

Stockings For Chiffonnette

by Sylvia Mac Neil



Chiffonnette, a 17 ¾ inch doll attributed to Huret, stands barefoot, amidst an array of stockings, from soft, pastel tints to bold stripes and dashing plaids. She is charming, in her snood of bright red and cream Cluny lace trimmed with a bow of red, silk ribbon, with a cord of red silk at the back. Her chemisette of fine batiste features rows of hand-sewn tucks in front, and is trimmed with delicate Broderie Anglaise which matches the lightness of the fabric. The petticoat of finest cotton, borrowed for this eventful, inspiring occasion, is garnished with rows of dainty, white Valenciennes lace insertion and edging. Her hoopskirt is fashioned from antique, cotton mesh and an antique, lady's hoop, complete with the slightly rusted, covered bands of steel and small, brass fastenings.

In drawing our studies from the nineteenth century World of Fashion, we are made cognizant of the fact that the topic of stockings did not necessarily occupy a prominent place among the requirements of a trousseau. There was, however, a certain amount of space allotted to the subject in the popular ladies' books of the time. If one chose to venture into the world, it was best to conform to its basic rules of etiquette. In the art of dressing, one was obliged, to some degree, to imitate the French, who, by general acknowledgment, were referred to as the most tasteful of societies.

As regards evening footwear, elegant satin shoes were favored, ornamented with black or white lace, or bugles and pearls, and produced a pretty effect when corresponding with the rest of the costume. Silk stockings also embroidered with beads were worn with these shoes. Black satin slippers were considered the most suitable and becoming, as they reduced the apparent size of the foot. Black kid slippers were also worn, richly embroidered with jet. Others were made of silks and satins, some richly quilted. With these dress slippers stockings of silk with colored, silk clocks were worn. Clocks are ornamental, embroidered finishes to the leg and instep of knitted stockings and socks. They were stitched in silk in a color that either matched or contrasted with the stockings they adorned. The name given to this decoration is considered to have originated in the resemblance to the pendulum of a clock.

During this period, toilet slippers were more fanciful than ever, being made of red, green, violet, or other color Moroccan leather, with heels to match. They were garnished on the toe with large bows of velvet or silk, in the center of which were huge buckles of steel, gilt, or jet. With these slippers, white silk stockings spotted with the same color as the leather were worn.

For daytime, shoes with dainty, curved heels and pretty kid boots

Here's Chiffonnette, donning a charming pair of silk, plaid stockings in soft shades of coral, charcoal and cream. A separate band of buff at the top, and a sole of the same buff, were cut from a different pair of socks, and set off nicely the colors in the plaid. The dots of coral, silk chenille in her snood match her stockings perfectly.

with high heels and silk tassels were considered in the best taste. They matched one of the colors of the ensemble, and silk stockings the other color. Ladies who did not wish a pair of shoes for each *toilette*, adopted, with dark dresses, black shoes with black silk stockings, and with light ones bronze shoes with pearl-gray stockings.

For a lady's skating costume, Balmoral hose were adopted. They were made in rounds of half an inch or so, in two colors, such as black and magenta, black with blue, or other hues to match the costume. Other favorites for skating were stockings of brilliant scarlet, or plaids of the brightest but most harmonious combinations. We can imagine, though perhaps merely a Parisian caprice, the distinguished appearance of a young Fashionable wearing Balmoral boots, bright Balmoral skirts, and still brighter Balmoral hose. In the most dreary weather, there was still a flaunting of bright skirts and a glancing of pretty faces on the ice and upon the pavement.

Colored stockings were extremely fashionable for children, bright red, both in silk or wool, being the favorite; they adopted the same gay stripes and prettiest plaids. Also popular were gaiters of the same color as the dress, but children from two to four years of age, wore white, knitted gaiters decorated with clocks.

Not to be overlooked, research material regarding stockings for dolls was found in the well known and ever-popular, *La Poupée Modèle*. There were two patterns featured, one was printed in the first year of its publication, in March, 1864, and the other was in February, 1872. The pattern changed little, if any. The 1864 pattern is featured here: "...stockings which are cut from an old stocking and are sewn in an overcast stitch, on the wrong side, all the length of the leg." In a footnote, this information, always with a keen eye towards business: "You will find at the house of mademoiselle Péronne,



All the featured stockings, fashioned from antique ladies' stockings, are made using the pattern from the March, 1864, issue of *La Poupée Modèle*, and will fit a lady doll, or a child Huret or Rohmer, from 17 to 18 inches tall. They have a nice curve at the ankle, a squared heel, and separate soles with rounded toes. The socks at the left are made up in a soft, cotton plaid of pinks, gray and cream. A separate band at the top and the soles are made of plain cream. Fancy was allowed more liberty with the stockings on the right. They are made from lacey, knit, cream-colored cotton stockings. A textured band in the socks was placed at the top, giving the appearance of original, doll stockings.



It's no easy matter, managing her unruly hoopskirt and voluminous petticoat, while she contemplates her brightly colored, striped, cotton stockings. In the strongest shades of red, blue, green, gold and white, these socks have white bands on the top, and white soles, cut from the tops of the original hose. Vertical bands of yellow, bright green and dark blue embroidered in silk, chain stitch enhance the novelty of these stockings. Here she wears a snood of cream, hand-netted cotton, accented with a ruff of pale, blue Cluny lace at the front.

rue de Choiseul, 21, some stockings all made, as well as some small felt hat forms without being garnished. I also recommend to you the boots with elastic sides and heels, and the Russian boots from la Poupée de Nuremberg." In the 1872 issue, these instructions: "Stockings embroidered in *point lancés*, with colored silk of any color, for Lily. You cut these stockings from an old fine stocking and you embroider each side. ... For a costume for a carnival or for *mi-carême*, perhaps your doll would be delighted also to have some pretty shoes from the address, la Poupée de Nuremberg." *Point lancé* is the simplest of embroidery stitches, made with short, straight stitches, easy enough for any child to master. Also in the magazine, in the August, 1865, issue, was a list for: "A Very Complete Trousseau For A Poupée. Claire, who is a skillful, hard working little girl, has made a splendid trousseau for her doll." Included in the trousseau, listed in the underpinnings, among the four chemises and four combing jackets to match, besides one gored crinoline and one net crinoline, two white petticoats with scalloped trim and two petticoats with embroidery, and one woolen petticoat with a flounce, and one corset, were listed: "4 pairs of stockings, 2 white, 1 red, and 1 with open work embroidery." A small, seemingly unimportant and often overlooked item of attire was given the attention it was due.

Such was the fashion of the day. With this important information at hand, one can create the most perfect little gems of stockings, cut from antique stockings, from the simplest, unadorned, white cotton to the boldest of stripes and jaunty plaid affairs, to the marvels of fanciful, open-work cream-colored cottons and silk.



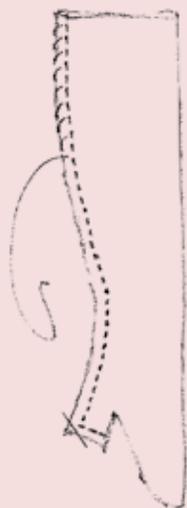
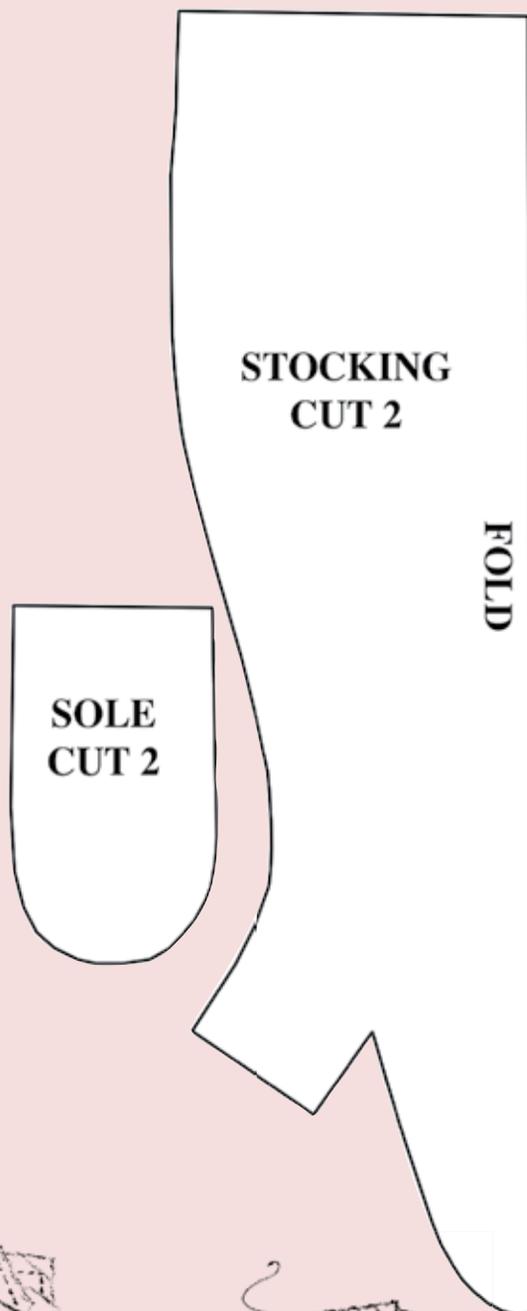
Chiffonnette's pale mauve, silk stockings are the prettiest folly of the day. What could be more perfect with her dress made up in an 1850s plaid in soft tints of mauve, gray, charcoal and cream, with its fanciful ruffles and ruching, pinked out along the edges using an antique pinking machine.



These jaunty, little affairs of Eugenie *bleue* striped with black match her skirt to perfection. They are sure to find favor with all lovers of novelty.



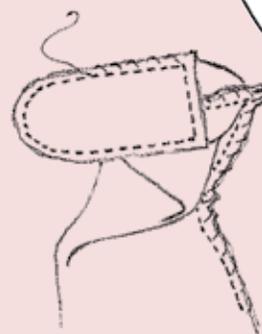
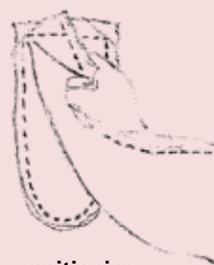
In this photo, Chiffonette wears a tasteful, black cotton snood, dotted with tufts of yellow chenille. She is able to control the hoops here, allowing her to lean forward a bit while putting on her elegant stockings fashioned of fine, textured, black silk.



The seam is sewn using a back-stitch with an overcast stitch to neaten the edges; the corner of the heel is clipped.



The sole is sewn on, carefully positioning the square corners on the sole with the clipped corners on the stocking.



The seam is overcast.



The top edge of the stocking is folded narrowly once to the wrong side and basted. The edge is folded again and stitched in place. The basting stitches are then removed.



The result is a stocking that has a smoothly fitted sole and squared heel, perfect to grace any doll's leg.