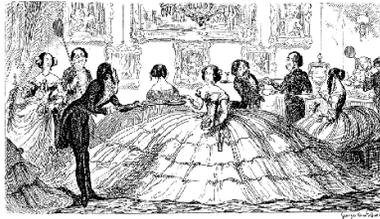


From 1840 to 1860 the focus of the woman's figure was on her waistline...the smaller better. Even Ma Ingalls liked to boast that her husband Charles could span her waist with his hands when they were first married. The desired circumference of the waist was just 20 inches. Look at your doll, her waist is about 10 to 12 inches around. That means that fashion conscious women were trying to get their waistlines to just twice the size of your dolls waistline. To make the waistline appear as small as possible, tight corsets drew the waist in and full, bell shaped skirts made the waist appear



even smaller. Until the crinoline was developed in the late 1850s, layers of petticoats, as many as seven at a time, were worn to add fullness to the skirts. This may not have posed a problem when the weather was cool, but can you imagine what it was like to dress this way when the weather was warm? Remember, there was no air conditioning at this time .

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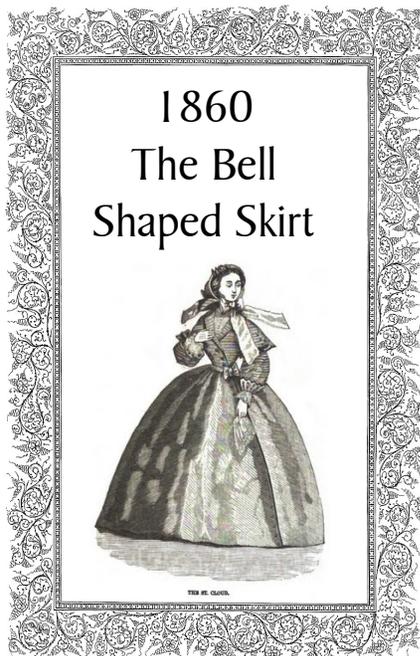
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**Books to read:**

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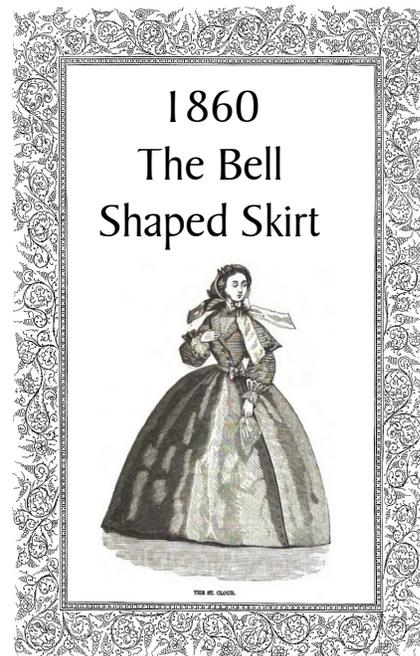
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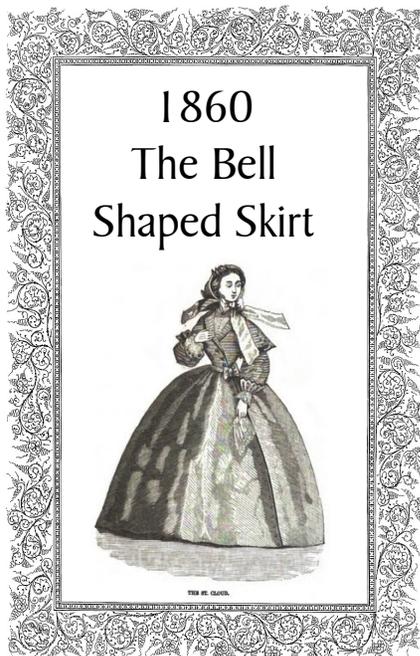
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