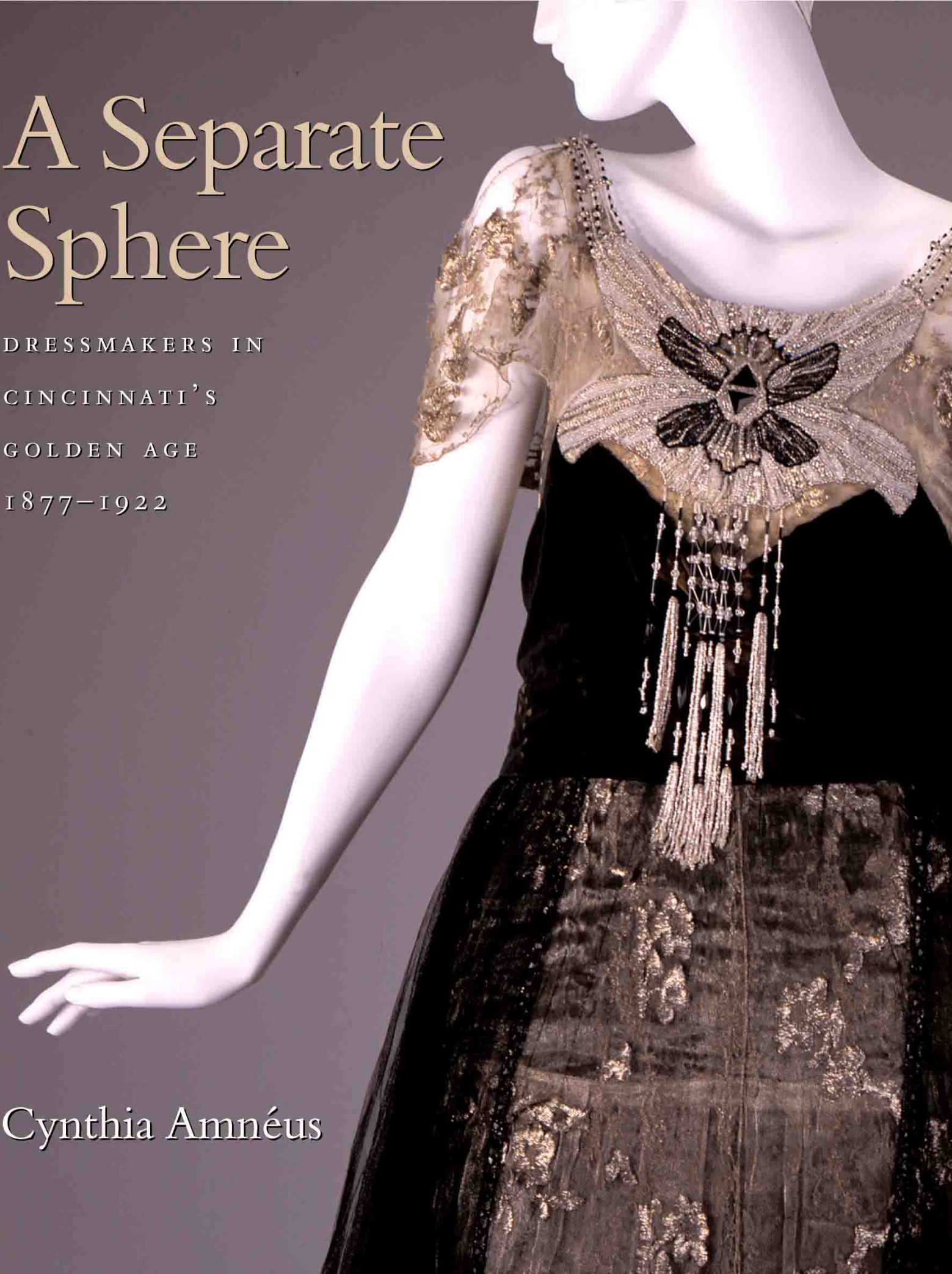


A Separate Sphere

DRESSMAKERS IN
CINCINNATI'S
GOLDEN AGE
1877-1922

Cynthia Amnéus





A Separate Sphere

DRESSMAKERS IN CINCINNATI'S
GOLDEN AGE

Cynthia Annéus

With essays by Marla R. Miller, Anne Bissonnette, and Shirley Teresa Wajda

*Cincinnati Art Museum
Texas Tech University Press*





Contents

<i>Foreword</i>	ix	5 Cincinnati's Dressmakers	78
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	xi	6 Ready-Made Garments and the Rise of the Department Store	137
Dressmaking as a Trade for Women: Recovering a Lost Artisanry	1	<i>Conclusion</i>	167
MARLENE MILLER		The 1870s Transformation of the <i>Rôle de Chambre</i>	169
Dressmakers in Cincinnati's Golden Age, 1877–1922: An Introduction	7	ANNE BISSONNETTE	
1 The Ideology of the Separate Sphere	10	"A Kind of Missionary Work": The Labor and Legacy of Cincinnati's Society Women, 1877–1922	175
<i>The Separate Sphere and the Women's Rights Movement in the Lattin Hall of the Nineteenth Century</i>	21	SHIRLEY VERENA WAJDA	
<i>Summary</i>	29	<i>Appendix: Dressmakers' Labels</i>	189
2 Women in the Workplace	31	<i>Notes</i>	195
3 Dressmaking as a Trade	43	<i>Bibliography</i>	203
<i>The Importance of Fashionable Dress</i>	44	<i>Index</i>	212
<i>A "Natural" Occupation</i>	45		
<i>Dressmaking as a Woman's Trade</i>	53		
<i>The Wages of the Seam</i>	59		
4 Cincinnati: A Historical Perspective	68		
<i>A Cultural Perspective</i>	75		

Copyright © 2009 Cincinnati Art Museum

All rights reserved. No portion of this book may be reproduced in any form or by any means, including electronic, magnetic, and retrieval systems, except by explicit prior written permission of the publisher, except for brief passages excerpted for review and critical purposes.

This book is printed on Recycled, 50% paper and is the first book in the Cincinnati Department of Arts & Culture's *Art in the City* series.

Dressmaker: Martha Weston

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data
Cincinnati, Ohio.

Separate sphere: dressmakers in Cincinnati's golden age, 1877–1922 / Cynthia Annison—with essays by Anne Bissonnette, Marleene Miller, and Shirley Verena Wajda.
p. cm.

Published in conjunction with the exhibition *A Separate Sphere: Dressmakers in Cincinnati's Golden Age, 1877–1922* organized by the Cincinnati Art Museum, October 12, 2009–January 4, 2010. Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0-89612-071-5 (hbk. alk. paper)
ISBN 0-89612-072-2 (pbk. alk. paper)
1. Dressmaking—Ohio—Cincinnati—History—19th century—Exhibitions. 2. Dressmaking—Ohio—Cincinnati—History—19th century—Exhibitions. 3. Cincinnati, Ohio—History—19th century—Exhibitions. I. Annison, Cynthia. II. Title.

E1194.4 .A45 2009
969.7'1077290014—dc22

200904009

China/Book Circulation Dept.
Box 28777
Libbyco, Tenn 37409-1077 USA
404-882-4042
tsp@tm.usda
www.tsp.usda

01 04 08 09 02 05 06 09 11 7
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11

Manufactured in China at Freshen Printing Company

Promoted by Kate R. Coniglin (603) 873-0223
Reception Desk: 404-882-4042; Call of Mrs. Robert
S. Allen: 404-882-4224

The Cincinnati Art Museum gratefully acknowledges the generous support of the exhibition "A Separate Sphere: Dressmakers in Cincinnati's Golden Age, 1877–1922" by the Cincinnati Art Museum, October 12, 2009 through January 4, 2010.

The Cincinnati Art Museum would like to thank the Friends of Fashion, particularly their chair members: Mrs. J. Gordon Brown, Mrs. Catherine M. Mary Light Meyer, and Mrs. Richard Thayer.

The Cincinnati Art Museum gratefully acknowledges the generous opening support provided by the Fine Arts Fund, the Ohio Arts Council, the Friends of Museum and Gallery Services and the City of Cincinnati.

Conservation of works in the exhibition was supported by the generosity of the James H. Brown & Co.

The Cincinnati Art Museum would like to thank the following organizations for their generous sponsorship of the "A Separate Sphere: Dressmaker" by the Cincinnati Art Museum, Inc., Boston & Co., 1908 Brown Field, LLC, and United Bank, Services and Design, LLC.





I

The Ideology of the Separate Sphere

DURING THE CLOSING decades of the eighteenth century, the idea that men and women operated within separate spheres as a result of inherent physical and mental differences became increasingly central in American thought. According to this ideology, man's sphere of influence was the public realm, "dedicated to production, competition and material gain."¹ Woman, the weaker sex, was relegated to the private sphere of the home. Her role was domestic: caring for the home and the children, and embodying for her family—and for society at large—the moral ideals of virtue and beauty. The contemporary generalization that Victorian women were decorative objects who spent their days sipping tea and attending soirées is a direct result of the ideology of the separate sphere.

Notions of women's general inferiority did not originate in the Victorian era. These ideas were based on the fusion of classical, Christian, and Germanic traditions of the early Middle Ages, which spawned western European culture.² In the Victorian era, however, we first encounter the idea that men's and women's work occupied different

spheres. This new ideology supported and maintained a rigid separation between work done in the home and that performed outside the home.

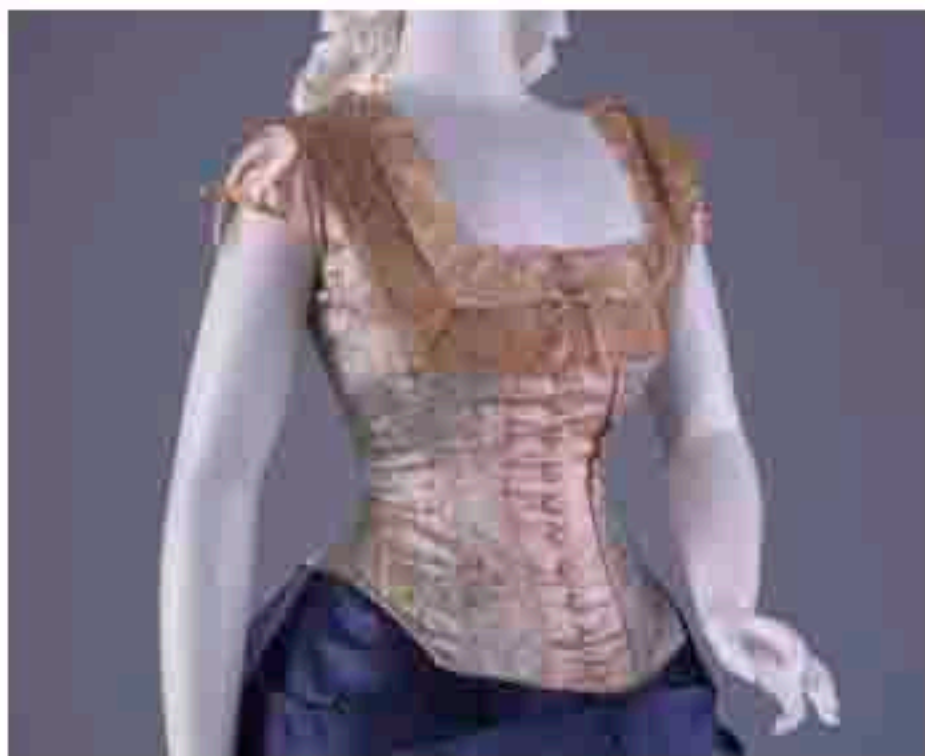
Settlers who crossed the Atlantic to the New World brought with them their cultural conviction that women were inherently inferior and therefore subservient to men. The law upheld this conviction. Under common law, married women suffered civil death. Once married, they held no legal rights to property and had no legal standing or existence apart from their husbands. Yet even while women were both ideologically and economically dependent, they figured substantially in the success of men's ventures. In fact, the puritanical colonists encouraged and even expected unmarried women to work. Believing industry to be a virtue and idleness a sin, authorities punished those who did not work. Working women were expected to help defray community expenses by paying a poll tax, but women contributed far more than taxes to colonial society.

Colonial America was an agrarian economy characterized by the small-scale



DATE: Y1W: Alma
Humbach: *Affirmor*
Dress: 1002: 1075: 32a.b
See page 130.





he had recognized the wealth that could be accrued in the pork business and was probably raising hogs, a lucrative venture in Cincinnati. Despite his erratic career changes, upon his death in 1880, Morris Cadwallader left his wife and three children an estate appraised at approximately \$110,000, to be divided between them—a significant sum roughly equivalent to \$1,837,000 today.²⁶

The Cadwalladers lived at 49 East Fourth Street, in the heart of the most fashionable area of downtown Cincinnati. East Fourth Street was the city's shopping and social center; here, the H. & S. Pogue Company, established in 1863, sold dry goods, millinery, and other fancy goods, such as dressmaking fabrics and trims. Also, the Mabley & Carew Company, another high-end retailer, was located on the corner of Fifth and Vine Streets. The John Shillito Company was nearby on Race Street. Dahme & Company, at the corner of Fourth and Walnut, catered to discriminating customers who wished to purchase fine china, jewelry, and silver. A. B. Clomon, Jr. and Company on West Fourth Street sold the paintings of local artists Frank Duveneck, Henry Farnley, and Joseph Sharp.

Throughout their marriage, Selina was not sitting idly at home. She was not only raising her three children, Jessie, Mary, and Selina (or Lena, as she was called), but she also operated a boarding house and a dressmaking business at the same time. Boarding houses, in the nineteenth century, often became semipermanent residences for wealthy families. Prominent women who did not wish to be bothered by the daily cares of running a household found life in a respectable boarding house a way of main-

DETAIL: Cadwallader Reception Dress, Evening Bodice, 1877–1878; 1989.12008.

Selina Cadwallader made the evening bodice for Mrs. Joseph C. Thomas to combine with the skirt made by Charles Frederick Worth, Paris.

CYRUS: Charles Frederick Worth (1825–1895), England (worked in Paris); Reception Dress, Day Bodice and Skirt, 1877–1878; silk; Label: Worth 7 RUE DE LA PAIX, PARIS; Gift of Mrs. Muriel Halstead Davidson, 1986.12006.5.



- Press, 1979), 1.
10. Joan M. Jensen and Sue Davidson, eds., *A Needle, A Bobbin, A Spoke: Women Needleworkers in America* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1984), 12.
 11. Kitchwell and Christman, *Suiting Everyone*, 15.
 12. *Ladies' Home Journal* (April 1906), 20.
 13. Otto Claifes Thoma, *With Grace and Favor: Victorian & Edwardian Fashion in America* (Cincinnati: Cincinnati Art Museum, 1991), 27.
 14. *The Ladies' Hand-Book of Millinery and Dressmaking, with Plain Instructions for Making the Most Useful Articles of Dress and Attire* (New York: J. S. Redfield, Clinton Hall, 1843), 32.
 15. Howells, 176–177.
 16. *Ladies' Home Journal* (April 1906), 20.
 17. S. A. Frost, *Art of Dressing Well: A Complete Guide* (New York: Dick & Fitzgerald, 1870).
 18. Kitchwell, *Cutting a Fashionable Fit*, 20.
 19. Simon, 50–54.
 20. *A Lady: The Workwoman's Guide* (London: Siphon, Marshall, and Company, 1838), 307.
 21. Kitchwell, *Cutting a Fashionable Fit*, 13.
 22. *Godey's Lady's Book* (July 1855), 65.
 23. Kitchwell, *Cutting a Fashionable Fit*, 16–18.
 24. Gamber, 12.
 25. Simon, 35–50.
 26. Verner.
 27. Michelle Oberly, "The Fabric: Scrapbooks of Hannah Ditzler Alspaugh," in *With Grace & Favor: Victorian & Edwardian Fashion in America* (Cincinnati: Cincinnati Art Museum, 1993), 4–13.
 28. Gamber, 12–13.
 29. *Ladies' Home Journal* (March 1891), 4.
 30. Helen L. Samner, *The History of Hosiery in Industry in the United States* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1910), 117.
 31. *Hesperus Bazar* (February 15, 1890), 124–125.
 32. *Ladies' Home Journal* (March 1891), 4.
 33. Gamber, 10.
 34. Diana de Marty, *Worth: Father of Haute Couture*, 2d ed. (New York and London: Holtens and Meier, 1990), 41–42.
 35. Caroline H. Dall, "Woman's Right to Labor," in *Low Wages and Hard Work* (Boston: Walker, Wise, and Company, 1860), 104.
 36. Gamber, 18–19.
 37. *Ibid.*, 15–17.
 38. *Ibid.*, 15.
 39. *Ibid.*, 18.
 40. Lucy Eldersveld Murphy, "Business Ladies: Midwestern Women and Enterprise, 1850–1880," *Journal of Women's History* 3 (1991): 65.
 41. Gamber, 61.
 42. *Ibid.*, 59.
 43. *Ibid.*, 53.
 44. *Democrat's Monthly Magazine* (January 1870), 24.
 45. Caroline H. Woods [Belle Oris], *The Diary of a Milliner* (New York: Hunt and Floughton, 1867), 1, 3, 5.
 46. Gamber, 46–52.
 47. Murphy, 75.
 48. *Ladies' Home Journal* (June 1887), 2.
 49. Gamber, 46.
 50. Susan Hay, "A. & L. Tinocchi: A Time Capsule Discovered," in *From Paris to Providence: Fashion, Art, and the Tinocchi Dressmaker's Shop, 1915–1947* (Providence: Rhode Island School of Design, 2000), 15.
 51. Gamber, 80.
 52. *Democrat's Monthly Magazine* (January 1870), 24.
 53. *Ladies' Home Journal* (March 1891), 4.
 54. Gamber, 74.
 55. Amelia Des Moulins, "The Dressmaker's Life Story," *Independent* 36 (1904): 944.
 56. Pamela A. Barnal, "Line, Color, Detail: Distinction, Individuality: A. L. Tinocchi, Providence Dressmaker," in *From Paris to Providence: Fashion, Art, and the Tinocchi Dressmaker's Shop, 1915–1947* (Providence: Rhode Island School of Design, 2000), 29–30.
 57. Gamber, 100.
 58. *Ibid.*, 57.
 59. *Ibid.*, 59.
 60. *Ibid.*, 84–85.
 61. *Ibid.*, 81.
 62. Christie Daily, "A Woman's Concern: Millinery in Central Iowa, 1870–1880," *Journal of the West* 21 (1982): 31.
 63. Sallye Clark, "Carrie Taylor: Kentucky Dressmaker," *DRESS: The Journal of the Costume Society of America* 3 (1980): 15.
 64. Gamber, 102–103.
 65. *Ibid.*, 105; Hay, 13.
 66. Gamber, 106–107.
 67. Susan Porter Benson, "Clients and Craftswomen: The Pursuit of Elegance," in



- From Paris to Providence: Fashion, Art, and the Tinocchi Dressmaker's Shop, 1915–1947* (Providence: Rhode Island School of Design, 2000), 63–64.
68. Clark, 19.
 69. Barnal, 29.
 70. Benson, 61–63.
 71. Des Moulins, 945.
 72. *Ladies' Home Journal* (December 1887), 3; (April 1887), 16; (February 1898), 22.
 73. *Ibid.* (February 1898), 22.
 74. *Ibid.* (October 1907), 98.
 75. Howells, 180–181.
 76. Benson, 64.
 77. Clark, 21.
 78. *Ladies' Home Journal* (March 1891), 4.
 79. Justin G. Turner and Linda Levitt Turner, *May Todd Lincoln: Her Life and Letters* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1972), 115.
 80. Murphy, 164.
 81. *Ladies' Home Journal* (June 1901), 14.
 82. Benson, 65.
 83. *Ladies' Home Journal* (June 1901), 14.
 84. Gamber, 119–120.
4. CINCINNATI: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE
1. Clara Longworth De Chaultrun, *Cincinnati: Story of The Queen City* (New York and London: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1907), 42.
 2. *Cincinnati: 200 Years in Photos and Words* (Cincinnati: Ohio Cincinnati Magazine, 1988), 201; Daniel Hurley, *Cincinnati: The Queen City* (Cincinnati: Cincinnati Historical Society, 1982), 209.
 3. Hurley, 33.
 4. Charles Carr, *Sketches and Statistics of Cincinnati in 1853* (Cincinnati: n.p., 1853), 341; Bertainx, 13.
 5. Charles Carr, *Cincinnati in 1851* (Cincinnati: William H. Moore and Company, 1851), 257.
 6. Hurley, 36–37.
 7. Sidney D. Maxwell, *Suburb of Cincinnati* (New York: Arno Press, 1974), 2.
 8. *Ibid.*, 9–10.
 9. "Cincinnati: 200 Years in Photos and Words," *Cincinnati Magazine* (1988), 94.
 10. Hurley, 86.
 11. A. O. Kraemer, *Knicker's Pictorial Cincinnati* (Cincinnati: A. O. & G. A. Kraemer, 1898), 9.
 12. Owen, 2.

13. *Ibid.*, 1.
5. CINCINNATI'S DRESSMAKERS
1. De Chaultrun, 134.
 2. *Ibid.*, 115–126.
 3. Alyin F. Harlow, *The Sewing Cincinnatians* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Company, 1950), 160.
 4. Timothy Flint, ed., *Travel in America* (New York: The Knickerbocker 2, 1833), 289–291.
 5. Lon W. Banner, *American Beauty* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984), 18; John Robert Godley, *Letters from America* (London: John Murray, 1844), 44.
 6. Banner, 19–22.
 7. *Ibid.*
 8. *Ladies' Home Journal* (June 1901), 13.
 9. Eliza Porter, *A Housewife's Experience in High Life* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 62.
 10. *Ibid.*, 276–277.
 11. *Ibid.*, 61–62.
 12. *Idler* (October 15, 1917), 35–36.
 13. Graydon DeCamp, *The Grand Old Lady of Fine Sewer* (Cincinnati: The Merten Company, 1991), 83–88.
 14. Gamber, 98.
 15. *Ohio*, vol. 83, R. G. Dun & Company Collection, Baker Library, Harvard Business School.
 16. *Ohio*, vol. 86, R. G. Dun & Company Collection, Baker Library, Harvard Business School; John J. McCusker, *How Much Is That in Real Money? An Historical Commodity Price Index for Use as a Deflator of Money Values in the Economy of the United States* (Worcester, Mass.: American Antiquarian Society, 2001), 31, 36, 39.
 17. *Ohio*, vol. 86, R. G. Dun & Company Collection, Baker Library, Harvard Business School.
 18. Patricia Cunningham, "Healthful, Artistic, and Correct Dress," in *With Grace & Favor: Victorian & Edwardian Fashion in America* (Cincinnati: Cincinnati Art Museum, 1993), 25.
 19. *Ohio*, vol. 89, R. G. Dun & Company Collection, Baker Library, Harvard Business School.
 20. *Ibid.*
 21. *Ibid.*
 22. Interview with Maudie McFaddin Ward by Julie Smith for the *Boulevard Enterprise and Journal*, August 2, 1974.

