



June

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

A vintage Patricia doll prepares for the day's chores in a dress made from 1930's voile.

A Doll for Her Time

Patsy Then & Now

by AnneLise Wilhelmsen

Patsy was born at a time when grand ideas ruled the day. It was the roaring twenties, and she arrived with her bobbed hair-do and tiny bow lips to a world which was exploding with optimism. The Empire State Building was under construction; Hollywood was booming; and life was good. Her patent was issued to the F & B Doll Company on Valentine's Day, 1928. Little did they know how much America would soon need her reassuring charm. In October of 1929 the stock market crashed, plunging the country into the worst economic depression in its history. But Patsy, a doll created for good times, thrived in spite of it all. She would go on to become the second most popular doll of the decade.

As for the "real people" of the day, we responded to our failing fortunes with strength and determined hopefulness. Although we might easily have become a country of drab imagery and pessimism we chose not to do so. We fought back with cheerful attitudes and imaginative ways to make do with what we had. We stitched feed sacks into colorful dresses. We invented Twinkies and Wonder Bread (1930) and turned financial ruin into the game of Monopoly (issued by Parker Brothers in 1934). Walt Disney gave us *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* in 1938 (the first ever full length animated film), and a year later Judy Garland danced across our screens with a scarecrow in *The Wizard of Oz*. That same year Rhett Butler proclaimed he did not give a damn and we all cheered. He had chutzpah, and so did we.

Patsy was just like us. She was presented to the world by her makers as a "loveable imp." Her key selling points were that she was unbreakable and able to stand by herself. Maybe a doll which would not shatter into pieces when dropped was a perfect match for penny-pinching times. Maybe the Patsy Family appealed to little girls whose own families were smaller than those of previous decades (due both to the pressure of too many mouths to feed and an increased use of birth control). It could be that her inscrutable expression allowed children to project a wider range of emotions onto her. Or perhaps, at a time when

every aspect of life had become more complicated, her sweet simplicity offered a comforting reprieve from reality. Whatever the secret to her success, Patsy had been designed to represent an ordinary child. And ordinary children loved her.

Patsy was soon joined by what would become the most beloved doll of the 1930s -- Shirley Temple. The little girl with the perfect curls was the darling of the cinema, and her studio was churning out movies at the rate of four per year in order to make the most of her fleeting childhood. Shirley Temple was plucky and optimistic, character traits which were in great demand after years of economic hardship. She arrived at the perfect time in American history, embodying the can-do spirit that would carry us through both the Great Depression and a Second World War. It seemed that nobody was immune to her charms, not even President Roosevelt, who famously stated that, "as long as our country has Shirley Temple, we will be all right."

Patsy and Shirley Temple dolls rode this wave of positive thinking together right through the 1930s and on into the 1940s. In addition to having the perfect personalities for the times, they (and the many imitation "Patsy Types") were the first dolls to have factory manufactured wardrobes sold separately. Their clothes were made with new, factory friendly techniques which traded fine sewing for faster finishing. Speed was key, since many items were made by homeworkers who were compensated on a piecework basis. Most of the time there were no buttons at the back. Garments were closed instead with tiny gold safety pins. Styles were kept simple for the same reasons, and organdy became a popular choice for fabric because its stiffness made it easier to sew quickly.

Our project for this issue uses many of these same techniques, including a collar which is stitched to the inside of the dress and flipped back outward over an unfinished seam. We have finished exposed seams, which would not have been done on factory clothing, but we have kept the machine stitched hem. It was simply too iconic to be "improved" by hand sewing.

Patsy and her family were available at multiple times, from

various manufacturers, during their history. In an effort to include as many dolls as possible we have drafted patterns for four different sizes, including the most current Patsy, which can be purchased from the Tonner Doll Company. There are also extended cutting lines to adjust Patsy Ann's patterns for 18-inch play dolls, and to alter Patsy's patterns to fit Bleurette.

In addition to the simple dress and matching combination undergarment we could not resist including a pattern inspired by an actual 1930s laundry bag. It is a playful way to make the drudgery of laundry day more fun. And fun, in the end, is what Patsy and her sisters are all about!

Wash on Monday, Iron on Tuesday,
Mend on Wednesday,
Market on Thursday,
Clean on Friday, Saturday bake,
Rest on Sunday for heaven's sake.



Day of the week towels were all the rage in the early 20th century, as housewives looked for cheerful embroidery designs to dress up re-purposed feed sack fabric. The order of chores varied sometimes between stencil sets, but laundry was always done on Monday after a good day of rest on Sunday, because it was the most strenuous task.

Laundry Bag

Muslin or toweling Fabric - 13" W X 8" L

Transfer-Eze Printable Paper

Embroidery Floss

Ribbon - 1/4"-3/8" W X 25"

1. Print design on one sheet of Transfer-Eze. Do NOT reverse design first.
2. Remove backing and stick transfer design to right side of your fabric. Work the embroidery.
3. Cut out laundry bag, plus one additional bag piece from remaining fabric.
4. With right sides together, pin sides and bottom of bag together. Using a 1/4" seam allowance, stitch down the first side, across the bottom, and back up the second side stopping at lower mark. Leave space between marks open. Continue stitching the small section above the top mark.
5. Soak bag in lukewarm water to dissolve Transfer-Eze and rinse well. Dry.

6. Press seam open flat. Finish each side separately with tiny zig-zag stitch.
7. At upper edge, turn under 1/4" and press.
8. Turn top edge to inside 1/2" and edge stitch in place.
9. Cut cording 25" long and insert into casing. Knot the ends.

Combination

Fabric to Coordinate with Dress

Optional Bias Binding (purchased or self made) - 1/4" W X 25"-45" L

Optional Lace or Loop Trim - 1/4" W X 25"-45" L

1. Cut one front on the fold and two backs.
2. With right sides together, pin backs to front at shoulders. Stitch using a 1/4" seam allowance. Finish seam edges and press open flat.
3. Simple Hems: Finish raw edges of arm's eyes and neckline. Stitch 1/8" from edges and clip curves (do NOT cut through stitching). Turn to inside along stitching line and hand baste in place. On front, top stitch close to the edges. Press.

4. Bound Finish: Trim away the 1/8" hem allowance from the neckline and arm's eye edges. Fit binding over edges and topstitch in place.



5. Lace or Trim Finish: Stitch 1/8" from raw edges, then clip curves. Turn to *outside* and hand baste in place close to the folded edge. Trim seam allowance to 1/16". Baste trim in place, covering the raw edges. Machine stitch. Press.
NOTE: Stitching close to the edge of a single layer of fabric, especially if it's fine, can be tricky. I find it's much easier to do this if I first trace the stitching line onto the fabric with a water soluble marking pen. Once the line is marked, lay the fabric on top of a piece of paper towel and stitch through all thicknesses. This makes it easy to control, and the paper towel pulls away without trouble afterwards.
6. With right sides together, pin front to backs at sides. Stitch using a 1/4" seam allowance. Press open flat. Finish seams.
7. Finish leg openings the same as neckline and arm's eyes.
8. With right sides together, pin center back from crotch to mark. Stitch using a 1/4" seam allowance.
9. Press under 1/8" plus a second 1/8" along each center back seam allowance, from top to bottom. Slip stitch in place on inside as shown.



10. With right sides together, pin crotch seam. Stitch using a 1/4" seam allowance. Press open flat and finish raw edges.

1930s

At a Glance

Costuming antique or vintage dolls requires both the heart and the mind. In order to have a successful outcome, the engine of imagination has to be fed facts about both the doll and the time period she (or he) represents. Any other fuel will lead to failure. It is not enough that a dress be pretty; it must be an accurate representation of what the doll might have been given when she was new. Anything less degrades her history and robs her of her dignity.

This list of events from the 1930s is not all inclusive, but it can help you get a feel for what "real people" were doing when the Patsy doll and her family came into being.

1930

Twinkies and Wonder Bread are introduced

1931

Empire State Building completed

1932

Amelia Earhart is the first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic
25% of the United States population is unemployed

1933

The Loch Ness Monster is first spotted

1934

Shirley Temple Stars in her first feature film, "Stand Up and Cheer"
Monopoly Introduced by Parker Brothers
Bonnie & Clyde gunned down by police

1935

Fred Astaire has a number one hit with "Cheek to Cheek"
Germany issues first Anti-Semitic Law

1936

King Edward abdicates for "the woman he loves"

1937

Amelia Earhart is lost
The Hindenburg is consumed in a disastrous fire

1938

Superman first appears in comic books
Disney's Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs is the first full-length animated movie

1939

The Wizard of Oz premieres
Gone with the Wind premieres
World War II begins



The girls are hard at work in their 1930's feed sack dresses. From left to right are Robert Tonner's reproduction Patsy Ann, his modern Patsy, and a vintage Patsyette.

11. Vintage Patsy dolls often came from the factory with small, gold safety pins for closures on both their combinations and their dresses. Feel free to do this for your own garments! Other options are a single snap at the neckline, or a button with a thread loop.

Dress

Organdy, Voile, Feed Sack, or Fine Cotton Fabric

Optional Bias Binding (purchased or self made) - 1/4" W X 15"-32"

Optional Lace or Loop Trim - 1/4" W X 15"-32"

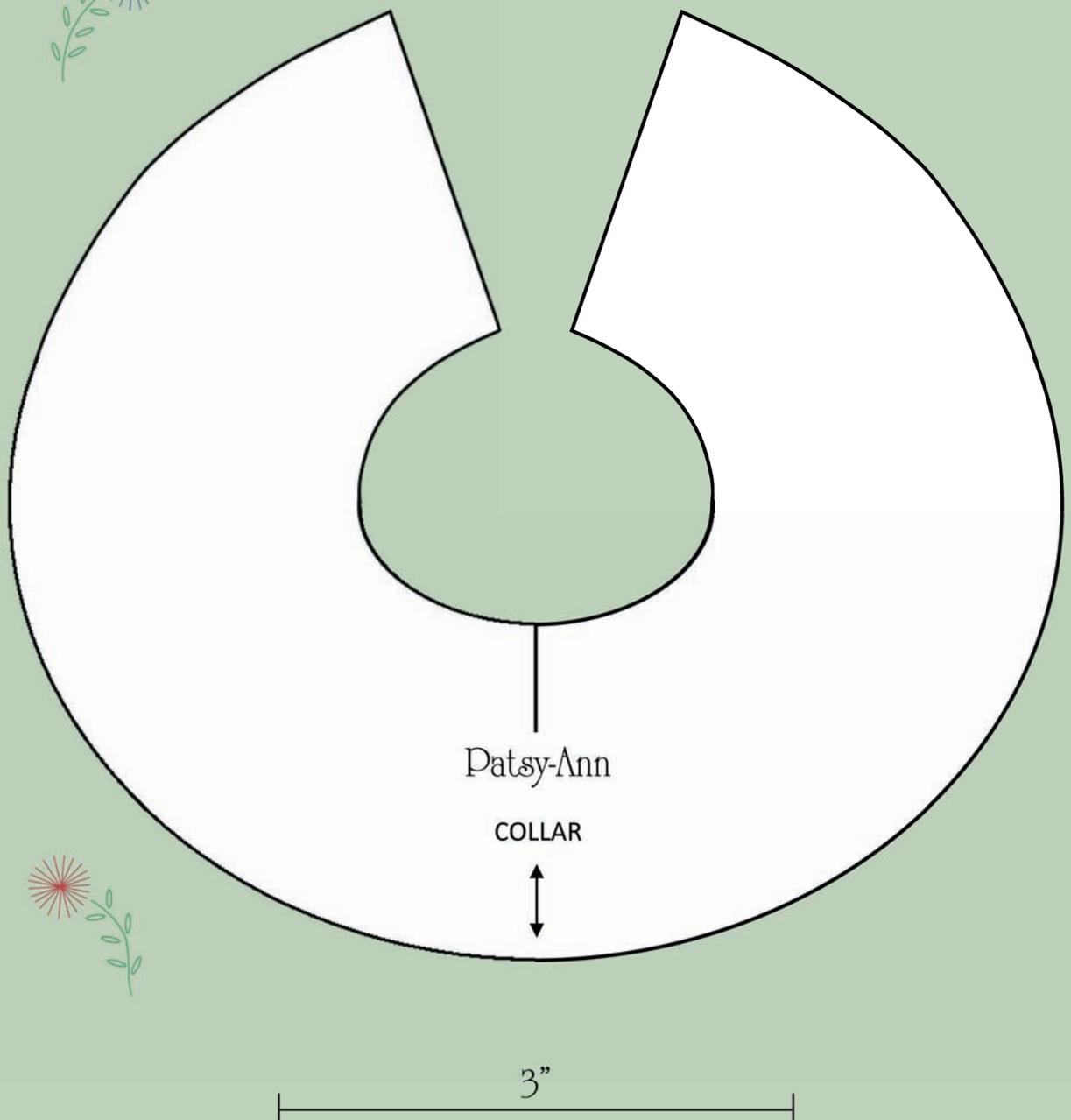
1. Cut one Dress on the fold.
2. Follow Combination instructions steps 5 or 6 to finish arm's eyes. Press.
3. With right sides together, pin front to back at shoulders. Stitch using a 1/4" seam allowance. Finish raw edges. Press open flat.
4. On center front, run long gathering threads 1/8" and 3/16" from neckline edge between marks. Pull up to length indicated on pattern and tie off threads as shown. Repeat for two back sections. NOTE: If you plan to finish the neckline with bias edging instead of lace or a collar you'll need to trim off the 1/4" seam allowance before you run your gathering threads.
5. With right sides together, pin center back from lower edge to mark. Stitch using a 1/4" seam allowance. Press seam open flat. Finish the same as in Combination step 9.
6. Bound Collar: Finish raw outer edge the same as in Combination step 4.
7. Trimmed Collar: Finish raw outer edge the same as in Combination step 5.
8. Pin wrong side of dress to right side of collar at neckline, adjusting gathered sections evenly. You should have at least 1/8" of excess collar at the center back. Do not trim this off. Stitch using a 1/4" seam allowance. Stitch a second time immediately inside (within the seam allowance) your first line of stitching. Trim seam allowance to 1/8" and clip curves.
9. Turn collar to outside and press seam allowance towards dress. Hand baste through all thicknesses (dress and seam allowance), keeping collar free. Machine stitch as close to seam line as possible without catching collar.
10. At center back, tuck in excess collar portions to make them even with the finished center back edges. Your fold lines should be parallel to the raw center back edges of the collar, but the amount folded in will vary for each dress size. Topstitch in place as shown. Press.
11. To create hem, turn up hem allowance (1/4" plus an additional amount as indicted on pattern). Edge stitch in place with thread to match fabric, or to coordinate with trims. Press.





With the work now done there's time to play. Vintage Sally (a "Patsy Type") wears her original dress and holds a 1930's blimp pull toy. Modern Patsy (right) wears a dress of vintage dimitry.

<i>All Measurements in Inches</i>	Datsyette	Datsy	Patricia	Datsy Ann
Height	9.5	10	14	17.5
Neck Circumference	3	4	6	7
Chest Circumference	6.25	5.75	8.25	10.75
Waist Circumference	6.50	5.75	8.50	11
Torso Length (Base of back neck to crotch level)	3.75	4.5	5.25	7





Gather to 1 1/2"

Gather to 3/4"

Patsy-Ann

DRESS PART 1



Place on Fold

Stitch Center Back to Here



Datsy-Ann

DRESS PART 2

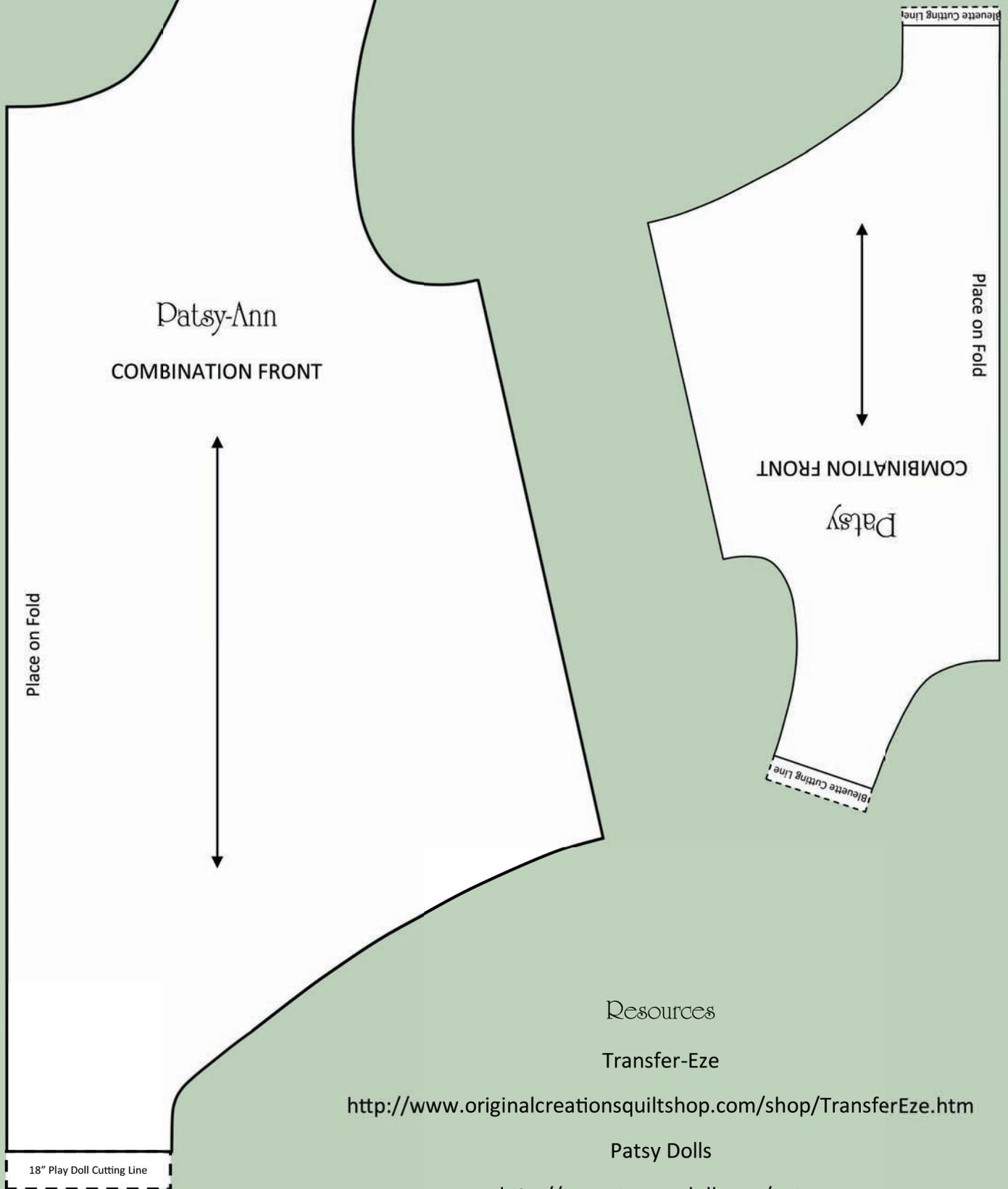
Match Red Lines & Tape Together



Place on Fold

Hem Allowance is $1/4"$ + $2\ 1/2"$





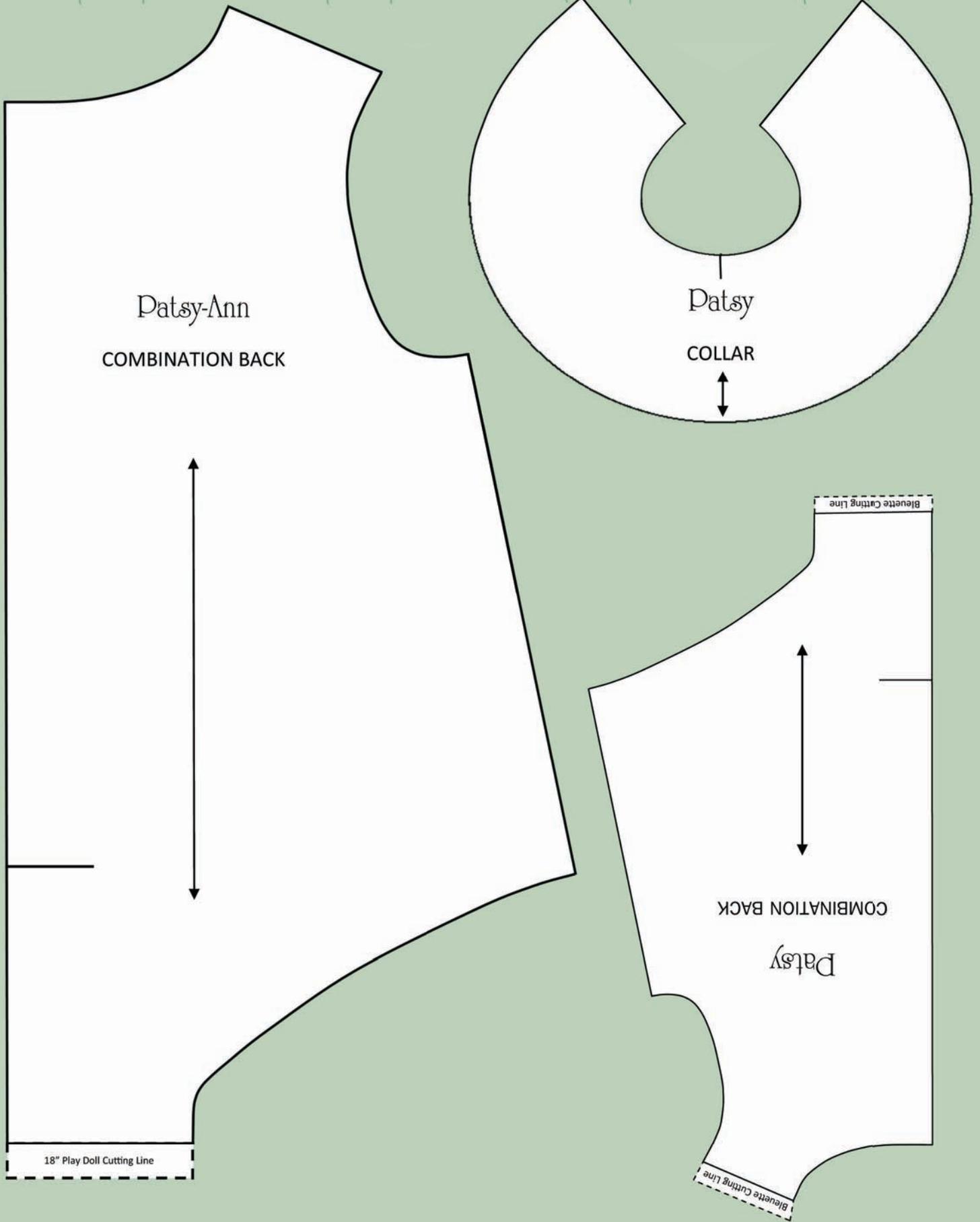
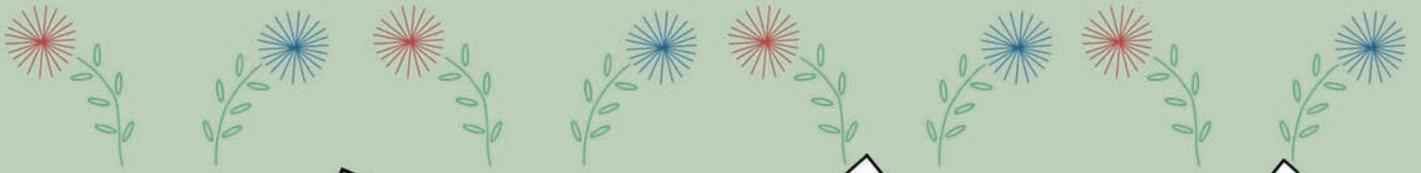
Resources

Transfer-Eze

<http://www.originalcreationsquiltshop.com/shop/TransferEze.htm>

Patsy Dolls

<http://www.tonnerdoll.com/patsy>



Datsy-Ann
COMBINATION BACK

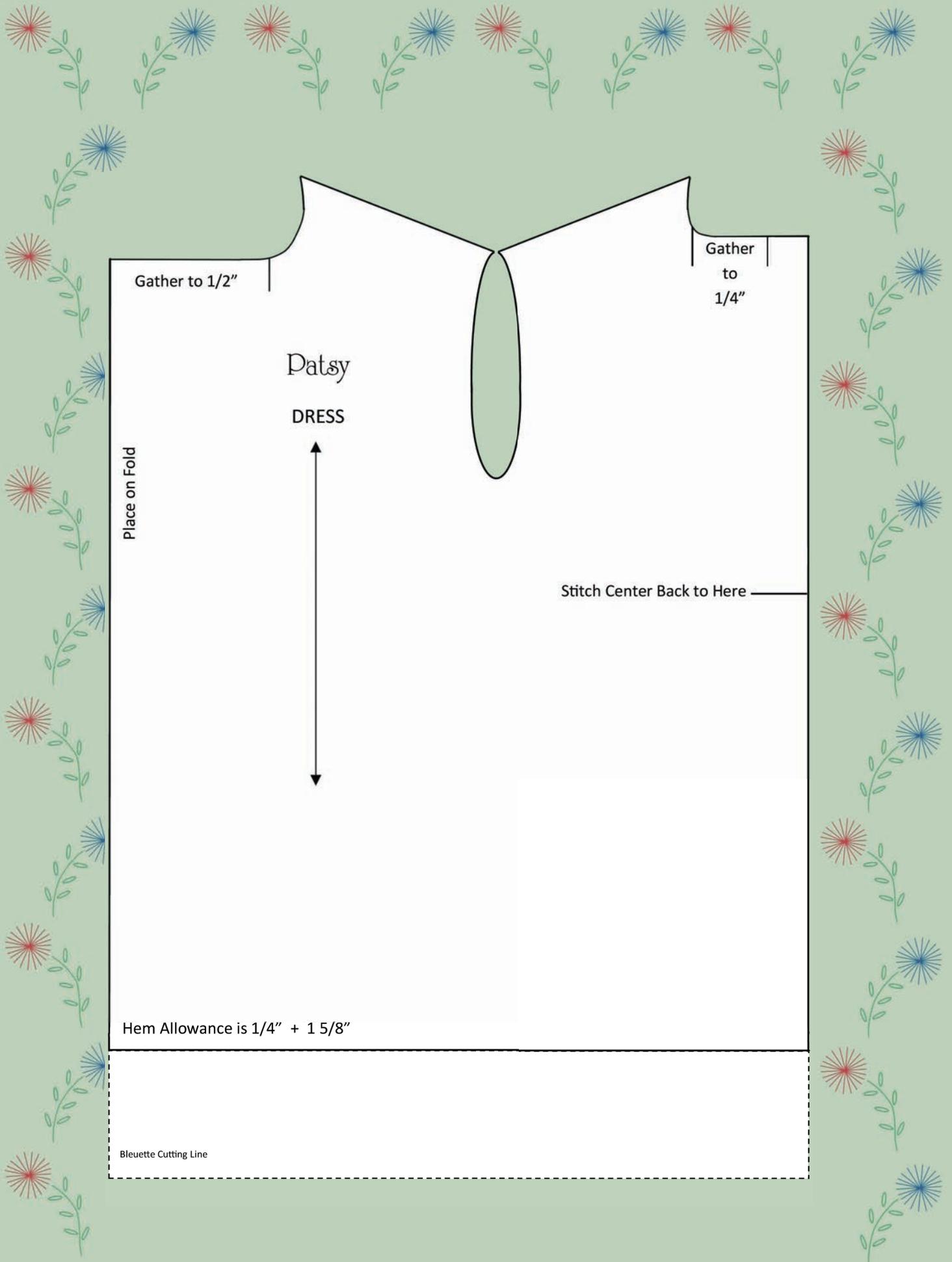
Datsy
COLLAR

COMBINATION BACK
Datsy

18" Play Doll Cutting Line

Bleuette Cutting Line

Bleuette Cutting Line



Gather to 1/2"

Gather
to
1/4"

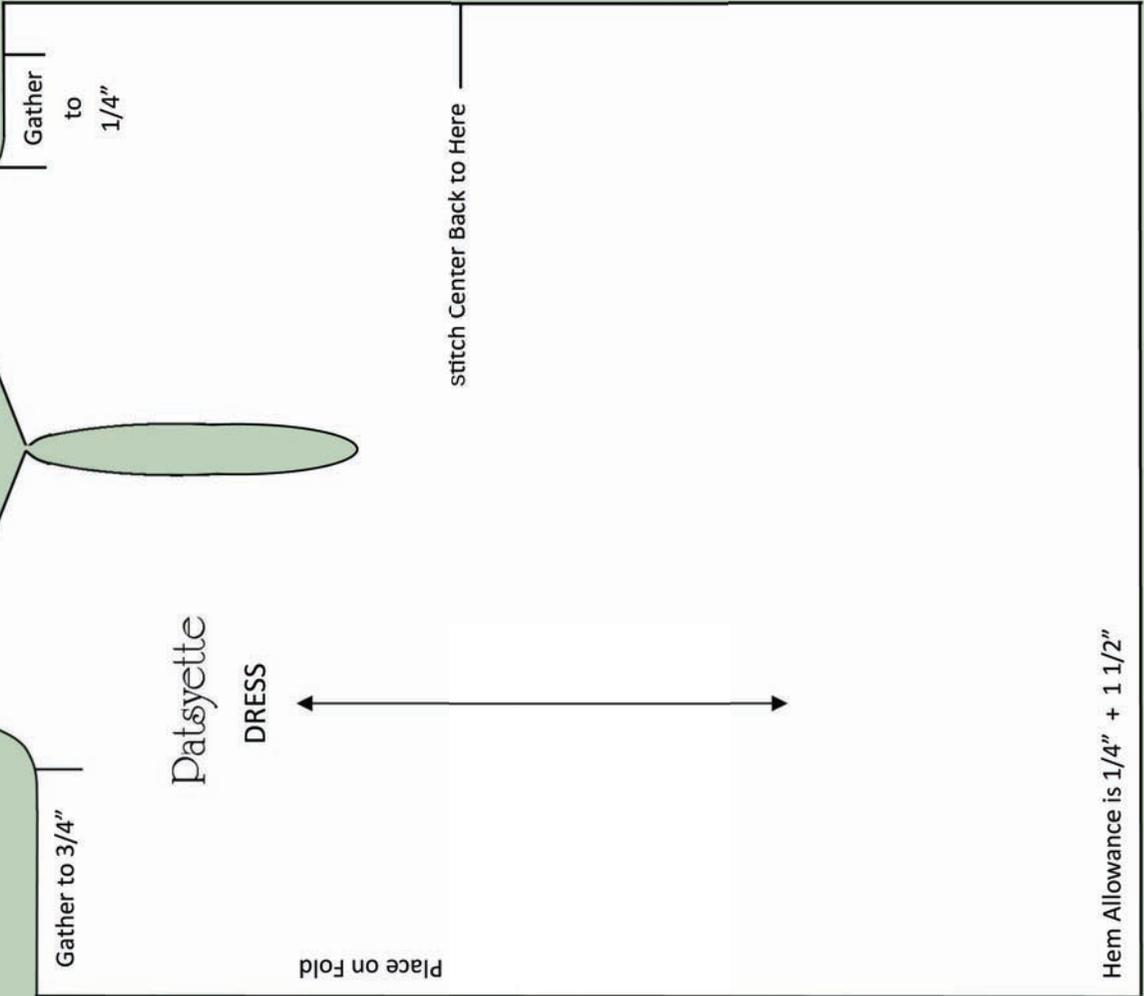
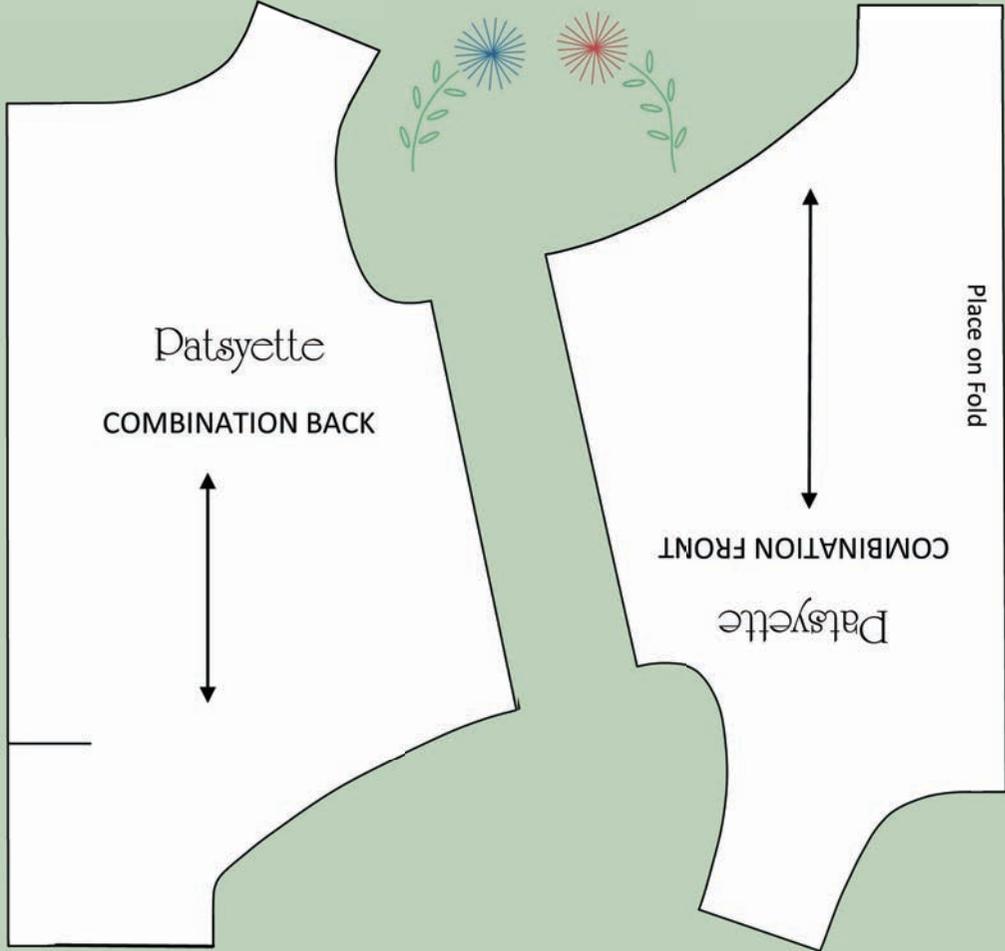
Datsy
DRESS

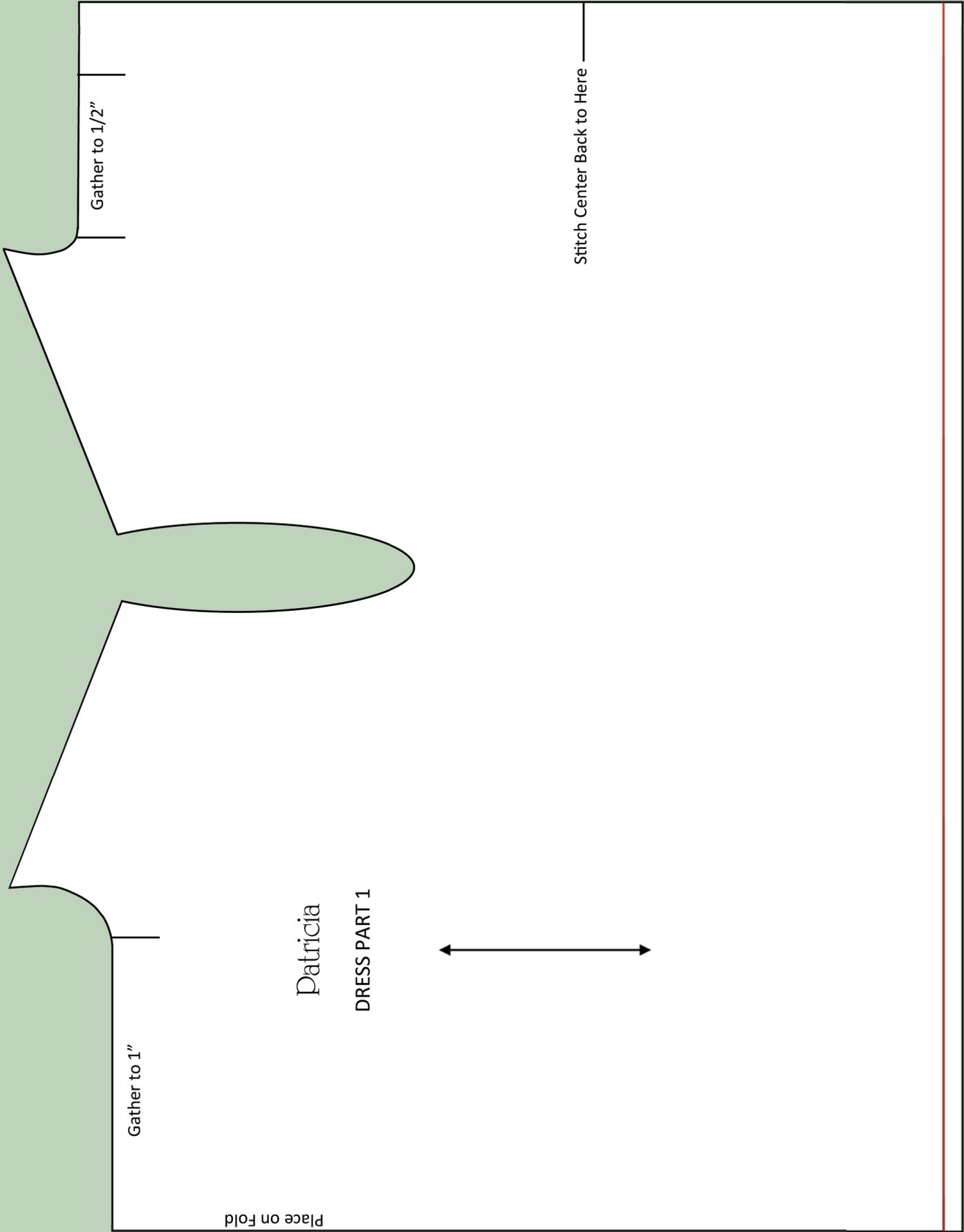
Place on Fold

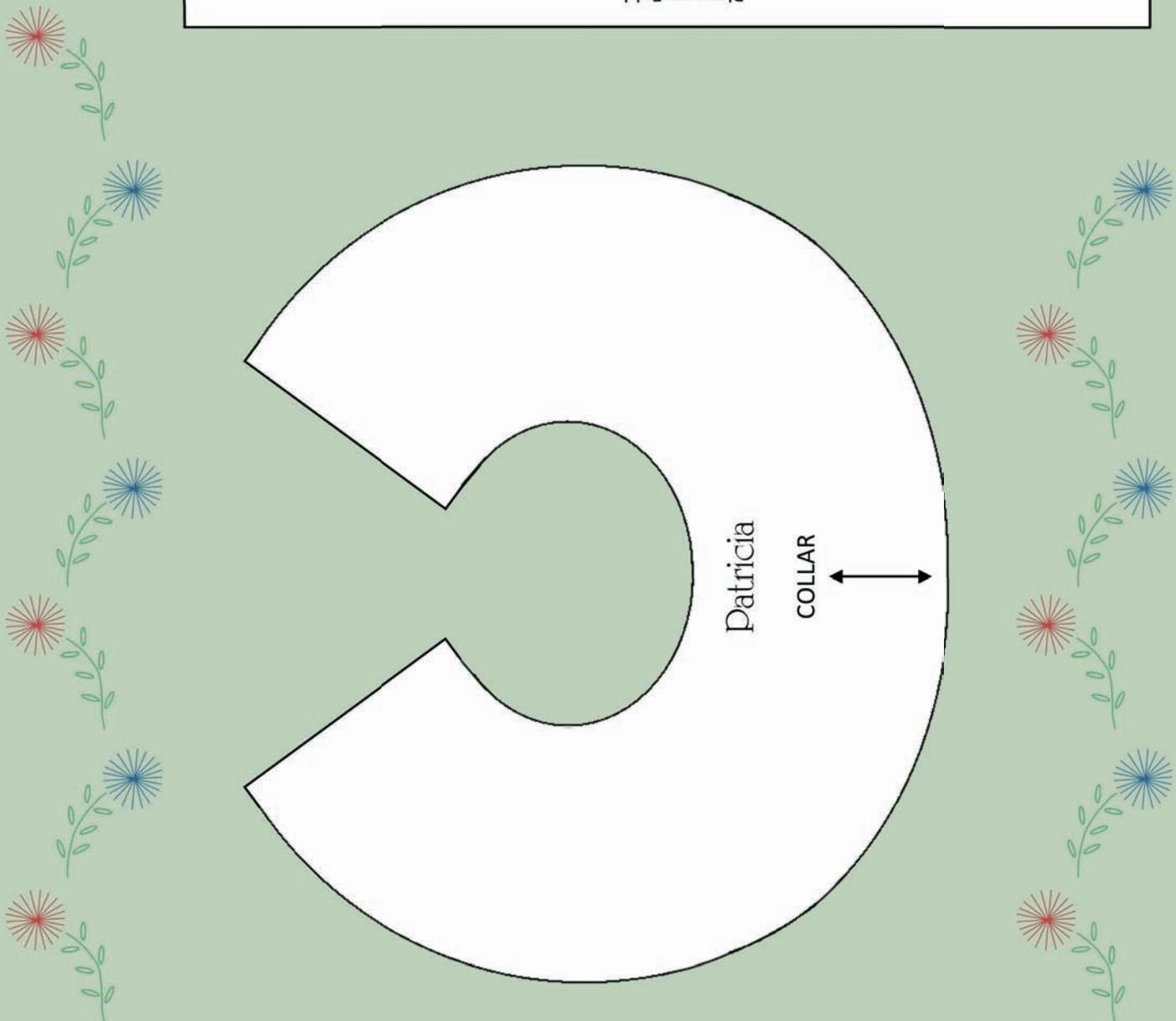
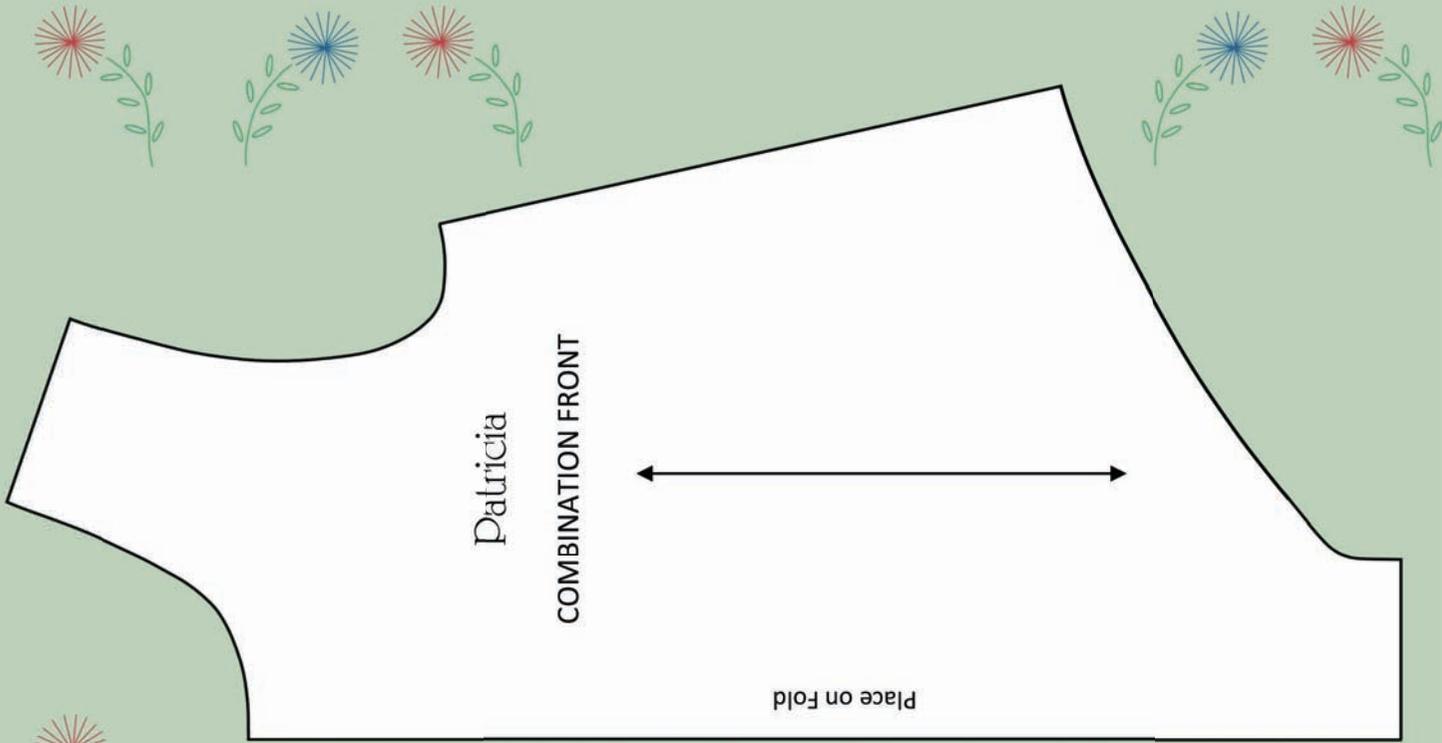
Stitch Center Back to Here

Hem Allowance is 1/4" + 1 5/8"

Bleurette Cutting Line







Patricia

DRESS PART 2

Match Red Lines & Tape Together



Place on Fold

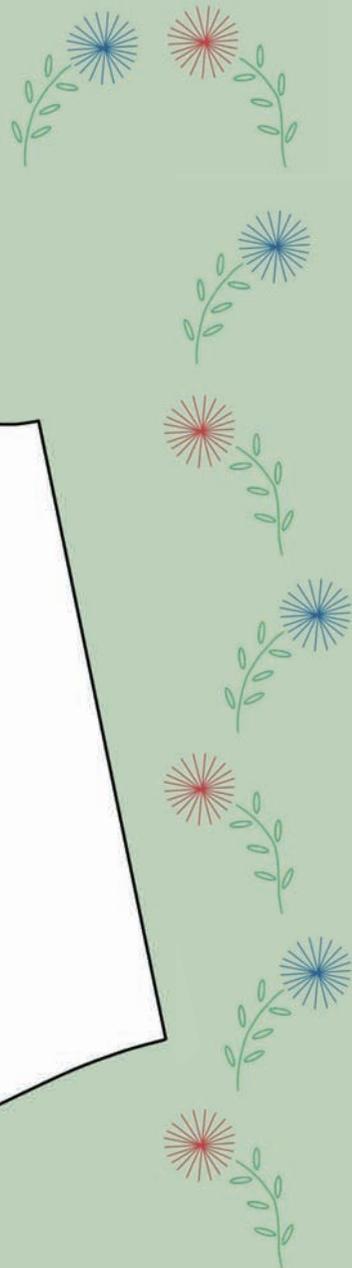
Hem Allowance is $1/4'' + 2 1/4''$

Patricia
COMBINATION BACK



Patsyette

COLLAR



Laundry Bag

