

# Donation of the Month

## Hannah Lumm Dress



1981.28.1

Donor: Mrs. Charles Geyer

This dress is a tribute to both resourcefulness and style. This dress was made by Ruth Hannah Lumm and, according to the donor, was worn as her wedding dress for her marriage to Jonas Windham in Sterling, Illinois, in 1840. The dress was given to the Rogers Historical Museum through Ruth's great-grandson, Charles Geyer.

This dress has three pieces; two bodices and one skirt. There is a long sleeved cut velvet bodice with pink tinted steel buttons on the front closure. Boning was sewn into the bodice to give it shape at the waist. The skirt is made of matching floor-length amethyst-colored velvet. In the 1880s, purple satin panniers were added to the skirt. Another bodice was also created of purple satin with cut velvet trim on the cuffs, collar, and lapel. These trim pieces were probably made from scraps cut from hidden areas of the skirt to achieve a matching fabric. The back of the bodice is longer and pleated. The original seams on the dress were hand sewn but the later alterations were machine sewn.

Most of the alterations made reflect the style of the times. The sleek, fitted basque bodice sits just below the natural waist and comes to a center point in the front. The high neckline and the smooth, tight-fitting sleeves are typical of fashion designs from the 1880s. The use of heavy fabrics like satin and velvet was very popular as well. The resurgence of the bustle in the 1880s affected the way a dress was made, and we see in this dress the longer back on the bodice that would fit over a bustle. The satin panniers were probably draped around the sides and pulled up in the back to also emphasize the bustled skirt. Different trimmings were popular and in this instance, the matching velvet trim was added to accent the satin.

**CREDITS**

Blum, Stella. Fashions and Costume from Godey's Lady's Book, 1985. Butterick Publishing Company, Metropolitan Fashions of the 1880s From the 1885 Butterick Catalog, 1997; "A Visual Dictionary of Fashion: <http://dept.kent.edu/museum/costume/bonc/3timesearch/time.html>  
Donor and object file; Rogers Historical Museum Research Library. Photo courtesy of the Rogers Historical Museum.