

Let it go to your head!
By Danine Cozzens Langdell



Eléonore de Montmorency (1771-1828) married Alexandre, Eighth Duc de Rohan in 1785. She would be about 40 here, wearing jewel tones, turban, and simple but expensive pearls.

<http://www.christies.com/lotfinder/LargeImage.aspx?image=http://www.christies.com/lotfinderimages/d47816/d4781653x.jpg>

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If you long to don your finest Regency evening wear and step out on the dance floor, put Saturday, May 30, 2015, on your calendar. Our Sister Organization, The Bay Area English Regency Society puts on only three balls each year. This one takes inspiration from an event 200 years ago that changed the map of Europe: The Congress of Vienna.

The romantic dance beloved by today's ball-goers and private weddings alike was choreographed almost 40 years ago by John Hertz for Friends of the English Regency, setting waltz movements of the 1810s to a haunting Swedish folk tune. John named it in honor of an event that was legendary in its day for non-stop partying, as diplomats from around Europe flocked to Vienna to decide what was to be done now that Napoleon was defeated. "The Congress does not move, it dances!" as one diplomat exclaimed at the time. Don your diplomatic sashes from imaginary countries, your tiaras, your dancing shoes, for The Congress of Vienna Dances at the Alameda Elks Lodge.



Older folks gaming with fantastic evening headdresses.
Gilray, PushPin.

People of all ages went to balls, as noted in Jane Austen's novels and humorous etchings of the era. Not everyone danced. There were cards, tea, and gossiping for the older folks. The plush seats ringing the Alameda Elks Lodge are perfect for watching and kibitzing. Dancing was quite vigorous and more the province of the younger set; Scottish country dance today, with its balletic footwork, is closer to what was done in the better circles. Although period costumes are admired, not required, who wouldn't want to show off their fabulous Regency finery? Let's explore how to look our Regency best no matter what our chronological age.

Evening Attire vs Ball Gowns

Regency researchers are fortunate to have much dress documentation, as this was the age when fashion magazines began. Prints from Ackerman's Repository, Heideloff's Gallery of Fashion, or Costumes Parisien, enchant us still today. If you look at the captions, you'll see terms for dress that bewilder us today: morning dress, walking dress, carriage dress, seaside dress, promenade dress, evening dress, half dress, full dress, opera dress, and ball dress. Morning dress encompassed the time from when you arose until you changed for dinner, which was late afternoon. Evening dress was party time, whether dinner at someone's stately home, cards with a neighbor, a concert in cities like London or Bath, or an assembly or ball.



If you look closely at illustrations, you see a variety of ages and stations represented. One of my favorites is Rolanda Sharples' Assembly Cloakroom. This is much like the mental picture we get from the Ball at the Crown in *Emma*. Our eye is drawn to the demure lass in the center with a soldier and a civilian vying for her attention. But there is so much more! You see a variety of ages and dress styles on men and women. Hair ornaments, turbans, and even a sheer evening cap for the older woman at lower right, whose poor relation is assisting with her shoes.

Age-Appropriate Attire, Regency Style

Regency notions of age appropriateness were not the same as ours today, especially in a costume community where you are as young as you feel. They thought in terms of stages of life.

“From this, my fair friends will easily apprehend that the most beautiful woman is not at forty what she was at twenty, not at sixty what she was at forty. Each age has an appropriate style of figure and of pleasing; and it is the business of discernment and taste to discover and to maintain those advantage in their due season.” (Mirror of the Graces, p. 30).

Adolescents who were “not out” did go out in society, but were kept in close observation and dressed quite simply. English country dance, by the way, is an excellent way for young persons to learn social skills as well as spatial ones.

Ball gowns were made for dancing, for the younger set. Dancing was the place to meet and interact with potential mates, and converse away from the watchful chaperones. Ball gowns were short, above the ankle, made of diaphanous material, with short sleeves and low necklines. They would have moved beautifully, showing off the graceful footwork learned from months with dance masters, and displaying the beautiful arms and “corsage,” as the French say, to advantage. Youthful loveliness needs no adornment; a simple necklace, a light headdress of flowers, with your Regency up-do, is quite sufficient.



A Rowlandson depicting a waltz from “Sorrows of Young Werther” by Goethe. Note moves similar to our Congress of Vienna choreographed waltz.

Off topic for Vienna 1815, but a great look at portraits of London life in 1809 online here:

<http://spitalfieldslife.com/2012/02/11/the-microcosm-of-london-ii/>

Full evening attire pulled out all the stops for the matron (as late as the 1950s, this used to be a good word!). A married lady could flaunt her jewels and jewel tones as would a single woman of wealth and status. Elaborate evening hats and turbans attracted the eye even when you were seated at dinner or the opera. Fortunately we have many examples preserved in museum collections. Full evening attire reaches the instep, and may have a train, depending on the fashion. One can dance gracefully but not athletically in this gown, with the train pinned up, as in *Northanger Abbey*.

Regency comic art by a young George Cruikshank. A sad crush indeed.

George Cruikshank
Inconveniences of a Crowded Drawing Room 1818 Andrew Edmunds, London
More rude comic art at the Tate:
<http://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-britain/exhibition/rude-britannia-british-comic-art/rude-britannia-room-guide/rude>



Single ladies, as we see in Jane Austen's life and novels, had a rough time, especially if they were not wealthy. But they still went to parties and balls, as we know from her letters. Single women would be properly attired, but not vying to be the center of attention. Like Anne Elliott in *Persuasion*, they might be playing piano for dancing or paying attention to the children. "I have made myself some caps to wear of an evening, and they save me a world of torment as to head-dressing," Jane wrote to her sister. Were they lace caps, or simple berets — if only we knew!

Jane found her niche. "And now, as I am of an age to be a chaperone, I may sit by the fire and drink as much wine as I like," she wrote in a letter. Chaperones could be any married woman, no matter how young, or an older woman of respectable status. Chaperones lent respectability to the event. Any out-of-the-ordinary behavior would be noted, and commented upon. They were a stabilizing influence.

As an older woman myself, I've been on a quest for period examples of women over the age of 29. (See my NoSpringChicken board on Pinterest [NoSpringChicken](#).) And surprise! There are no hard and fast rules. Most women are not in evening dress, but neither are they all in lavender or black. They heed the advice of *Mirror of the Graces*, which is, basically, to tone it down as you grow older. I found women with white hair and wrinkles wearing white gowns and stylish bonnets. (Advanced style circa 1815.) Net takeaway: go with your own sense of what becomes you, as women have done for centuries.

Hair styles: If you are wearing a tiara, or if you have been blessed with a *parure* (matching set of necklace, earrings, two bracelets, and tiara or combs), you want your hair dressed properly. In the classical style, hair is piled at the back or top of the head, with ringlets surrounding the face. Earlier in the period, wigs in a variety of colors were quite the thing in Paris, as was the Titus cut for very short hair. If your character is from an out of the way location, or simply prefers the styles of her youth, go with the hair style and headgear you find in portraits that can be dated from that year. Resorting to artificial hair is period accurate.

For those with waist-length hair, some great recreations of Regency hairstyles from a professional hair braider.

Regency hair

<http://thedreamstress.com/2015/03/regency-hair/>



Gillray - Progress of the Toilet - The Wig. Ref: 4708

A caricature by James GILLRAY, London published by John Miller, Bridge Street and W.Blackwood, Edinburgh. Circa 1820. Early Colouring

Turbans: Our very own Lynn McMasters has not only the patterns she creates but many helpful articles on her website. This series of articles, originally done for Your Wardrobe Unlock'd, describes the history of this flattering style and ways to create them. <http://lynnmcmasters.com/articles.html>



Another charming turban, with elegant gauze sleeves.

<http://www.wikiart.org/en/pierre-paul-prud-hon/portrait-of-madame-p%C3%A9an-de-saint-gilles-1822>

Berets: The other classic Regency evening hat is the beret, a simple circle of fabric that can be gathered, tucked, and pleated in various ways into a simple headband. In evening fabrics, with beading or ornamentation, a simple beret can be an elegant finish to your ensemble.

Caps: These are the last frontier in evening wear, because even in the most refined fabrics, they are not youthful. There are a few commercial patterns for day caps that could be made up in sheer fabrics for evening.



Age-appropriate day wear circa 1820 as seen on Rolinda Sharples, age 17, and her mother, noted painter of miniatures.

Self-portrait of Rolinda Sharples with her mother Ellen Sharples

Rolinda Sharples (ca. 1793 - 1838) - Scanned by H. Churchyard

Public Domain

File:Rolinda-Sharples-selfportrait-ca1820.jpg

Uploaded by Churchh

Bookshelf Favorites:

English Women's Clothing in the Nineteenth Century, by C. Willett Cunnington, reprinted by Dover in 1990. Dr. and Mrs. Cunnington were among the first collectors of historic clothing. This wonderful tome lists examples of styles from decade to decade and year to year, with hairstyles, underwear and fashion notes included

A Dance With Jane Austen: How a Novelist and her Characters went to the Ball, by Susannah Fullerton. (2012, Frances Lincoln Limited) Historical research transmuted into easy reading with apt period illustrations.

The Mirror of the Graces, by a Lady of Distinction (1811), reprinted as *Regency Etiquette* by R. L. Shep Publications in 1997. Advice from the wife of a diplomat who's seen the fashionable world. You will never appear a mushroom or make a cake of yourself if you heed her wise but conservative counsel.

Kyoto Museum catalog: before there was Pinterest, this museum catalog was the pinnacle of perfection for Regency attire, beautifully displayed.

Humorous etchings: The comic books of their day, complete with word balloons and snark. Rowlandson, Gilray, Cruickshank were very popular, sometimes rude, and occasionally NSFW.

Editor's Note: Danine Cozzens fell in love with the world of costuming while singing madrigals at Black Point RennFaire in the mid-1980s. Since then she's been telling people where historically informed fun is to be found. Danine has served on the boards of the Bay Area English Regency Society, the Art Deco Society of California, and the Greater Bay Area Costumers Guild. Her husband, James Langdell, directs the Divertimento Dance Orchestra which plays for BAERS balls. She clearly spends more time on Pinterest than on sewing.

James Langdell has been interested in the historical context of music he plays since being a music major at UC Santa Cruz. He has led the Divertimento Dance Orchestra while playing clarinet at many costumed balls held by BAERS, PEERS, and elsewhere. He also conducts several adult concert bands, including the San Mateo Elks Concert Band.



The Music of The Congress of Vienna By James Langdell



In terms of conventional music history, the Congress of Vienna took place in the latter part of Ludwig van Beethoven's "Heroic Period". This focus of his composing style burst forth in 1805 with the "Eroica

Symphony" (his third). Beethoven's music in this manner, which gave the sense of important things being accomplished, fit as the theme music for the participants in the Congress. Beethoven's now most-derided creation, the sound-effect filled battle symphony "Wellington's Victory", was performed frequently at the time of the Congress, including at a gala concert that featured noted musicians of Vienna, such as Salieri, firing the guns and cannons on cue.

Beethoven was called upon to compose several works for occasions specific to the Congress. The most extensive was a cantata "The Glorious Moment" that celebrated this event and its participants. After the Congress ended, this unprecedented popularity of Beethoven waned, and he entered a fallow series of years as a composer before his amazing late works emerged. Among them was his culminating ninth symphony, which uses voices and instruments in ways that composing "The Glorious Moment" had served as a first draft.



At the time of the Congress, music of many other sorts filled the ears and propelled the feet of the participants. Vienna, long the hub of an empire, had been a melting pot of musical styles from across Europe. The waltz had already been established as a characteristic dance of the city, and new music for balls was being produced in those years by Hummel, Diabelli, and many others. A smaller scale dance orchestra led by Michael Pamer played music in a style that took first steps towards creating a distinctive Viennese waltz manner. Pamer's group in those years included teenaged musicians Joseph Lanner and Johann Strauss I, who a few years later started their own dance orchestras. A generation later, Strauss's sons created the best known dance music in the history of Vienna.

Here's an example of Michael Pamer's dance music: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n4qCnPvsIAE>

Simultaneously with the Congress years, in Vienna another teenager, Franz Schubert, was in obscurity, composing the first of his songs to prove enduring, including "Gretchen at the Spinning Wheel" and "The Erl King". On a bigger stage, Rossini in his early twenties was already becoming known in Vienna for his Italian operas.

Towards the end of his life, Johann Strauss II authorized an operetta to be created based on themes from his earlier dance music. This work, "Vienna Blood", had a story set within the Congress of Vienna.

Meanwhile, what of the music for the locally popular waltz, "Congress of Vienna"? The music that choreographer John Hertz selected for this dance was taken from a recording of an orchestration of Swedish folk tunes. While John based the dance figures on those in books of instruction and drawings from the time of the Congress of Vienna, the lovely and well-wedded music is from another place and another time.

Clothing the Californio, 1769 to 1848 and Beyond

By Elizabeth Urbach

Editor's Note: When I saw the Calendar of Events had Zorro Saves The Peralta on June 14th with a note of appropriate dress being "Californio", I had no idea what that meant. Elizabeth has written a scholarly treatise just on that subject to help guide you if you choose to go Californio for your costume



Spaniard and Mestiza produce Castiza_, by Jose Joaquin Mangon, c. 1770, Mexican, Museo Nacional de Antropologia, Madrid.

The modern state of California, called Alta California almost 250 years ago, was the last part of the Spanish empire to be settled; as the New World frontier, it was far away from most of the cultural and political movements that were current in Spain, and the rest of the Spanish Empire (settled over 200 years earlier). This distance affected everything in California, from the architecture, economy, agriculture and other trades, to the *traje*, or dress. The Spanish citizens who settled this remote land, called *Californios*, were working-class people, most of mixed race, who came to spend their lives settling the wilderness. Many were soldiers in the army, who were paid, not so much in money (the government didn't want to encourage their gambling habits), as in supplies and the promise of a land grant after 10 years of service. The Mexican viceroy, on behalf of the King, Carlos III of Spain, funded the whole scheme in order to provide supply ports for the Manila galleons returning from Asia, and a buffer zone of Spanish settlements, between the English, French, and Russian ships in the Pacific Ocean and the rich silver mines in what is now northern Mexico. The viceroy's goal was to get the most service out of the people and the land at the least expense, so California was never well-supplied by the government in Mexico City, as the letters of the mission padres, the presidio commanders, the local *alcaldes* (magistrates) and the Governor in Monterey attest.

California remained a relatively poor and isolated land until 1824, with one or two Spanish galleons arriving approximately once a year with supplies and news from Mexico City for the Governor in Monterey, the padres at the Missions, and the officers at the presidios. Other residents could order things from Spain, if they could pay the high taxes and prices, but many ships were wrecked sailing around South America, and many shipments never arrived. All of these shipments stopped completely after 1810 because of the Mexican War for Independence; all Spanish supply and trade ships were commandeered for the war effort and not permitted to sail to California, and Spain hadn't extended free trade yet. Trade and supplies didn't resume shipment to California until around 1824, when the new Mexican Governor arrived with the astonishing news that California was no longer under Spanish rule.

As a result, without a body of wealthy citizens to commission portraits of themselves and their neighbors,



"Women in Baja California", Ignacio Tirsch, *Codex Pictorius Mexicanus* 1762. National Library of the Czech Republic, Prague. Accessed from Manuscriptorium.com

there are only a few images of the people who lived in California before 1824; most are sketches done by a traveling priest, Father Ignacio Tirsch, and all show people who lived in Southern California and the Baja

California peninsula. There are no known garments remaining from that time period that can be studied, so in re-creating a *Californio* costume from the Spanish period, quite a bit of extrapolation is necessary. To find out what was worn, the costume historian can start with the documents; general clothing information can be found in the records kept by the mission padres, the presidio officers, and the governor. These lists were created when settlement groups left for California (and received supplies for the trip), when they arrived (and settlement supplies were doled out to everyone), and again whenever more government supplies arrived. It can be assumed that the people would have made their clothes according to the pattern used by the lower and middle classes of northern Mexico.



Native Californians lassoing a steer_, by Auguste Ferra, Bancroft Library

One record from Baja California in 1725 indicates that the following items were purchased and provided for the presidio and pueblo settlers in that area: men's linen shirts, cotton hose, silk hose, and hats; women's underpetticoats, long silk stockings, short silk stockings, short cotton stockings, rebozos, and shoes; cotton, linen, and wool cloth; also, Flanders lace, fine silk, Chinese brocade, ribbons, fancy patterned banding materials, silk and cotton thread, silk knitting yarn, combs, gold wire loop earrings, pearl beads, and coral (for beads). The silks and lace would have been used by the regional Governor and his family, and perhaps the highest-ranking official at the presidio, but generally not by the rest of the settlers and soldiers and their families.

The first settlement party to present-day (Alta) California, led by Juan Bautista de Anza, traveled between 1775 and 1776, and Captain Anza and the priest Father Pedro Font kept journals of the trip, including a few clothing details. Anza's supply list for the 240 or so people on the expedition included these items: "Wardrobe for a Man" – 3 shirts of good Silesian linen, 3 pairs of underdrawers of Puebla cloth, 2 cloth coats with lining and trimmings, 2 pairs of trousers with lining and trimmings, 2 pairs of stockings, 2 pairs of chamois-skin boots, 3 pairs of gaiter shoes, 1 cloth cape lined with thick flannel, 1 hat, 1 ribbon for the hat and hair. "Wardrobe for a Woman" – 3 shirts, 3 pairs of white Puebla petticoats, 2 pairs of petticoats (silk serge and thick flannel) and an underskirt, linen cloth for jackets, 2 pairs of Brussels stockings, 2 pairs of hose, 2 pairs of shoes, 2 shawls, 1 hat, 6 varas of ribbon. Children's clothing supplies included Puebla cloth for linings, petticoats, and white trousers, thick flannel for "little petticoats", linen for shirts, other unidentified cloth, hats, shoes, shawls, and ribbon for bands.



"Mule driver and his wife taking cloth to the mission at Monterey", Ignacio Tirsch, Codex Pictorius Mexicanus, 1762. National Library of the Czech Republic, Prague. Accessed from Manuscriptorium.com

To find out what these garments looked like, the costume historian should focus on the sketches from Father Ignacio Tirsch, along with some from northern Mexico (the birthplace of all of the settlers – mostly from Sinaloa and Sonora) ca. 1775, and only consult illustrations from the rest of Mexico, Central and South America when looking for different views of a garment or style seen in one of the California pictures. Simple European patterns for things like generic petticoats and shirts can be used as well. Many styles shown in Central and South American images represent what was worn locally, but not in California, since California had so little contact with present-day Mexico, and basically no contact with the rest of the Spanish Empire. Apart from the sketches, the most helpful source of detailed illustrations is a genre of portraiture called *casta* paintings. *Casta*, or "Caste," paintings were a uniquely Spanish and Portuguese art form, combining the Enlightenment's obsession with categorization, and the Iberian peoples' experience with racial, religious and cultural identification and segregation, through centuries of Moorish, and then

Christian, rule. These paintings are structured in a kind of grid system, with sets of vignettes, usually 4 across, and 4 down the canvas; each scene shows a man, woman, and child, from various (racial and socio-economic) *castas*, in typical costume and settings, illustrating the major "pure-blood" *castas*:



illustrating the major "pure-blood" *castas*: (*Español*), Indian (*Indio*), and African or Moorish/Middle Eastern (*Negro* or *Moro*), and the *casta* which results when these races mix, and then each further *casta* when the mixed-race *castas* mix. In most of the Spanish Empire, the *casta* labeled not only racial background, but it determined the legal, financial, and social status of the individual; in California, the *casta* designations were not so strictly

Black and Spaniard makes Mulatto_, Mexican, unknown artist, c. 1780, Collection Malu and Alejandra Escandon, Mexico City.

applied, and as long as you were moderately prosperous and lived as a Spaniard (i.e. according to Spanish culture), you had the same rank as the other citizens who owned the same amount of property, no matter what your racial background was. Wealth, rather than pure Spanish blood, was reflected in the clothing of the *Californio* population.

So, in analyzing the images of early Spanish-era *Californio* women, these are the common clothing elements: white linen *camisa* (women's shirt) with medium-high neckline (no cleavage) edged with 2-inch ruffle, with full elbow-length sleeves edged with 2-inch ruffle that shows under the jacket sleeves; fitted wool or linen *cuero* or *chaqueta* (bodice or jacket), with medium-high round or square neckline (no cleavage showing), pointed front waist, stiffened with light boning and/or cording in front and at body seams, elbow-length sleeves with 3- to 4-inch ruffle, hip-length



Jose Agustin Arrieta _La Sorpresa_ 1850.

peplum/skirt attached to the back and sides of bodice waist edge, laced over a dark/contrasting stomacher, or laced or possibly hook/eye fastened closed at center front; two (non-ruffled) ankle-length *faldas*, or petticoats, in solid colors (wealthier women are shown in cotton print petticoats), including red – often with white cotton or linen yoke from the waist to the hips and red wool or other color from there to the hem; black or white cotton or wool stockings and plain brown or black leather shoes with low heels; solid colored, or white, or striped, cotton or linen *rebozo* (rectangular cloth veil or shawl), or lace *mantilla* (large rectangular or triangular veil worn by wealthier women) -- no cap, hat or bonnet -- covering the head, and wrapped around the shoulders and neck; hair braided and wound around the head (perhaps like Renaissance hair taping) under the *rebozo* or *mantilla*, or (for Native women at the missions and pueblos) braided in one or two braids and hanging down the back. Accessories include a white or colored apron with rounded bottom edges, edged with wide bias ruffle (or no ruffle for poorer women), maybe a crucifix on a black ribbon around the neck or a coral bead necklace, and delicate dangling earrings for wealthier women. Native women at the pueblos are shown wearing a solid color petticoat, with a white linen *camisa* (no jacket), a solid color *rebozo*, and no shoes or stockings. Women of African descent are often shown wearing a *manga* – a mantle that looks like a full skirt – over their shoulders, on top of their *camisa*, *chaqueta* and *falda*, and a colored and/or striped scarf wrapped around their hair, turban-like.

Use these elements for the early Spanish-era *Californio* man's clothing: white linen or cotton *camisa* (men's shirt) – no ruffles except for the Governor -- and *calzoncillos*, (long-leg drawers) as underclothes; dark wool or thin leather *pantalones* or trousers, that are left open at the side seam from the knees down (tied around the leg with leather thongs when on horseback); a dark wool, skirted, *abrigo*, or jacket-coat with long sleeves and metal buttons to fasten center front; a colorful, striped, fringed, wool *serape*, or large rectangular blanket-cape, worn over it, either draped over one shoulder, or with a hole in the middle for the head, the ends either hanging down front and back, or one end hanging down the back with the front piece swung across the body and over one shoulder to hang down the back; white, black, or natural wool or cotton stockings and brown or black leather shoes or boots with metal spurs on the heels; a clean-shaven face; hair perhaps

shoulder-length, but slicked back from the face and tied into a queue with a black ribbon and bow; wide-brimmed leather or straw hat held on with leather chin strap; leather *cinturón*, or belt, and wide red wool or cotton *faja*, or sash, around the waist. Wealthier ranch owners are shown with ruffles on their



"California soldier and his daughter",

Ignacio Tirsch, Codex Pictorius Mexicanus, 1762.

National Library of the Czech Republic, Prague. Accessed from Manuscriptorium.com

shirt fronts, more colors woven or embroidered on their *serapes*, and silver coin buttons on their trousers. Native men at the pueblos are generally shown in shabbier versions of the above, minus the metal buttons

and embroidery. Military men, of course, wore their army-issued uniforms of blue and red wool.



Vaquero_ by James Walker, ca. 1885, Bancroft Library
Jose Agustin Arrieta _La Sorpresa_ 1850

The Native Californians, except for those at the missions, are always described as being completely or partially naked, except for some bead jewelry and feather ornaments; generally, the men and children were completely naked, and the women wore skirts made of grasses or leaves, with the addition of animal skin capes in cold weather. Some of the men (around Monterey) are described as having beards, and some have no facial hair, while the women have long hair, except for some north San Francisco Bay residents who wear theirs cut short in a blunt chin-length bob, with a straight fringe over the forehead. Many people seem to have worn decorative and symbolic face and body paint. The Spanish gave out glass beads as trade goods and gifts to all the Native Californians that they met. Native men and women at the missions were given a woolen hip-length tunic and a blanket; men also received a breechcloth and women also received a wool petticoat. After 1824, under Mexican law, the central government basically ignored California, but the *Californios* were given free trade and loosened domestic business regulations; when the Missions were secularized, some people received large grants of good Mission land from the government, and were able to become self-sufficient and even begin to accumulate wealth. They used their wealth (in hides and tallow) to purchase manufactured goods that were brought to California on international trade ships every few weeks or so, on average, but most ranch owners didn't live in aristocratic style until much later. Many of the Native people who had been part of the Mission system stayed on the land and became the servants of the

wealthier ranch owners, but by the 1830s, this state of society was still really new and changing. Americans, English, and other non-Hispanic immigrants began to arrive in small numbers at this time, and generally adopted *Californio* fashions, taking Spanish names and joining the Catholic Church, as well as becoming Mexican citizens, purchasing rancho land, or marrying into land-owning families and inheriting it.

Although the newly prosperous ranch owners tried to imitate what they knew of the lifestyle of the *hidalgos*, or aristocracy in Spain and Mexico, California's remoteness made that difficult. Fashion, especially for women, borrowed certain ideas from mainstream European styles, but lagged by 5 to 10 years in most details, and retained certain old-fashioned elements much longer. With free trade, luxurious silks and other manufactured fabrics from Asia and the United States became widely available – Richard Henry Dana's account of his merchant ship's wares from 1834 includes "clothing of all kinds, boots and shoes from Lynn, calicoes and cotton from Lowell, crapes, silks; also, shawls, scarfs, necklaces, jewelry, and combs for the women" -- but the up-to-date styles of making the clothes took longer to arrive.

Dana's book, *Two Years Before the Mast* contains this description of *Californio* women's dress: "The women wore gowns of various texture — silks, crape, calicoes, &c.,—made after the European style, except that the sleeves were short, leaving the arm bare, and that they were loose about the waist, corsets not being in use. They wore shoes of kid or satin, sashes or belts of bright colors, and almost always a necklace and ear-rings. Bonnets they had none. I only saw one on the coast, and that belonged to the wife of an American sea-captain ... They wear their hair (which is almost invariably black, or a very dark brown) long in their necks, sometimes loose, and sometimes in long braids; though the married women often do it up on a high comb. Their only protection against the sun and weather is a large mantle which they put over their heads, drawing it close round their faces, when they go out of doors ... when in the house, or sitting out in front of it ... they usually wear a small scarf or neckerchief of a rich pattern. A band, also, about the top of the head, with a cross, star, or other ornament in front, is common. ... The fondness for dress among the women is excessive, and is sometimes their ruin. ... Nothing is more common than to see a woman living in a house of only two rooms, with the ground for a floor, dressed in spangled satin shoes, silk gown, high comb, and gilt, if not gold, ear-rings and necklace. " While there is some indication that some *Californio* women wore something like petticoats and un-fitted shortgowns in the 1810s and 20s, there are no images of this outfit; by the 1830s and 1840s their dress included: a full, white linen *camisa*, with medium-high neckline (no cleavage or off-the-shoulders) – ruffled or not – and elbow-length fitted sleeves (you don't see them much); no corset or stays; dark or colored wool, cotton, silk, or velvet fitted bodice (boned in front) with pointed front waistline and high or medium-high round, straight (high-shoulder to high-shoulder), or wide-V neckline (again, no cleavage or shoulders uncovered), fastening in the



Maria de Jesus Estudillo Davis_ by Leonardo Barbieri, C. 1847, Bancroft Library

back, with elbow-length or wrist-length fitted sleeves -- velvet or silk bodices trimmed with a flounce of wide black lace at the neckline and the sleeves; ankle-length full skirt (plain, or with one single wide flounce in the 1840s) that may or may not match the bodice (black velvet bodices are shown with lighter colored cotton print skirts) worn over multiple petticoats; embroidered white or colored cloth *rebozos*, black lace *mantillas*, or *mantones de Manila* -- embroidered black or white fringed silk shawls -- on the head and around the shoulders; hair parted in the center, smoothed back from the face, braided and pinned up into a bun on top of the head, ornamented with a high carved wood or tortiseshell comb, or *peineta*, under the *mantilla* and perhaps a black ribbon across the forehead; white silk or cotton stockings and black leather or colored satin shoes with low heels (like ballet flats); small gold earrings (hoops or delicate dangling earrings), thin gold chain necklaces, thin gold bracelets, and delicate gold finger rings. By the Gold Rush, however, the huge influx of non-Hispanic women influenced local style so that California women are basically indistinguishable from American women by their dress; they have adopted hoops and corsets, bonnets, and other Anglo fashions.



The World in California, 1856_ from Peralta Hacienda FB page

While soldiers still wore their military uniforms on a daily basis, civilian men's clothing included: a white linen *camisa*, with front placket opening that can be ruffled or not; a richly embroidered *chaleco* (waistcoat); a short, waist-length, *chaqueta*, or jacket of dark silk, calico, or wool, with long sleeves; *calzones cortos*, or knee breeches, or velveteen or wool broadcloth pantaloons, open at the side seams below the knee and decorated with gold or silver lace or other trim; white or dark stockings; dark brown deer-skin shoes, heavily decorated; a *sombrero Cordobès*, or stiff black or dark brown broad-brimmed wool or fur felt hat, with a gold or embroidered band around the crown and a silk lining under the brim; wide red sash around the waist; wool *serape*, made of black or dark blue wool broadcloth with velvet and trimmings (for the wealthy), or simpler, coarser wool, woven with various colors, shaped like a blanket with a hole in the middle for the head. Poorer men wore simpler wool and cotton jacket and trousers, with leather leggings tied on below the knee for protection when riding. Most men wore metal spurs over their shoes whenever they were outside, since they traveled on horseback everywhere.

Native men and women dressed more and more like their Hispanic counterparts, the more time they spent in the pueblos and on the ranchos. Native women in the pueblos or servants in homes are most often shown wearing a *camisa* and a petticoat, without a bodice or jacket on top; they have a plain *rebozo* and are often barefoot. Their hair pulled back in one or two long braids that are hanging down their back. Native men in the pueblos, or working as vaqueros or cowboys on the ranches, are shown dressed in wool or leather jacket and trousers, with no embroidery or other trim, over white shirt and under-drawers, with a plain wool and leather wide-brimmed hat, similar to the Spanish men of earlier eras *serape*.

By the time California entered the United States in 1850, the social and political climate of the state was radically changing. Hispanic immigrants from Mexico, Central and South America, entered California and headed to the gold mines, bringing their own culture with them. Non-Hispanic immigrants to the state no longer acclimated themselves to California's previous culture, and they competed with the *Californios* for land, status, resources, and political clout. Many *Californio* women married non-Hispanic men during this time period not only because the newcomers were different and exciting, but because to do so helped secure their property (an English-speaking man to manage their affairs as local law became much more English and American in influence) and social status. During this time, *Californio* families began to identify themselves with Spanish European culture, in opposition to the non-*Californio* residents' characterization of all Hispanic people as Mexican and



The Mark of Zorro _ movie poster starring Douglas Fairbanks, 1920. Wikipedia, public domain.

therefore "non-white". *Californios* began to wear the same styles and garments that other Americans wore. In 1884, Helen Hunt Jackson's novel "Ramona" was published, set in a romanticized "Old California", and cast a Native American man and Spanish orphan woman as "star-crossed lovers"; part of Jackson's goal for the book was to make a statement against the mistreatment of the Native Americans in California, but most readers saw it as an appealing love story set in a faraway time, setting the stage for "Zorro" to appear in print and on screen a generation later. The American premiere of Bizet's opera *Carmen*, in 1878, and the popularity of "Old West" shows, also possibly contributed to the romantic late 19th century-to-early 20th century idea of "Old Spanish" costume.

Current ideas of "Old California" clothing are influenced mostly by the "Zorro" romances and the movies made from them. Set in the 1820s and 1830s, possibly inspired by the Gold Rush-era bandits Joaquin Murieta and Tiburcio Vasquez, the "Zorro" story was invented in 1919 with the pulp fiction Robin Hood-

style adventure "The Curse of Capistrano," by Johnston McCulley, who had been a reporter for a sensationalist police news rag. Published in book form (with the title *The Mark of Zorro*), and put on the silver screen in 1920 by Mary Pickford and Douglas Fairbanks, the story's characters were dressed in a romanticized combination of Spanish Gypsy flamenco costume, mainland Mexican traditional dress, and elements of Edwardian fashion, such as women wearing flowing white gowns trimmed with lace, embroidery, and ruffles. Embroidered and lace *mantillas*, flowers and tall *peinetas* in the hair, very full skirts, fluttering fans, touches of bright colors, and theatrically coquettish behavior, along with Zorro's mysterious black mask, black tights, black pirate shirt, black Three Musketeer-style cape, and dashing swordplay, gave an impression of old-fashioned romance and drama, with a touch of the exotic; it became wildly popular with audiences, and was accepted by many into the "legend" of California's past, although it was only loosely inspired by reality. More than 60 more Zorro stories were written and published between 1922 and 1959, fueling the story's popularity.

Early 20th century "Spanish California" women's clothing elements include full, white cotton "peasant blouses" trimmed with ruffles and lace at the low, gathered neckline (shoulders and some cleavage might be visible) and puffed, short (elbow or bicep-length) sleeves, sometimes trimmed with brightly colored rickrack or embroidery in floral patterns; very full, mid-calf length, white or colored, gathered cotton skirts with flounces and ruffles, trimmed with lace and brightly colored embroidery; colored fabric sash, knotted at the hip, with long fringed ends; white or black stockings and black leather Mary Jane or T-strap shoes



Marguerite de la Motte as Lolita in *The Mark of Zorro*, 1920.

with curved "Cuban" heels; gold chain or long pearl necklaces with gold crucifix pendants, gold hoop or small dangling earrings, multiple gold wire bracelets on the arms, small gold rings on at least one finger; colorfully-embroidered, fringed, triangular white or black silk or rayon "Spanish" (really Phillipine Island) shawls; hair slicked back into a high bun on the back of the head, or bobbed very short to the nape of the neck and slicked back, with short, glossy, pomaded stylized curls at the temples; large fancy *peineta* in the top of the bun with a long black lace mantilla draped over the top; and 1920s-style makeup: pale face with dark red Cupid's-bow lips and "smoky" dark eyeliner and shadow.



screenshot from The Mark of Zorro with Douglas Fairbanks, 1920.

Early 20th century "Spanish California" men's clothing elements include full, white cotton "peasant" or "pirate" shirt with ruffles down the front neck opening, a falling "poet's" collar, and long, full sleeves with cuffs; short (waist-length or shorter), dark cotton, wool, or leather "bolero" jacket, with long sleeves, sleeve seams left open from wrist to mid-forearm, decorated with silver or white embroidery and silver "coin" buttons around the sleeve edges, neck, front and hem edges, worn open at the front; thin, black "bolo" tie or cravat with long ends that hang down over the shirt to the waist; tight high-waisted breeches or fitted trousers with a buttoned fall-front, decorated with colored trim and/or silver "coin" buttons down the side seams, slightly flared or left open a few inches from above the ankle to the hem (which is just at the ankle bone); white stockings and low black leather shoes; wide colorful sash worn around the waist, tied at the hip, with long fringed ends hanging down the side, with a fancy leather belt over it (at an angle) to hold pistol holsters; colorful or black, voluminous serape, embroidered, worn so that both long ends hang down the back like a cape; stiff, black, wide-brimmed, flat-topped hat with black cord chin strap; hair cut very short at the nape of the neck and slicked back with a side part or no part, with lots of pomade, to be very glossy; and a clean-shaven face, or perhaps a dramatic "swooping" moustache, heavily pomaded

Early 20th century "Spanish California" Native American men and women are portrayed either as wearing plainer versions of the clothing worn by their Spanish employers, or in white cotton shirts and pantaloons (men), or white cotton blouses and petticoats, with *rebozos* (women). Historian David Rickman said in an e-mail that the "white pajama" look was a myth invented in the 19th century by a church historian. On another note, Rickman reminds us that the Fransiscan padres wore grey robes, not brown – which didn't become universal until 1898 – and that the grey robes were actually made from a black wool twill crossed with

white wool, that appeared grey at a distance. He recommends contacting La Purisima Mission State Historic Park for more information about the padres' clothes. There is a lot of information out there, but it requires a lot of analysis and comparison with other sources in order to create a historically accurate 18th century, 19th century, or early 20th century "Old California" costume!



The Mark of Zorro_ photoplay scene with Douglas Fairbanks, 1920

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Elizabeth comes from a line of home and professional seamstresses, and has been a costume and history nerd since she was in high school. Her obsession with costume history began in 1998 when she interned as a research assistant at a costume shop, Vintage Reflections (now closed) in San Jose, and she joined the GBACG soon afterwards. She has been a living history re-enactor and historic dressmaker since then, making almost every costume piece that she owns and wears, and is also a collections volunteer with History San Jose, specializing in historic textiles and costume. She has also been a theater costumer since 2007, especially with Lyric Theatre of San Jose and Portraits of the Past, and a free-lance writer who blogs about costume, food, and domestic history at The Cup That Cheers, <http://the-cup-that-cheers.blogspot.com/>.

President's Letter



Happy Spring, everyone!

You know what Spring means, right? Picnics! We have five lovely picnics planned this year, all proposed and hosted by YOU, our lovely members. Picnics are a fantastic venue for costume. They're low-cost, wonderfully family friendly, and have plenty of room for everyone who wants to come. Historical summer clothes are so light and lovely, and a nice break from our winter silks and woolens. So please come join us at Cordonices Park in Berkeley for some mid-20th century Baseball fun on May 3. Prefer 19th century? Come to the Peralta Adobe for our early California picnic with Zorro on June 14. Not elegant enough for you? How about our Edwardian Summer Whites picnic and lawn bowling on July 19? Too elegant? Then come to the beach, Regency style, for our

Brighton by the Sea picnic on September 19. Or is all of that outdoor wholesomeness too darned cheerful? Then come to our Victorian mourning picnic at Colma's historic Cypress Lawn cemetery on November 15, and tour the ranks of the dearly departed in a horse-drawn carriage and view one of the largest collections of stained glass in the country. Thanks to the ingenuity and hard work of our volunteer hosts, we can offer something for everyone.

I hope to see you all at a picnic this year!

Catherine Scholar
GBACG President

Calendar of Events

For the complete calendar, please see our website www.gbacg.org



[Strawvaganza - Block a straw hat with Wayne Wichern](#)

Saturday, April 4th AND Saturday, April 11th, 2015

Learn how to block and finish a straw hat from Master Milliner, Wayne Wichern.



[Barbecue At Twelve Oaks](#) Saturday, April 18th, 2015 [The Rengstorff House](#) in

Mountain View provides an elegant backdrop for a gracious 1860's style fully catered barbeque. Will you sit at a table, or in a crowd of men on the grass?

Ticket Price: \$\$



GBACG Lecture: Top it Off! Hats from the Regency to the Gilded Age

Sunday, April 26th, 2015

Day and evening hats and headdresses for the major eras of the 19th century is the focus of our upcoming lecture by Lynn McMasters, costumer and proprietor of "Out of a Portrait."

Ticket Price: \$



A League of Their Own Reunion Picnic

Sunday, May 3rd, 2015

Calling all Rockford Peaches, Kenosha Comets, and Racine Belles! Support the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League (1943-1954) at a reunion picnic for players, fans and families. Whether you play or prefer to spectate in 1950's style, you can't go wrong at this t-ball game and picnic in an East Bay park.

Ticket price: \$



GBACG goes to BAERS Congress Of Vienna Ball

Saturday, May 30, 2015

The Bay Area English Regency Society celebrates the Bicentennial of the Congress of Vienna, which united Europe in a rage for the new and scandalous waltz. The Ball will also feature easy set dances, taught and called by our esteemed Dance Master, Alan Winston. Diplomats of tiny imaginary countries especially encouraged.

Costume 1795 - 1825.

Advance Ticket Info



GBACG Goes To: PEERS - Doctor Who Time Travels to 1756

Saturday, June 6th, 2015

Don your 18th century dance wear. Doctor Who travels through the fireplace to Madame du Pompadour's Grand Costume ball at [this PEERS dance](#) in the stunning Alameda Elks Lodge.

Ticket Price: \$

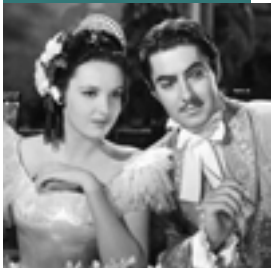


Costume Salon: Edwardian

Sunday, June 7th, 2015

Join us for potluck tea, snacks, socializing, and sharing resources. Theme appropriate books, patterns, garments and projects are welcome. No costume is required. If you'd like to attend, email costumesalons@gbacg.org.

Ticket Price: Free



Zorro Rescues the Peralta Adobe

Sunday, June 14th, 2015

Picnic in pre-gold-rush California style at [Peralta Adobe](#) where you will, perhaps, encounter an enigmatic stranger in a distinctive sombrero cordobés. Costume is 1830's and 40's, or Californio.

Ticket Price: \$

Finery is the newsletter of the Greater Bay Area Costumers Guild, an educational group dedicated to all aspects of costume and textile arts, and is published bi-monthly. The next deadline for submissions is 5/15/15. For details about submitting articles, please see our website at www.gbacg.org, or contact the editor, Robin McGann, at newsletter@gbacg.org.