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Romanticism



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Romanticism is a term used to describe a movement in art, literature, and music which started in England and spread to the rest of Europe and the United States during the 1800's. This movement valued freedom of expression and was a rebellion against classical rules that limited creative work, romanticists believed that emotions should be expressed through art. This Romantic Era caused several changes in women's fashion; one of these changes could be seen in the fullness of skirts which increased during this decade. This also helped to put an emphasis on a narrow waist and was matched at the top of dresses with extremely large and puffy sleeves; there were overall several changes to the silhouette of dresses during this era.

A popular look during this era was adding decorations to the sleeves and hemlines of dresses which could sometimes be very elaborate and extreme. This could be anything from embroidery, ruffles, ruching or puffs. Even with all of these decorations on the sleeves the shoulders on dresses were extremely large and exaggerated. The gigot sleeve was popular during this era, this means there would be a large puff at the shoulder and a more tight fitting sleeve along the arm. Just like sleeves during this era the hemlines of skirts were decorated and had an exaggerated size, as seen in the pictures above. The necklines of dresses varied somewhat, there were round, squared and v necks on dresses, but if a neckline was very deep or revealing underneath a chemisette would be worn. A chemisette is a piece of clothing that covers the neckline and can feature collars or ruffles, this gives the appearance that a shirt is being worn underneath a blouse. A popular accessory at time were hats which could look extremely elaborate and decorated. The hats could be decorated in large ribbons, flowers, and lace as well as having decorations attached to the brim of the hat.