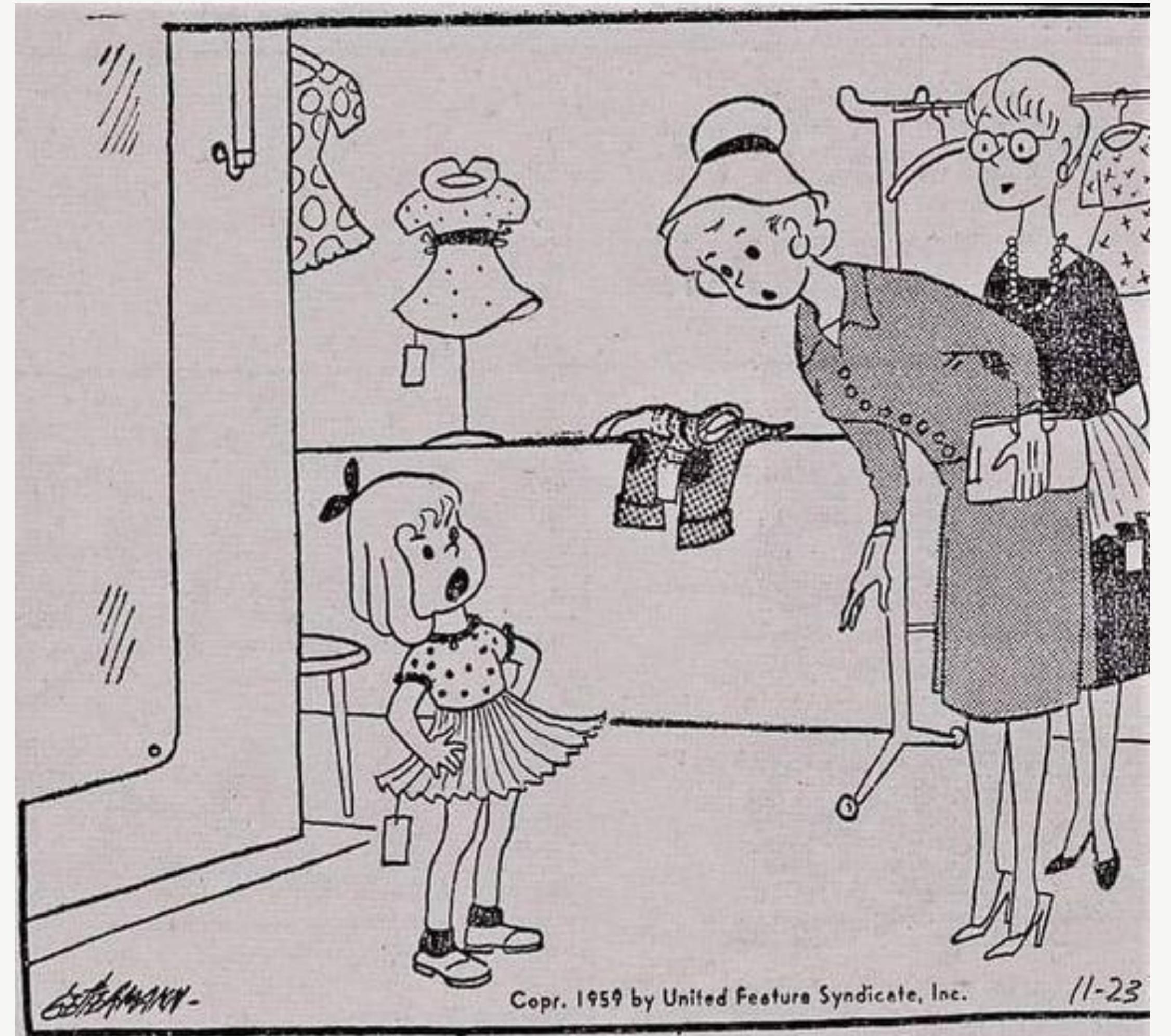


# Pockets



ESTERMAN-

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11-23

"Maybe it is pretty—but how can I carry my frog and my worms in a dress with no pockets?"

# Point of View

Even before humans developed trade systems and currency, we developed pockets, purses, and other means of transporting small valuables.

We will find a way to put small things in our pockets, shoes, waistband, bust support, hat, bag, basket, etc. or we will tie things onto our garments.

Losing the ability to carry a few small things rocks our sense of freedom and autonomy.



## Memory and identity

Think of all of the metaphorical phrases we have today that refer to pockets: 'out of pocket' meaning having lost out in a financial transaction, 'in pocket' for having money or funds, to 'pocket' something means to conceal or keep it private, 'put one's hand in one's pocket' for generosity and even something as simple as 'empty pockets' for being broke.

In 1693, a man testifying in court used the words 'kept one Pocket and one Bed' to describe the union between himself and the woman he was living with. Tie-on pockets too had a wide range of metaphorical and symbolic meanings over the years.

1500-1650

SECTION TITLE (OPTIONAL)  
Extant

Fashion Dolls

Practicality

Assumptions

In a chapter on 'The Grossenesse of former Times', the 1613 text *The Treasvrie of Avncient and Moderne Times*, a compendium of observations collated from a variety of European authors, said of the hose men used to wear that they were 'made close to their limbes, wherein they had no menes for Pockets'.<sup>10</sup>

However, in his work illustrating historical and contemporary dress from around the world, Vecellio indicated that pockets were a relative novelty of the end of the fifteenth century, writing of the 'reformed and more modest dress' of some Venetian women that:

"I have found that in those times trains were not worn long but held up and attached to the belt or to the edges of pockets — which were being used for the first time, though their use continued for a very long time afterward."

# Pocket Alternatives

## Pockets in Muffs

According to *The Fairchild Dictionary of Fashion*, muffs continually made appearances throughout the centuries; Charlotte Mankey Calasibetta writes:

“muffs have been used since the second half of the sixteenth century and have appeared in women’s dress with great regularity. Large muffs were optional accessories for extremely stylish men in the 1690s and again in the 1770s to 1780s, while smaller ones were used in the first half of the eighteenth century. Muff-handbags were an interesting adaptation carried by women in the 1880s when handbags were new. Fur muffs for little girls were fashionable as recently as the 1960s.” (149)

Sweet bags, reticules, chatelaines, handbags and purses.





The pocket in Eleonora di Toledo's funeral dress skirt, 1562 (Palazzo Pitti, Florence), made of silk taffeta



Two pieces of yellow taffeta were found amongst the satin remnants of the burial gown of Eleonora di Toledo (1522-1562) which are thought to have comprised a pocket, whilst the pockets in the loose gowns and nightgowns of Mary I (1516-1558) were always made of black satin.





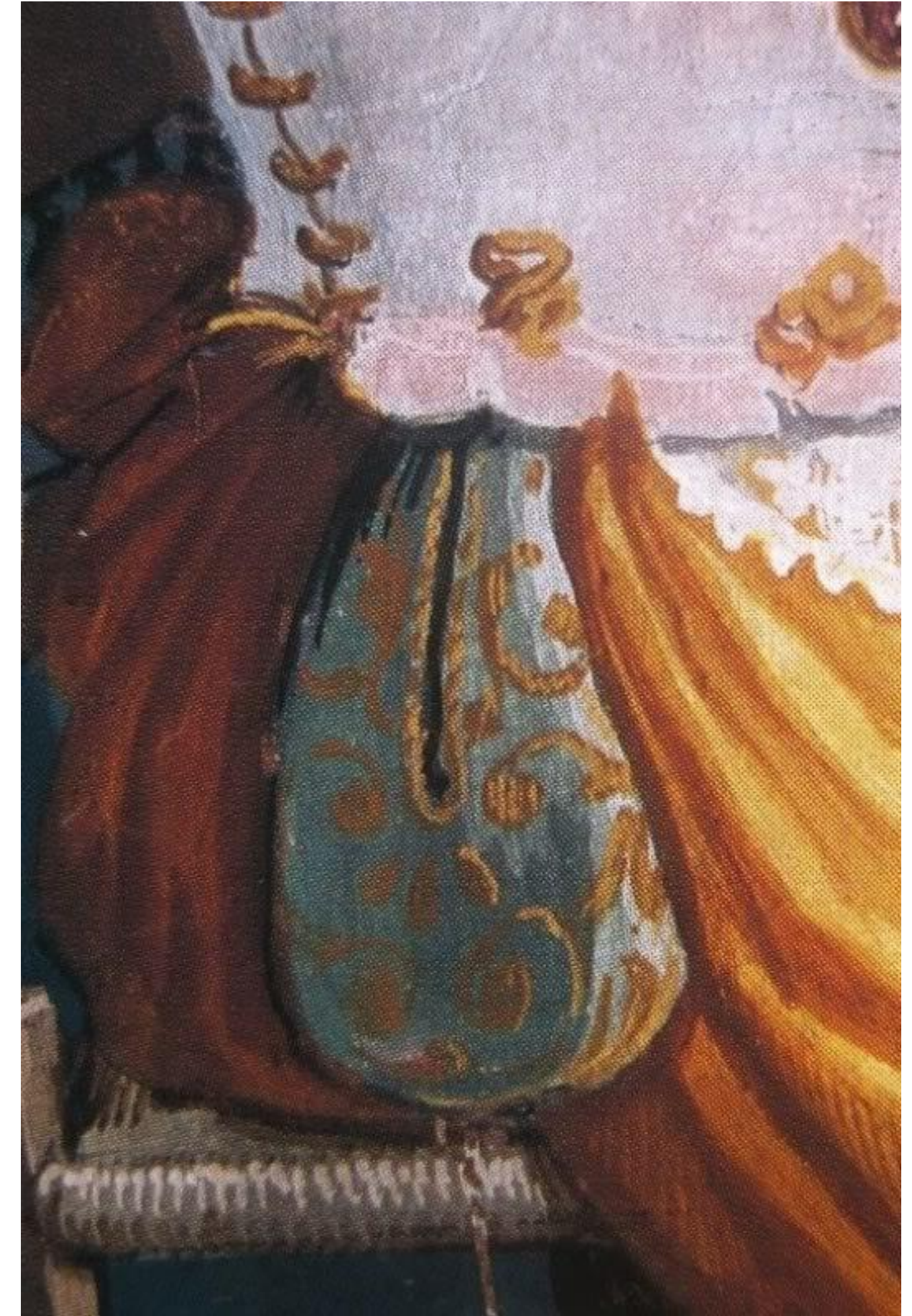




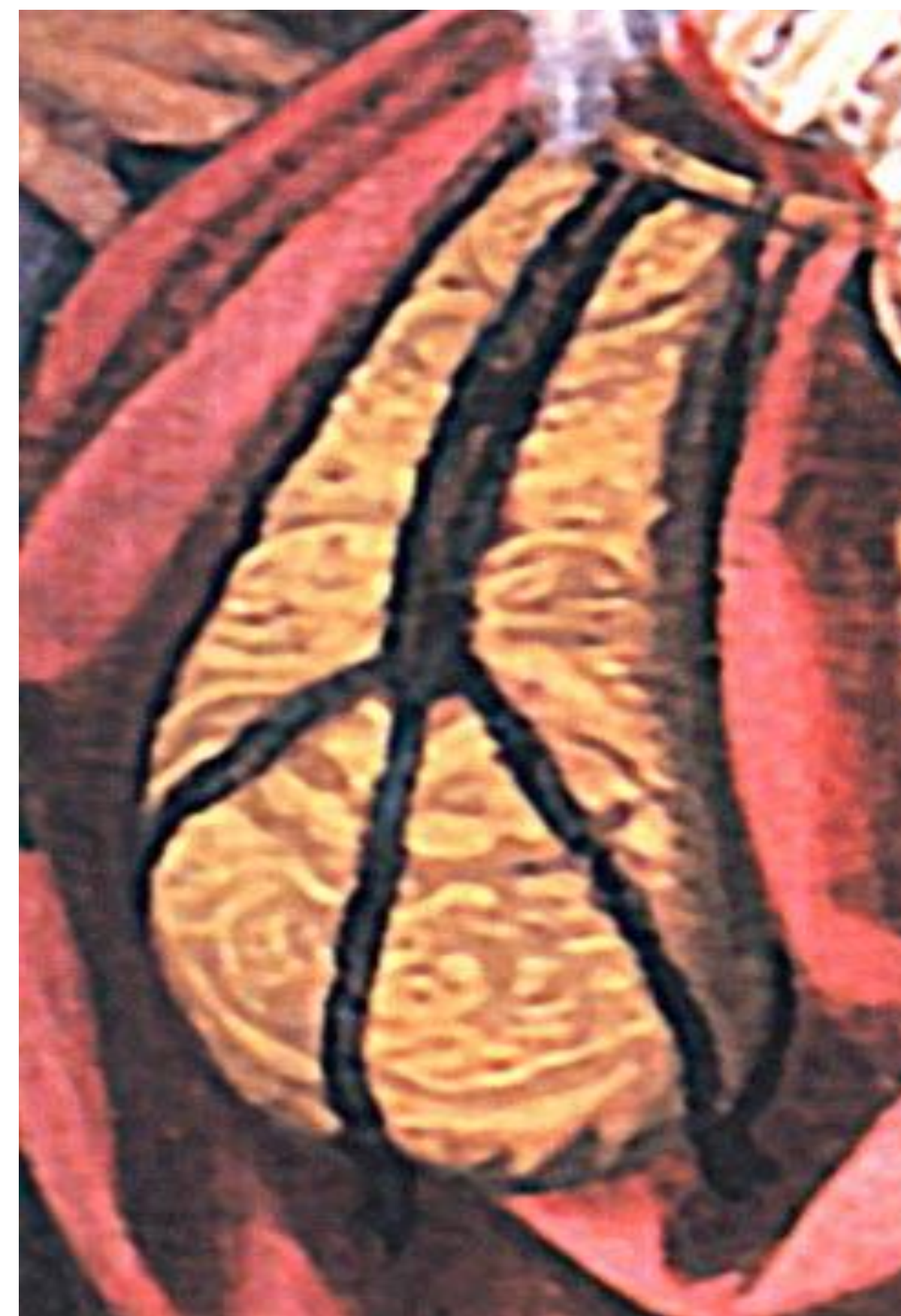
Bolso also known as Faltriquera, or Spanish pocket dated 1575-1600 just within period at Museo del Traje or Museum of costume in Madrid.



*"Woman at her toilet"*, 1575-78, Alessandro Allori





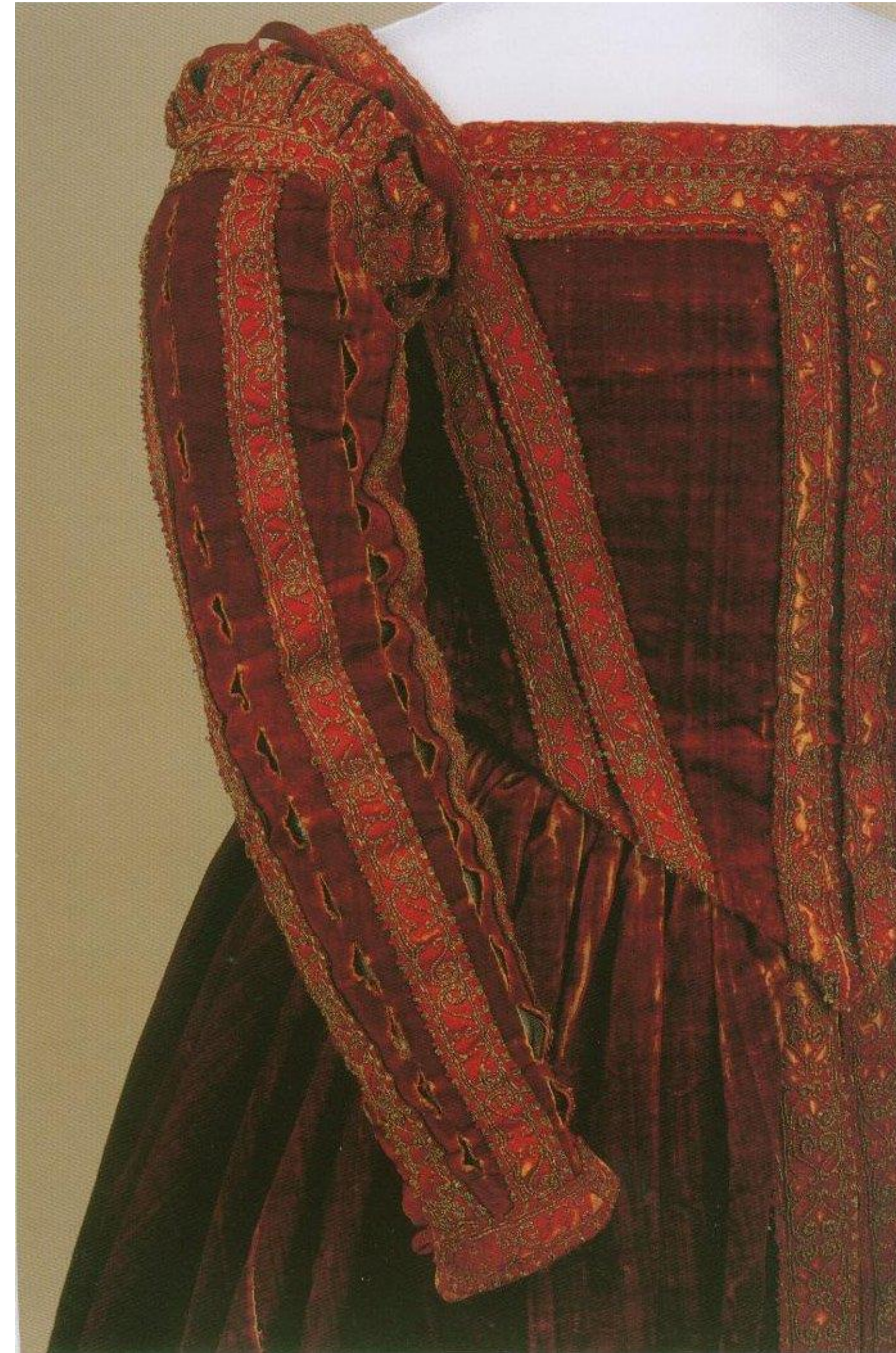


*Birth of the Virgin* by  
Alessandro Allori,  
1595





Extant red velvet dress of time period of the funeral dress-  
no direct proof that it was worn by Eleonora of Toledo, but  
same timeframe and style.







The wardrobe accounts of Elizabeth I show that pockets were often placed in her gowns, nightgowns, safeguards and cloaks. A 'straight bodied Gowne of blak taphata' made for the Queen in 1569 had a 'Pockett of carnation taphata', while a loose gown made in 1574 of 'plaine blak vellat' also had pockets made of 'blak taphata'.<sup>30</sup> The records for the alteration of a gown 'brought out of Fraunce' for Elizabeth note that the gown included a 'pockett of blak taphata', but whether the gown had originally been made with such a pocket or whether the Queen's tailor Walter Fyshe (*fl.* 1557–1586) had inserted it is unknown.<sup>31</sup>

Pockets could be remade or added to a garment after its initial construction: in 1575, Fyshe had the task of 'makege newe pockettes of blak taphata' for a black wrought velvet cloak, and in 1580 of 'making of a pockett for a rounde kyrtell of yellowe taphata'.<sup>32</sup> The fabric which pockets were made from generally did not match the rest of the garment, but they did often coordinate with trimmings, as in a safeguard of black tuft taffeta 'borderid with blak sarceonett and pocketts of like sarceonett'.<sup>33</sup> Elizabeth's pockets were predominantly made of taffeta, but she also had pockets of grosgrain or sarcenet, and occasionally they were lined with fustian, presumably for strength.<sup>34</sup>

Two pieces of yellow taffeta were found amongst the satin remnants of the burial gown of Eleonora di Toledo (1522–1562) which are thought to have comprised a pocket, whilst the pockets in the loose gowns and nightgowns of Mary I (1516–1558) were always made of black satin.<sup>35</sup> However, when a garment was made for someone else, whether a dwarf, a maid or a lady of the court, the wardrobe accounts of Mary and Elizabeth show that the pockets included were almost always made of either fustian or buckram, as opposed to a type of silk cloth.<sup>36</sup>

Elizabeth's pockets were not necessarily made from offcuts of fabric: Baptist Hicks (1551–1629) delivered 'two yerds thre quarters of taphata for pocketts' to the Great Wardrobe in 1603.<sup>37</sup>



Women also wore tie-on pockets long before the end of the seventeenth century. There are a number of references in Elizabeth's wardrobe accounts to pockets having been made separate to any gowns, as in 'Item for makinge of Twelve Pockettes of silke grograine: Twelve Pockettes of taphata: and Twelve Pocketts of bridge satten' in 1579.<sup>38</sup>

In 1608, Sir Thomas Edmondes (c. 1563–1639) sent Sir Robert Cecil (1563–1612) a parcel of goods from Brussels, which included '2 perfumed pocketts' alongside Spanish gloves and scented candles, and there are extant embroidered pockets in the Museo del Traje in Madrid.<sup>39</sup> Similar pockets can be seen in several works depicting women — paintings, preparatory sketches and prints — by the artists Giovanni Stradano (also known as Jan van der Straet (1523–1605)) and Alessandro Allori (1535–1607), both based in Florence in the late sixteenth century (**Figure 7**).<sup>40</sup>

These items perfectly match Burman and White's definition of tie-on pockets — 'large, discrete garments of a more or less rectangular or oblong shape, designed to be tied around the waist, over a petticoat and under a dress' — except for the fact that they are only visible because they are being worn externally, over the skirts.<sup>41</sup>

This raises the question of whether such items should be seen as a type of bag as opposed to a pocket. Although decorated, they do not look as robust or secure as the purses which men can be seen sporting in formal portraits, and it is notable that Stradano and Allori's images all show women in domestic environments or states of semi-undress, implying that in some informal circumstances it may have been acceptable to wear a pocket above your clothes for ease of access





Women wearing tie-on pockets whilst incubating silk worms. Karel van Mallery after Jan van der Straet, *Vermis sericus*, pl. 3, c. 1595. Engraving, 20 × 27 cm. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Elisha Whittelsey Collection, The Elisha Whittelsey Fund, 1950, 49.95.869(2) *Metropolitan Museum of Art*.

3.

*Aspersa vino terfaq oua vermicum*

*Papillulis solent fouere virgines.*



Drey arme hauß meynd klage auch/ Die yar dinst seind yn herb vñ rauch.





# 1600+

**Early Fashion Dolls**

*Lucy Locket lost her pocket*  
SECTION TITLE (OPTIONAL)  
*Kitty Fisher found it*  
*not a penny was there in it*  
*only ribbons round it.*





# Salisbury and South

V&A Museum: Pockets of History Project

# Wiltshire Museum







V&A Museum: Pockets of History Project  
FASHION DOLLS WITH POCKET

am,

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need at 1000



# Pick-pockets

## The Proceedings of the Old Bailey, 1674-1913

SECTION TITLE (OPTIONAL)

As soon as there were pockets, there were people to pick them. This record from the major criminal court of London has over 40,000 case results in a search for pocket-related crimes.

Our knowledge of pockets and their contents is largely held in the complaints and court records of the time. We are able to research the theft of pockets and their contents.



# What does she have in her pockets?

*Mist's Weekly Journal (London), 22 May 1725*

D[r]opp'd between St. Sepulchres church and Salisbury court in fleet-street, going down fleet-lane, and crossing the bridge, a pair of white fustian pockets, in which was a silver purse, work'd with scarlet and green S.S. In the purse there was 5 or 6 shillings in money; a ring with a death at length in black enamell'd, wrapp'd in a piece of paper; a silver tooth pick case; 2 cambrick handkerchiefs, one mark'd E.M. the other E5D; a small knife; a key and pair of gloves, and a steel thimble. &c. If the person who took them up will bring them to mr. peachy's at the black boy in the o'd baily, he shall receive a guinea reward, ann no questions ask'd.

Unsurprisingly, many women judged that the safest place to store keys and other valuables at night was in their pocket, typically stowed under their pillow.





*A Narrative of the Proceedings at the  
Sessions in the Old-Baily, June  
the 1<sup>st</sup>. 1677.*

**T**He first Tryal was of a young fellow that on the 25. of *May* last came early in the morning to drink with one of his Acquaintance, and afterwards the same forenoon came again all alone by himself, call'd for a Pot of drink and must needs have a Cup to drink out of, they brought him a silver Beaker valued at 35 Shillings, he pretended to wait for his friend, lingered away some time, but at last spying an opportunity when the Maid of the house was gone into the Stables, stole the plate and left his reckoning to pay, he made severall slight ridiculous Excuses, as that he was drunk, that his friend came and took it away, &c. but confessed he himself offered the plate to sale, and thereupon was found Guilty.

The next was a pickpocket who on the 2. of *May* seeing a young maiden dancing with the Milkwoman made shift to steal a box and 21 shillings 6. pence in money out of her Pocket, and according to method, forthwith delivered it to a boy his Confederate, who immediately ran away and is not yet taken. But our young practitioner was not so much Mr. of Art as to perform

The next was a pickpocket who on the 2. of May seeing a young maiden dancing with the Milkwoman made shift to steal a box and 21 shillings 6. pence in money out of her Pocket, and according to method, forthwith delivered it to a boy his Confederate, who immediately ran away and is not yet taken.

But our young practitioner was not so much Mr. of Art as to perform the Exploit clerely, for he was both perceived by the Girl, diving in her pocket and seen by another deliver away the prize, so that he was found Guilty.



A Gentleman having (but ungentleely at the Devil-Tavern) ran another into the belly, and quite through the body; a very dangerous wound, upon scarce any provocation, and before the other so much as saw his sword, the same being drawn under the Table, he was now indicted for the Assault, and though he endeavour'd in vain to have bailanc'd it with bringing a Cross-Indictment; yet being found guilty, he was fined 100 *l.* committed in Execution till the same paid, and to find Sureties for the good Behaviour for a Twelvemonth.

There were in all Eleven Persons, Seven men and Four women, received Sentence of Death, viz. Two for Horse-stealing, in which they rid double, each being guilty of two Indictments; One for Pocket-picking; Three for Burglary and House-breaking; Two women, notorious Shop-lifters; and Two other women and a man (having all formerly received Mercy) for several Felonies.

There were likewise Six Persons burnt in the hand, Two allowed to be Transported, and One ordered to be Whipt: And so the Sessions concluded.

*F I N I S.*



## Old Bailey Proceedings punishment summary.

5th June 1679

There were in all Eleven Persons, Seven men and Four women, received Sentence of Death, viz. Two for Horse-stealing, in which they rid double, each being guilty of two Indictments; One for Pocket-picking; Three for Burglary and House-breaking; Two women, notorious Shop-lifters; and Two other women and a man (having all formerly received Mercy) for several Felonies.

There were likewise Six Persons burnt in the hand, Two allowed to be Transported, and One ordered to be Whipt: And so the Sessions concluded.



**Katharine Smith.**

**Theft: burglary.**

**9th April 1684**

Katharine Smith, known amongst the Pick-Pocket by the name of Yorkshire Kate, was Indicted for stealing Handkerchiefs and other linnen, of the Goods of Thomas Williams, and found Guilty of Felony and Burglary.

**Sentence**

Which Tryals being over the Court proceeded to give Judgment as followeth.

Eight received Sentence of Death, viz.

Mary Corbet, for the High Treason, to be burnt to Death. Mary Corbet, for the Murder, Jane Robinson, alias Vos, Charles Close, Bernard Trevers, Hugh Kelley, Katharine Smith, and Benjamin Gander, alias Gandee, to be hanged.

Three of the Women which received Sentence pleaded their Bellies, viz. Jane Robinson, Mary Corbet sentenced for the Treason, and Katharine Smith; upon whom a Jury of Women being impanelled, they gave a Verdict, that Jane Robinson was quick with Child, but that the other two were not.

*slowth, an Inn-keeper at Wood-green in the Parish of Trencham, and taking away in Plate and Money to the Value of 150 l. which they effected, by going first to drink, as if passing towards Hornsey, being habited as Gentlemen: the Inn-keeper making much of them, thinking he had gotten good Guests, and offering them to lye at his House; but sfoon as it grew dark, Bernard Trevers let in several others, who assisted them to bind the Family, and rob the House. Also, Mary Kelley was Indicted as necessary, for comforting, aiding, and harbouring them after the Robbery committed. Some of them were taken at Portsmouth, and part of the Plate found with them, also a Gold Ring found with Mary Kelley, she being the pretended Wife of Hugh Kelley. Trevers was taken about Charing-Cross, and either was or went in the Habit of a Traitor. The three Men confessed, upon their Arraignment, that they were guilty of the Felony and Robbery, but not of Breaking the House: however, it being proved that Trevers unbolled a back door to let the rest of his Companions in, they were all three found Guilty of Felony and Burglary; but Mary Kelley is acquitted.*

*Mary Baxter, Indicted, for that she, being a Nurse to a sick Person in the house of one Isabel Redden of the Parish of St. Dunstons without Aldgate, did make discovery to one Walter Gilman, and Ann his Wife, how they might rob the House; which House, was robbed of Gold and Silver, and other Goods to a great Value, as is believed, by the said Gilman and his Wife (they being fled) and alleged that Mary Baxter was necessary thereto, and refused to find them out, albeit she privately since frequented their Company. But the Evidence being very ill managed, no manner of Proof was against the said Baxter, and she was acquitted.*

*John Francis Indicted for stealing a piece of Dowlas, containing many Ells, out of a Linnen Draper's Shop in New Fish street: the Servant of the Draper seeing him snatches it out, and running away, made such quick Pursuit, that he dropt the Dowlas at the Door; and before he got out of the street was taken. The Prisoner pretended he found it; but that appearing a common Excuse, he was found Guilty.*

*Edward Hubbard Indicted for Robbing Ann Barker of a Box, wherein was Hoods and Lace to the Value of about 3 l. by snatching them out of her Hand as she was going through Lombard-street: he was, however, acquitted, the said Ann Barker not appearing against him, and great Suspicion is, that some Composition hath been made for the said Felony.*

*Daniel Butterman Indicted, for that pretending himself a Drawer at the Horn Tavern in Fleet-street, he as such, went and fetched away a Trunk full of Cloaths, where a Maid Servant at that Tavern had left them; and cheated her thereof.*

*Katharine Smith, known amongst the Pick-Pocket: by the name of Yorkshire Kate, was Indicted for stealing Handkerchiefs and other linnen, of the Goods of Thomas Williams, and found Guilty of Felony and Burglary.*

*Anthony Jacob Indicted for stealing an Iron Beam and a Peck Weight, from William Wasfon, a Baker; but was acquitted.*

*Benjamin Gander, alias Gandee, Indicted, for that he, together with Bridget Sands, and Christopher Ludbery, robbed John Clerk, Esq; of a Gold Watch, a Gold Seal, and 12 Shillings in Money. It appearing the said Bridget Sands had pick'd his Pocket, and conveyed the said Watch, &c. to Gandee, he was therefore found guilty of the said Robbery.*

*Robert Brewer Indicted for a Trespass, being a suspected Person, and having a Bunch of Pick-lock Keys found upon him, also been formerly burnt in the Hand, he was found Guilty of the Trespass.*

Which Tryals being over the Court proceeded to give Judgment as followeth.

Eight received Sentence of Death, viz.

*Mary Corbet, for the High Treason, to be burnt to Death. Mary Corbet, for the Murder, Jane Robinson, alias Vos, Charles Close, Bernard Trevers, Hugh Kelley, Katharine Smith, and Benjamin Gander, alias Gandee, to be hanged.*

Seven were Burnt in the Hand, viz.

*William Charles, John Lestevs, James Warringtons, Charles Tooley, William Clarke, Thomas Wyatt, and Thomas Hunt.*

Six to be Transported, viz.

*John Den, John Francis, Richard Enos, John Wheeler, John Cudde, and Lawrence Axial.*

One to be Whipt: viz. *Susanna Saunders.*

Three of the Women which received Sentence pleaded their Bellies. viz. *Jane Robinson, Mary Corbet* sentenced for the Treason, and *Katharine Smith*; upon whom a Jury of Women being impanelled, they gave a Verdict, that *Jane Robinson* was quick with Child, but that the other two were not.

*George Larkin* having pleaded Guilty to an Indictment, for Printing a seditious Paper, called, *Shall I, Shall I, No, No,* is sentenced to pay a Fine of 50 l. stand in the Pillory, and find Sureties for his Good Behaviour a Twelve Month.

*Daniel Butterman* is sentenced to stand in the Pillory, and to have a Blew Apron on, by which he coloured his Cheat, and pay a Fine of 5 Nobls.

*Robert Brewer* to pay a Fine of a hundred Marks, and find Sureties for his Good Behaviour.

This Sessions being ended, the next Sessions and Goal-delivery at the said place, will begin on the 15th of May next.

GOD SAVE THE KING.

**I Do Appoint George Croom, to Print and Publish the Proceedings at the Sessions held at Justice-Hall in the Old-Bayly: And that no other Person or Persons whatsoever, presume to Print the same.**

**Henry Tulse, Mayor.**



# People and their pockets as property

SECTION TITLE (OPTIONAL)

The terrible fact that a runaway slave was listed as property along with their clothing and possessions is important.

In the United states runaway slaves were listed as lost/stolen property along with their possessions. These records give us a unique view into the materials used and the prevalence of pockets even for women who could own nothing.



# 1700-1800

## Doll Clothes with Pockets

SECTION TITLE (OPTIONAL)



## EVEN THE DOLLS HAD POCKETS

V&A Museum of Childhood  
Late 1700s-early 1800s

The fronts and backs of this small pair of attached pockets are made of plain weave cloth. The vertical openings are reinforced. A length of tape attaches the pockets and forms the ties. The lower fronts are embroidered with silk in a posy of flowers, stems and leaves and the edges in a loop and flower design. This pair of pockets comes from a collection of doll's clothes once the property of Miss Mary Spenlove, born in June 1797 (her mother was a Miss Morland).

Their construction and decoration are a very precise copy of adult clothes and pockets and may have been an early exercise in sewing for their owner. Th









PEDLAR DOLL WEARING A POCKET





ANOTHER PEDLAR DOLL





Pedlar Doll, Early-mid 1800s





# Mid-1700s Fashion doll





# 1700-1800

## The Golden Age of Pockets

The 18<sup>th</sup> Century brought an interest in embroidering and detailing all sorts of small household linens with delicate, often personal, embroidery.

This led to ladies of a variety of means purchasing and making a very wide range of pocket shapes and decorations.

























Photograph by Susan Holloway Scott  
with permission of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.



















.E (OPTIONAL)







# Regency Slim Silhouettes

Extant

Fashion Dolls

Practicality

Assumptions





Late 1800s early 1900s

The front and back of this pocket are made of a smooth faced cloth, possibly cotton. It is fully lined in chamois leather. The opening runs horizontally across the pocket and is fastened with a steel press stud on a flap. The flap and the edges are bound with braid. Lengths of vertical tape attach to the top of the pocket and the belt. This pocket is probably sewn by machine. It is one of a group that has evolved from the conventional tie-on pocket to include the use of a waist band inserted through two vertical tapes, and horizontal openings covered by flaps with press studs.

Fashion Museum, Bath





# Child's

# Dress

late 1700s - early 1800s

This young girl's dress is made of unlined cotton printed with small red flowers on a coffee and white ground. There is a vertical opening on the wearer's right, in the side seam of the skirt below the high waist. It has been darned at the top and there is a tear at the lower end of the opening. Openings of this kind gave access to a tie-on pocket and this little dress shows that use of these pockets began early for young girls at this period. It can be compared to a painting by Sir William Beechey 'Portrait of Sir Francis Ford's Children Giving a Coin to a Beggar Boy'





# 1830+

Voluminous clothes and pockets



Oom Papi  
@tru\_melo



Women when they have pockets in their dresses 😂



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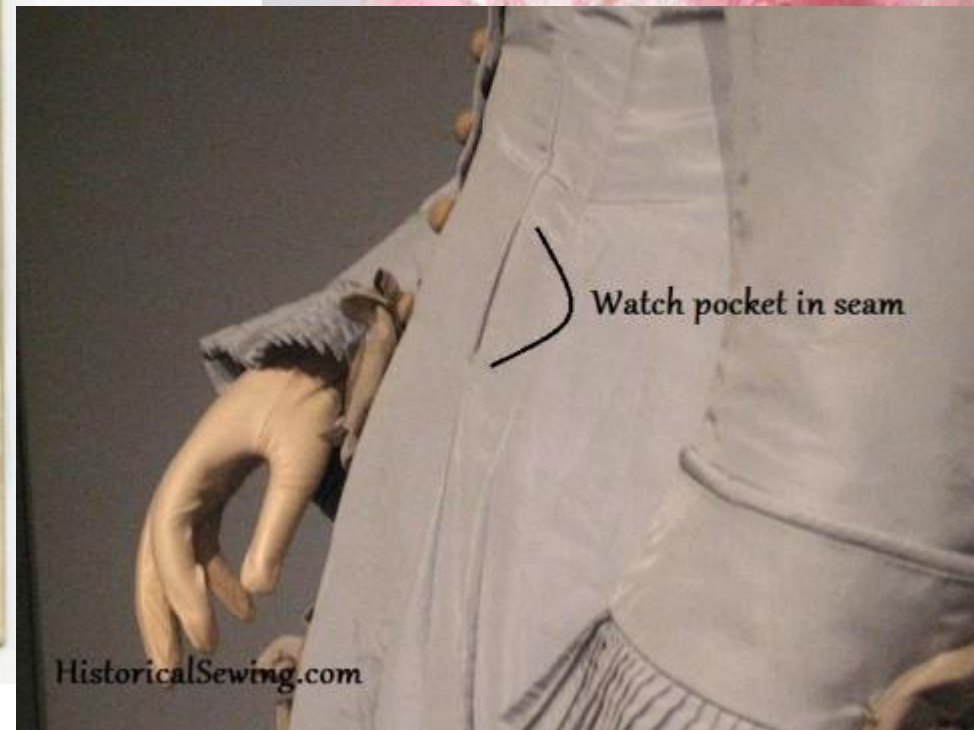
Mid-1800s  
Fashion doll





The pocket afforded women a degree of emancipatory privacy through individual craft and ownership, enabling a public existence independent of the home. --Illustration from *Costumes Historiques de France*, Vol. 3, 1860





© BETTER DRESSES  
Vintage





Follow

What do we want?

DRESSES WITH POCKETS!

How do we want them?

FILLED WITH SNACKS!

What kind of snacks?

PREFERABLY A REFRESHING MIX OF  
SALTY AND SWEET BUT WE'RE NOT TOO  
PICKY FOCUS ON THE POCKETS

6:00 PM - 8 Dec 2017

28,993 Retweets 100,786 Likes



POCKETS!!!!





SAFELY ENDANGERED

TERRY, ARE YOU READING A BOOK?



YEAH DUDE. IT'S CALLED "THE ART OF SEDUCTION"



LATER

HEY



I GOT YOU A DRESS WITH POCKETS







Anil Dash

@anildash

Follow

May all your dresses have pockets.

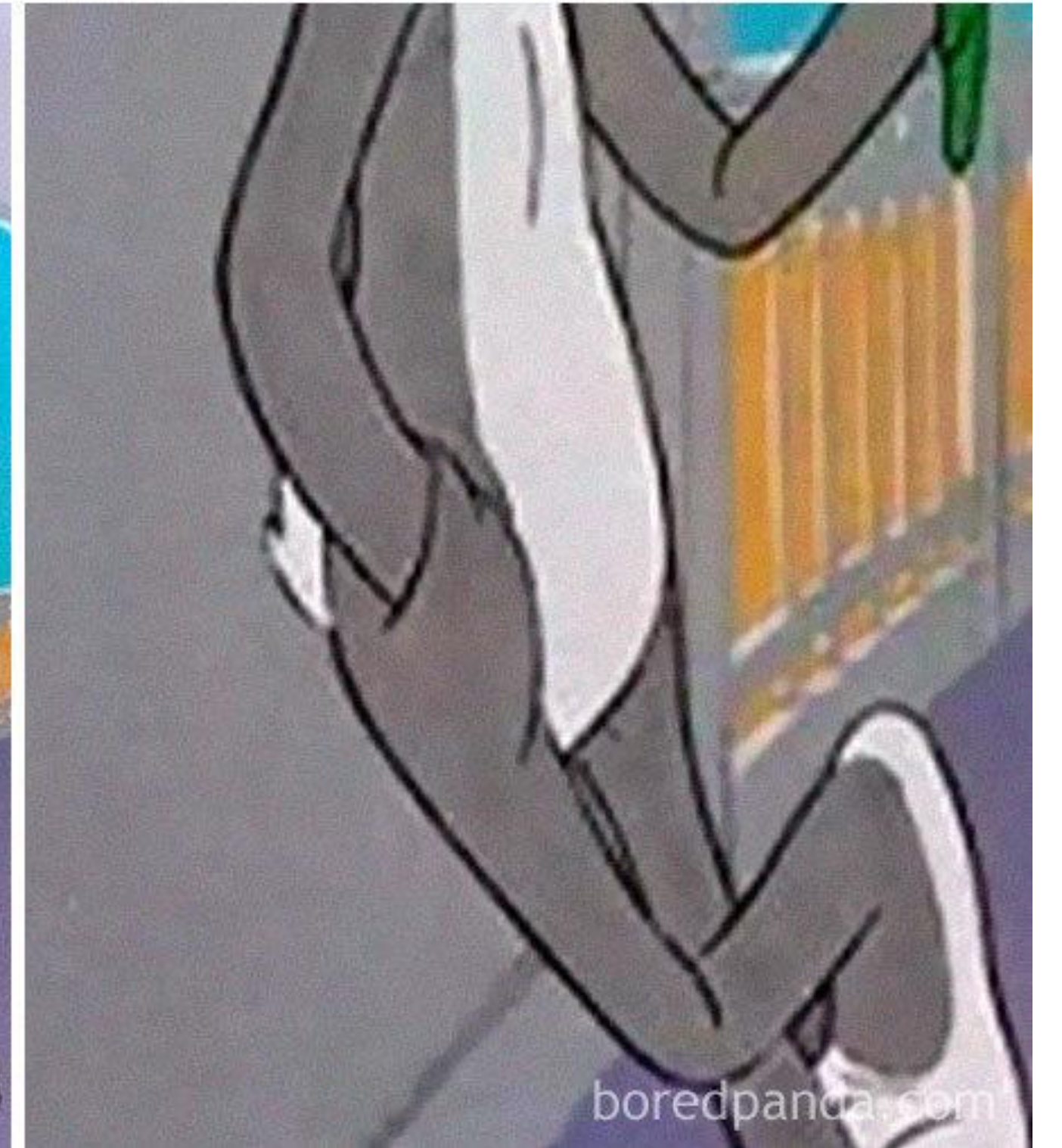
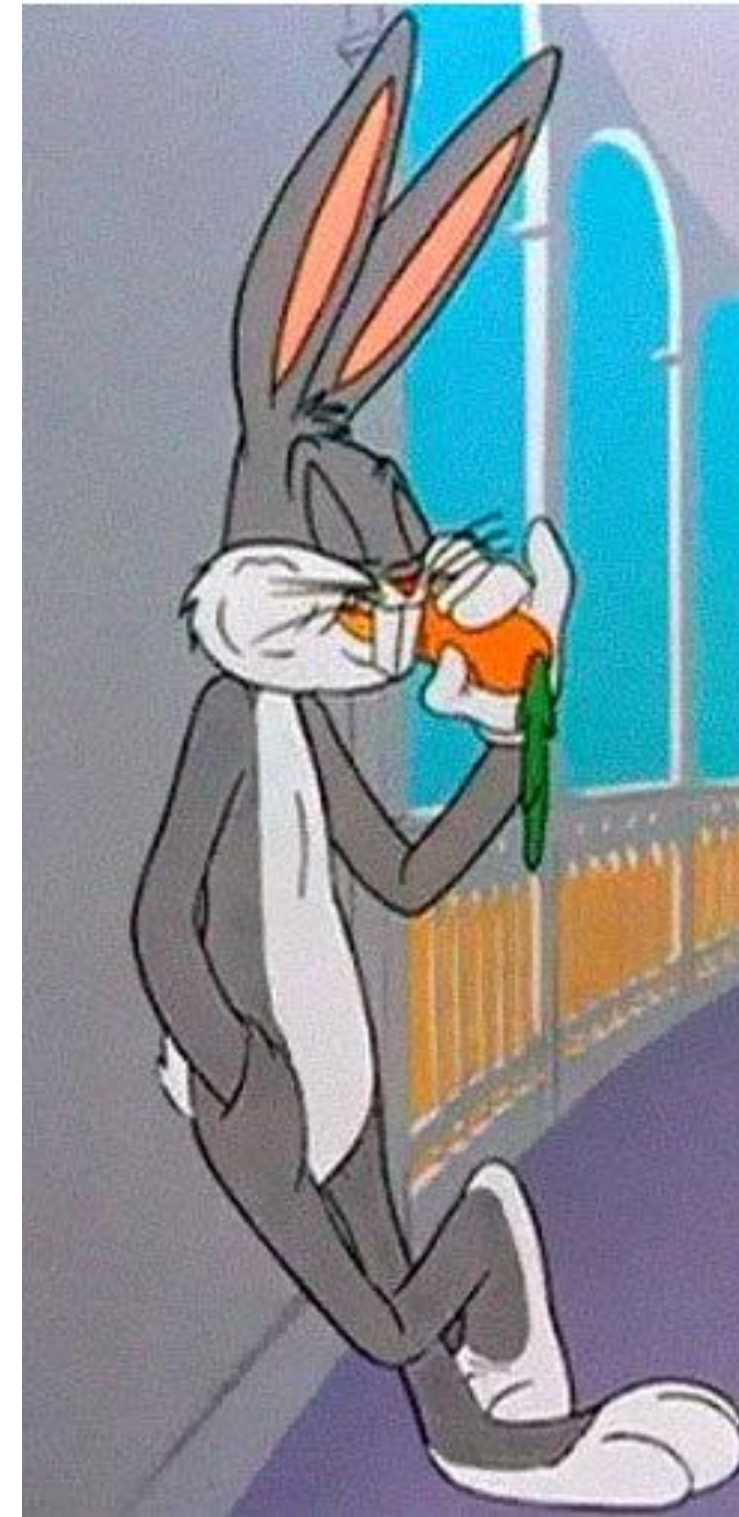
11:56 AM - 5 Jul 2017

894 Retweets 2,406 Likes



A blessing.

Bugs Bunny has pockets built into his fur, but women can't get real pockets made into our jeans



boredpanda.com



## RESOURCES

With thanks to Barbara Burman, independent scholar, and Ariane Fennetaux, Assistant Professor of History, Université de Paris; authors of *The Pocket: A Hidden History of Women's Lives, 1660-1900*, published by Yale University Press.

### **Hands Deep in History: Pockets in Men and Women's Dress in Western Europe, c. 1480–1630**

<https://www.eupublishing.com/doi/full/10.3366/cost.2017.0022>

### Spanish Renaissance pocket and more

<http://courtesansca.blogspot.com/2013/07/renaissance-pocket.html>

### Isobel of Toledo's funeral dress:

<http://theclosethistorian.blogspot.com/2014/08/closet-histories-11-funeral-dress-of.html>

<http://www.karen.htmlcreators.com/florentine.html>

### 16<sup>th</sup> Century working woman

<https://handcraftedhistory.blog/tag/16th-century/>

### Proceedings of the Old Bailey- London's criminal court 1674-1913

<https://www.oldbaileyonline.org>

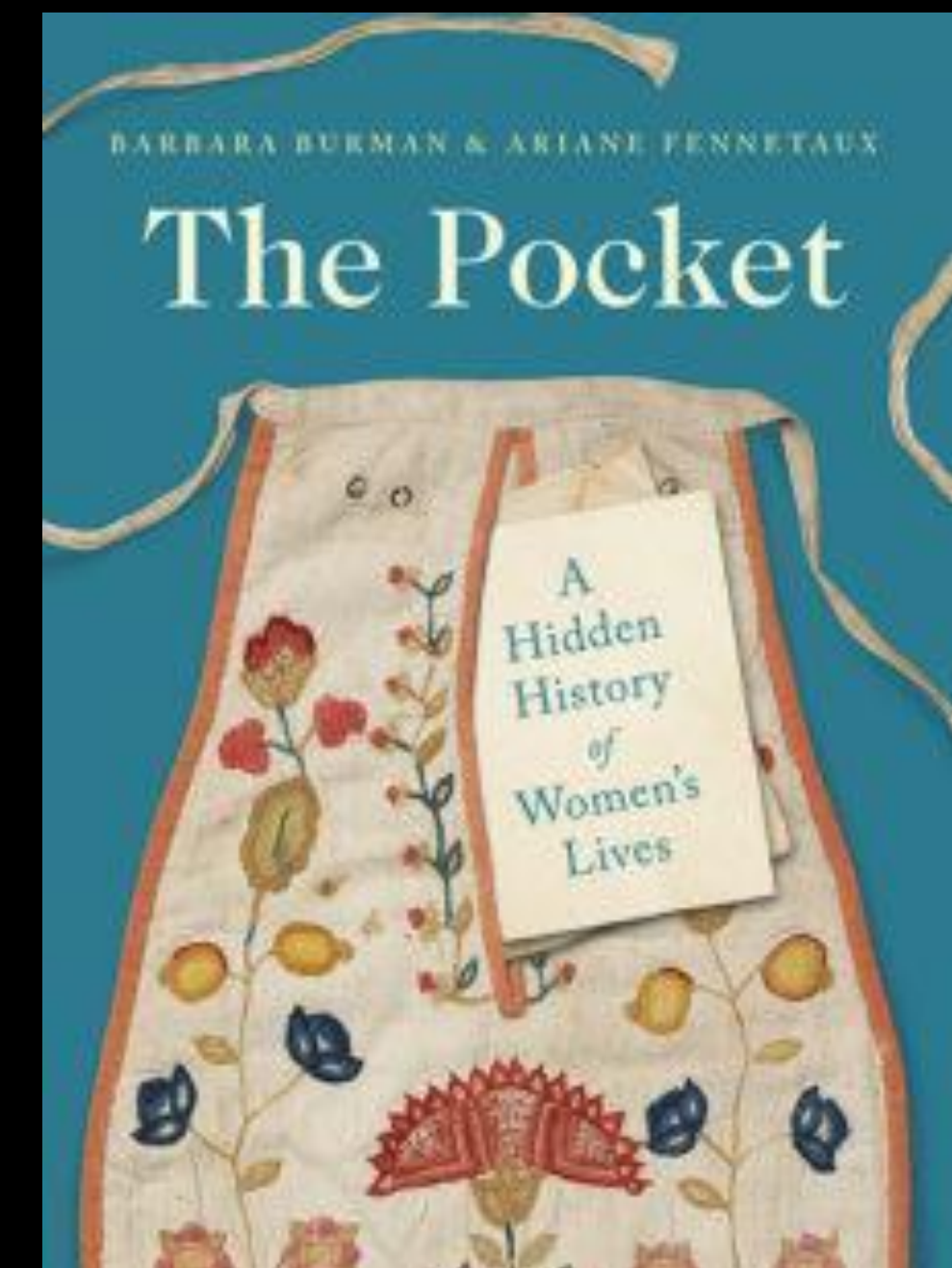
Search for the crime of pickpocketing.

### V&A Museum article: Women's tie-on pockets

<https://www.vam.ac.uk/articles/womens-tie-pockets>

### Doll pockets

<https://www.vads.ac.uk/digital/collection/POCKETS/id/359/rec/17>







**Tink Walker**

5d · 🌐


i couldn't work at no aquarium,  
i'll have a penguin in my pocket

   12

1 comment 4 shares  ▼

 Like

 Comment

 Share



**Elzy Rich**

This is why women's clothing has no  
pockets

Like Reply

2  