


Contents



Foreword	v
Introduction	vi
Dress	1
Colonial (Pilgrim & Puritan 1620 - 1700)	3
Quaker (1681 - 1860)	11
American Revolution (1775 - 1783)	15
Young Republic (1800 - 1820)	23
Romantic Era (1820 - 1848)	27
Pioneer (1800s)	34
Civil War (1861 - 1865)	39
Sailor (1865 - 1905)	46
Victorian 1880s	52
Victorian 1890s	58
Turn of the Century (1900 - 1910)	65
Tea Party	70
Index	72
Bibliography	72



*Let us run the risk of wearing out
rather than rusting out.*

-Theodore Roosevelt

*Make today right and tomorrow
may be right of itself.*

-Sarah Hale

*The smallest things are as absolutely
necessary as the great things.*

-Mary Slessor

*As the daylight can be seen through very small holes
so little things will illustrate a person's character.*

Indeed, character consists in little acts, well and honorably performed.

-Smiles

*Stay is a charming word in
a friend's vocabulary.*

-Louisa May Alcott

*If we had not winter, the spring would not be
so pleasant. If we did not sometimes taste
adversity, prosperity would not be so welcome.*

-Anne Bradstreet

*The art of self-government is
indispensable to woman's felicity.*

-Sarah Hale



Foreword

by Jennie Chancey



“Mom, do we have a parasol?” I asked, digging through the upstairs hall trunk. “Well,” my mother replied, “I know we *used* to have an old Japanese parasol that belonged to your grandmother, but we can always make a parasol from an umbrella!” An hour later, I was promenading in the back yard with my lacey ’brella and feeling like a queen.

While growing up and homeschooling, our family loved to “play dress-up” as we studied historical events. We also got together with fellow homeschoolers to put on history plays, and it was always interesting to see what kinds of costumes everyone came up with. For medieval times, we cooked a period feast and dressed in costumes we cobbled together from the dress-up trunk. When we read about the pioneers, I made a bonnet and created a “kind of” accurate outfit from a dress and an apron. When we hit the War Between the States, I pined for a hoopskirt but made do with my grandmother’s old crinoline petticoats from the 1950s. Creating costumes from what we had on hand and making fun accessories to go with them was the icing on the cake as we studied timelines, names, and places.

Many mothers dread the thought of sewing something from scratch, especially since commercial patterns are often very time-consuming and daunting for the inexperienced seamstress. Yet there is something extra special about being able to “live” history as we study it, and girls especially find it thrilling to dress like Pilgrims or pioneers. Often it just isn’t possible to attempt costuming because of the costs and time involved.

That is all about to change. You hold in your hands the answer to these concerns, and I am absolutely thrilled to promote Amy Puetz’s wonderful book, *Costumes with Character*. From one beautifully detailed page to the next, you will see how simple it is to take a basic dress and turn it into eleven different costumes, spanning from the 17th century to the early 1900s. You will be amazed at how little effort it takes to go from one era to the next with a change of collar and cuffs or the addition of a bonnet! Amy’s clear instructions and illustrations make all of the sewing steps easy to follow, and her historical quotations, and Q&A in each section will spark further interest in each time period.

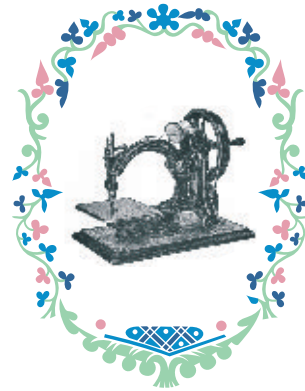
It *is* possible to create wonderful costumes to portray historical events without emptying your pocketbook or losing your mind over complicated directions. If you are looking for a fun way to introduce daughters to sewing, this book is also a super jumping-off point. Whatever the event, I believe you’ll find *Costumes with Character* a tremendous creativity-booster. Thank you, Amy, for this historical treat!

Jennie Chancey

Homeschooling mom and owner of Sense & Sensibility Patterns

Introduction

Adjusting the patterns



I hope you enjoy this book as much as I enjoyed writing it. History is so exciting to study, and what better way to learn about it than by dressing up in historical outfits from different time periods?

The patterns in this book are for ages sixteen and up. Below is a chart for making the patterns to fit smaller girls. You may want to make some of the patterns, such as the collars and hats the original size so they fit for many years. The cuffs should be measured according to the size of the wrist and arm. The other patterns, such as the aprons and vests, should probably be made to fit.

For example, let us say you want to make the apron in the Colonial chapter and your child is nine years old. The length will be determined by how tall she is and how much fabric you have. The width of the apron is 24", so we need to reduce the size by 12%. The equation would look like this:

$$24'' \times 12\% = 2.88''$$
$$24'' - 2.88'' = 21.12'' \text{ round the number to } 21''$$

Therefore, make the apron 21" wide rather than the 24" in the patterns. Use the equation above and the measurement chart below as a guide to reducing the size of the patterns.

Measurement Chart

Approx. Age	4-5	6-7	8-11	12-14	16 and up
Chest	26	28	30	32	34
Waist	22	23	24	26	28
Reduce the size of the patterns by	24%	18%	12%	6%	no reduction.

Several patterns call for paper-backed fusible web my favorite kind is Wonder-Under.

You can also make a simple dress for a doll, then make the costumes in this book to fit the doll. Then the doll and girl can have matching outfits.

Each chapter begins with a short overview of the history of the era and the clothing that was worn. I begin by sharing about the era and my writing is indented and in a smaller text. The historical notes from period sources are in a larger font. For a more in-depth study of historical costumes see the bibliography in the back. This list shares my favorite historical costumes and the ones I used to help me with write book.

I sincerely hope you have a great time making the clothes in this book and enjoy pretending to live during the eras covered in this book. God bless you all.

Pilgrim on a journey,
Amy Puetz

The Dress

Finding the Perfect Frock



My fingers ran along the hem of the most beautiful white dress I had ever seen. Voices in the background brought me back from my rapture as I heard my grandma say something about purchasing the dress at a garage sale with the plan of cutting off the bodice to make a skirt from the bottom part of the dress. “But I never got around to it, so the girls can have it as a play dress.” Had I heard correctly? Grandma said my sisters and I could have this beautiful dress! It was too wonderful to be true.

When I was a little girl we went to visit my grandma and while rummaging around in her back closet she found this magnificent frock. The dress was made from wide seersucker fabric and had lace trim along the cuffs and skirt ruffle. Although the sleeves did not have the puff that Anne Shirley from *Green Gables* would have wanted, it did have a slight poof to them and the collar was made of a little ruffle. Even though it was much too large for my sisters and me, we absolutely loved it. From that time on the white dress became our favorite garment for play.

With our vivid imaginations we could transform the dress to almost any time period. One day it would be the perfect dinner gown for a party set in the 1940s; the next day it would be a fashionable dress of a western woman. At the waist we would pull up the long skirt and pin it, which gave the look of a bustle and the extra skirt would cascade down the back in a long train. This was perfect for a Victorian tea party and other social gatherings that occupy girls at play.

From that very early age I began my love for historical costumes. My sisters and I enjoyed historical movies such as *Anne of Green Gables*, *The Robe*, and *How the West was Won*. Obviously our mother wasn’t going to make us a new costume each time we found a good historical movie, so we learned to improvise. In our large box of play clothes—hand-me downs from our mother and adult clothes from garage sales—we would put different skirts and blouses together to form different looks. From the same garments we created costumes for every time period from the Biblical era to the 1950s. With the addition of a few essentials such as sunbonnets, hats, gloves, and belts we were able to put together a variety of outfits.

In this book I share the simple idea of taking one dress and transforming it into styles from different eras. *Costumes with Character* utilizes the concept of one dress costuming. With the simple addition of cuffs, collars, belts, aprons, etc., one gown can easily be altered to reflect the fashion of different time periods. This book is much more sophisticated than my childish attempts to make the white dress change from one frock to another. In my imagination there is no doubt that the white dress looked exactly as I wished, but any other observer would probably have seen it differently! I hope you enjoy this book and discover the world of historical costuming.



My sisters and me. Sarah in the white dress, Marissa (middle), and Amy (right).



Amy in the white dress and Marissa

2 ~ Costumes with Character

A simple dress can be used for so many time periods that it is an essential for any girl or young lady who loves historical costumes. When the dress is completed, the costumes are half done! Then add the accessories for each costume.

There are different ways to get a dress that will work. It may be sewn using a pattern (like the blue dress at right and the pink dress below), or you may make over a dress you already have (like the green dress below). The green dress was a size 12 lady's dress that has been altered to fit an eight-year-old girl.

If you find or make a solid color dress, then the accessories may be of a printed fabric (or vice versa if the dress has a pattern on it). Instead of a dress you may use a blouse (white is always a good choice) and a long skirt for some of the time periods. Garage sales and second hand stores often have dresses that work for the simple dress that is just calling for accessories.

If using a pattern it should be a basic and simple dress. The easiest way to get a dress for a child is to find an adult dress and take up the side seams, hem, and sleeves. The dress and sleeves can be made with deep hems to be let out as the girl grows. Let your imagination soar!



Things to look for in a pattern:

- ~ no collar
- ~ simple sleeves
- ~ full skirt
- ~ long skirt

Visit www.AmyPuetz.com/Costumes.html for pattern sources.



You may also make a simple dress for a doll and then use the patterns in this book to make accessories for her as well!

Colonial

Pilgrim and Puritan

1620-1700



Bravely they came, and heroically they stayed. What courage it must have taken for the women and girls who came to America on the *Mayflower*. No doubt the stories of other attempts at colonization crossed their minds. Did they think about the lost colony at Roanoke and the struggling colony at Jamestown? Possibly, but they knew setting up a home in America was God's will and they bravely followed their husbands and fathers to the New World.

There were approximately eighteen married women and ten girls on the *Mayflower*. Sadly only four women survived the first winter. They were: Mary Brewster, Susan Winslow, Elizabeth Hopkins, and Ellen Billington. In *Of Plymouth Plantation*, Ellen More is the only girl whom William Bradford mentions as dying the first winter. The other girls of the *Mayflower* went on to marry and many of them have numerous decedents. Among the most famous of these Pilgrim girls were: Priscilla Mullins, Mary Chilton, Elizabeth Tillie, and Constanta (Constance) Hopkins. The first three in the list lost their parents during the general sickness of the initial winter. It is possible that they lived with William and Mary Brewster until they married.

These women and girls were real people. They had joy and sorrow, enjoyed pretty things, learned to do without, and most of all they did daily mundane activities just as we do. Their very lives depended on their ability to provide food, clothing, and shelter to their families. When thinking of historical women, try to remember that they were very much like us. Their dress and manner of speaking were different, but underneath humans are basically the same down through the ages.



The Pilgrims going to church

In *The Women Who Came in the Mayflower*, author Annie Russell Marble describes how the Pilgrims dressed.

What did these Pilgrim women wear? The manifest answer is, what they had in stock. No more absurd idea was ever invented than the picture of these Pilgrims "in uniform," gray gowns with dainty white collars and cuffs, with stiff caps and dark capes. They wore the typical garments of the period for men and women in England. There is no evidence that they adopted, to any extent, Dutch dress, for they were proud of their English birth; they left Holland partly for fear that their young people might be educated or enticed away from English standards of conduct.



The first Thanksgiving

4 ~ Costumes with Character

The women wore full skirts of silk of varied colors, long, pointed stomachers—often with a bright tone, sometimes puffed or slashed sleeves, and lace collars or “whisks” resting upon the shoulders. [Whisk is a collar which covers the neck and shoulders, usually made of muslin trimmed with lace.] Sometimes the gowns were plaited or silk-laced; they often opened in front showing petticoats that were quilted or embroidered in brighter colors. Broadcloth gowns of russet tones were worn by those who could not afford silks and satins; sometimes women wore doublets [a garment usually made of two thicknesses, thus its name] and jerkins [another name for jacket or doublet] of black and browns. Velvet and quilted hoods of all colors and sometimes caps, flat on the head and meeting below the chin with fullness, are shown in existent portraits of English women and early colonists.



Landing of the Pilgrims

Among relics that are dated back to this early period are the slippers belonging to Mistress Susanna White Winslow, narrow, pointed, with lace trimmings, and an embroidered lace cap that has been assigned to Rose Standish. Sometimes the high ruffs were worn above the shoulders instead of “whisks.” The children were dressed like miniature men and women; often the girls wore aprons, as did the women on occasions; these were narrow and edged with lace. “Petty coats” are mentioned in wills among the garments of the women. We would not assume that in 1621-2 all the women in Plymouth colony wore silken or even homespun clothes of prevailing English fashion. Many of these that are mentioned in inventories and retained as heirlooms, with rich laces and embroideries, were brought later from England; probably Winslow, Allerton, and even Standish brought back such gifts to the women when they made their trips to England in 1624 and later. If the Pilgrim women had laces and embroideries of gold they probably hoarded them as precious heirlooms during those early years of want, for they were too sensible to wear and to waste them. As prosperity came, however, and new elements entered the colony they were, doubtless, affected by the law of the General Court, in 1634, which forbade further acquisition of laces, threads of silver and gold, needle-work caps, bands and rails, and silver girdles and belts. This law was enacted not by the Pilgrims of Plymouth, but by the Puritans of Massachusetts Bay Colony.

The Pilgrims were followed to the New World by the Puritans who settled in the Massachusetts Bay area in 1630. While the Pilgrims were Separatists (who wanted to separate from the Church of England), the Puritans tried to “purify” the church from within. Reforms were not easy and many Puritans looked to America as a place where they could enjoy religious freedom. The Puritans were very strict in their dress, in fact they were even called Roundheads because the men’s hair was worn in a plain round style.

Below are some interesting facts about Puritan dress from *Historic Dress of America* by Elizabeth McClellan.

Margaret Winthrop, [the wife of Governor John Winthrop] in a letter to England written from Massachusetts, gives a note of daily wear: ‘I must of a necessity make me a gown to wear every day and would have one bought me of good strong black stuff and Mr. Smith to make it of the civilest fashion now in use. If my sister Downing would please to give him some directions about it, he would make it the better.’ Slight as is this note, it proves that Dame Winthrop was not indifferent to the prevailing fashions. The familiar portrait of Governor Winthrop in a ruff and long hair indicates that he had not adopted the dress of the strict Puritans. Unfortunately, no portrait of his wife has been handed down to

posterity, and we are left to conjecture that the dress of 'good strong black stuff' to 'wear every day' was made of Durant [a woolen fabric], something after the fashion of the picture at right.

The couple below shows the dress of the Puritans. His suit of black cloth is of the same cut as a Cavalier's only without trimmings. Stockings or hose of dark gray or green wool fastened to the breeches by points of black ribbons. The collar and cuffs are of white Holland linen. The hat of black felt finished with a narrow band of ribbon and a small silver buckle. The cloak is of black cloth. The lady's gown is either purple or gray, or perhaps brown; for outdoor wear it is turned under and looped back showing petticoats of homespun or l i n s e y - woolsey. The



Puritan couple

apron is of white Holland linen. A collar goes around the neck of the gown and white linen cuffs are turned back over the sleeves. The hood is made of dark colored silk and lined with soft silk or fur to match the muff. Stout shoes with wooden heels and woolen stockings completed the costumes. The hair is drawn back under a white linen cap and an apron covers the front of the dress. This was the ordinary dress of a Puritan gentlewomen from 1620-1640.

The majority of the Puritans were very much in earnest on the subject of reform in dress, and it has been said they expressed their piety not only in the choice of somber hues and simplicity of cut, but even worked into the garments religious sayings and quotations from the Holy Writ. This fashionable custom in England is also mentioned by Ben Jonson, 'The

linen of men and women was either so worked as to resemble lace or was ornamented by the needle into representations of fruit and flowers, passages of history, etc.'



Puritan couple

Recommended Resources

- The Courtship of Miles Standish* by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
Almost Home, a Story Based on the Life of the Mayflower's Mary Chilton by Wendy Lawton
The Light and the Glory by Peter Marshall & David Manuel
Of Plymouth Plantation by William Bradford
If You Sailed on the Mayflower by Ann McGovern
Three Young Pilgrims by Cheryl Harness
Sweet Land of Liberty by Charles C. Coffin



Find recommended resources
for the other eras at

www.AmyPuetz.com/CWCresources.html



6 *~* Costumes with Character

They cherished a great hope and inward zeal of laying good foundations, or at least of making some way towards it, for the propagation and advance of the gospel of the kingdom of Christ in the remote parts of the world. -William Bradford, giving one of the reasons they came to the New World

*She has a strange sweetness in her mind, and singular purity in her affections; is most just and conscientious in all her conduct; and you could not persuade her to do any thing wrong or sinful, if you would give her all the world, lest she should offend this Great Being.
-Jonathan Edwards on Sarah Pierrepont's character four years before she became his wife*



For we must consider that we shall be as a "City upon a Hill." The eyes of all people are upon us; so that if we shall deal falsely with our God in this work, we have undertaken and so cause Him to withdraw His present help from us, we shall open the mouths of enemies to speak evil of the ways of God and all professors for God's sake; we shall shame the faces of many of God's worthy servants, and cause their prayers to be turned into curses upon us till we be consumed out of the good land whither we are going. -John Winthrop in a sermon titled "A Model of Charity"

The Pilgrim Dress

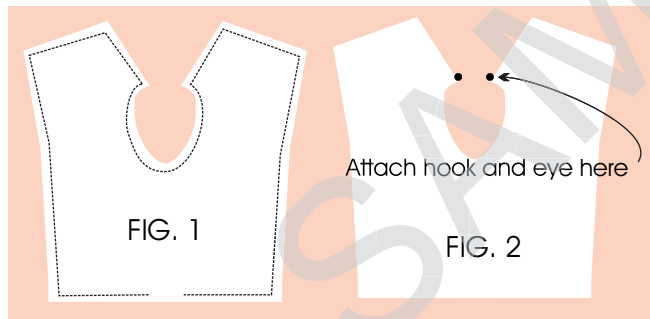
Collar

- White fabric
- Hook and eye
- Iron-on interfacing for midweight fabric
- Paper-backed fusible web (optional)



Instructions

1. Use the collar pattern on page 10 as a guide to cut out fabric.
2. Iron interfacing on the wrong side of one of the collar pieces.
3. Sew with right sides together using 1/4" seam and leaving 2 1/2" opening to turn through (FIG. 1). Notch around neck and clip corners.
4. Turn the collar right side out and press.
5. Iron a small piece of the fusible web on the opening in the back, let cool, then tear the paper off and iron again. This will close up the opening in the back, or you may hand stitch the opening closed.
6. Hand stitch hook and eye (FIG. 2).



7. To wear, place collar over dress. It may be safety pinned to the dress.

Cuffs

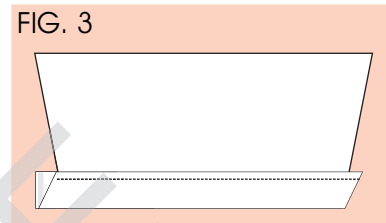
- 1/4" elastic
- White fabric
- Iron-on interfacing for midweight fabric

Instructions (make two)

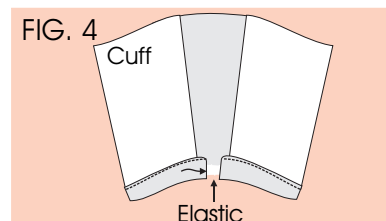
1. Use the patterns on page 10 as a guide to cut out fabric for cuffs and casing. Cut out interfacing just a little smaller than the cuff piece.
2. Iron interfacing on the wrong side of one of the cuff pieces.
3. Place right sides of the cuffs together and stitch around three sides, using 1/4" seam and leaving the

bottom open. Clip corners, turn right side out, and press.

4. Fold and press 1/4" to inside of casing piece lengthwise on both sides so when sewed there will be a finished edge. Fold wrong side together lengthwise and press. Crease one short end 1/4".
5. Place open bottom end of cuff in the casing. Top stitch the casing to the cuff piece through all thickness so you have a finished top stitch on both sides (FIG. 3).



6. Thread elastic (the size of the wrist plus 1/2" for seam allowance) through casing. Sew the elastic ends together. Close the opening of the casing by putting the raw edge into the creased edge (FIG. 4) and top stitch.



7. To wear, tuck the casing part under the sleeve so only the cuff is visible. It may be secured with safety pins to keep in place.

Hat

- White fabric
- Two - 25" x 1/4" white ribbon
- Iron-on interfacing for midweight fabric
- Fabric that matches the dress
- Paper-backed fusible web

Instructions

1. Use the hat patterns on page 10 as a guide to cutting out the fabric. Iron interfacing on the wrong side of the white fabric.
2. Place right sides together. Pin ribbon 3 3/4" from the top edge. Sew together using a 1/2" seam allowance. Leaving a 2" opening in the back for turning (FIG. 5).