

1850 - 1859

CLOTHING TRENDS

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1850 - 1859 MAJOR FEATURES IN CLOTHING.

Below is modified from Wikipedia. Full article at en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1850s_in_Western_fashion It shows many excellent images and illustrations with sources. Excerpts of the article modified in each section below.

Working Class. Farmers wore smocks of strong fabric with ornate smocking at neck and cuffs, with trousers and work boots.

Working men of other kinds wore flannel shirts and tough trousers with work boots or shoes.

Working women wore dresses with gathered skirts, petticoats for warmth, but rarely crinolines or hoops. Men and women of every class *always* wore hats outdoors. Women usually wore indoor caps to keep hair clean. All women wore shawls or cloaks for warmth.

Men, Middle and Upper-class: linen or cotton shirts had high upstanding or turnover collars, detachable for easy washing and frequent changing, as were detachable cuffs.

Frock coats were single-breasted, heavily padded, and fitted. Waistcoats were cut straight across at the waist. The new sack coat style was loosely fitted to mid-thigh. Full-length trousers were day wear. An outfit of coat, waistcoat, and trousers of the same fabric became known as the "suit." Coats and vests were worn outdoors. Social level was shown in the excellence of fabrics and tailoring

Facial hair became extremely popular, with a huge array of styles. Top hats became taller. The bowler hat was invented but usually worn by the lower classes. Workmen's low caps, often called "pilot caps" or "newsboy caps" were popular with lower classes.

Women, Middle and Upper-Class: Full, rounded skirts continued to expand, often emphasized by tiers of flounces gathered tightly at the top and stiffened with horsehair braid at the hem to flare out more broadly. Linen and cotton became common, less expensive than silk, and cooler than wool. Sewing machines allowed women of all classes wider access to homemade to couture clothing.

Bodices featured panels over the shoulders, gathered into a low point at the waist. They generally fastened in back with hooks and eyes. A jacket-style bodice appeared, with a front button and wide, bell-shaped sleeves. False undersleeves, often very ornate, were called *engageants*. Separate small collars of lace or crochet were worn with dresses, Evening ball gowns had very low-cut necklines, off-the-shoulder, with short sleeves. (Think of the film costuming in the original *KING AND I*.) Social level was shown in the excellence of fabrics and expensive ornamentation.

Called a crinoline, A bell-shaped cage of steel wire or bamboo expanded the skirt even farther. Pantalets must be worn under hoops for modesty's sake, as the hoops might suddenly flip up during sitting or dancing.

Cape-like jackets were worn over the wide skirts, as were Indian shawls in Paisley patterns.

Hair was dressed simply, middle-parted, and drawn into a bun or wound braid at the back, with the sides puffed out over the ears or with clusters of curls to either side.

Bonnets became as ornate as women could afford. The indoor or day cap became little more than a lace and ribbon frill worn on the back of the head by middle and upper-class women. Again, social class was shown by expensive materials and elaborate decor.

Children's Clothing was not much changed. Small boys still wore dresses or belted tunics over open-crotch pantalets. Older boys wore skeleton suits or three-piece suits with open collars. Girls' dresses were still knee or calf-length above pantalets but had snug waists and fuller skirts to match their mothers' fashions.

NOTE- Images have been cropped to best show the clothing, rather than the overall portrait, photo, or illustration.

1850 – 1859 - MEN, WORKING-CLASS CLOTHING.

(Working smocks were worn from 1700 through 1900)



Farmers still wore work smocks and trousers. 1800 – 1900 on.

DESCRIPTION: A Farmer in New York, David Whitmer wears the usual American linen smock to cover his clothing while working. If the day were hot, a farmer might wear nothing on his torso except his tough linen smock. He also wears a broad-brimmed, low crowned hat and heavy leather work shoes.

David's family hosted Joseph Smith, Jr. for one month while the Prophet used this safe place to get away from life-threatening mobs while translating the *Book of Mormon* from ancient gold plates into English.

Details of Smock construction can be found in 1800-1820.

SOURCE: This ink drawing, a portrait by Robert Barrett, is displayed in the Grandin Print Shop, Palmyra, New York. The clothing was carefully coached by Carma for the artist.

Photo by Carma; free use



1850s Vest and cap worn by a talented African-American farmhand, ca. 1850s.

DESCRIPTION: This young man working as a servant on Stony Brook farm in Long Island, New York, when it was completely rural. He has time to cheerfully play his banjo, making wonderful music for all to enjoy. The Mount family kept no slaves.

He wears a beige vest with colored, striped lapels edged by gold silk, with red silk fabric for the back. His neckerchief is an edge-stripped light red silk. Dark wool pants are horizontally buttoned across the front in a "broad-fall." A string around his neck has a small, gold stick fob. He appears to have a gold chain leading to a vest pocket which has a blue handkerchief and might contain a watch. His pointed cap which flops over at the top is of horizontal knitted black and red stripes.

SOURCE: Painting by William Sidney Mount. Seen in: David Cassidy and Gail Shrott, Janice Gray Armstrong, Ed. *William Sidney Mount, Works in the Collection of The Museum at Stony Brook*. (The Museums at Stony Brook, Stony Brook N.Y. 1983).



1850s Father and son cut logs into planks.

On left is a raw log, half sawed, with a 2-man saw and an ax in front.

Father wears a vest over warm, striped sweater. Striped trousers. He has a pilot's cap and a kerchief tied around his neck. Father and son both wear work boots.

His facial hair has muttonchops and a beard, and his hair is neck length.

Son's jacket is torn and falling apart, but still gives

warmth. Sleeve ripped, buttons few. He also wears a pilot cap, later called a newsboys cap.

Woodsawyer's Nooning, Getty Museum. Free use.



1854 warm wool coat and boots are needed while fishing through the ice,

This warm, wool, double-breasted coat is lined with red plaid wool. It has leather buttons and pocket flaps and is held at his waist with a red sash, most likely the sash worn with his local militia uniform in upstate N.Y. Light brown gloves keep his hands warm. He has knee-high leather boots over brown wool trousers.

His hat is a felt Stetson with a brown string around the crown. Facial hair is mutton-chop whiskers, and possibly a beard under his chin.

Fishing Through the Ice, a painting by Arthur Fitzwilliam Tate, 1854, 'American Heritage' August 1969.



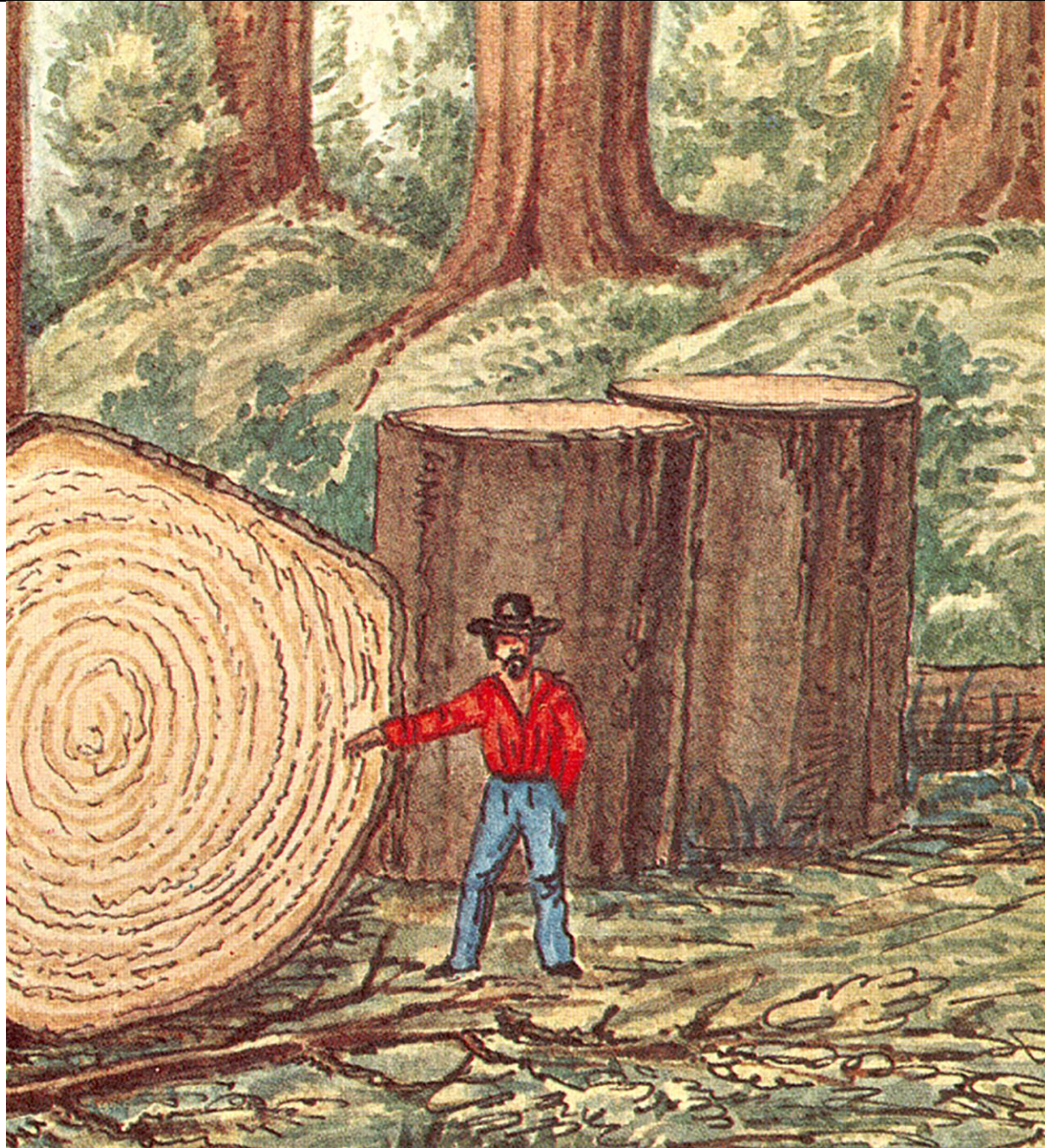
1856 American Hunting Camp in the Adirondacks

. A party of American hunters and campers relax in the very large oil painting. They wear wool shirts in red, black, gray, and white, and one man has a light jacket. They have a variety of hats from a straw boater (back) to bent-up Stetsons, and the man on the right wears a hat similar to a railroad cap. All wear boots and trousers.

Facial hair ranges from a mustache and Van Dyke beards to large muttonchops, under-chin beards, and one clean-shaven.

The men have made a lean-to from broken trees covered with slabs of bark.

By Frederick Rondel, 1856, *Camp in the Adirondacks* in 'American Heritage' August 1969.



Mid-1800s Lumberjack shows the relative circumference of old-growth trees in Minnesota.

The mid-1800s was an active time for lumbering in the big forests of northern states. Almost any healthy man could get a job with meals and rough housing.

Men wore wool shirts and knee-high boots inside or outside of wool trousers. They always wore hats outdoors.

Here we see a man with a beard and mustache.

By Holzhuber, in 'American Heritage' June 1965



1859, A lumberjack and his supervisor in Minnesota forests.

Mid-1800s were an active time for lumbering in the big forests of northern states. Almost any healthy man could get a job with hefty meals and rough housing.

Men wore wool shirts and trousers with knee-high boots worn under or over trousers. They always wore hats outdoors.

These men wear beards and mustaches.

By Holzhuber, in 'American Heritage' June 1965