

## Travelling Brunswick Day to Evening Reversible Mode

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**Purpose:** To create a versatile winter travel wardrobe that is comfortable, easily maintained, beautiful and can be worn indoors and outdoors and from day to evening requiring minimal added items. The inspiration comes from the eighteenth-century informal “brunswick,” a three-quarter length long-sleeved hooded jacket worn with a matching petticoat.<sup>1</sup> To increase versatility, each item is reversible (black or navy) and the ensemble is layered into four essential components: skirt, bodice, sleeved bolero and collared vest with detachable hood.

While air travel may be easier than carriage rides over unpaved roads, it is not without its drawbacks. To increase comfort, the long and roomy quilted skirt acts like a blanket—more sanitary than those provided by airlines—and has dual-sized anchors at the waistband to address the

abdomen’s expansion while seated. The skirt and vest have large deep pockets for storage, which can reduce or eliminate the need for a purse. The hood can be rolled behind the neck and serve as a pillow. The quilted nylon virtually eliminates creasing, can be spot cleaned, machine cleaned or the garment can simply be reversed in case of soiling. This nylon is tightly woven and glossy, which makes it adaptable to evening wear as well as windproof and resistant to snow and rain. The pointed shape of the hood leaves no flat surfaces for water to puddle but a loop at the tip can anchor a fold at the apex. This eliminates the need for an umbrella (leaving hands free) and creates a roomier interior that won’t mess someone’s hair in a similar way as the collapsible eighteenth-century “calash.”<sup>2</sup> Lastly, the quilted and shaped bodice provides support for the breasts, which can eliminate the need for a bra (especially helpful during overnight travel).



Process: Research was conducted regarding eighteenth-century garments and accessories, which examined cut, construction and function. An article by Linda Baumgarten on layered garments and quilted petticoats was particularly helpful. A ca. 1750-1760 border design from a Connecticut petticoat featured in this article served as a source of inspiration for quilting the bodice, vest and skirt. A class in “longarm” machine quilting and renting of this equipment led to design experimentation. A grid system provided by the computerized machine proved to be a disaster in the fall of the skirt. This stitched grid was (painstakingly) removed and changed to a small “brain” pattern that reduced bulk and the matching of stitched lines. The way a brunswick was form-fitting and flattering at the torso is different than most contemporary winter attire and became a design goal. The quilting of two layers of mid-weight nylon and polyester batting provided the possibility of strong sculptural shapes if properly tailored. Through quilting and tailoring, the jacket did not need to be skin-tight to suggest a woman’s body shape. Parts were assembled with abutted seams and covered with nylon bias tape. With airline seating in mind, batting and quilting were absent at the crease of the arm to increase comfort when arms are bent.

Techniques: Longarm machine quilting.

Materials: Nylon, polyester batting, zipper, elastic, buttons, hooks and eyes.

Date completed & measurements: April 2013, size 10 to 12.

References:

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<sup>1</sup> “A Colonial Lady's Clothing: A Glossary of Terms,” s. v. “Brunswick,” Colonial Williamsburg, <http://www.history.org/history/clothing/women/wglossary.cfm#brunswick> (accessed May 24, 2013).

<sup>2</sup> “Green Calash (Collapsible Bonnet),” under “Colonial Williamsburg’s Museum Collection Historic Threads: Three Centuries of Clothing,” [http://www.history.org/history/museums/clothingexhibit/museum\\_explore.cfm#index=156&filter=genderf,fmlacc,fashnacc,evydyacc,alldates](http://www.history.org/history/museums/clothingexhibit/museum_explore.cfm#index=156&filter=genderf,fmlacc,fashnacc,evydyacc,alldates) (accessed May 24, 2013).