the same as those worn by English women on Portminster Beach in Cornwall in 1900 as can be seen in illustration 32. The women in both of these photographs were dressed in the more relaxed fashion of a blouse and skirt, for by now, people were beginning to get into the spirit of the seaside.

Irish women were equally keen participants in sporting activities. Illustration 33 shows two young Irish women, the Langham sisters, playing croquet at Tempo House in 1900. Both women are wearing elaborately decorated hats. One is trimmed with flowers and the other with plumage. Irish women, like others, faced the dilemma of having to wear such fancy headwear and cumbersome skirts while partaking in outdoor activities. Another popular sport was lawn tennis. It was considered to be a refined sport suitable for ladies and gentlemen and could be played in a garden of average size. Again women were required to play in full attire which would have hindered their playing potential greatly. Illustration 34 is of an English summer day dress worn for playing tennis. This dress is accompanied by a straw hat trimmed with a wide satin ribbon. It is dated about 1885 and is remarkably similar to the hats worn by Irish women playing tennis in illustration 35. The hats worn by these Cork women are also made of straw and in the right foreground the young woman's hat is trimmed with plumage.

It appears to me that the Irish aristocracy both rural and urban led similar lifestyles and followed similar fashion trends to that of the English and European wealthy classes. At the beginning of the nineteenth century Irish fashions in headdress would have been a little behind others due to the disadvantage of its geographical location and unreliable transport and communications. However, as the century progressed, magazines, postcards and fashion plates, as well as trips abroad kept Irish women up-to-date with new styles. Illustrations 36 and 37 are postcards that were sent to Irish women from abroad in 1905. Both are photographs of fashionable women which many others would have looked to for inspiration, and both are wearing very large and heavily trimmed hats. These were the images Irish

women were looking at and adapting in the beginning of the 1900's.

Irish and English headdress for the wealthy classes was very similar. These women would have read the same magazines such as the 'Domestic Woman's Magazine' and would have acquired similar fashion illustrations, photographs and advertisements. A great financial void existed between the poor and the wealthy classes causing huge differences in the types of headwear worn. While society women kept up-to-date with and followed trends, women from poor backgrounds simply wore a shawl over their head. In this chapter I mentioned two types of poor people in Ireland, urban and rural poor. The main difference between these was the fact that poorer people in urban areas tried to keep up with fashions as best they could but rural women appeared to have been unconcerned with hats and bonnets. However, some rural women such as the wealthier cottiers' wives would have worn mob caps and women like doctor's or teacher's wives would have worn a bonnet or hat. From this I can assume that owning a hat or cap in Ireland in the 1800's was a definite symbol of financial status.



Illustration 23.

This print from the early 1800's shows both wealthy and poor styles in headwear worn in Dublin.





Illustration 24.

An Irish servant woman, 1900.





Illustration 25.

Mrs. Cavendish Butler with a tenant on her estate.





Illustration 26.

A brimless bonnet with a 'bavolet', mid 1860's.



Illustration 27.

George Grattan 1810.

Many of the women in this painting are wearing mob caps.





Illustration 28.

Portrait of an Irish couple, early 1900's.

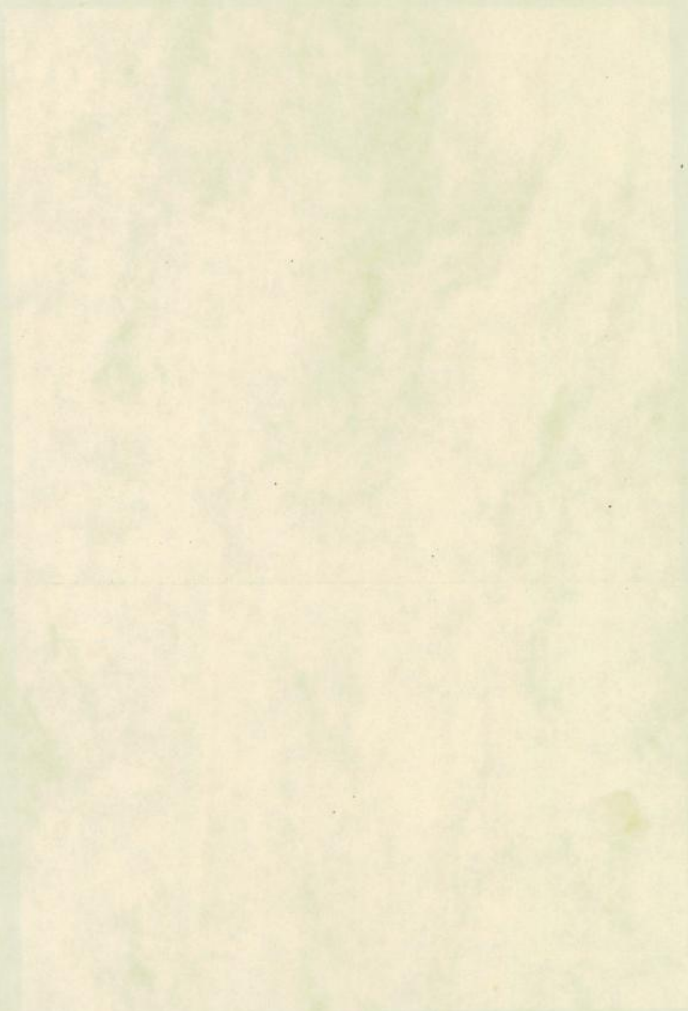




Illustration 29.

At a Wishing Well in Wexford 1910.



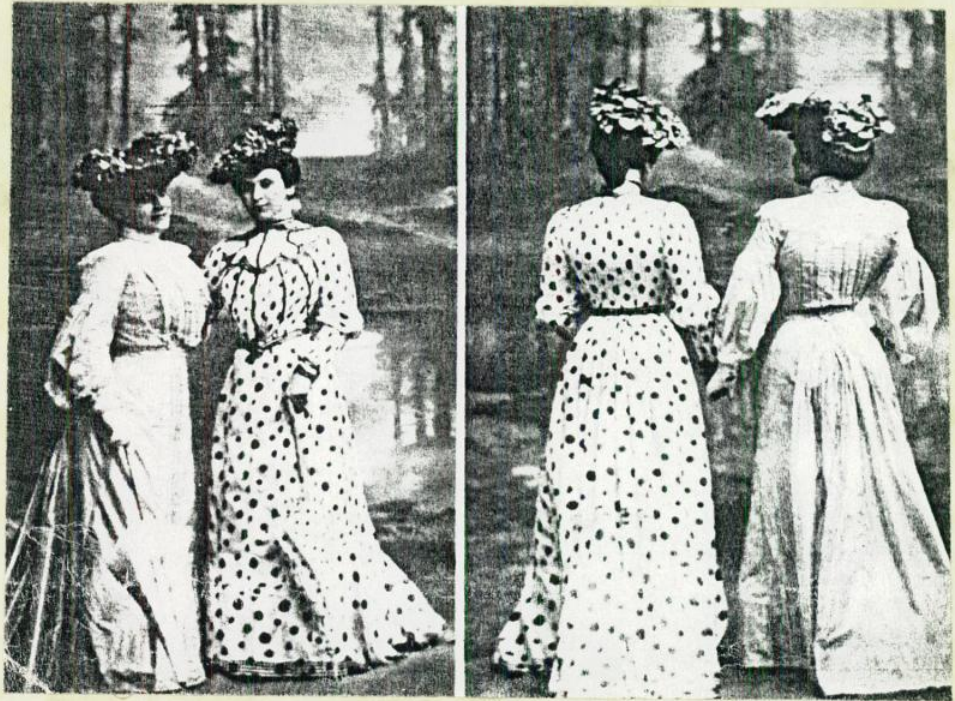


Illustration 30.

A studio portrait of two English women,
taken about 1910.





Illustration 31.

Killiney Beach, Dublin 1900.



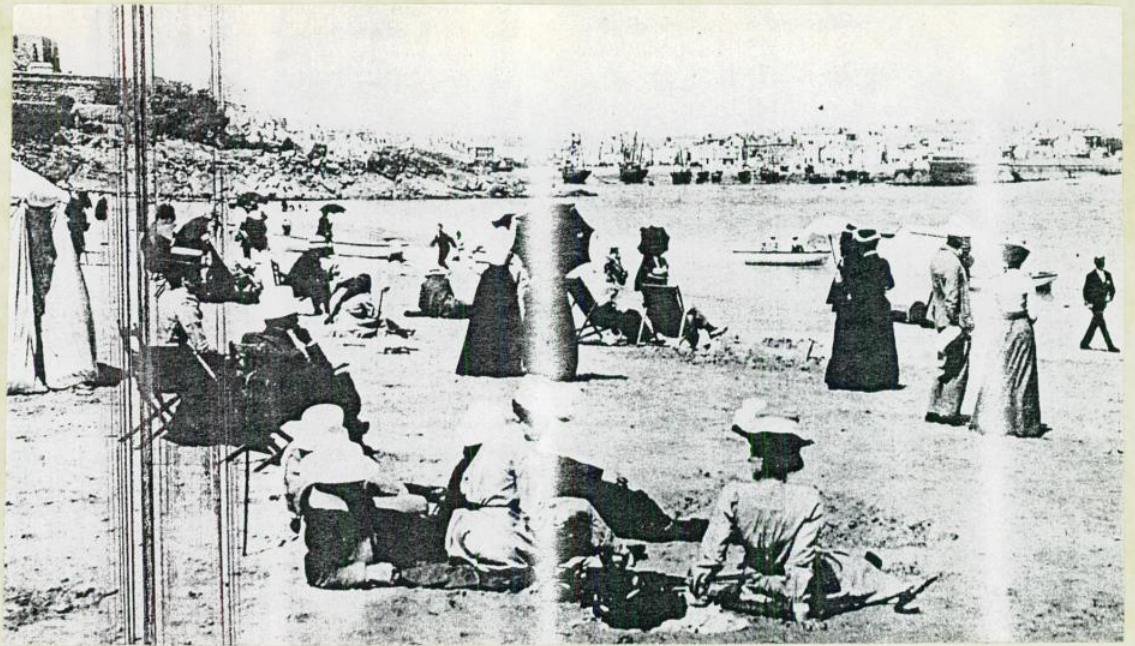


Illustration 32.

Portminster Beach in Cornwall, 1900.



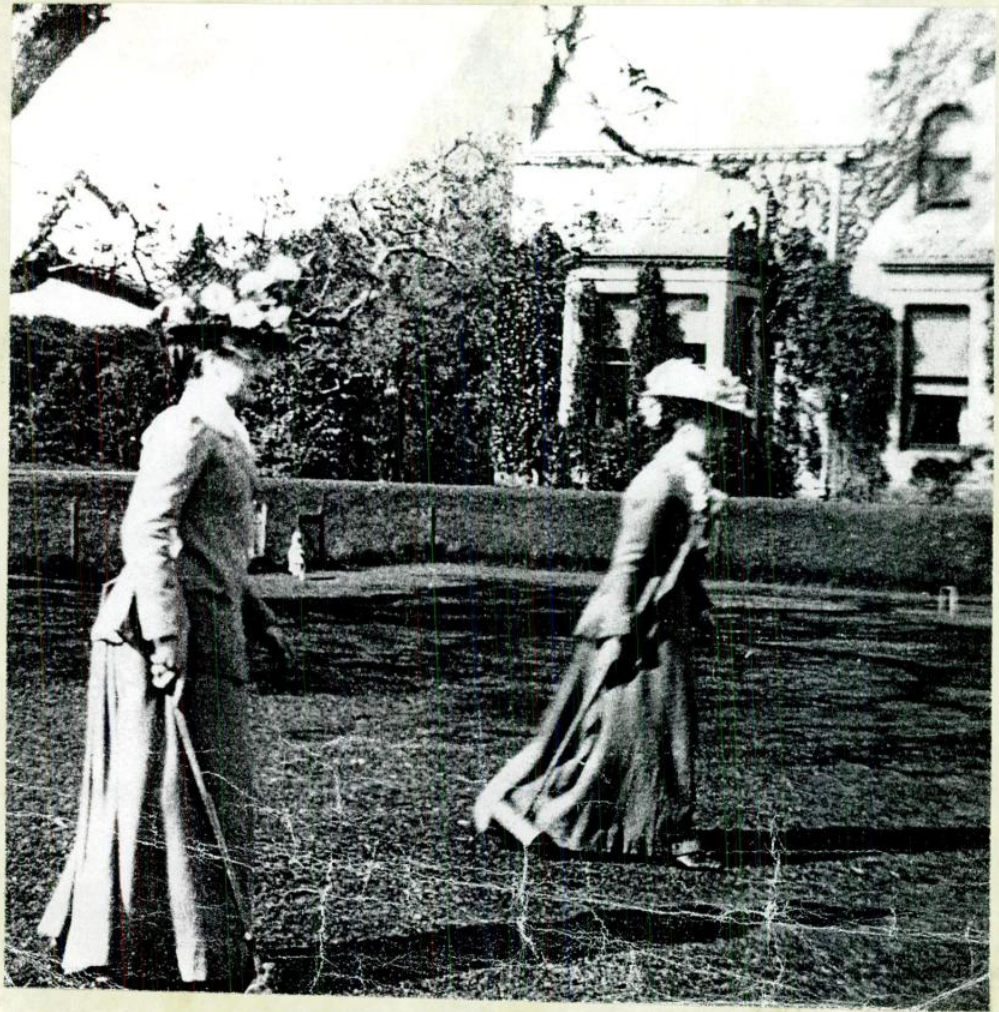


Illustration 33.

The Langham sisters playing croquet
at Tempo House, 1900.



Illustration 34.

A Summer Day Dress accompanied by a Straw Hat, 1885.





Illustration 35.

Irish women and men playing tennis,
Cork, about 1900.





Illustration 36.

This hat is profusely decorated with ostrich plumes.
The basic shape seems to have disappeared under the vast
decorations which were a must for wealthy fashion conscious women.

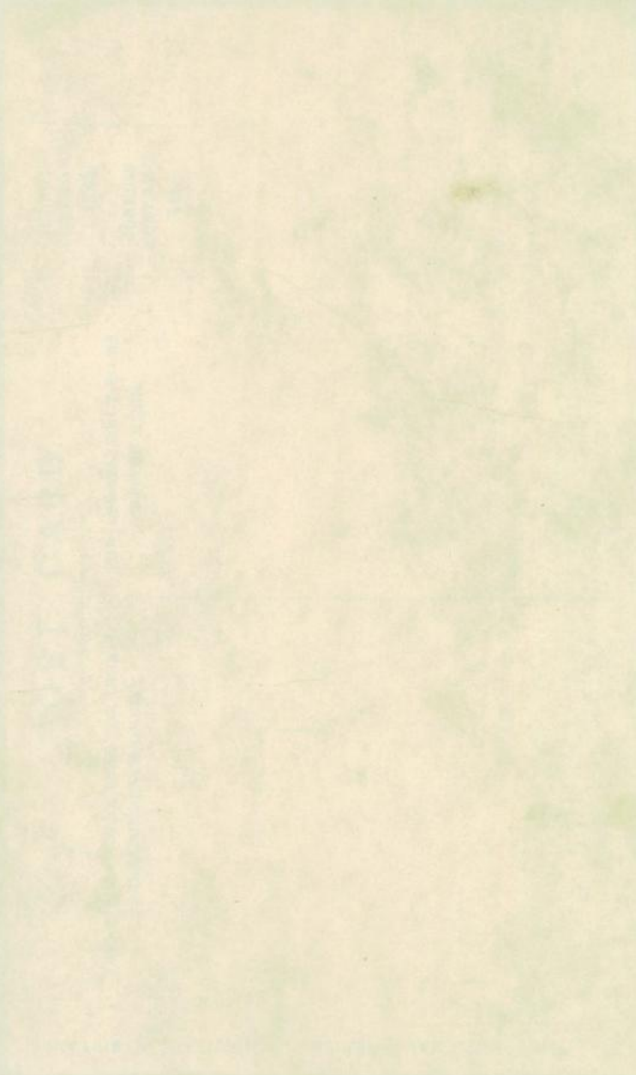




Illustration 37.

The hat worn on this postcard is elaborately decorated with ruffles of gauze and lace trimmings, crowned with an additional rosette of gauze.

CHAPTER 3.

SOCIAL ETIQUETTE AND IT'S EFFECT
ON WOMEN'S
HEADDRESS

CHAPTER 3.

In the nineteenth century the appearance of a woman's headdress was regulated not only by fashion and taste but also by the rules of etiquette. For any woman who wished to stand well in society it was essential for her headdress and clothing to be appropriate to her station in life, to the occasion and to the time of day. These considerations affected the material, colour, decoration and form of headdress worn. An understanding and observance of such conventions had long been accepted as a social duty among the middle and upper classes as important as good manners and correct behaviour, and while an excessive concern with personal appearance and fashion was considered vulgar, a due respect for the rituals of dress was expected.

Social behaviour in the form of manners and dress as an unspoken language was a useful means of distinguishing one class from another. The Victorians, particularly the middle and upper classes, were extremely class conscious and used dress to maintain or even appear to improve their standing in society. The workwoman's guide of 1838 thought that,

attention to the minutiae of dress adds much to a ladylike and refined appearance and an endeavour to please by an agreeable exterior, does not necessarily involve a disposition to vanity and frivolity(xii).

Women appear to have been urged to dress as elaborately as possible paying special attention to all details of their dress. A woman could display her husband's or father's wealth according to how elaborately her headdress was decorated, her jewellery and by the fabrics she wore, but at the same time she is reminded to remain modest and

sincere where possible.

A manual of etiquette for ladies and gentlemen of the 1840's gives an indication of the reasons for the complex and ever changing codes of etiquette that existed at this time.

It may be as well to state that etiquette is the name given to the code of laws established by the highest class of society for regulating the conduct, words and actions of those admitted within its sphere, and so thoroughly are these rules and regulations based upon good sense and politeness, that they have become not only absolutely essential to the well being and happiness of society, but even to its very existence. Etiquette is the keystone in the arch of refinement, and it would be both impolite and dangerous to remove it. It is an effectual barrier against the innovations of the vulgar(xiii).

Etiquette as defined by the above extract was confined to the upper classes. Rules were constantly changing in subtle ways and only those in this tight social circle would be aware of them. This is one way in which the wealthy tried to keep themselves distinct from others. As political power and wealth of the aristocracy declined, barriers began to be broken down and self-made men were allowed to ascend the social ladder. The impetus for advancement was fuelled by the Victorian passions for hardwork and self-help. The middle classes aspired to gentility and strove to adopt the manners and social customs of the gentry and aristocracy who in their turn, tried to repel any such invasion from below.

I have already shown how rules of etiquette changed, it was these changes that determined the headwear worn by women. Different headwear was required for different occasions and times of day. Illustrations 38, 39 and 40 are a series of fashion plates from the 1830's showing the types of headwear women would have worn at

different times of the day.

According to Mairead Dunleavy it was imperative that Irish women wore ostrich feathers for evening wear(xiv). Women were required to wear specific headwear for certain occasions purely because of etiquette as it was considered to be the most proper code of dress and behaviour.

One of the most important requirements of a woman's headdress was that it should accurately reflect her position in society, and this involved not just social class, occupation or degree of wealth but age, and in the case of some women marital status. This involved careful observance of the rules of etiquette as there were increasing numbers of different social activities of which each had to be marked by a change in headdress. For any woman belonging to the fashionable elite a new hat or bonnet would have had to be purchased for each different occasion. By 1864 the 'Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine', informed its readers,

the exigencies of the toilette are greater than ever, even in August, when a little more informality might be expected, to wear a morning dress all day is not permissible; one is obliged to change at least three times a day. One cannot go out in a morning dress and cap, fancy woollens are still the material worn for walking. So as soon as a lady re-enters the house, she must vest herself in muslin or chambery gauze(xv).

It seems that without the requisite number and variety of headdresses it was impossible to take part in or be accepted as a member of this high social group.

It appears to me that all society women, during the period from 1800 to 1900, wore a hat on absolutely all occasions except with

evening wear. Women wore hats while attending dinner parties and to the theatre. The point I find most fascinating is the fact that they did not remove their hat while eating or while in the theatre. The fact that they wore large heavily decorated hats seems to have caused them no concern. Ladies hats had become so large at the beginning of the 1900's that ultimately theatres started handing out printed requests to remove hats during the performance. Sonia Keppel, in 'Edwardian Daughter' recalled an occasion in 1905 when a lady took off her hat and pinned it to the back of the seat in front of her, "thus accidentally impaling the occupant like a gigantic butterfly"(xvi).

Another function of a woman's hat was to display her wealth. The types of fabrics used in constructing the hat, the trimmings such as feathers, ribbons and beads could convey a woman's wealth to others. Therefore, it can be said that the more luxurious and decorative the hat the wealthier its wearer. In the early and mid 1800's the wearing of hats was confined to young girls. This was considered vulgar by older ladies who preferred to wear bonnets. The bonnet took precedence over the hat for important social occasions as it was considered to be more respectable and formal than a hat.

Marriage was the most important change in status for a young woman in the nineteenth century. From being a junior member of the family she acquired a home of her own to run and a position in society, and however young she may be as a married woman she took precedence over any unmarried ladies. Her new role was to support and promote her husband, she could therefore parade her attractions, such as her decorative headdress, jewellery etc. as her husband's property in an approved manner, and in doing so display his wealth. Before being married a woman dressed in light fresh colours and wore simple

straw or plain fabric hats with very understated decoration. When she married a woman was permitted to wear darker, richer colours for her dresses and heavy silks, satins or velvets were used for headwear. Her headwear would be lavishly trimmed with embroidery, beads, feathers and ribbons. Illustration 42 shows the contrast between the dress of married and of unmarried women.

Headwear made from fine and luxurious materials was confined to the upper classes as were the social rules of etiquette. This does not mean that the lower classes had no interest in fashion. On the contrary, they were constantly striving to purchase or make the most elaborate and fashionable hats they could possibly afford. Close observation of what was being worn by wealthy society women was necessary and from this they could produce cheap replicas of what was in fashion. Everyone wanted to ascend the social ladder at all levels of society. At the lower social level the goal was respectability and there was a constant underlying fear of losing even the slightest of footholds on this ladder. If anyone achieved success in business they took great care to avoid any exposure of where they originated from.

In circumstances such as these, types of headdress, fashions, jewellery and behaviour were useful for distinguishing one class from another and recognising outsiders. Attempts to resist intruders might also be made by changing the 'rules' from time to time or by making them more complex. Consequently there was a ready market for manuals of etiquette which were published widely. The advice columns of women's magazines were constantly filled with requests for guidance on various points of etiquette. One reason for their popularity may have been that many readers would have gained great pleasure from following the activities of the upper classes. Even if they did not expect to be

presented at court themselves, they would like to know how others dressed, this may also have helped those who were less well off to produce replicas of hats that would have been at the height of fashion. Another reason for the popularity of manuals of etiquette may have been that those who might be expected to be socially aware could draw reassurance from the manuals.

Social class and class differences were very important to the Victorians. Each class had its own values and constantly strove to better their position in society. The headwear worn by women showed their wealth and in doing so their social standing. All classes in society struggled to ascent the social ladder, just as they persevered to produce or buy the best type of headdress they could afford. Wealthy women would have to change at least three times a day, whereas a working class woman might only have one change of clothes in her complete wardrobe. The differences between classes during the period from 1800-1914 was much greater than those of today, yet the struggle for self-improvement still remains. As the 1800's progressed, etiquette and social morals played a less important role in governing what type of headdress women wore until the First World War. Women themselves then decided what they wore and how they wore it.



Illustration 38.

The cap in the illustration above would have been made of muslin or lace and trimmed with ribbons. These were usually made by the owner themselves. Morning Dress was lightweight and always in aple colours.

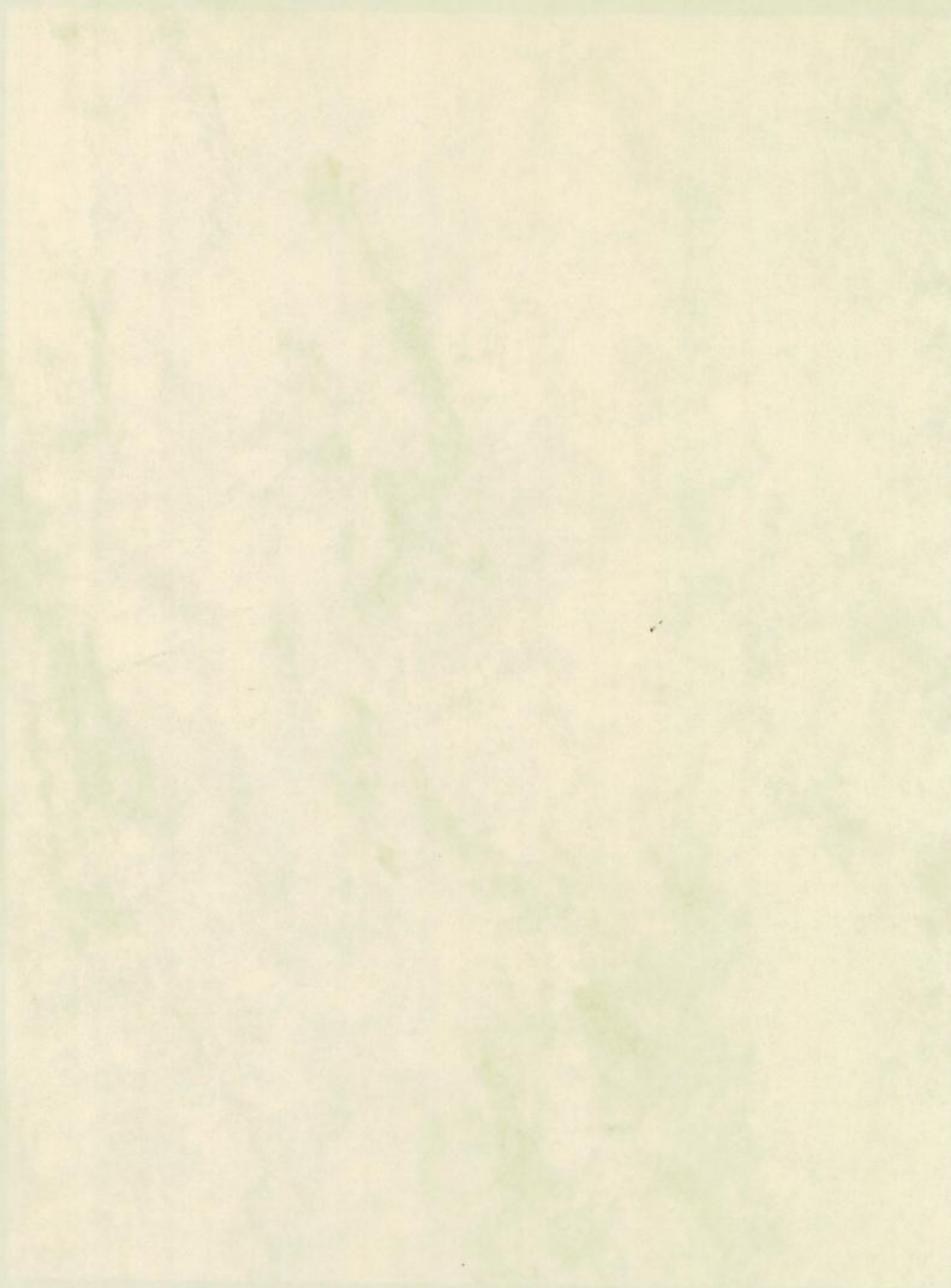




Illustration 39.

This illustration shows two examples of walking attire.
Both women are wearing hats trimmed with sprays of
flowers and ribbons.
These hats have relatively wide brims to shade the
ladies from the sun's rays.





Illustration 40.

This illustration shows changes of Dinner Dress, Evening Dress and Ball Dress. Hats were worn to dinner but never for Evening Wear, women always decorated their hair delicately with ribbons and flowers for evening occasions as hats and bonnets looked clumsy when worn with a Ball Gown.

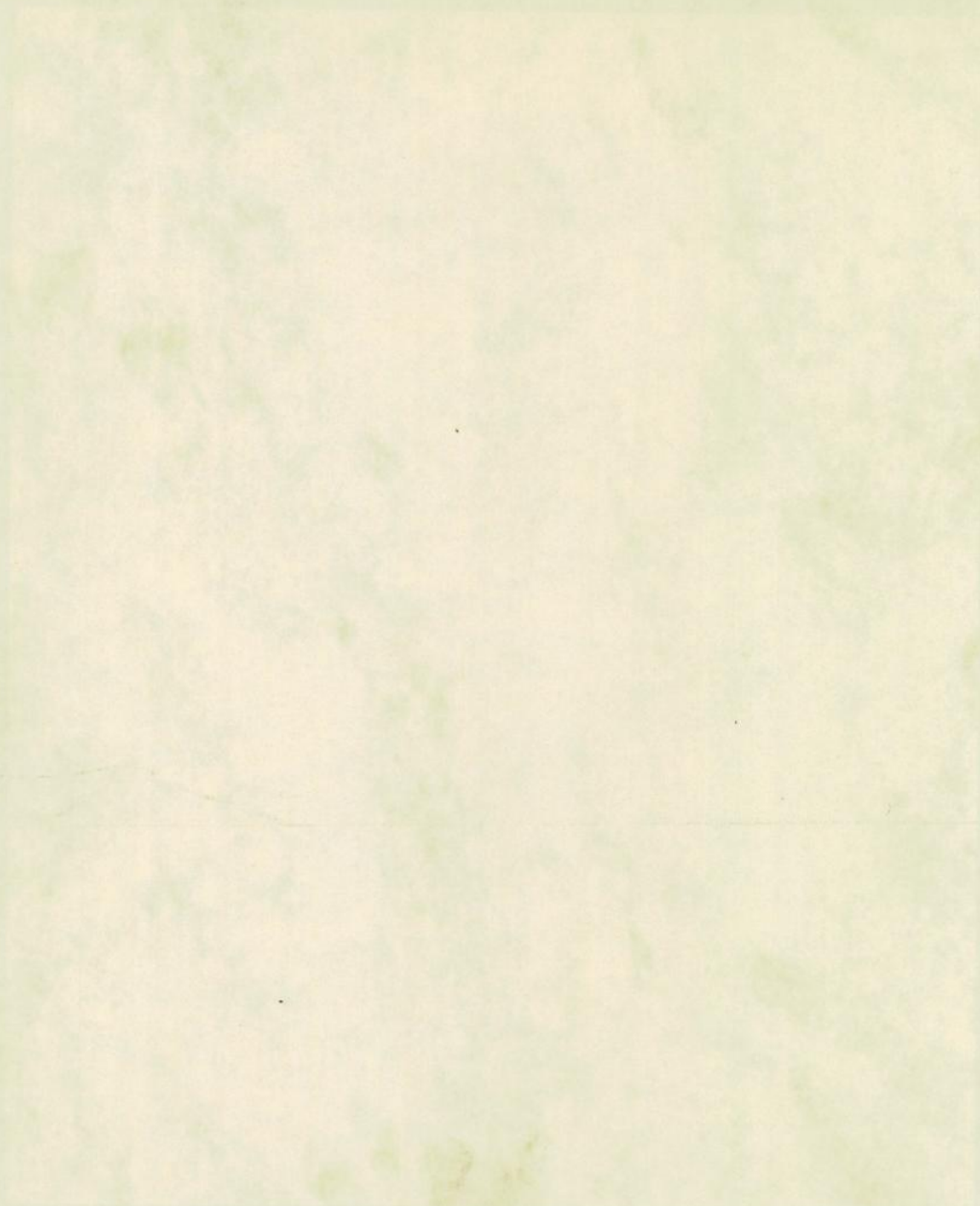




Illustration 41.

Visiting the Theatre 1905.



Illustration 42.

In this 1911 wedding group the Bride and Bridesmaid are wearing slightly younger fashions, the older women are as elaborately dressed as ever.

CHAPTER 4.

HOW WOMEN'S CHANGING SOCIAL ROLE

AFFECTED THEIR HEADDRESS

CHAPTER 4.

The beginning of the nineteenth century saw a helter-skelter of constantly changing styles of headdress for women who were firmly entrenched as the decorative sex, and who had made fashion a central part of their existence. The first 75 years of the century of photography shows women in an enormous variety of headdresses suitable only for ladies of leisure. Full heavy skirts, corsets, crinolines, huge bonnets and elaborate hats, in each decade, underline women's inactivity which made possible such fantasies of fashion. The feminine aim in dress was to look attractive in all circumstances.

However, this changed with the beginning of the war in 1914. Women's clothing and headdress became much more simple and practical, due to the fact that many women replaced men in the workforce. The structure of society also changed, etiquette became less important and codes of behaviour more relaxed. Women were permitted to join the workforce freely and partake in outdoor activities of their choice.

With the industrial revolution began the reform of women's clothing and headwear. The products were made available that provided new comfort and conveniences to those who could afford them. It was the middle and upper classes which prospered in the beginning but it took a great deal of time before the working classes gained better conditions or wages. The industrial revolution also created a need for engineers, clerical staff and secretaries, as a result an education became vital for any woman who wished to follow a career. Most of the women who received an education were from professional and business families who viewed education as a means of increasing security of status. They also encouraged expenditure on female

education, where wealth was likely to be insufficient to support daughters not catered for economically by marriage. New opportunities for work were also opening up in the 1870's, for example, with the commercial manufacture of the newly invented typewriting machines many new secretarial jobs were made available to those with the right training.

An important and ultimately successful element of dress reform was the issue of women's rights. This had begun to be discussed in the 1840's when types of strong minded women who supported the cause of women's liberation was identified. It was thought by many that these women,

"despised dress and all such appurtenances"(xvii).

They were also thought to signal their views by wearing 'masculine' looking accessories such as small plainly decorated hats. These hats were a very notable contrast to the huge elaborate hats worn by other women in the late 1870's. Illustration 43 shows a group of suffragettes campaigning for women's independence and generally making their presence felt by supporting the 'votes for women' campaign. These new attitudes were reflected in the more practical style of dress which became popular among women. It allowed them greater freedom of movement and their hats were smaller and less cumbersome than before.

The growing popularity of sporting activities such as riding, skating, lawn-tennis and cycling was also responsible for the reform in women's headdress. In the earlier part of the 1800's the only sport in which women had been allowed to participate was that of horse-riding. But it was an aristocratic privilege and was scarcely *untrue*

common practice, even among the middle and upper classes.

The photograph in illustration 44 was taken in the late 1800's of Mrs. Watney who posed in a correct and formal riding dress and hat. Her snug fitting tailored jacket with graduated length in its back panel echoes the shape of a man's tailcoat. The stiff cuffs and cuff-links add another masculine touch, so does the tip-tilted top hat, though it is feminised with a wisp of tulle. Later on in the century two new sporting activities were introduced, lawn-tennis and cycling. Each sport eventually developed its own costume and accompanying headdress.

At first tennis was not a strenuous pastime, primarily because of the clothes and elaborate hats in which it was played. In illustration 45 both young women are wearing tall flowerpot shaped hats which are decorated with flowers. They are wearing long skirts with bustles which I would imagine were extremely inhibiting to play in. Tennis, like all other sports, had a particular form of headwear which had to be worn whilst playing, no matter how cumbersome. In the early days, the strength of tennis was that it was so refined it fitted easily into the open air summer life of the middle classes. It could be played on a lawn of moderate size and it provided a new opportunity for that parade of eligible daughters in all their finery which was one of the main preoccupations of any mother. Punch magazine, which recorded all changes in the social atmosphere, made references to tennis in the mid 1870's. It was conscious, from the first, of the difficulties of playing in the encumbering feminine costumes of the day and it offered a suggestion that,

"men should be handicapped while playing by having scarves tied around their knees"(xvii).

The invention of the bicycle was the most influential of all the sports on women's clothing and headdress. In 1883 Punch magazine reports on a lady having said in relation to cycling,

"Women can't do that, you know, not even with divided skirts"(xiv).

Improvements were not long delayed, and about the year 1890 the bicycle suddenly began to find riders everywhere in spite of its clumsy form. The importance of the invention is that it was adopted by women with as much enthusiasm as men. The fact that women became competent cyclists imposed an entirely new set of problems which were to go on agitating both fashion designers and moralists for many years to come. Cycling required a new costume composing of a divided skirt and short fitted coat accompanied by a small military style hat perched high on the crown usually decorated with a small feather. Illustration 46 shows a group of both male and female cyclists. I noticed, while looking at this photograph, that there are equal numbers of men and women, proving the point that women were as enthusiastic about and capable of cycling as men. Most of the women are wearing simple straw hats, some of which are trimmed with a bird's feather.

Motor cars were becoming popular, and like all other sporting activities required a costume which consisted of a mask to protect the eyes, a scarf and a hat that could be tied securely to the owners head. An example of which can be seen in illustration 49. This would have been accompanied by a three-quarter length coat.

Nearing the end of the nineteenth century women favoured a tailored look and small hats for working and outdoor activities. These small hats and less voluminous skirts were much more practical

and were expressly designed to enable young women to indulge in such physical activities as would have been previously restricted to men. The originality of this new style lay principally in the fact that it did not attempt to be sexually attractive, a sufficient reason, men thought, for regarding it as unladylike.

It is a woman's business to charm and attract and to be kept from anything that may spoil the bloom of her character and tastes(xv).

Men obviously did not agree with women's new change of appearance. They, like many others, still clung to the belief that a woman's sphere was in the home. It was realized that a number of middle class women were unable to marry, through no fault of their own, as there was an increasing surplus of women over men in the population. Some bold women were even choosing not to marry and to carry out work of their choice, although the classic example of Florence Nightingale working as a nurse during the Crimean War remained unusual.

Gradually the social and dress reforms in women's lives began to be accepted and women began to determine what they wore themselves. Many women modelled themselves on the professional beauties of the late 1800's, mentioned in Chapter 1. Professional beauties were not brilliantly born or solidly wealthy. They relied for their position at the top of society almost entirely on their looks. By the late 1870's a beautiful wife was a well known route up through the ranks for a social climbing husband. The acknowledged queen of the professional beauties was Lillie Langtry, who rose from a modest, middle class background to the highest position a professional beauty could occupy. It was images like those of Lillie Langtry, Daisy Maynard and Violet Lindsay that influenced how hundreds of women dressed and looked.

Lilly would pose in each of her new costumes required for her stage career. Women would attempt to immitate what she wore, making her an important role model of the time. Illustration 51 shows Eva Moore, a successful actress and keen fashion follower. She too, like Lilly Langtry was a role model for many women. In this illustration she wears an elaborate flat shaped hat with a wide brim. It is trimmed with tulle and a bird's feather. These women were important communicators between fashion designers and women and remained a popular method of dissemination of ideas for many years.

As the 1900's progressed women's dress changed because of their new working habits. Hats became smaller and less decorative. Large decorative hats were reserved for special occasions or outings. Illustrations 52 and 53 were taken in 1906 of Miss Katherine Fox who studied in the ^{Metropolitan School of Art} ~~National College of Art and Design~~, Dublin which was then known as the ~~Municipal School of Art~~. Illustration 52 shows her wearing a plain hat with a small plume on the side. This would have been for everyday use, it was simple and practical. In illustration 53 we can see Miss Fox wearing a more decorative, white lace and gauze hat. Hats like these were worn on special occasions. Skirts were less full, thankfully crinolines had disappeared, giving women more freedom of movement which was necessary if a woman was to partake in a working career. Education played an important role in preparing women for a career, which in turn brought great reforms for women in the form of being financially independent, being in control of how they spent their time, being away from their families, meeting and conversing with other women and men. These are among some of the advantages of being a working woman in the early 1900's.

As the nineteenth century drew to a close a style of headdress

had evolved which was to set the pattern for the next dozen years. Women entered the twentieth century still wearing fanciful hats, their hair long and elaborately dressed. Edwardian dress had been as restrictive as that in the late 1800's but gradually lost its formality. In 1914 the First World War changed all this and by the end of the war in 1918 dramatic changes had taken place in women's headdress. Hats were small and less elaborate than ever before. Many had little, if any, decorative trimmings attached and women had begun to crop their hair short. This applies mainly to younger women of this time. The roots of these changes lay in the nineteenth century and it was in the Victorian period that the foundations of modern millinery and fashions were laid.

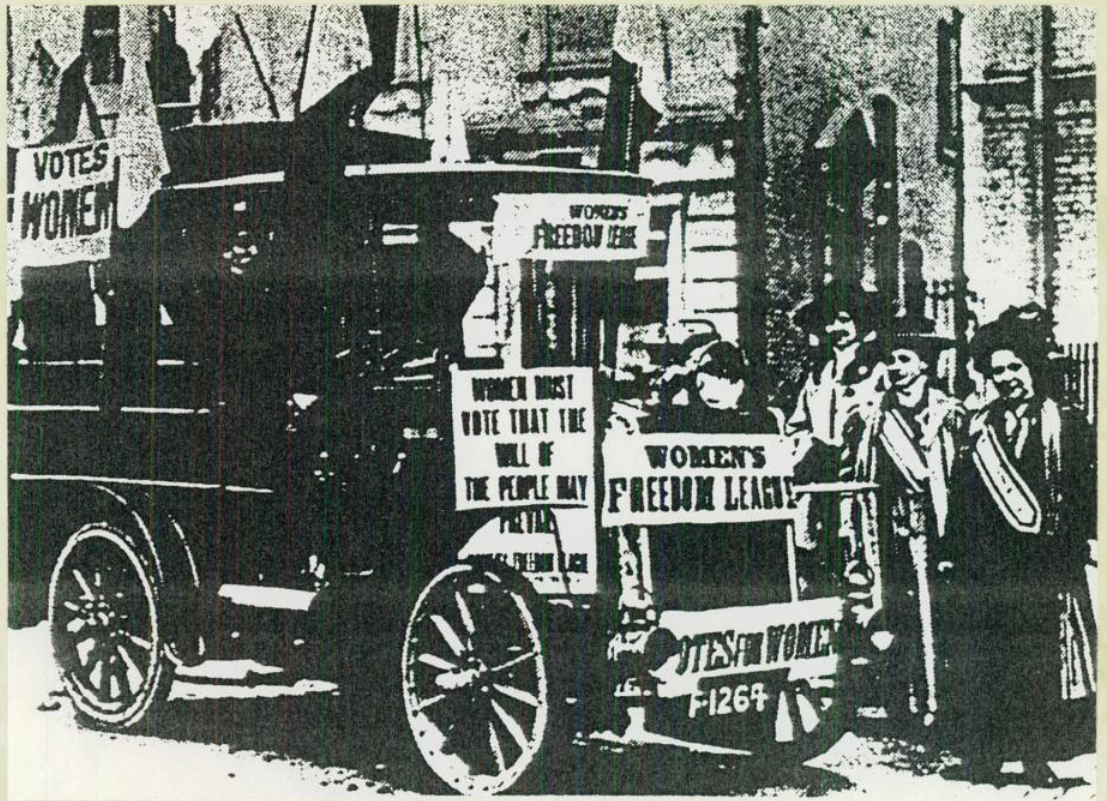


Illustration 43.

These women who are campaigning for their right to vote are wearing plain, wide brimmed hats.





Illustration 44.

Riding Dress and Top Hat, late 1800's.





Illustration 45.

Julie Waite and her cousin, dressed for
playing tennis, 1887.





Illustration 46.

A Cycling Party 1906.



Illustration 47.

A rare photograph of Viscountess Harberton in her personal version of rational dress, 1890. She was the leading campaigner for the promotion of functional garments for over twenty years.

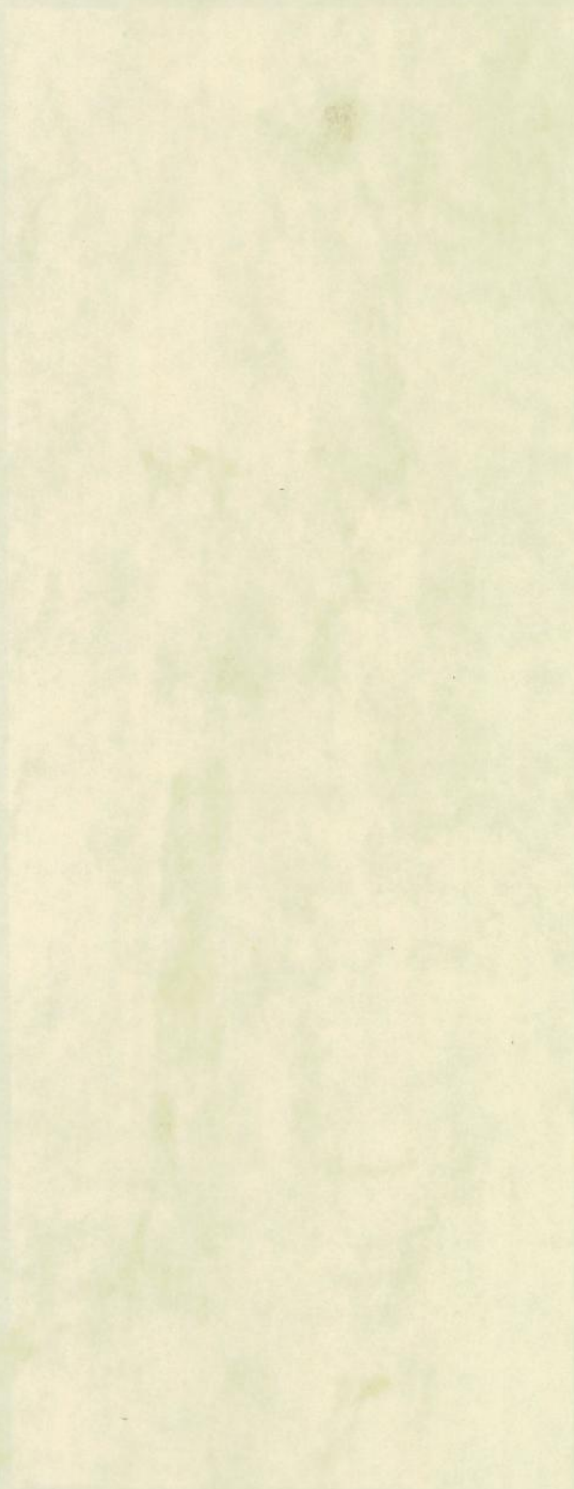




Illustration 48.

Most women who cycled in the late 1800's wore the conventional full length skirt. It was a struggle to maintain decorum while mounting and dismounting.

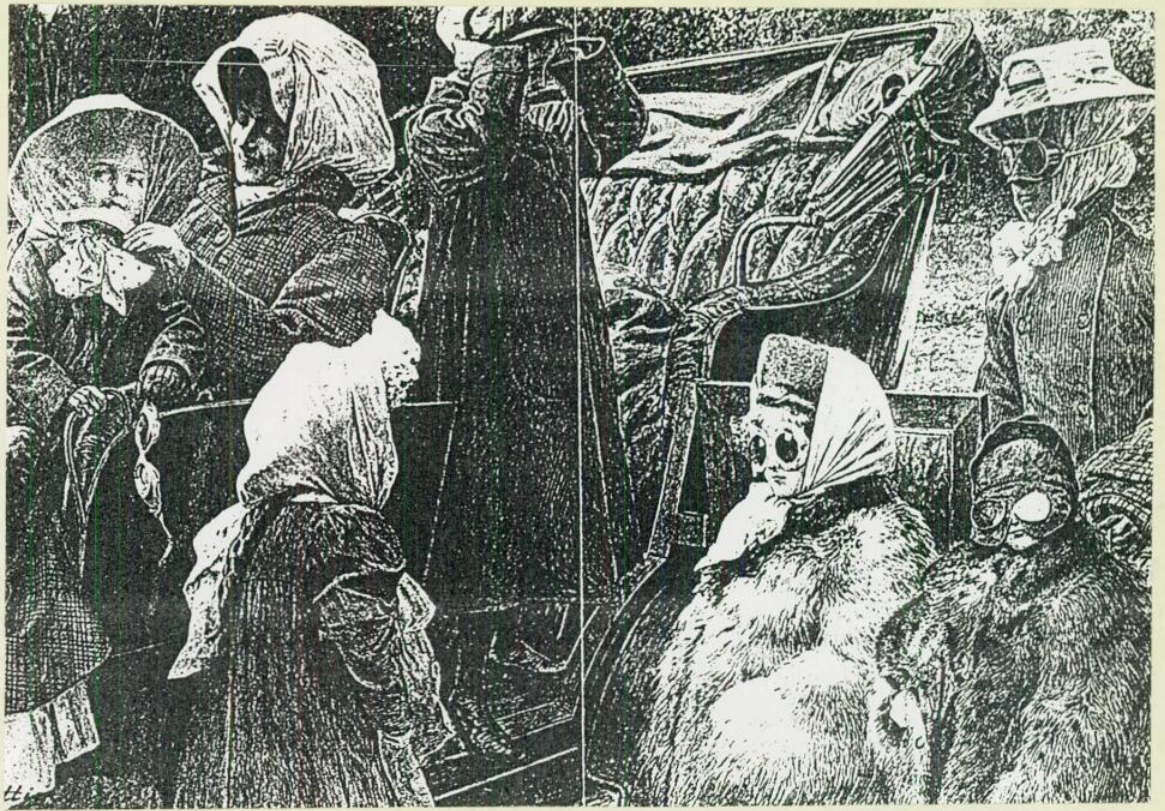


Illustration 49.

An example of the type of headwear worn for motoring, early 1900's.



Illustration 50.

Lilly Langtry posing in her latest costume
required for her stage performance.



Illustration 51.

Eva Moore, leading actress in the late 1800's.



Illustration 52.

Miss Katherine Fox, 1906.



Illustration 53.

Miss Katherine Fox, 1906.



Illustration 54.

Garden Party for Colman's Employees, 25th July 1914.

The women in this illustration are all simply dressed in blouses and long straight skirts. Their hats were very plain, they are simply trimmed with a band of ribbon, but in some cases a feather or flower is added.

Even though hats became plainer and simpler, women never discarded them, for example every woman in this photograph is wearing a hat.

CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION

Women's headwear from 1800-1914 saw many changes in size, materials and position on the head, yet the basic bonnet and hat shapes remained constant throughout this period. Throughout the 1800's milliners looked to the past for inspiration from which they produced various styles of headdress that remain a hallmark of the century. Bonnets were the most popular form of daytime headdress throughout the first 75 years of the period. It was not until this point, the mid 1870's, that the hat became commonly worn. Previous to this the hat had been restricted to young girls and was frowned upon by older ladies. This changed gradually and by the early twentieth century hats were the most popular form of daytime headdress, especially for outdoor activities.

Many wealthy Irish women wore elaborate bonnets and hats during the nineteenth century and were keen followers of fashion trends. Irish fashions were similar to those worn by English and other European women. They were kept informed about new trends through looking at women's magazines, fashion plates and, later on, photography. Headdress was a luxury confined to the wealthy classes as it was an expensive commodity, and could only be worn by ladies of leisure. Wealthy cottiers' wives wore a mob caps but the poorer rural women simply wore a shawl over their heads for protection. These people were struggling to overcome the effects of the Famine, and also the political turmoil of the Land League and later on Home Rule. There was a distinctive unevenness in the distribution of wealth in Ireland during the 1800's. It was in the areas of concentrated wealth that headdress was bought and worn. However, one main difference did exist between the rural and the urban poor. This was their interest

in fashion. Although neither had much money to spend, The rural poor showed no interest in buying headwear whereas their urban equivalent spent what they could in an attempt to immitate the styles worn by society women at the time.

People of this period were extremely class conscious and everyone constantly strove to improve their position in society. Social etiquette in the form of manners and dress was a useful means of distinguishing one class from another. Women were required to change their headdress in accordance to the rules of etiquette used for different occasions and times of day. For any upstanding society women it was essential that they had a wide variety of expensive headwear to cater for all the social events in their calendar. The headdress worn by a woman told others a great deal about her. It illustrated the extent of or lack of her wealth, status and taste. A hat could also tell a woman's marital status and indicate her age. Therefore, I assume that headdress was a very important, if not the most important, item of clothing in any woman's wardrobe in the 1800's.

The industrial revolution marks the beginning of the liberation of women's headdress. It made new materials such as dyes, ribbons, new fabric types and plumage available for milliners and brought with it influences from abroad because of improved communications and travel. Gradually working opportunities for women became available, and as a result, women were permitted to enter the educational system to gain the training and experience necessary for new jobs. The invention of the typewriter was monumental in terms of job creation for women as many worked as secretaries and clerks. Sporting activities also helped moderate women's headdress. Hats were much

smaller and were minimally decorated. They were worn high on the crown of the head and had a very small, if any, brim. They were easier to wear because they were smaller and more secure on the head. This made them a practical answer to women's needs. Cycling was the most important of all the sports. It allowed women to wear divided skirts (trousers) which caused quite a stir among their male counterparts. Cycling, although it was considered to be essentially a masculine sport, was taken up just as enthusiastically by women.

The period from 1800-1914 was a great time of change in many ways. I chose to look at the changes which took place in women's daytime headdress throughout the period. From my studies I feel that this era was at the height of millinery history, never since has there been such a demand for so diverse a range of headwear. There has in fact, been a steady decline in the wearing of hats by women in this century as they are considered expensive and impractical for the ever quickening pace of today's society. This is not to suggest that no flamboyant hats are worn today, they are, but only on very special occasions and even then most would be considered tame in comparison to those I have seen while carrying out my research. Women's headdress is one of the many things that have suffered due to our speeding lifestyle. Unfortunately, I don't see how a revival of such mastery of millinery on such a large scale could be made possible in today's society, due to the phenomenal cost of materials and restricted movement incurred by wearing large hats. I would find it hard to imagine any woman in today's society trying to catch a bus or manoeuvre through a supermarket wearing a millinery creation from the 1800's. I do, however, think that hats will always remain part of our culture whether for protection, identification or decoration.

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