

# Baker Street *Elementary*

PRESENTS  
"THE LIFE AND TIMES IN VICTORIAN LONDON"



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THE LIFE AND TIMES IN VICTORIAN LONDON  
# 122 - WOVEN INTO HISTORY - AUGUST, 2023



WELCOME TO TOPIC NUMBER # 122... TODAY WE  
WILL BE LOOKING AT THE USE OF TWEED DURING  
THE VICTORIAN PERIOD.



**WHILE YOUR TWEED DEERSTALKER SHOWN IN PAGET'S ILLUSTRATIONS WAS NEVER MENTIONED IN THE ACTUAL WRITINGS, YOU DID WEAR A TWEED COAT IN THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES AND A TWEED SUIT IN 'A SCANDAL IN BOHEMIA.'**



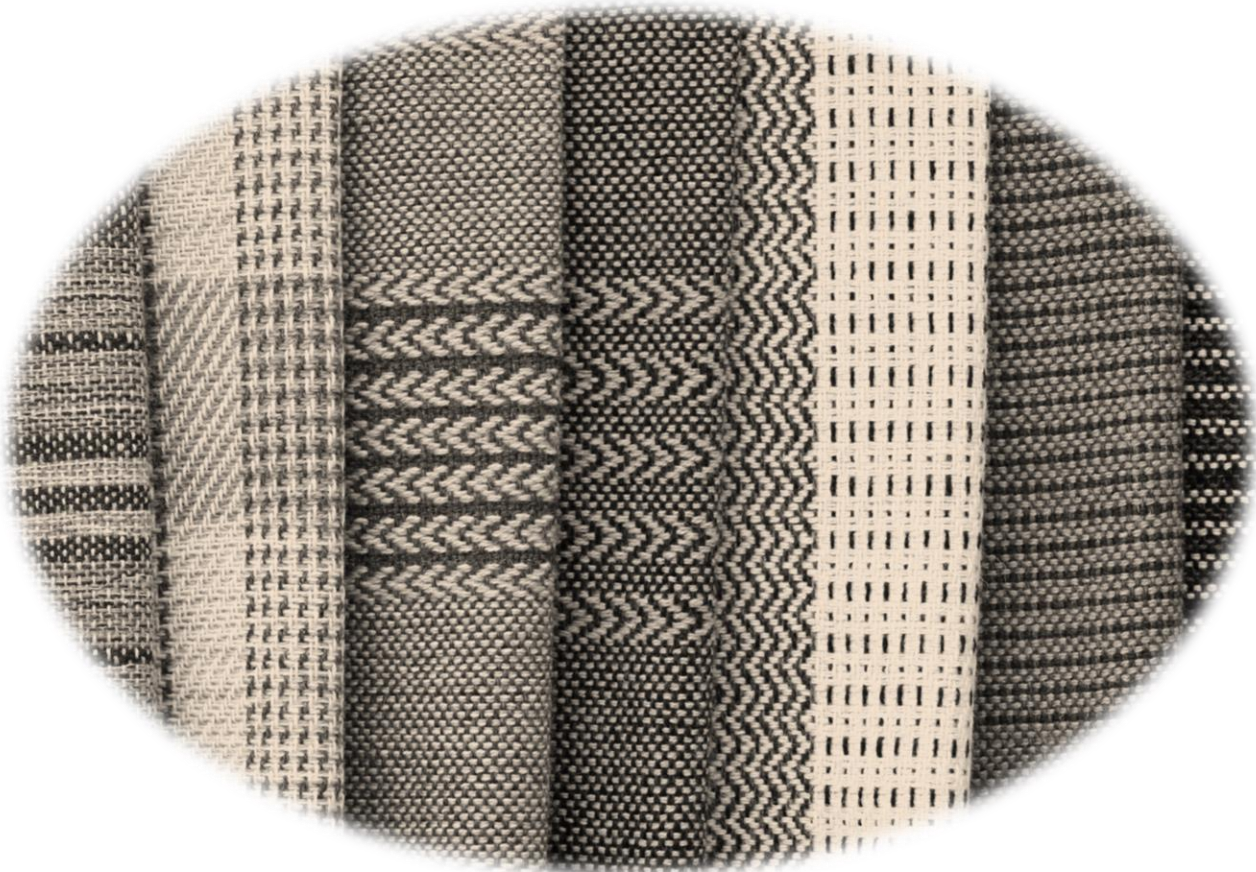
*OTHER MEN WERE DESCRIBED AS WEARING TWEED SUITS IN EIGHT OTHER CASES, BUT THE MERE MENTION OF THIS VERY POPULAR WEAVE WAS ENOUGH TO EVOKE IN THE READER'S MIND THE IMAGE OF THE MAN'S SUIT.*



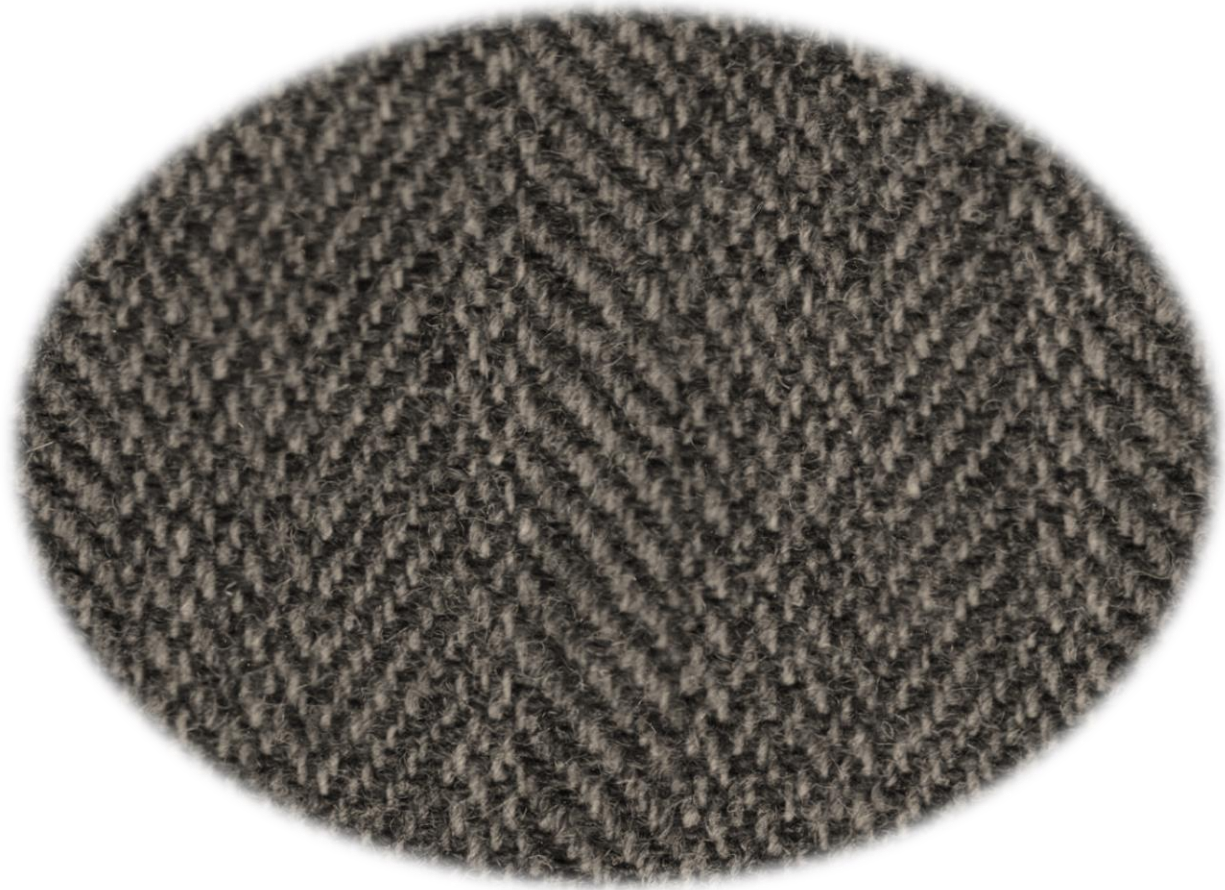
**SCOTTISH FARMERS DEVELOPED THE CLOTH, CALLED  
CLÒ-MÓR (MEANING 'THE BIG CLOTH') IN THE  
1700s TO PROTECT THEM FROM THE ELEMENTS.**



WOVEN BY HAND, THE FABRIC IS A NATURAL FIBER (VIRGIN WOOL) IN A SOFT, OPEN WEAVE, THAT ORIGINALLY WAS QUITE THICK AND NOT AS COLORFUL OR INTRICATELY DESIGNED AS NOW.



THE WOOL, FROM CHEVIOT SHEEP, PRODUCED GARMENTS THAT WERE WARM, WATERPROOF, AND THICK... THE THREADS WERE DYED WITH NATURAL PLANT COLORS SUCH AS LICHENS.

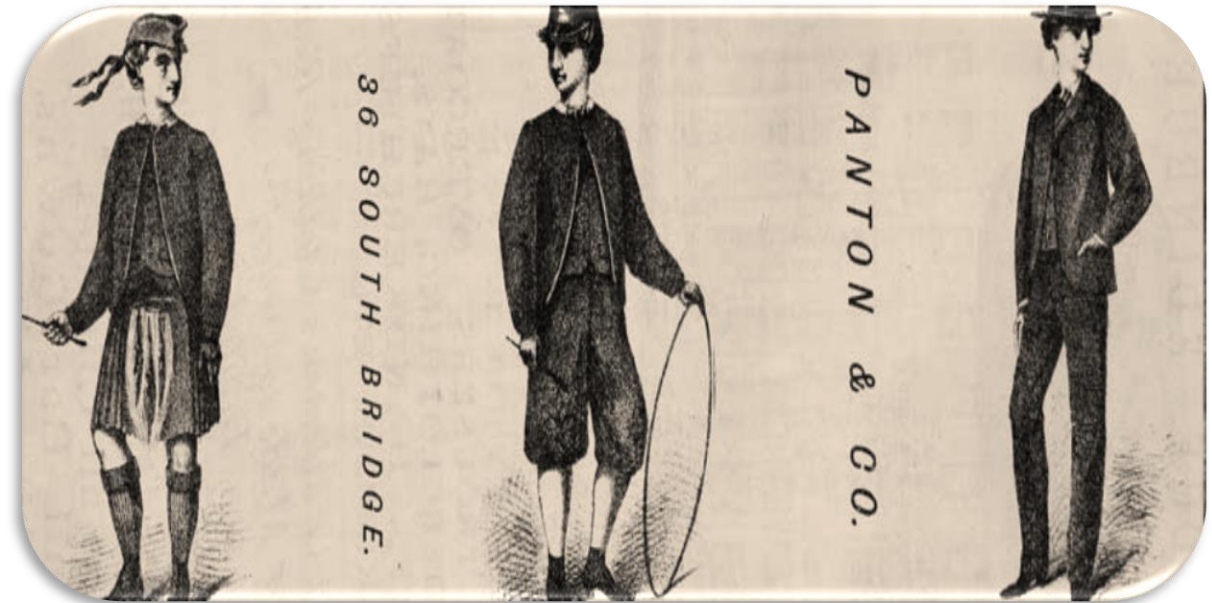




**BY THE 1830s, THE BRITISH ARISTOCRACY WERE USING THE FABRIC FOR THEIR STAFF UNIFORMS WITH SPECIALLY COMMISSIONED PATTERNS FOR THEIR COUNTRY ESTATES.**



UNIQUE DESIGNS WERE USED TO DISTINGUISH  
THOSE FROM THE DIFFERENT ESTATES DURING  
HUNTING AND OTHER OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES.



*THE MOST FAMOUS OF THESE ESTATE TWEEDS  
WAS THE GRANITE AND CRIMSON HEATHER  
'BALMORAL TWEED' CREATED BY PRINCE ALBERT  
AFTER PURCHASING BALMORAL CASTLE IN 1853.*





*WHILE SOME ATTRIBUTE THE FABRIC'S NAME TO THE TWEED RIVER, MOST REFERENCES AGREE THAT ITS MONIKER DEVELOPED BY ACCIDENT.*



THE SCOTTISH WORD FOR TWILL IS TWEEL, AND IN 1826, A LONDON MILLINER MISREAD THE LABEL ON A SHIPMENT OF WOOL TWEEL AND ADVERTISED THE ARRIVAL OF TWEED FABRIC... THE NAME STUCK AND HAS BEEN USED EVER SINCE.



**IN THE MID-1800s, AUTOMATION INCREASED PRODUCTION, AND DEMAND FOR THE FABRIC REACHED BEYOND THE ARISTOCRACY.**



**WHILE MEN'S FASHIONS INCLUDED TWEED JACKETS, SUITS, AND OTHER ACCESSORIES SUCH AS HATS, BY THE EARLY 1860s, WOMEN ALSO INCLUDED TWEED IN THEIR WARDROBE.**



AS THEY PURSUED OUTDOOR SPORTS SUCH AS WALKING, SHOOTING, AND CYCLING, THEY OFTEN WORE JACKETS, CLOAKS, COATS, AND, LATER, MATCHING JACKETS AND SKIRTS FOR INFORMAL OR SPORTING WEAR.







*TO PROTECT THEMSELVES FROM THE RISE IN AUTOMATED TWEED MILLS, THE SELF-EMPLOYED WEAVERS IN THE OUTER HEBRIDES FORMED THE HARRIS TWEED AUTHORITY IN 1909 TO SAFEGUARD THE CLOTH AND PATTERNS FROM IMITATION.*





SHIELDED BY AN ACT OF PARLIAMENT, ONLY THAT FABRIC SANCTIONED BY THE AUTHORITY CAN CARRY THE CERTIFICATION OF HAND-WOVEN HARRIS TWEED.



IN ADDITION TO HARRIS TWEED, OTHER POPULAR  
TWEEDS CAN BE CHARACTERIZED BY THEIR WEAVE,  
THE TYPE OF SHEEP, OR THEIR ORIGIN... INCLUDED  
AMONG THESE ARE...



- **DONEGAL TWEED FROM THE IRISH DONEGAL COUNTY WITH RAINBOW-SPECKS OF YARN IN ITS KNOBBY SURFACE**
- **SAXONY TWEED ORIGINATING FROM SAXONY, GERMANY AND MADE WITH MERINO WOOL**
- **HERRINGBONE TWEED USES A WEAVE THAT FORMS A V PATTERN ON THE SURFACE SIMILAR TO FISH BONES**
- **SHETLAND TWEED HAILS FROM THE SHETLAND ISLANDS AND IS CHARACTERIZED BY A LIGHTER, MORE DELICATE WOOL**



- *BARLEYCORN TWEED SPORTS BUMPY 'BARLEYCORN KERNELS' ALONG ITS SURFACE*
- *CHEVIOT TWEED IS A ROUGHER AND HEAVIER FABRIC FROM THE CHEVIOT HILLS*
- *OVERCHECK TWILL USES A PLAIN TWILL PATTERN WITH AN OVERLAID CHECK DESIGN*





*IN THE EARLY 1900s, TWEED REACHED WORLD-WIDE POPULARITY.*



*COCO CHANEL RAISED IT TO HAUTE COUTURE IN THE 1920S BY INCORPORATING IT INTO HER DESIGNS, AND IT REACHED THE WORLD'S PINNACLE WHEN SIR EDMUND HILLARY WORE IT WHEN HE ASCENDED MOUNT EVEREST. .*



**WITH A SHIFT IN FASHIONS, TWEED'S  
POPULARITY PLUMMETED, AND HARRIS TWEED  
PRODUCTION IN 2006 HAD DROPPED 90% FROM ITS  
PEAK IN THE 1960s.**





**MILLS CLOSED, AND WORKERS LOST THEIR JOBS  
FOLLOWING AN EFFORT BY ONE BUSINESSMAN TO  
CORNER THE MARKET ON HARRIS TWEED.**



**WHEN HIS VENTURE FAILED, EFFORTS BY TWO OTHER BUSINESSMEN TO REVIVE THE INDUSTRY EMERGED... OF GREAT CONCERN WAS THE LOSS OF THE CENTURIES OF PATTERNS WHICH THE FIRST BUSINESSMAN HAD ELIMINATED.**



**MORE THAN EIGHT THOUSAND OF THESE DESIGNS  
WERE FOUND IN A WAREHOUSE, PRESERVING THIS  
RICH TRADITION, AND HARRIS TWEED IS AGAIN  
WINNING EXPORT AWARDS.**





IT WAS NOT HAPPENSTANCE I WORE A TWEED COAT  
WHILE ROAMING THE DARTMOOR MOORS... NOT ONLY  
DID IT PROTECT ME FROM THE ELEMENTS, IT ALSO  
HELPED ME BLEND INTO THE SURROUNDINGS...





*...PERFECT FOR OBSERVING WITHOUT BEING OBSERVED... ONE MUST WONDER, HOWEVER, IF IT WAS A HOUNDSTOOTH WEAVE.*



SO, WE HAVE COMPLETED TOPIC # 122 IN OUR SERIES...

IN TOPIC # 123, WE WILL BE LOOKING AT LEPROSY DURING THE VICTORIAN PERIOD.



## ORIGINAL SOURCE MATERIAL FOR FOR THIS TOPIC:

- [HTTPS://WWW.JOSEPHTURNER.CO.UK/CUSTOMER/PAGES/ABOUT/WHAT\\_IS\\_TWEED](https://www.josephturner.co.uk/customer/pages/about/what_is_tweed)
- [HTTPS://WWW.NATIONALGEOGRAPHIC.COM/TRAVEL/ARTICLE/TWEED-WEAVES-TALES-OF-SCOTTISH-HISTORY-AND-LANDSCAPES](https://www.nationalgeographic.com/travel/article/tweed-weaves-tales-of-scottish-history-and-landscapes)
- [HTTPS://WWW.BRITANNICA.COM/TOPICTWEED](https://www.britannica.com/topic/tweed)
- [HTTPS://WWW.MASTERCLASS.COM/ARTICLES/WHAT-IS-TWEED#8-DIFFERENT-TYPES-OF-TWEED](https://www.masterclass.com/articles/what-is-tweed#8-different-types-of-tweed)
- [HTTPS://FASHION-HISTORY.LOVETOKNOW.COM/FABRICS-FIBERS/TWEED](https://fashion-history.lovetoknow.com/fabrics-fibers/tweed)
- [HTTPS://CLAN.COM/BLOG/HISTORY-OF-TWEED](https://clan.com/blog/history-of-tweed)



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"THE LIFE AND TIMES IN VICTORIAN LONDON"

IS CREATED THROUGH THE INGENUITY & HARD WORK OF:  
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