

# The Fashion Archaeologist

## Free PDF Pattern #FP-03 – 1891 Ladies' Embroidered Chemise

### *“Chemise Décolletée avec Empiècement Brodé -- No. 2”*

This pattern is offered free of charge to give you an opportunity to try PDF printing and assembly before purchasing a full-size pattern. The pattern and translated instructions are copyright, for your personal use, not to be copied, re-sold, or used for commercial garment production purposes.

Below is some information to help with constructing the patterned item, including a copy of the original French sketch and text, as well as my translation.

#### General Guidelines:

- These PDF patterns are not “full service” patterns, they are taken directly from the antique pattern sheets as free trial patterns. They do **not** include seam allowances – you will need to add your own allowances appropriate to the fabric and item type. The lines shown are the seam lines only.
- On some patterns, the garment or item pieces may be superimposed, to make the best use of the relatively small space on the scan. Where this is so, you will need to trace off the pattern pieces separately after printing the PDF pattern out on paper. Pieces are marked with the original Figure numbers, to match the antique French text.
- Some lines on these patterns may need to be “trued up” slightly before cutting out. Also, the antique sizing may not be what you might expect -- allow for this when cutting out. It's always best to make a mock-up out of inexpensive fabric before cutting the pattern from your fashion fabric.
- Other than translations of any existing antique sewing instructions, you may need to work out the order of construction and sewing methods on your own. Bear in mind that some patterns may only need to be cut once; others may have to be cut twice. This may not always be clear from the antique text.
- Pay careful attention to the letters or numbers marked at corners, etc. on the patterns – these show which edges are to be matched up when sewing, or they will relate to something mentioned in the antique text.
- Watch for additional notations on the patterns themselves which will assist in construction or finishing.

#### Notes for This Pattern:

This is a classic late Victorian chemise with a back and front yoke into which the body of the chemise is gathered. The chemise buttons at each shoulder. The embroidery design is shown on the next page, but can be replaced or omitted entirely. The embroidery should be done at the centre of the Yoke Front (see 1891 sketch). Purchased eyelet trim can be used instead of the hand-embroidered edging around the chemise. You will need to elongate the sides of the chemise Front and Back patterns to suit your preferences and fit.

For your convenience, my translation of the 1891 French text is also included below. My own clarifying notes are in square brackets. The original French text is on the following page, along with a copy of the 1891 fashion sketch of this item. Recommend fabrics are fine-grained lightweight linen, or crisp cotton percale. The fabric must have sufficient body and crispness to take embroidery well on a single layer.

The pattern pieces on the PDF are as follows. Pay attention to the various markings on the pieces:

Fig. 8 Back Yoke

Fig. 9 Chemise Back

Fig. 10 Front Yoke

Fig. 11 Chemise Front

Fig. 12 Sleeve

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Cut the Front Yoke, Chemise Front (Figs. 10 & 11), and Back Yoke and Chemise Back (Figs. 8 & 9)\*, as well as the Sleeves, from fine linen. Elongate both sides of the Chemise Back and Front in the direction of the arrows indicated on the pattern. The [centre of the Yoke Front], the top edge of the Yoke Front and Back, and the outside edges of the Sleeves, are trimmed in Madeira embroidery [= Eyelet embroidery, or Broderie anglaise] executed as indicated in the embroidery designs. Assemble the Chemise [according to the numbers in the corners and edges]: [First], gather across the Chemise Front from the dot [on one side] to the dot [on the other]; gather the Chemise Back in the same way, from the double dot to double dot. [NOTE: You will need to adjust the gathers on both pieces to fit onto the bottom of the respective Yokes]. Attach the Yokes. Sew the Sleeves into the armscyes after assembling them by matching the asterisk/star (\*) mark to the double-dot mark. Sew a button on each shoulder edge [of the Chemise Back] and work a corresponding buttonhole [into the shoulder area of Chemise Front].

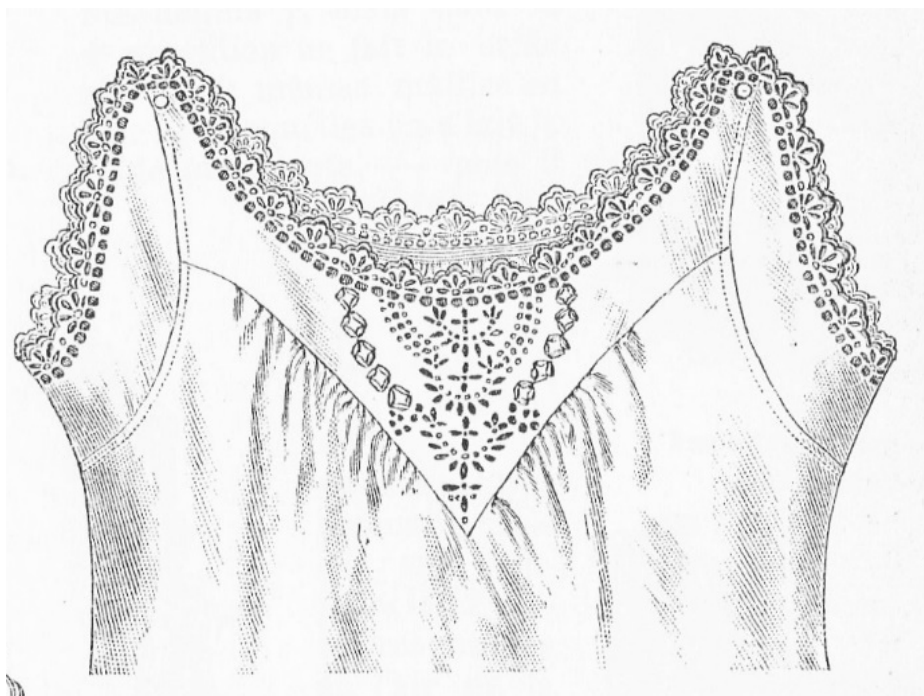
[You will obviously need to properly finish all seams and edges according to your preferences. Historical undergarments of this era generally had their main side seams sewn as French seams, and the other attachment seams were carefully overcast to prevent fraying, as these items had to withstand frequent washing.]

**\*NOTE:** The French instructions refer to Figures 7 and 8; these came from another pattern on the 1891 sheet. I've re-numbered these two pieces so that they run consecutively with the rest of the pattern pieces here.

Original (1891) French text:

On coupe en toile fine l'empiècement et la chemise par devant, ainsi que l'empiècement et la chemise par derrière, entiers d'après chacune des figures 10 et 11, 7 et 8 (voir ci-dessus), on coupe la manche d'après la figure 12; on prolonge la chemise dans le sens de la direction des flèches; on garnit l'empiècement et la manche avec une broderie de madère exécutée d'après les indications des dessins; on assemble la chemise. On fronce celle-ci devant depuis le point au point, derrière depuis le double point au double point, on la garnit avec l'empiècement; on coud les manches dans les entournures après les avoir assemblées depuis l'étoile au double point, on fixe sur chaque épaule un bouton et une boutonnière.

**1891 Fashion Sketch** [See embroidery designs on next page]



NOTE: The embroidery patterns below are not necessary life-size. You may need to either enlarge or reduce them to fit properly on the Chemise.

**1. Centre Embroidery (for Yoke Front)**



**2. Embroidered Edging:**

