

Something Borrowed



a collection of Arts
University Bournemouth's
donated Wedding dresses,
spanning 150 years.

Upton House
12th - 20th September

AUB

Russell-Cotes Art
Gallery & Museum
22nd September - 8th
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*Curated and edited by Victoria Adams.
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support.*

1834

Sarah Wills to James Alexander

1890

Unknown

1912

Agnes Bilsland Felldin Dobson to Walter Hyslop

1927

Unknown

1937

Winifred Mary Constance Doman to John Brealey

1949

Sylvia Patricia Pearl Shrubbs to Albert Davis

1956

Anonymous

1960

Barbara Abbiss to Robert Flexen

1973

Maureen Mary Ratcliffe to Martyn Trevor Mercer

1983

Caroline Bloss and Johnathan Hanbury

"A wedding dress is both intimate and personal for a woman — it must reflect the personality and style of the bride."

Carolina Herrera

The clothes that we chose to wear become extensions of ourselves, acting as a window to our character and circumstances. Throughout history, you can often read a person by looking at their dress, and for many women, when marriage marks a new chapter in life, what you wear when you embark on that journey says everything. Long after the wedding day has passed, these garments continue to tell their stories, preserved not only through memory but through the collections that safeguard them.

Often, historical costume is passed on with very little information on where it came from and who wore it. In the absence of documentation, archivists must rely on evidence within the garment itself, but factors such as personal taste, economic circumstance, alteration and reuse can complicate the interpretation. Wedding dresses on the other hand, are unique in archival terms because they so often survive alongside their provenance, held as precious keepsakes. Photographs, letters, and family stories frequently accompany them and being traceable to a specific date helps to colour the wider fashion of the time.



It is impossible to ignore the deeply sentimental value placed on these dresses. For many donors, the decision to part with a wedding dress is not made lightly. These dresses represent memories too precious to discard, yet too significant to remain unseen, with each dress a product not only of the woman who wore it, with her own tastes, aspirations, and identity, but also of the social and cultural world in which it was made.

Within this collection, you can see the stories of family heirlooms, cultural symbolism and nearly 150 years of changing silhouettes. It has fallen to us to become custodians of these tangible memories of the past. Please enjoy as you consider the women behind these dresses and their enduring connections through their garments that are once again, telling the stories of the lives they touched.

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Each of these dresses have been donated to the Arts University Bournemouth Costume Archive. Now comprising hundreds of garments donated from across the UK, it is an extraordinary resource, supporting the study of historical dressmaking and construction techniques while also providing a rich commentary on social history. By examining historical costume, we are invited to reconnect with the people behind the garments, offering insight into everyday life across multiple generations.

This exhibition provided the opportunity for students to work with historical garments in a new capacity, mounting them onto forms and breathing life back into objects which have gathered years of dust. Following the dress through the entirety of the exhibition process, each student has taken an inspired path of research, looking into a range of topics related to their chosen dress. The following guide is an accumulation of that research, as well as further information about the lives of the women who wore each dress.

Victoria Adams
Exhibition Curator





"A wedding dress is never simply of its time; it carries with it echoes of the fashions that came before, gathering centuries of changing silhouettes, fabrics and ideas into a single garment."

Pre-1830, wedding dresses were a woman's 'best dress', either her favourite dress with additional decoration, or a new dress bought to then be worn again for different occasions.

1800

1900

2000

1850

1830s to 1900 – Queen Victoria marries Prince Albert, wearing a white gown and veil, crowned with orange blossom. Wedding fashions will forever change.

1901 to 1939 – wedding dresses are inspired by evening wear, with heavy decoration still in white. Hollywood glamour influences the whole wedding process to become a socialite event.

1950

1940s to 1950s – the outbreak of war has forced brides to be resourceful, handmaking dresses from parachute silk, net curtains, or upholstery fabric.

1980s to 2000s – the rise of romanticism harks back to historical silhouettes with big skirts and high necks, embodied by Princess Diana's wedding dress.



The practice of re-wearing and re-using clothing is commonplace throughout history. From medieval 'botchers' creating garments from scraps, Victorian partygoers raiding their attics for 18th century fancy dress, to the wartime 'make do and mend' campaigns, conserving and reworking dress remains an artform that has given clothes new leases of life. This wedding dress is a perfect example of this, becoming a treasured garment that would be worn by three women across 100 years, and 6 generations.

Originally made for and worn by Sarah Wills, who married James Alexander on the 24th June 1834, the dress was constructed as sleeveless, worn for the wedding with a boned jacket which could then be removed when the dress was later worn for balls. This was common practice for the time, even in the upper classes, as demonstrated by Alexandra, Princess of Wales, who frequently reused her gowns in public appearances throughout her life. Sarah's wedding ensemble would have most likely included a small bouquet of flowers or bible, plaited hair adorned with spring flowers (which could have been real or made from silk), a veil and flat satin shoes.

24th June, 1834



It is unclear how many times the dress, if it all, was worn again by Sarah, however it is known to have been worn again in 1887 by her granddaughter, Isabella Sarah, as she married Charles Edward Clowes. The dress was worn for a third time by Penelope Mary Clowes, who married John Campbell in 1942. During this time, slight alterations were made to make it suitable for a 1940s wedding, including taking the original sleeves from the jacket and setting them into the dress, as well as letting down the shoulders to make it slightly longer in the waist. The neckline was then filled in with tulle, to make appropriate for the church wedding.

By 1942, Britain's clothes rationing had become well-established, with restrictions on available materials as outputs were directed to the war effort. Standard fabrics such as silk were suddenly unavailable, and many women were using rayon or other synthetics to achieve the same look. This dress, having been meticulously preserved, seemed the perfect solution for a bride with limited resources, and so was worn once more.

Dress care and notes by Elloise Page.





1890

'From time immemorial the bride's gown has been white'. This common misconception was published in the Ladies Home Journal in November 1890. Although Western bridal tradition began to formalise in upper class circles from 1820, with white or pearl gowns favoured (Queen Victoria's ivory wedding gown of 1840 further amplified the trend), women continued to marry in a myriad of hues. This popular rhyme advised Victorian brides on marital colour:

Married in white, you will have chosen right.
 Married in grey, you will go far away.
 Married in black, you will wish yourself back.
 Married in red, you wish yourself dead.
 Married in green, ashamed to be seen.
 Married in blue, you will always be true.
 Married in pearl, you will live in a whirl.
 Married in yellow, ashamed of your fellow.
 Married in brown, you will live out of town.
 Married in pink, your fortune will sink.

The 1890 ensemble in eau de nil silk is referenced in two lines: the charming, 'married in blue, you will always be true', and the rather unfavourable, 'married in green, ashamed to be seen'. Blue, associated with the Virgin Mary, was common for bridal attire from the medieval era, symbolising purity and loyalty. Green was popular with Elizabethan brides to denote fertility and joy, but by the nineteenth-century the colour had fallen from favour. Scholars suggest this may be



because green signified a 'loss of virginity represented by grass stains' on a white dress.

A late Victorian "white wedding" often described occasions where bridesmaids wore white and the bride opted for a pale pastel silk, like eau de nil. Unfortunately, we do not know much about our 1890 bride. We can tell from her dress that she may simply have been a follower of fashion, but the colour also raises questions about her class. The upkeep of white clothing was expensive, meaning pre-Victorian white wedding gowns were reserved for the wealthy and usually royal, including Katherine of Aragon in 1501, Mary Queen of Scots in 1559 and Catherine the Great in 1745, who all wore a mostly white gown. If able to afford a new dress, a lower- or middle-class bride would likely have chosen a more versatile outfit, such as a coloured-silk travelling suit. The 1890 ensemble resembles this style, which was often worn after the ceremony en route to the honeymoon, and throughout married life. Ladies Home Journal advised a widow remarrying 'may wear any colour if she is in travelling costume [...] but never white'.

Dress care and notes by Martha Grubb.





This exquisite example of an Edwardian wedding dress was worn by Agnes Dobson for her wedding to Walter Hyslop on the 14th of September 1912, in Glasgow. Wedding dresses from this period can be quite rare, not only being made from a fragile soft silk lined with a lightweight cotton, but they were also often repurposed during the Great War, when fabric and clothing was being rationed.

This was a transitional era for clothing, when society begins to move away from the heavily structured fashions of the earlier decades and re-emerges as what we perceive as fashionable today. This dress, with its softer and natural silhouette, stands in stark contrast to the previous decade. Decoration is still encouraged, with lace at the neck and cuffs, and a net decoration at the centre front. The high neckline had become prominent around 1900, often with small springs of wire being placed to support the height. Even on this dress, wire can be seen in the collar to help keep its shape.

Unfortunately, the original silk belt was too fragile to display, and a new one has been made in its place. The silk decoration at the cuffs have also sadly sustained quite a significant amount of damage over time. The dress closes with hook and eyes at the front, hidden by the lace and net decorations. It is mostly sewn by machine, but has some hand finishing on the inside, such as along the hem of the dress.

14th September, 1912



By the end of the 1910s, fashion had begun to change again. Moving into the mid-1920s, the waistline had dropped significantly, and the hemline had rose to under the knee, creating a drastically different silhouette. 1918 saw two huge societal changes, the end of WW1, which saw more women in the workforce, and the first-time women could vote and run for parliament in a UK general election. It is often argued that the independence these events gave women helped to drive the change in fashion.

These changes were furthered by youth culture at the time, which often centred around music and dancing – thus creating a need for more practical garments. These trends ultimately trickled into wedding fashions of the time, most notably with the characteristic short hemline and dropped waist. These are illustrated in the 1927 wedding gown held in the AUB costume archive, however unfortunately, these dresses are often even more fragile than the 1910s, made of crepe georgette and weighed down with beading and metallic threads, they are rarely suitable for display.

*Dress care by Charlotte Knight.
Notes by Alice Haynes.*





1927

Juliet caps have become synonymous with the 1920's bride, which were known for their elaborate headdresses. They are characterised by a band worn low on the forehead and a veil creating a close-fitting cap around the head; however, other designs were also worn during this period, such as a medieval headdress, a lace coronet, or tiara, with the style of headdress often matching the overall theme of the gown.

After WW1 there was a dramatic change in fashion and society, leading to the emergence of the 'modern woman' and the idea of the 'flapper'. Alongside more masculine silhouettes popularised by designers like Chanel, women began to chop their hair into shorter bobbed haircuts. These were popularised by Clara Bow

and Joan Crawford and allowed for the wearing of the fashionable, close-fitting cloche hats. These hairstyles were starkly different to the long, ornate coiffures of the Edwardians, and were used by the younger generation to force society to rethink the traditional gender roles from before the war. In line with these new haircuts and styles, brides wanted their veils to complement their hair, resulting in the development of the Juliet cap. Many dresses, such as the one that accompanied the veil from 1927 which, like the veil, is unfortunately too fragile to display, featured shorter hemlines and no train, another symbol of the 'modern woman'.

This veil was worn in 1927 and is a clear example of the Juliet cap and bobbed hairstyles. Unfortunately we do not know the name of the bride, but we do have her photograph and can see how the veil complimented her quintessential 1920's dress. There is a frill at the bottom of the cap connected with stab stitches, as well as a thin wire that helps the cap to hold its shape. A line of silk thread is woven through the bottom of the veil, 3" from the hem; this could have been used to denote the edge of the veil.

It is decorated with two bands of beading at the front and two faux floral arrangements of orange blossoms at the sides of the head. These blooms were used to symbolise fertility and virtue; however, other flowers such as roses and myrtle were often used due to their association with love. Orange blossom in particular was made fashionable by Queen Victoria in 1840 as it featured in her wedding, inspired by a brooch Prince Albert had given her, shaped into a sprig of the flower. For women unable to obtain fresh flowers, wax flowers were made as a replica, as we can see on this veil. These remained a cost-effective way to bring florals into their dress, and the inclusion of wax orange blossom has remained popular in weddings to this day.

Notes by Bebe Elkins.







The 1930s is the first decade where fashions are significantly influenced by the big screen. Despite financial issues caused by the Great Depression, Hollywood film stars dictated what was fashionable, and many brides of the 1930s sought to emulate the glamour of the movies on a budget. Many magazines had dedicated sections for screen stars, aiding to create a fascination with fashion and celebrities that continues to this day.

The bias-cut dress which created the figure hugging, elegant silhouette synonymous with the '30's was not new, originally developed by Madeleine Vionnet in the early 1920's, but has come to embody the chic of Hollywood glamour. This technique has remained popular for decades and can still be found today, timeless, in cinema and as evening wear.

And yet through this period we also see that trends are cyclical. The leg o'mutton sleeves that were often part of 1930's wedding dresses and can be seen in this particular example, are reminiscent of those worn in the 1890s. However, when looking further back, these sleeves can be seen multiple times through history, notably in 1820's romantic-era fashion which took inspiration from the Elizabethan canon sleeve and 17th century virago sleeve. These sleeves became fashionable once again during the 1980s (as can be seen in the 1983 wedding dress). Likewise, the silhouette of the 1930's, whilst being an updated, modern take, is

14th August, 1937



rooted in the silhouettes of the 1810's and 1910's, with a column-like, streamlined shape being the definitive element of all three of these decades.

This dress was worn by Winifred Mary Constance Doman for her marriage to John Henry Brealey on August 14th, 1937. They had met 10 months earlier at a mutual friend's whist drive. Win's dress depicts the fashion trend cycles, boasting a cowl neckline, leg o'mutton sleeves and bias-cut silhouette. It was likely hand-made using artificial silk which was a more affordable fabric. This is supported by the area of piecing on the train of the dress, meaning the bride might have sewn the dress herself as she was accomplished at needlework and had worked in a lampshade making shop. However, this could equally point to a skilled seamstress making the best use of as much fabric as possible during a time when money wasn't in abundance.

The dress also has an art deco hand-beaded design across the chest of the dress and on the belt, used to accentuate the waist. The silhouette, decoration and fabric choice display the bride's interest in fashion trends of both the 1930's and 19th century, on a budget.

Dress care and notes by Bebe Elkins.





Sylvia Patricia Pearl Shrubbs and Albert "Bertie" Davis were married on 12th May 1949. As rationing was still in place for a number of years following the war, friends and family had to conserve their ration coupons to assist the young couple in affording their wedding attire.

During the 1940s, the disruption caused by the Second World War significantly affected fashion. The war led to shortages of materials and elevated prices for available items in shops, with imports of clothing from abroad being restricted. Domestic manufacturers were compelled to focus on producing wartime essentials, such as uniforms and parachutes. To encourage resourcefulness, the government introduced the 'Make do and Mend' campaign, issuing posters and leaflets offering advice and ideas on how to prolong the life of their garments or extend the usability of old clothes and fabrics. Evening classes were established to teach the craft of transforming worn-out garments into new attire, promoting a culture of recycling within the community. Despite these constraints, in 1942, a group

12th May, 1949



of London-based designers in conjunction with the Government, successfully developed the iconic 'Utility' collection. The collection focused on supplying good quality, stylish clothing essentials to the public that could be brought with rationing coupons. The collection featured padded shoulders, an emphasised waistline, and hemlines just below the knee, which helped define the decade's silhouette.

The dress in question is also likely handmade, reflecting the widespread participation in the 'Make do and Mend' initiative during the decade. Many women across England possessed sewing skills that enabled them to create their own clothing. Although couture clothing remained a luxury for most, women could incorporate designer-inspired elements into their handmade wardrobe since during this period, numerous high-end fashion brands released sewing patterns based on their designs, allowing a broader segment of the population to access couture styling. This also allowed for creativity and individuality to flourish, with women creating their own unique garments.

Sylvia's dress perfectly illustrates this fashionable silhouette, featuring design elements such as padded shoulders and a central diamond motif to emphasise the waist. While it appears to be made of silk, it is likely that a more affordable alternative, such as polyester satin, was utilised, given that silk was scarce during this period. The fabric is decorated with a printed floral pattern, and the long, flowing skirt presents her as a stylish bride in keeping with the fashion standards of the era.

Dress care by Amber Kipping-Bier.

Notes by Amber Kipping-Bier and Elizabeth Peters.





The tradition of single-wear white wedding dresses began during the Victorian period, becoming common for British brides by the 1880s. This changed during wartime with the implementation of rationing restrictions. Although rationing of clothing ended in 1949, its impacts were felt throughout the 1950's with consumption controls and shortages making the price of fabric disproportionate to the average wage. This meant that every garment was a luxury, with men and women getting creative with their clothing by repairing, re-wearing or making over old pieces. Buying a single-use white wedding dress was viewed as excessive, and so often, inventive ways were used to create a suitable gown.

After WW2 there was a major marketing campaign to revitalise single-wear white wedding dresses. It was spurred on by the return of soldiers who needed work, and the government's desire for women to revert to their previous domestic duties. The white wedding gown symbolised the return to more clearly marked gender roles, and with this restoration of traditional values, the symbolism of the colour white came to be an outward display of the bride's purity and virtue. This meant that socially, it was frowned upon for women marrying for the second time, those with an illegitimate child or who were pregnant at the time of their marriage, to wear a white wedding dress.

16th June, 1956



Etiquette books from the 1950s state instead that if in this condition, wearing a 'traditional' bridal gown was in "poor taste", and suggest a bride wear a pastel colour to a smaller, less formal ceremony. As a result, we see a range of unexpected garments from this time being worn as bridal attire – from colourful dresses to skirt suits.

This vibrant pink 1956 wedding dress was worn on the 16th of June and stands as a perfect example of the social decisions a woman would face in the 1950s. The dress is stitched mostly by machine, however, does boast some hand sewing and alongside the lack of a label in this period, suggests that it was likely homemade. It is made from an organdie with flocking designs – popular for the period as a more cost-effective way to create a devore look. It has a line of faux pearl buttons down the front, a belt to cinch in the waist and a full, tea length pleated skirt. The colour and construction of the dress suggest that this was made to be money-conscious, however we also know that the bride was pregnant at the time of her marriage. The silhouette would have helped disguise a pregnancy, and there is a metal zip at the side of the dress as well as evidence of the dress being altered, suggesting it may have been adjusted for pregnancy or that it was reworn. We see here that social expectation as well as means have heavily influenced the choice of wedding dress, and while it differs from the traditional standard of the time, bares no impact on the beauty and meaning of the dress.

Dress care by Victoria Adams.

Notes by Bebe Elkins.





At the beginning of the 1960s, wedding dresses were still inspired by the swing dresses of the previous decade. The full skirt silhouette was emphasised by a small waist and volumized hips due to chiffon and tulle petticoats, nylon crinolines and sometimes accentuated by hip pads. Princess Margaret's 1960 wedding dress was a popular inspiration for many brides, with her long silk organza sleeves and full skirt influencing the fabric and design of many wedding dresses. Necklines of wedding dresses usually remained plain and round to focus attention to the bride's face and hairstyle. The bateau neckline started its popularity in the 50s, worn by Audrey Hepburn, and continued into 60s bridalwear.

While long wedding dresses had remained common with brides, hemlines in bridalwear were lifting above the knees around the middle of the decade. The wedding mini dress was very popular and a signature style of 1960s weddings, influenced by the trend of Mary Quant's 1966 miniskirt designs, worn by contemporary women in everyday fashion. Towards the end of the 1960s, sleeves grew from three-quarter to full length, the waistline rose up to an empire waist and the skirt narrowed following an A-line or columnar silhouette.

This dress is a perfect culmination of the trends of the early 1960s. Worn by Barbara Abbiss during her wedding to Bob Flexen on 2nd April, 1960, this dress has tulle petticoats with a crinoline base, and net hip pads to support such a silhouette. Barbara was a junior school teacher and met Bob during pottery evening classes. The dress, donated by Barbara's daughter, has also come with a small clutch bag, made by the Groom's mother, to be her something new, and something blue.

2nd April, 1960



Originating in the Victorian era from Lancashire, England, the classic rhyme associated to weddings reads as follows: “Something Olde, Something New, Something Borrowed, Something Blue, A Sixpence in your Shoe”. The decoration of bridal and groom wear is often seen as an act of tradition or superstition, with each item serving to bless the bride in a different way. For this 1960s wedding dress, the accompanying bag is lined with a pale blue silk, acting as the bride’s “Something Blue”.

Wearing blue on one’s wedding day is said to ward off the evil eye, “a curse passed through a malicious glare what could make a bride infertile” and other curses that can be cast upon a marriage. Traditionally, a blue garter is worn on the thigh of the bride, beneath her wedding dress. Some state that the colour blue connotes love, purity and fidelity whereas others claim it to be loyalty, faithfulness and modesty. Some of these associations are rooted as far back as Ancient Rome, and within Christian tradition, blue is the signature colour of the Virgin Mary. All feature the theme of good fortune aimed towards a couple on their wedding day.

*Dress care by Elloise Page.
Notes from Livvy Weston and Poppy Chilton.*





When we think of a wedding in 1970's, particular images come to mind; grooms in colourful suits, large hats and daisy motifs in guipure lace. Gone are the stiff traditions overhanging from the Victorian era, replaced by fashions still heavily influenced by the swinging sixties and the relaxed look of the rich and famous. Bianca Jagger broke away from tradition entirely and wore a trouser suit with an oversized hat, and Princess Anne opted for a structured medieval style dress.

While trends will always influence wedding gowns, each dress is still deeply personal to the individual woman who wears it. So many young girls around the world dream of their wedding day, having been described in fairy stories, folk tales or seen at the wedding of a relative they may have attended, and it often manifests with a pillowcase or net curtain held over her head and fabric draped across the waist. The right gown has been deliberated and pondered over throughout that little girl's life, and choosing what to wear on your wedding day remains a mammoth decision for more reasons than one.

In generations gone past, it was customary for a wedding dress to be handed down from one bride to the next. This gown, from any era, was likely to be the most expensive garment a woman would ever own, made of sumptuous fabrics and adorned with lace, beads, or pearls. Another factor contributing to the importance

27th October, 1973



of the gown may be that the dress was made by hand; a friend, a family member or even by the bride herself. Wearing a dress made with such love and care on the beginning of a new chapter in the couple's life together, makes it even more special.

This dress in particular was worn by Maureen Ratcliffe, on the 27th of October, 1973 as she married Martyn Mercer. It was handmade by the groom's cousin from satin and nylon, trimmed with daisy flowers added by the bride. A 9ft, triple layered monarch veil was also worn with the gown alongside a diamante tiara. It included a wide lace trim which was later removed when the same veil was worn again by her eldest daughter when she married in 2000.

The dress is a simple A-line design with a crew neckline and long sleeves; a popular choice for bridal gowns during 1970's. The teardrop bouquet was made up of pink roses and freesia; the bride's favourite flowers, with stephanotis being an addition from family. A number of accompanying pieces survive, including the order of service, newspaper announcement, napkin, cake topper, photographer's receipt, shoes, the photo album of the day – all illustrating the importance and sentimentality of one's wedding day.

Dress care and notes by Elizabeth White.





This wedding dress was worn by Caroline Bloss, who married Jonathan Hanbury in Liphook, Hampshire, on the 28th of May 1983. The dress was designed and made by local dressmaker Julie Vernon, who owned a bridal shop in Grayshott, Hampshire. Decorated with ruffles, covered buttons and fabric flowers that adorn a gathered cuff, similarities can be drawn with the equally ruffled and gathered romantic wedding dress of Princess Diana.

Worn just two years previously, on her wedding day to the now King Charles in 1981, Diana's dress reshaped the trends of the wedding industry for the rest of the decade and beyond. Elizabeth Emanuel, the co-designer of Diana's dress, describes in a Vogue article how "the gown was typical of early '80s style – overblown, romantic, flouncy", creating such a recognisable style that the 'princess dress' is still worn today.

28th May, 1983



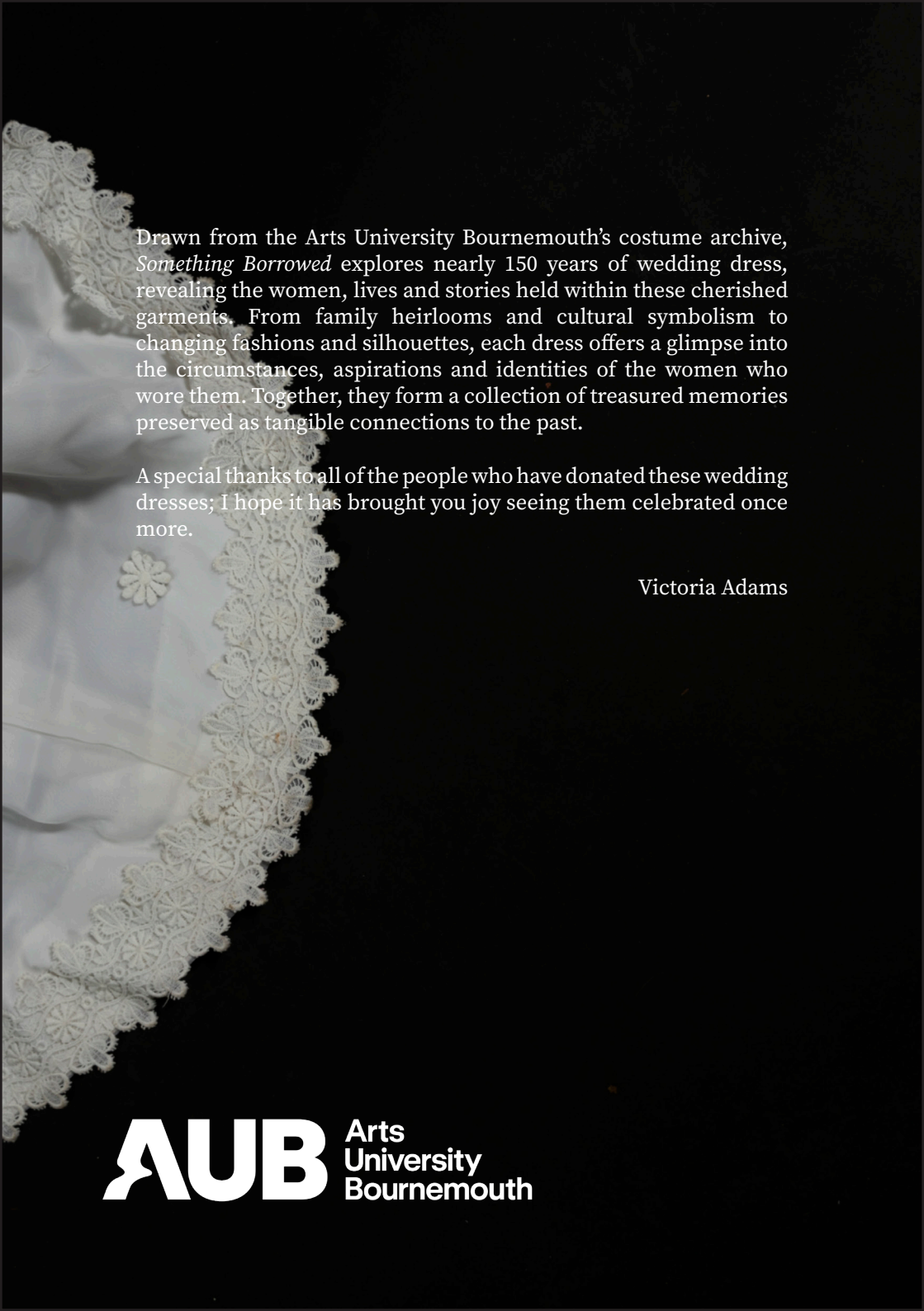
Made from ivory taffeta, as was popular at the time, this dress has three layers of stiff white tulle sewn in at the waist to give the skirt extra volume, along with a petticoat underneath, exaggerating its ballgown silhouette. A thin lining fabric is also included to protect the body from the tulle, as well as to protect the hem of the dress from general wear.

Although distinctly rooted in the fashion of the 1980s, this dress also echoes the romantic silhouettes of previous centuries. Its exaggerated volume, gathered layers, ruffles and fabric flowers recall the elaborate dresses worn by brides in the nineteenth century, when full skirts and fitted bodices were central to fashionable dress. This garment also includes a small blue satin ribbon tied in a bow on the underside of the train – Caroline's 'something blue'. This small detail, carried through generations of bridal tradition, reminds us that this dress is part of a much longer story: a reflection of the styles and customs that came before it. Across generations, brides have revisited and reimagined familiar traditions and silhouettes, creating a connection between women separated by centuries. Within this single dress, we can see traces of the many dresses that came before it.

Dress care by Emily Pike.

Notes from Emily Pike and Lara Manton.



A close-up photograph of a white lace wedding dress, showing intricate floral patterns and a scalloped edge. The dress is set against a dark, textured background. The lace features a repeating floral motif with delicate, pointed petals.

Drawn from the Arts University Bournemouth's costume archive, *Something Borrowed* explores nearly 150 years of wedding dress, revealing the women, lives and stories held within these cherished garments. From family heirlooms and cultural symbolism to changing fashions and silhouettes, each dress offers a glimpse into the circumstances, aspirations and identities of the women who wore them. Together, they form a collection of treasured memories preserved as tangible connections to the past.

A special thanks to all of the people who have donated these wedding dresses; I hope it has brought you joy seeing them celebrated once more.

Victoria Adams