THE FLAPPER: A STUDY OF THE EVOLUTION OF AN AMERICAN FASHION STEREOTYPE FROM 1910 to 1929

By

BARBARA ROSE ALLAN

AN ABSTRACT

Submitted to the College of Home Economics of
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ABSTRACT

The decade of the nineteen-twenties in the United States represents an era in American history which has no immediate parallel. It encompasses a period of time during which this country was witness to: the recovery from a major war; a short economic depression followed by unequaled prosperity; the impact of media of communication and travel; the era of prohibition and its social and economic effects; the emergence and influence of "The Lost Generation"; and the emancipation of women from their ties with Victorian traditions; and the rise to public attention of the spirit of youthfulness.

This last factor of youthfulness permeated the entire atmosphere of the decade. The stress was placed on youth . . . their ideals, their actions and their clothes. This study is centered on the figure of the flapper, who is most readily thought of in terms of her mode of dress. The flapper is the caricatured figure of the American woman during the twenties; she looked, dressed, and acted to the extreme in every aspect of the youth of that day. She is a stereotype of the twenties, for today when the flapper is mentioned, she brings to mind the dress and actions peculiar to that decade.

The study of the flapper as a fashion stereotype involved four phases. The first encompassed the background conditions of

the period. Those covered were: the political and economic scene; the automobile; media of communication; prohibition; trends and fads; the role and status of women; the changing manners and morals of the period. The second phase presented the stereotyped flapper in terms of the fashion ideal, the definition of the flapper, and the presentation of the flapper in terms of dress. The third phase was a survey of the fashions preceding the nineteen-twenties which served to illustrate the changes in dress leading up to the twenties. The last phase was a comparative fashion study, utilizing the fashion offerings of two publications, the Sears, Roebuck and Company catalogs and Harper's Bazaar fashion magazine. This study, with accompanying illustrations, showed the variations in dress that were available to the consumer at that time. It also illustrated how actual fashions deviated from the "typical" flapper and in addition, how the two publications differed from each other.

Data for this study were obtained through library research and encompassed several categories of publication: historical studies, social histories, costume histories, writings by authors of the twenties, related empirical studies, books containing editorial comments, and magazines and newspapers published during the decade.

Several conclusions were reached at the completion of the study. The decade of the twenties was one of major change in the United States and these changes influenced fashion. It is believed that while the change in the American woman at that time can be

attributed to no one factor, each had its influence. The flapper has become a fashion stereotype in that she represents the appearance of the woman of the twenties. While this is true, the actual fashion offerings of the day, as seen in the fashion publications, did not appear to be as extreme as the stereotype. A great difference was noted between the fashions of the two publications in the comparative study. In that the beginning (1920-1921), middle (1924-1926), and end (1928-1929) of the decade were studied, it was apparent that the trends established in Harper's were not seen until one season to three years later in Sears. In addition, while the trends were followed by Sears, they were invariably modified and less extreme. Harper's came closest to portraying the flapper as she was typified. A relationship may be inferred between the offerings and the assumed readers of the two publications.

Because of the breadth of this study, it was not feasible to explore each facet of the subject to its possible depth. As a result, there are related studies which could be conducted, such as the following suggested topics: an analytical study of the chemise trend during 1958 and 1959, to determine why these fashions erupted again, and how they were similar to the fashions of the twenties; a comparative study between the fashions of men and women during the twenties and further, relating them to those of 1928 and 1959; a specific study of any one of the background factors as a fashion motivator; a study of the psychological factors affecting women during the twenties in

reference to dress, and an investigation of social class in relation to fashion changes of the twenties. It is believed that this field is ripe for further research on the subject.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The "Roaring Twenties"[1] . . . the "Jazz Age"[2] . . . both terms make reference to a relatively short (1920-1929), but important period in United States history. It was a period of radical change both in the moral and the economic standards of the people. It marked a sharp breaking point from the strict morality and convention of the Victorian era. It was a time of change which affected every phase of the traditional American way of life.

> The restlessness of returned doughboys, the excesses spawned by widespread open disregard of the natural law, the speakeasy, the bootleggers, the high speed automobile, the flappers, short skirts, bobbed hair, uninhibited literature, the early psychoanalysis, the tabloid version of yellow journalism, the manipulation of credit and the obsolescence of the gold standard, wide open gambling, Sunday sports, popular dance crazes, movie madness, and all the other mass hysterias contributed to one signalled, vast break from the old ways and a changed attitude of looking forward, being ready and eager for "something new."[3]

This period has left a lasting impression on the minds of the American people and has also created certain patterns of thought.

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[1]Paul Sann, The Lawless Decade (New York: Crown Publishers, Inc., 1957), p. 7.

[2]Oliver Jensen, The Revolt of American Women (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1952), p. 170.

[3]Sann, op. cit., p. 4.

One of these patterns involves the "flapper," a stereotyped image of the American woman during the twenties, immortalized by cartoonist John Held Jr., and writer F. Scott Fitzgerald.[1] "She was the languid, concave, flat-chested Flapper. She smoked too much, she drank too much bath-tub gin, she hated daylight, and was apparently always bored to tears."[2] Nowhere in American history, save this period, does this image find a place. The flapper has become representative of an era that produced one of the most radical and sudden revolutions in American life.

The stereotype of this figure is unvarying--cloche hat, bobbed hair, flat, boyish figure, the chemise, skirts to the knees, rolled stockings, vivid and extreme cosmetics--a cigarette smoking, gum chewing, wise-cracking "woman of the world." This is the image and it is expressed in terms of figure and fashions. She was, in her day, the symbol of idealized youth and revolt from the staid traditions of her elders. Yet there is more to the flapper than merely what she wore, for she represents change; change in the role of women in American culture, change in the social conditions of the country, and change in the morality.

At the turn of the century, the Victorian tradition held fast, expressing itself on the surface by the excresences which decorated outside garments--the superfluous petticoats and underwear, and

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[1] Golden Anniversary of Fashion (New York City, 1948), p. 22.

[2] Ibid., pp. 22-23.

the stiffly boned corsets. As the years progressed, certain changes in women's dress began to appear, which gradually resulted in the relaxed, simple, and youthful silhouette of the nineteen-twenties.

Statement of Purpose

It is the purpose of this paper to study the dress of the flapper as a reflection of the era in which she existed. She will be examined and presented in two ways. First as a stereotyped image which represents all the excitement and radicalism of the nineteen-twenties. This will be the flapper that has survived the element of time and which now exists in a glorified version through the media of print and film. This is the flapper as she exists in the mind of man. In this sense, the flapper will be seen as a reflection of the mood of the period during which she existed; as the idealized image of American woman at that time, and as a figure that is peculiarly American.

Since the term "flapper" is closely related to a mode of dress, the second presentation will involve the actual fashions of the time period. This will be the flapper as she existed in reality during the twenties, in terms of dress. It will involve the gradual changes in women's dress which lead to the fashions of the flapper.

Inasmuch as it is difficult to state specifically when any particular fashion started or ended, because of overlappings with previous fashions, an overall view of the fashions of the decade 1910

to 1919 in the United States will provide the background for the period specifically covered in the survey. The fashions of the background period will be regarded in light of certain factors, as the changes in silhouette, garment structure, and decoration.

The fashions of the twenties will be presented on a comparative basis, for it is self-evident that the fashions of any one period are not adopted by all levels of society in exactly the same way. It is for this reason that two publications were chosen as a basis for comparison, the Sears, Roebuck and Company catalogs and Harper's Bazaar magazine. It is felt that each has its specific audience: Sears, Roebuck catalog--the mass, mail-order market; and Harper's Bazaar--the woman who is more conscious of high fashion. In addition, it is felt that the differences in the fashion offerings of these two publications will, in themselves, provide sufficient differences to clearly illustrate the variety of existing fashion trends and how they relate to the flapper.

A parallel to the actual garment change was a change in the fashion ideal, which is the aim of the woman who desires to be in vogue. Since this ideal is not static, but changes with the times and attitudes of the people, it will also be considered. Selected illustrations from each publication will be utilized to support the descriptions of the fashion changes. This is not to be a detailed costume study. Rather it is designed to give the reader a broad view of the progressive changes in women's fashion during the years covered.

These fashion changes will be discussed in terms of the social and economic changes occurring at the same time, showing their

influence. The most specific socio-economic conditions to be considered are: the national prosperity, the effect of the prohibition amendment to the Constitution, the changing morals and manners of the period, and the changing role of women.

Justification of Study

It is the belief of this writer that the marked changes in women's fashions during the years 1910 to 1929 in the United States, closely parallel the economic, social, and moral revolution taking place at the same time. It was a time when women reached the peak of their struggle for equal rights with men, involving both the right to vote and the ability to compete in the business world; of greater communication between people by means of new and improved media--radio, motion pictures, books, newspapers; of more rapid transportation--trains, automobiles, and airplanes; of the growth of industrialization; of the emergence of the United States as a world power following World War I; of the night club era of prohibition and gangsterism; and of the change in morality as reflected in new religious movements and trends of thought in literature.

Fashions change because of social, economic, and psychological factors. Among the factors speeding these changes are "democracy, education, travel, inventions, competition, the courage of leaders who have high ideals for the common good, and a preponderance of organizations directed by younger people."[1] All of

[1]Bernice Chambers, Fashion Fundamentals (New York: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1947), p. 15.

these existed in the United States during the years 1910 to 1929. New fashions, to be successful, must be in accordance with the ideals current at the time they are launched so that women may see in them a symbol of that to which they are striving.[1] These were years of rapidly changing ideals; so too were they years of rapidly changing fashions. The climax of the change was the emergence of the flapper in the nineteen-twenties.

The author believes that there are several significant factors that support the defense of this thesis. The period under consideration is one of importance in American history both socially and economically. It was an era that was witness to a break with tradition; it was a period of political upheavals; and was a time of unparalleled economic prosperity. In the area of fashion, it is outstanding, for it was a time of a marked change in women's apparel.

The author feels that this study is unique in that, despite a wealth of related information pertaining to the subject, she is unaware of any works treating the flapper as a fashion entity. This stereotype is referred to many times in social histories and costume surveys, but the flapper has not been the subject of a distinct study, relating her dress to social conditions. Since fashions generally reflect the customs of a people and the mood of an age, it is felt that this study will serve as a foundation for a better understanding of

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[1] J. C. Flugel, The Psychology of Clothes (London: L & V. Woolf at the Hogarth Press and Institute of Psychoanalysis, 1930) p. 152.

the developments in women's fashions during the nineteen-twenties.

Methods of Research

This thesis may be designated as an historical research paper embracing a fashion survey. The procedure followed involves an analysis of historical data in terms of the subject matter. Historical analysis incorporates judgment and understanding of the problem and the information;[1] the arriving at a conscious unity of ideas from the diversity of human functions encountered in research;[2] and the utilization of an appropriate language,[3] one that is capable of describing an accurate outline of the facts.

Two categories of research materials have been utilized, primary and secondary sources.[4] Primary sources are those which give the first information attainable of the fact or event to be discovered. This would include several kinds of periodicals as well as scientific journals--all published concurrently with the event under investigation. This may also include textbooks and literary works authored by those who personally experienced the event. Secondary sources are those derived from the primary, which are either known

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[1] Marc Bloch, The Historian's Craft (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1953), p. 138.

[2] Ibid., p. 144.

[3] Ibid., p. 154.

[4] C. G. Crump, History and Historical Research (London: George Ruttledge & Sons, Ltd., 1928), pp. 67-68.

to exist or are discoverable. This would include textbooks, surveys, analyses, and other publications compiled at a later date utilizing the available primary sources.

In respect to this study, certain steps in the organization of research were followed. The problem was identified as a library research study. This indicated that the bulk of the factual content would be gleaned from printed materials available in public collections. The types of material available that would be pertinent to the study were enumerated: fashion magazines, newspapers, textbooks, literary works, scientific journals, and mail-order catalogs. It was felt that these classifications would provide the author with valid data since they encompass both primary and secondary sources. These sources also provided the author with varied socio-economic attitudes toward the subjects. For example, a comparison between the Harper's Bazaar interpretation of the fashions and that of a mail-order catalog. A thorough investigation of the available sources was made which enabled the author to present these data and their interrelationships.

Definition of Terminology

A study of any kind requires the utilization of terminology which facilitates the execution of the paper. It has been established in the statement of purpose that the costume of the years 1910-1929 will be surveyed in reference to pertinent factors. In order to fully understand this summary, certain terms require definition.

Fashion is "the accepted manner of dressing, living, entertaining, or traveling adopted by groups of people at a particular time."[1] Fashions are dynamic and change in accord with the economic and social conditions of the era. The term is often erroneously used as a synonym for style. In the world of fashion, style refers to "the silhouette, fabric, color, decoration, trim, or accessories used at a particular time, identified with a particular group of people."[2] It is a static element. It may be correctly stated then, that fashion is concerned with a particular style used at a specific time.

The important element in fashion is the general contour of the costume in relation to the figure and carriage of the individual. Changes in fashion are primarily silhouette changes and not necessarily changes in detail. Silhouette may be defined as "the mass of the costume which shows the outline, whether viewed from the front, back, or side. This outline will include the shape of the neck and bottom of the sleeve, as well as the shape of the waist, sleeve, and skirt."[3]

Silhouette may vary according to:

1. length of skirt,
2. position and size of the waist,

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[1] Chambers, op. cit., p. 1.

[2] Ibid., p. 2.

[3] Josephine F. Eddy and Elizabeth C. B. Wiley, Pattern and Dress Design (New York: Houghton-Mifflin Co., 1932), p. 141.

3. the style of the sleeves,

4. the amount, position, and type of fullness,

5. the shape of any applied trimming, such as bows, capes, and panels,

6. the texture of the material used.[1]

Beginning the silhouette at the top of the figure is the shoulder line or shoulder seam.[2] It lies at the very top of the shoulder, from the neck base to the shoulder tip. The decrees of fashion will vary the placement, whether forward, straight, or back.

The bustline is a circumference measurement, taken about one inch below the armhole. It extends around the largest part of the bust in front and straight across or a little higher across the back.[3] The normal or natural waistline is the line of the smallest body (torso) circumference. It lies just below the lower rib.[4] The hipline is a circumference measurement taken seven inches below the waist.[5]

The skirt is any part of the garment (or a separate garment) that hangs below the waist.[6] The hemline, at the lower edge of the

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[1] Ibid., p. 142.

[2] Mabel D. Erwin, Practical Dress Design (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1940), p. 116.

[3] Mabel D. Erwin, Clothing for Moderns (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1949), p. 191.

[4] Erwin, Practical Dress Design, op. cit., p. 50.

[5] Ibid., p. 51.

[6] Mary Brooks Picken, The Fashion Dictionary (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, Co., 1957), p. 306.

skirt, is important in its relation to the general silhouette. No body measurement can be made on this plane. Fashion suggests its location, whether to emphasize or minimize the legs. Skirt length (in this study) refers to the number of inches between the skirt hem and the floor.[1] Therefore the higher the skirt length number, the shorter the skirt will be on the given individual.

It is important that silhouettes look well on the figure when it is seated as well as when it is in motion. There are fashions in posture and carriage as well as in dress. Generally, new silhouettes bring in new postures. These postures are adopted by the fashionable individual in the belief that this particular stance or method of walking enhances the outward appearance and effectiveness of the costume. The two postures prevalent during the time period covered by this study were the debutante slouch and the flapper swagger. The slouch was a stance and the swagger a mode of movement. Both involved the shoulders and chest being dropped back and the abdomen pushed forward.[2] This gave the figure a sway-back appearance.

The time period under consideration in this survey was witness to the emergence of a new figure in the field of women's fashion, the "flapper." Dictionary definition describes her as "a young girl considered bold and unconventional in actions and dress."[3]

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[1] Erwin, Practical Dress Design, op. cit., p. 51.

[2] Ibid., p. 136.

[3] Webster's New World Dictionary (New York: World Publishing Co., 1954), p. 551.

The fashion definition is the "name given to any young woman who wore very short skirts or short sleeveless dresses, large hats, and the generally exaggerated styles of the nineteen-twenties."[1] The term appeared as early as 1910 denoting any girl who followed the new and different modes in dress. Despite this, the term generally has reference to the nineteen-twenties and refers to one of the three characteristic new types of women that appeared. They were the sophisticate, the flapper, and the careerist. They represented three striking impulses: the desire to be worldly, the quest of pleasure, and the ambition to win a personal success in business or other occupations.[2]

In this survey, the term flapper will refer to any woman who wore the exaggerated styles of the period, regardless of her age, occupation, or social status. She is a stereotyped figure, one that represents the mental image of women and dress that evolved out of the nineteen-twenties in the United States. In this sense, stereotype is defined as "a picture people carry in their heads relative to political, economic, or social phenomena."[3]

The flapper brought with her certain terms that were somewhat new to fashion. The boyish-form was the straight, uncorseted

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[1]Picken, op. cit., p. 132.

[2]Agnes Rogers, Women Are Here To Stay (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1949), p. 94.

[3]Leonard W. Doob, Public Opinion and Propaganda (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1948), p. 201.

figure popular in the nineteen-twenties. The bust was held in and flat by a brassière designed for that purpose.[1] The chemise-frock refers to a simple unfitted dress hanging straight from the shoulders.[2] The cloche is a hat with a bell shaped crown, often with an even brim turned down. It may also have a short brim at the front and back, and a slightly longer brim at the sides.[3] The boyish-bob refers to a hair style that is cut quite short and trimmed fairly close to the head, as in a man's haircut.[4]

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[1] Picken, op. cit., p. 301.

[2] Ibid., p. 104.

[3] Ibid., p. 162.

[4] Ibid., p. 24.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In order to conduct a study such as this, it was necessary to use as references many types of publications. As explained in the Statement of Purpose, the author is unaware of any other works, whether of literary or scholarly value, that deal with the flapper as a fashion entity. As a result, an attempt was made to utilize a representative selection of the available works that deal with the subject matter, whether directly or indirectly. Among the classifications used were: historical reviews; social histories of the United States; volumes on sociology; works containing editorial comments, which would include books giving the author's own comments, novels, and magazine and newspaper articles; related empirical studies conducted as research in other American universities; and books dealing with historic costume and costume design. In addition the Sears Roebuck & Company catalogs and issues of Harper's Bazaar were used for the comparative costume study. The following review presents examples of the types of references utilized.

The nineteen-twenties define a period in American history that many Americans cannot deplore more heartily . . . or recall with more relish. The memory of them is, in reality, a composite of whirling years with but a few annual dates; it was an amazing interlude that began with the attempted aridity of the prohibition amendment

and ended in the deluge that followed the Wall Street crash. Between these two specific events was a time of change. It encompassed a short period of economic depression and a longer period of inflation and prosperity. The business world opened its doors to women and their influx was unprecedented. The younger generation became almost the prime focus of the country and their influence was widespread. It was a period that saw a radical shift in the manners and morals of the people and which gave importance to factors that had heretofore been in the background of American life.

The changes that occurred during the nineteen-twenties involved social changes. Sociology is "the study of the ways in which social experiences function in developing, maturing, and repressing human beings through interpersonal stimulation;[1] it is the study of social situations.[2] A social situation is the "interplay of a number of persons meeting or attempting to meet a want or need."[3] These definitions are important to the influence of social changes on fashion for they support the premise that the social events of the decade under consideration had an effect on the prevailing modes of fashion.

> In all fashion, there must be a relationship to the events and aspirations of the moment, but also a memory of the past. It

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[1] Emory S. Bogardus, Sociology (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1954), p. 4.

[2] Ibid., p. 19.

[3] Ibid., p. 18.

> is a continuous sequence of change, revolving around the axis of events. Its objective is to bring into harmony the various environments which mankind creates and controls. Fashion is a way and pattern of living controlled by various other forces, but, in the end, bringing these forces into focus and balance . . . . [1]

According to Cunnington, "the fashions of an epoch and its social tastes and outlook have an ascertainable harmonic relationship." [2] Fashion itself, is governed by change, both environmental and emotional. The décor of our lives is constant, is near to us, and is close to our thoughts. Since it is a close phase of our envoirn, it may be said to be a valid representation of both material and psychological changes.

> Fashions do not accidentally occur nor do they suddenly erupt. They represent a long and intelligent evolution expressing the needs of women in relation to their social lives, at some particular time, and with relationship to available materials and inspiration. They grow out of the fashions of the past; re-interpreted in the needs and visions of the present. [3]

In direct relation to this, it was said "For this reason a composite study of the progress of fashion . . . should serve to indicate the changes which took place in . . . America." [4]

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[1] Morris de Camp Crawford, One World of Fashion (New York: Fairchild Publications, Inc., 1955), p. 65.

[2] C. Willett Cunnington, Why Women Wear Clothes (London: Faber & Faber, Ltd., 1941), p. 36.

[3] Morris de Camp Crawford, "Fashion Significances, The 1920's: The Fashions and the Art Inspiration," Women's Wear Daily, April 1, 1949, p. 3.

[4] Elizabeth Burris-Meyer, This Is Fashion (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1943), p. 158.

Carrying this thought another step, Young stated that "a controlling factor in changes in women's dress is that all women desire to wear each year, dresses sufficiently different from last years so as to be unmistakably recognized by the uninitiated as being the latest mode, yet not identified with those of other women, yet not so different as to be conspicuous."[1]

In his articles, Francis E. Russell developed this thought in this way: "It would be far easier for her to wear the skirt to her knees with the majority of women dressed the same, than to be alone in a gown six inches from the floor. It is all a matter of custom and it can only be changed by the united efforts of those who see the necessity."[2]

Relative to the idea of custom and dress, he stated,

> Men who admire women more than clothes have never taken kindly to dehumanizing fashions . . . But however they may protest . . . anything that women will persistently wear "as the correct thing" soon seems to be associated with womankind in men's minds as to seem the "womanly" dress.[3]
>
> It seems as if, at this stage of the world, we all ought to know that our notions of what is womanly or unwomanly, feminine or unfeminine, are largely the results of education. Had we always seen men in petticoats and women in breeches, it would seem very unfeminine for a woman to put on skirts.[4]

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[1]Mrs. Agnes Brooks Young, Recurring Cycles of Fashion (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1937), p. 4.

[2]Francis E. Russell, "Freedom in Dress for Women," The Arena, Vol. 8 (August, 1893), p. 70.

[3]Ibid.

[4]Francis E. Russell, "A Brief Survey of the American Dress Reform Movements of the Past, with Views of Representative Women," The Arena, Vol. 6 (June, 1892), p. 336.

The essential quality of the fashions during the twenties was the expression of youth, "gradually changing from a sort of 'neutral sex' verging on the male adolescent, towards the female adolescent and finally emerging by about 1930 into womanhood."[1] The boyish vogue was perceptable and hipless and bosomless figures became the fashionable aim. "My dear, you've got absolutely nothing"[2] was a high compliment, for 'nothing' was coveted. The whims of fashion seldom follow the contours of the body and the result is particular stress on some single part which is then treated as a special center of interest. "At the present time interest has departed from the trunk and is centered on the limbs."[3] The accentuation of youth had led to the idealization of youth. Flugel[4] supports this premise:

> Long slender limbs and an undeveloped torso are typical of immaturity, and if modesty had departed from the legs it has now moved upwards to the body where any display of the characteristics of the fuller figure is discountenanced. The bosom must be small and virginal; and maturity . . . is concealed as long as possible.

With the tendency toward short skirts, knees were exposed and stockings ceased to be "underwear and became outerwear."[5] The

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[1] C. Willett Cunnington, English Women's Clothing in the Present Century (London: Faber & Faber, Ltd., 1951), p. 148.

[2] Doris Langley Moore, The Woman in Fashion (New York: B. T. Batsford, Ltd., 1949), p. 174.

[3] Flugel, op. cit., p. 161.

[4] Ibid., p. 162.

[5] Golden Anniversary of Fashion, op. cit., p. 26.

question of "underwear" was a topical one. It was said that "It is perfectly true today that women wear little or no lingerie but that 'little' adds to or detracts immeasurably from the total effect of the whole costume."[1] Research showed that in 1926, many ceased to wear the brassière, the teddy (a comination camisole and bloomer) being the only undergarment worn and many, not even that."[2] A fashion writer of the New York Times in July, 1920, wrote: "The American woman has lifted her skirts far beyond any modest limitations."

It may be surmised that during the period under discussion there were many changes, changes in the way of life and changes in the costume desired and worn.

> With women's penchant for extreme frankness in manner, habits, and speech, a lack of modesty and decorum was evident, and her dress reflected this attitude with its extremely low necks, short tight sleeves, or no sleeves at all.[3]

While the American woman was dressing differently, she was also doing something else, whether consciously or unconsciously.

> In a very tight skirt, the American woman was expressing "her desire for new experiences" in the tango, foxtrot, and, most alarming to those interested in her welfare, the "sinuous debutante slouch." And the day was at hand when the old boned corset, though still purchased was "parked" for the

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[1] Harper's Bazaar, April, 1924, p. 105.

[2] Annie Isabelle Elliot, "Style Cycles in Women's Undergarments" (unpublished Master's thesis, Department of Home Economics and Household Administration, University of Chicago, 1927), p. 17.

[3] Doris Jane Brockway, "The Social, Political, and Historical Influences Reflected in Twentieth Century Costume" (unpublished Master's thesis, University of Washington, 1939), p. 126.

> duration of the dance . . . a signal to the inflexible of mind that morals were melting fast.[1]

The post-war world faced far reaching conflicts in morals and religious beliefs, for there was a change in ideals. The revolutionary theory of Darwin resulted in a critical analysis of the Bible, with considerable speculation as to the acceptability of orthodox religion. The result was a lack of emphasis on theological controversies and a direction of the attention to the problems of the machine age. There was the removal of some spiritual explanations of life's processes, and growing materialistic trends. "God is the power of money."[2] "Remove the spiritual qualities of awe and reverence and audacious bravado will stand in its stead."[3]

The "flaming youth"[4] came to fore. They were undisciplined and pampered, seeking chiefly to "get by" and making mad plunges here and there. An encompassing statement of the age was made by John Erskine: "It would be unfair to ourselves and our contemporaries to say that this is an age of bad manners. Rather it is an age of no manners at all."[5]

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[1] Robert Holliday, Unmentionables (New York: Ray Long and Richard R. Smith, 1933), p. 267.

[2] Brockway, op. cit., pp. 81-82.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Bogardus, op. cit., p. 261.

[5] John Erskine, "Tact," Mirrors of the Year 1925-28, ed. Horace Winston Stokes (New York: Frederick A. Stokes Co., 1928), p. 147.

It was an age of prosperity and unreality. There was an overexaggeration of everything, especially concerning the freedom of the female.[1]

> If you shut your eyes and tried to figure out a way for women to dress at such a time, you'd certainly hit on something like what they wore. Everything had to be done very quickly, including dressing. Everything that was formerly covered up had to be uncovered and everything that was uncovered had to be covered up. Women had to be men. There was no subtlety about anything. Modesty has, in fact, never been the same since.
>
> So you had women running hectically about in little bags . . . their breasts bound and flat, their hips concealed by calling them waists, waving their uncovered legs in the air. Unnatural, mad as prosperity itself.
>
> Then came the depression . . . .[2]

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[1] Elizabeth Hawes, Why Is a Dress? (New York: The Viking Press, 1942), p. 73.

[2] Ibid.

CHAPTER III

BACKGROUND CONDITIONS OF THE PERIOD

In order to understand the changes that took place during the decade of the nineteen-twenties, it might be well to look at the earliest days of the post-war decade.

Political and Economic Scene

In November of 1918, the Armistice was signed which brought to a close the first great war, World War I. On the morning of November 11, 1918, President Woodrow Wilson wrote this message to the American people:[1]

> My Fellow Countrymen: The armistice was signed this morning. Everything for which America fought has been accomplished. It will now be our fortunate duty to assist by example, by sober, friendly counsel, and by material aid in the establishment of just democracy throughout the world.

Within this statement was the intent of a peace of reconciliation; one which placed upon democracy the responsibility of aiding those less fortunate than we. However, the era of peace that was to have begun, was not entirely free from strife. Despite the fact that the war was "officially" over, evidences of the bitterness that it had invoked in the minds of Americans appeared throughout the country in riots against the Germans.

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[1] Frederick Lewis Allen, Only Yesterday (New York: Bantam Books, 1959), p. 11.

Even as the soldiers returned home and certain articles of food, such as sugar, became less scarce, the people went on thinking with the mind of a nation at war.[1] They had learned to strike back at the thing they hated. Germany had been struck down and now the threat of Bolshevism spreading from Russia to the rest of Europe and possibly to the United States loomed on the horizon. The nation had formed the habit of summary action and it was not soon unlearned; only the circumstances and the methods had changed. A week after the Armistice, Mayor Hylan of New York forbade the display of the red flag in the streets and ordered the police to "disperse all unlawful assemblages."[2] A mass meeting of Socialists in Madison Square Garden required twenty-two mounted policemen to break up the milling mob and restore order. Other riots also occurred.

America, like other nations, had gone deeply into debt as a result of the war. In 1914, our national debt was $1,188,235,400; in 1921 it was $23,976,250,608.[3] The economic structure of the country was made seemingly more powerful. The factory capacity had been greatly speeded up, first to supply the war needs of Europe, and later our own. The postwar result was that the ability to produce was greater than the peacetime capacity to consume, and was greater

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[1] Ibid., p. 13.

[2] Ibid., p. 14.

[3] Mark Sullivan, Our Times, Vol. VI, The Twenties (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1935), p. 11.

than we could find markets abroad when other nations returned to normal production.

Similarly, agricultural production had been stimulated and expanded to feed peoples of warring nations who had previously been supporting themselves. In the process, prices of farm products and farm land, had risen to fantastic heights. In the speculative buying, many mortgages had been given . . . ones which would be all but impossible to pay once prices would start to fall.

The war itself accelerated economic and social ferment. It had brought about a change in the status of large numbers of persons. There was a "new rich" and a "new poor."[1] With wartime inflation, the purchasing power of the dollar had sunk and those who had fixed incomes had become the "new poor." These were those who live upon the returns from bonds, mortgages, and rents, government employees, school teachers, and college professors. The "new rich" were those whose wealth was in lands, goods, shares in corporations, and who therefore profited by the rise in prices.

During the war prices had soared and at the end of the war, with no controls, they continued to climb. Employers watched with resentment the rising scale of wages paid to labor. They wanted to teach labor a lesson. On the other hand, labor, facing a mounting cost of living, and realizing that it was no longer unpatriotic to strike for higher wages, decided to hit back at management. The ensuing

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[1] Ibid., p. 13.

result of these contradictory ideas was a series of bitter strikes and lockouts. In addition, with buyers on strike, markets became overloaded and an economic depression set in, stifling business.[1] The peak of this problem occurred during the period 1919-1920, but the effects extended even into 1921 and 1922.

The postwar period saw more fervor, emotional patriotism, intolerance toward suspect loyalty, and hopeful chanting of the slogans of democracy and peace than this country had ever seen before. War enforced an uneasy national unity; people were disposed to work off their built up grudges on the outside enemy. However after the war, the rising prices, war fatigue, a desire to reap the much advertised fruits of democracy, and the desire to release wartime tensions, gave vent to another social problem . . . race riots. Now instead of the "outside enemy," the people were fighting the "next-door enemy."[2] In addition to isolated incidents, in 1919 the Ku Klux Klan was openly reorganized in many parts of the country and its influence on racial tensions was greatly felt. The postwar period was one of strikes, waves of radicalism, uncomfortable cost of living, and general tension. "The American people were tired . . . tired of war, responsibility, idealism, regulations, and duties. They wanted to relax, have a good time, make money."[3] In 1920 Warren G. Harding was elected to the

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[1]Agnes Rogers, I Remember Distinctly (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1947), p. 28.

[2]Ibid., p. 25.

[3]Ibid., p. 32.

presidency with his statement of a return to "normalcy." "The easy-going years, the let's-forget-it-all-and-have-a-good-time years, were beginning with corruption in Washington."[1]

On March 4, 1921 Harding took the oath of office and the reign of normalcy had begun, and so had "The Lawless Decade," so aptly named by Paul Sann in his book of the same title. The general conditions of the country on that day may be summed up thusly:[2]

> --the war had been over for more than two years, although a technical state of war still existed between Germany and the United States.
>
> --business was collapsing into depression and dragging down the price level.
>
> --the Big Red Scare was gradually ebbing.
>
> --the Ku Klux Klan was acquiring its first few hundred thousand members.
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> --the Eighteenth Amendment was in its second year and rum-runners and bootleggers were acquiring confidence in their operations.
>
> --the first radio broadcasting radio station in the nation was hardly four months old and the radio craze was not yet begun.
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> --a crime commission had just been investigating Chicago's crime wave.
>
> --Judge Landis had become the czar of baseball.
>
> --Dempsey and Carpentier had signed to meet the following summer at Boyle's Thirty Acres

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[1] Ibid., p. 35.

[2] Allen, op. cit., p. 88.

> --Main Street and The Outline of History were becoming best sellers.
>
> --skirts climbed half-way to the knee and seemed likely to go down again.
>
> --the sins of the flapper were disturbing the nation; it was about this time that Philadelphia introduced the "moral gown," and the Literary Digest featured a symposium entitled "Is the Younger Generation in Peril?"

There was a growing apathy toward anything that reminded the people of war. They didn't want to be told of new sacrifices . . . they felt they had done enough. The nation was spiritually tired . . . of the war excitements, of political idealism, and of America's duty to humanity. They wanted quiet and healing; a chance to pursue private affairs free from governmental interference and public affairs.

However the political scene during the administration of Harding was filled with scandal, most of which came into the open after the sudden death of the president on August 2, 1923. The reaction of the public to this situation? The harshest condemnation by the press and the public was reserved for those who insisted on bringing the facts to light, not for those who defrauded the government.[1] This, almost more than anything else, reflects the general desire of the people to be left alone, and illustrates their political apathy.

When Calvin Coolidge took office in 1923, the nation was on its way to a business revival . . . one that was to reach a height never before or since seen in American economy. The economic

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[1] Ibid., p. 109.

plateau represents nearly seven years (1923-29) of unparalleled prosperity. They were years during which the nation might have been disillusioned about politics, religion, and love, but it was believed that the end of the rainbow held the legal tender of the prosperity of American industry.

Between 1921 and 1929 industry reported a gain of more than fifty per cent in the value of its products. In the latter year, iron and steel, machinery, automobiles, petroleum, textiles, prepared foods, and the other products of American manufacture reached a total value of $68,000,000,000.[1] The task of marketing these products led to a phenomenal expansion in wholesale and retail trade. Selling became as important as manufacturing. The measure of its success was a total sales of almost $50,000,000,000 through the retail stores dealing directly with the great consuming public. An expanding foreign trade also helped absorb industrial output, total exports rising from $4,485,000,000 to $5,241,000,000.[2] Even more than in previous years, it was the domestic market that enabled industry to expand so spectacularly, for the purchasing power of the American people themselves held the secret of the prosperity.

The national income naturally rose in response to such advances in industry and manufacture. It was estimated at $66,000,000,000 at the opening of the nineteen-twenties, and at

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[1] Foster Rhea Dulles, Twentieth Century America (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1945), p. 261.

[2] Ibid., p. 262.

$82,000,000,000 at their close.[1] This total was by no means evenly divided among American families; but there were relative gains all along the line. While income taxes and other criteria revealed that the rich were becoming richer, with new additions every year to the swelling roster of millionaires, other classes, including professional workers, businessmen, and white-collar workers were also earning more money.

The underlying factors responsible for the general prosperity of the nineteen-twenties (on the industrial scene) were the efficient exploitation of natural resources, improved methods of industrial production, and the intensive development of both domestic and foreign trade. Good times were perhaps even more directly due to the spectacularly rapid expansion of a number of key industries. Some of them were entirely new; others were undergoing their period of greatest growth. Together they gave a tremendous impetus to economic development all along the line. The automobile industry may well have been the most important of all, for both at home and abroad it became a token of American prosperity during these halycon days.[2]

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Ibid., p. 264.

The Automobile

Automobiles appeared on the American scene as early as the late 1800's, and it wasn't until about the turn of the century that the "horseless carriages" began to be produced in quantity and sold in that same way.[1] The nation learned with amazement of this new fantasy, and realized gradually that it might eventually prove to be practical. And so the age of the automobile had begun . . . and it grew. The transformation actually began in 1919.[2] After the war a newly mature generation of Americans held a very different point of view on the automobile than that of their elders. It was not considered merely a luxury and an instrument of recreation, but was regarded as a year-round, day-and-night utility. For many it was a means to augment earning power; for most it was a convenience capable of increasing personal comfort. With this attitude, the era of the linen duster and goggles came to an end as closed cars were introduced . . . vehicles usable in all weather conditions. In ten years, the national registration of automobiles leaped from six to twenty-three millions.[3] During the twenties the automobile became both a utility and a plaything to be used and enjoyed by the average American.

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[1] Lloyd Morris, Not So Long Ago (New York: Random House, 1949), p. 260.

[2] Ibid., p. 379.

[3] Ibid.

Aside from (but not incidental to) the economic aspects of the growing production and usage of the automobile, were changes in the national mores. In 1925, a resident of the middle-west in talking with the sociologists Robert S. Lynd and Helen Merrell Lynd asked: "Why on earth do you need to study what's changing in this country?" And he went on to remark, "I can tell you what's happening in just four letters: A-U-T-O!"[1] In Middletown, the Lynds noted several factors regarding the automobile in American life, among them were: auto ownership had reached the point of being an accepted essential of normal living; landscaping had given way to the needs for a garage and driveway; evening and Sunday afternoons were spent on the road not in the parlor; and the family car had become as important as the physical appearance of the home, with people often mortgaging the home in order to purchase an auto. Some families even reported a preference to go without food, clothes, and indoor bathroom facilities to satisfy their desire for the vehicle.

The use of the automobile was upsetting various old-established social adjustments, and coming into conflict with emotionally charged sanctions and taboos. The Sunday drive in some cases became all-important. Because of this, the automobile was regarded, by conservative folk, as "a threat to the church," and clergymen, aware of the impatience of their congregations, were promising to

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[1] Ibid., p. 381.

dismiss them at an earlier hour.[1]

The automobile caused social problems as well. It often was a source of friction between children and their parents. It made it possible to join friends motoring to another town without asking permission. In many cases, the family car was an important criterion of social eligibility. The automobile was also replacing the parlor as the location of courtship preliminaries. It offered not only improved means of transportation but, for the young people, a means of escape from parental chaperonage. It provided both young and old with a "room protected from the weather which could be occupied at any time of the night or day and could be moved at will into a darkened byway or country lane."[2]

Media of Communication

Radio

Symptoms of the changing temperament of the day were the emergence of new things to bedazzle the public. Radio broadcasting was especially important. When the United States entered the First World War, there were between three and five thousand amateur wireless operators in the United States. By the time hostilities ceased, the number had almost doubled.[3] The next few years

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[1] Ibid., p. 381.

[2] Allen, op. cit., p. 70.

[3] Morris, op. cit., p. 435

were ones of experimentation with the media. The first commercial station KDKA, was opened in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania on November 2, 1920, by Dr. Frank Conrad.[1] The station was operated by the Westinghouse Company, and their first broadcast announced the Harding-Cox returns.[2] At first, this new revolution in communication and public entertainment made slow headway but the tide grew. Eighteen months after the inauguration of broadcasting, two hundred and twenty stations were on the air in the United States, and a new craze was sweeping the country.[3] By the spring of 1922, it seemed certain that broadcasting was to become a permanent and expanding enterprise. In the opinion of David Sarnoff, it promised to be an activity of national rather than merely local scope. Broadcasting stations, he surmised, would "ultimately be required to entertain a nation."[4] As stated by Frederick Lewis Allen, in his book Only Yesterday, radio ". . . was destined ultimately to alter the daily habits of Americans as profoundly as anything that the decade produced."

During the winter of 1921-22, the craze came in with a rush. A San Francisco newspaper described the discovery that millions were making: "There is radio music in the air, every night, everywhere. Anybody can hear it at home on a receiving set, which any

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[1] Allen, op. cit., p. 32.

[2] Morris, op. cit., p. 439.

[3] Ibid., p. 441.

[4] Morris, op. cit., p. 445.

boy can put up in an hour." Newspapers brought out radio sections, and hitherto unmechanical people puzzled over articles about circuits, tubes, and condensers.

In the Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature for the years 1919-21, there were two columns of references to articles on Radicals and Radicalism and less than a quarter of a column of references on Radio. By contrast, in the account of 1922-24, the section on Radicals and Radicalism shrank to half a column and the section on Radio swelled to nineteen columns. This alone is an index to more than merely quantities of periodical literature.

Radio made it possible for people all over the country to share together the experience of hearing an event actually happen. It aided in the rapid spread of information and was a means of uniting the country by direct communication.

The Motion Pictures

Motion pictures were available to the public as early as 1892 in Penny Arcades, Peep Shows, or Kinetoscope Parlors. By 1900 they often were the last bill on a Vaudeville show.[1] During World War I the arrival of partisan films from Europe opened the box office possibilities. Birth of a Nation demonstrated that the screen was an unrivaled medium for propaganda and polemics.[2]

[1] Richard Griffith and Arthur Mayer, The Movies (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1957), p. 35.

[2] Ibid., p. 113.

By the middle of 1918, the movie industry was deeply involved in the war effort. Theatres were used as community centers for fund-raising rallies; "picturettes" urged the purchase of Liberty Bonds; leading stars participated in the fund drives. Movies themselves were full of Red Cross nurses, Gold Star mothers, heroic infantrymen, spies, and saboteurs. "The movies contributed more than their share to the 1918 wave of hysteria which saw sabotage in every accident, and a sinister plot in any unusual occurrence."[1] Small children fled from a stranger in a mustache, since they knew from the "silver screen" that a stranger with a mustache was a German spy.

During the prewar period, a movie family of types was developed.[2] It included the Hero, the Heroine, the Mother, the Villain and the Vamp. Each had a cut and dried set of characteristics and could always be readily identified on the screen; in addition, "good" would almost invariably triumph over "evil." The postwar period brought about a change. The new public wanted "courage and weakness, evil and good, all mixed up in a cocktail of human fallibility."[3]

During the war, the middle class became a part of the movie audience. The wartime need for escape and for news gradually overcame the prejudices of the nickelodean days. Theatres became

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[1] Ibid., p. 119.

[2] Ibid., p. 63.

[3] Ibid., p. 132.

more lavish; the tastes of the people were changing. Cecil B. De Mille believed that the straight-laced Puritanism of prewar days was weakening. He produced pictures to show at length and in detail what people ought not to do. He introduced bathing as an art, and disrobing as a prolonged rapture. He had heroines wearing the best Parisian and New York styles. These costumes were copied all over the country. However he was not specifically concerned with being fashionable but with being sensational, so he used the best designs but in a more exaggerated state. There was no concern that a middle-west waitress might copy the exaggerated version.

"The movies had made themselves a fast transmission belt for the Jazz Age ideas and nothing could arrest the process. In spite of censorial and ministerial protests, the young knew what they wanted to see on the screen, and many of their elders, despite their protestation, wanted to hear the same."[1] The movies played almost incessantly on the same lucrative theme . . . sex. The producers of one picture advertised "brilliant men, beautiful jazz babies, champagne baths, midnight revels, petting parties in the purple dawn, all ending in one terrific smashing climax that makes you gasp." Another promised "neckers, petters, white kisses, red kisses, pleasure-mad daughters, sensation-craving mothers, . . . the truth . . . bold, naked, sensational."[2]

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[1]Ibid., p. 191.

[2]Allen, op. cit., p. 71.

The storm of protest from church organizations led to the installation of Will H. Hays, President Harding's Postmaster-General, as the arbiter of morals and taste in films. Yet even with the almost obligatory moral endings, the films continued in their path through the decade.

It was during this decade that the new elite of the movies replaced, in the imagination of the American people, an older elite of industrial wealth. The social authority passed to Hollywood and the movie stars. "Thereafter, it (Hollywood) was to exercise a predominant influence on fashion, manners, morals and the complex art of civilized living."[1]

> Hollywood in the Twenties was garish, extravagant, ludicrous, acquisitive, ambitious, ruthless, beautiful . . . which was just what its world public wanted it to be. Its very unreality was protective of the illusion . . . dream worlds are not supposed to be lifelike.[2]

The influence of the motion pictures on the people was powerful for several reasons. They presented real people in settings that could be imagined to be real. Many of the films presented revolutionary ideas on life and morals . . . ideas that fascinated the younger generation . . . ideas that they wished to emulate. They were influential in the spread of ideas and fashions to the entire country in a comparatively short period of time. They laid heavy emphasis on sex and the morality of the stars became the ideals of

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[1]Morris, op. cit., p. 139.

[2]Griffith and Mayer, op. cit., p. 231.

many citizens of all social and age levels. The real influences of a media such as this can never be measured accurately, only inferred by certain trends.

Print Media

During this same period a crop of sex and confession magazines appeared on the news stands.. The publishers of these learned to a "nicety the gentle art of arousing the reader without arousing the censor.[1] While always providing a moral ending they concentrated on the description of what they called "missteps." Stories were offered with such titles as "What I Told My Daughter the Night before Her Marriage," "Indolent Kisses," and "Watch Your Step-Ins." Bernarr McFadden's True Story, launched as late as 1919, had over 300,000 readers by 1923; 848,000 by 1924; over a million and a half by 1925; and almost two million by 1926.[2] These figures speak for themselves.

The tabloids were also growing in popularity. They presented American life not as a realistic struggle, but as "a three-ring circus of sport, crime, and sex."[3] In varying degrees, to meet the pressure of competition, other papers followed suit. Spectacular accounts of "Peaches" Browning, the Arbuckle scandal, and other current happenings, provided the average man with sufficient material

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[1] Allen, op. cit., p. 71.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid., p. 57.

to aid him to forget to be class-conscious.

Books too, became an important part of American life. Among the popular releases during the decade were The Outline of History by Wells; Main Street by Sinclair Lewis; and White Shadows of the South Seas by Frederick O'Brien. The Sheik both in book and movie form showed the public about "hot love in hot places."[1] There were many other publications by eminent authors. The twenties were a time of resurgence in American writing. Sinclair Lewis, Willa Cather, John Dos Passos, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Theodore Dreiser, Ernest Hemingway and others were breaking new ground in fiction. Their writings reflected the mood of this generation. They were not the whole of the generation but their writing had an influence greater than their number.[2] They called themselves "the lost generation," a phrase first applied to them by one of their idols, Gertrude Stein, in a conversation with Ernest Hemingway.[3]

One of the most influential publications of the decade was This Side of Paradise written by twenty-four year old F. Scott Fitzgerald, in 1920.[4] With this book, he called attention to the generation. In it and also in The Jazz Age (by which he named the twenties) he provoked interest in and imitation of, what he wrote.

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[1] Allen, op. cit., p. 57.

[2] Sullivan, op. cit., p. 380.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Sullivan, loc. cit.

His writings described the futility of the times and while not necessarily being autobiographical, they were of sufficient interest that they provided a blueprint for many of his generation.

Prohibition

On midnight of January 16, 1920, the Prohibition Amendment went into effect. Since June 30, 1919, the country had been under the wartime prohibition act.[1] Consequently, the going into effect of the Eighteenth Amendment was not accompanied by the closing of saloons or by any other happenings connected with the physical disappearance of liquor from American life. It had been a war-time argument that a sober soldier was a good soldier and a sober factory hand a good factory hand. This idea got such overwhelming support that the "wartime" dry act was passed and went into effect on July 1, 1919, and almost without opposition. On the last day before the Prohibition Amendment went into effect in 1920, the Anti-Saloon League of New York issued an exultant statement: "At one minute past twelve tomorrow morning, a new nation will be born. . . . Now, for an era of clear thinking and clean living!"[2]

The Eighteenth Amendment aroused no organized opposition; the Senate debated thirteen hours and the House, seven. The prospect of national sobriety infatuated the American conscience, which was

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[1] Rogers, I Remember Distinctly, op. cit., p. 22.

[2] Ibid., p. 45.

pitched to the highest idealism by a great crusade . . . a war to end all wars forever. Then suddenly, idealism collapsed. When the amendment became effective in 1920, Americans were tired of causes. All at once the nation went on the "greatest, gaudiest spree in history."[1] The law that had the greatest impact on the land evoked the least obedience from the people. Liquor flowed like a "giant waterfall" during the thirteen years called by Herbert Hoover ". . . an experiment . . . noble in purpose."[2] According to Paul Sann, prohibition was the greatest single factor in the lawlessness of the Lawless Decade.

Evasion of the law began immediately, and sincere opposition to it quickly gathered force. The results were the bootlegger, the speakeasy, and a spirit of deliberate revolt which, in many places, made drinking the "thing to do."[3] In 1923, H. L. Mencken said of prohibition: "The business of evading it and making a mock of it has ceased to wear any aspects of crime, and has become a sort of national sport."[4]

From this, came further results: the use of the hip-flask, the cocktail party, and the transformation of drinking from a masculine prerogative to one shared by both sexes together. To

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[1]Lloyd Morris, Postscript to Yesterday (New York: Random House, 1947), p. 68.

[2]Sann, op. cit., p. 7.

[3]Allen, op. cit., p. 71.

[4]Sann, op. cit., p. 90.

quote in part from Elmer Davis in reference to father going down to Cassidy's bar with the boys" . . . father may still go down there of evenings, but since prohibition mother goes with him."[1] The speakeasy was illegal, but was always to be found. Something else was added . . . "women, traditionally barred by customs from the saloons, but a decidedly welcome fixture in the new style oasis."[2]

Lawless gangs were no novelty to Americans, but prohibition and public cynicism lifted them to unprecedented power, wealth, and violence as the twenties wore on. During the era of gangsters and racketeers which extended from 1920-1940[3] Americans witnessed the creation within the body politic, of a "new" society, based on lawlessness; one which enforced its own codes by a private police system; set up its own industrial combinations, bankers, and legal staff; organized its own distributive outlets; and finally appointed its own "impartial arbiters" to regulate internal conflicts of competition, when violence had become too costly.[4] By the early twenties, crime had become "big business." Sanctioned by custom, it wore the guise of legitimacy; for it accorded with the requirements of logic if not of

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[1]Allen, op. cit., p. 70.

[2]Sann, op. cit., p. 195.

[3]Morris, Postscript to Yesterday, op. cit., p. 65.

[4]Ibid.

law.[1] It was abetted by the people and protected by their chosen officials. The patronage of millions of otherwise ethically upright people, made its efficient services profitable. "The nature had not changed. The mood of the American people had. So had their folkways."[2]

A Treasury Department report showed that between 1920 and 1928, the government had fired 706 Prohibition agents and prosecuted 257 others for taking bribes. Elmer L. Irez, Chief Treasury man, termed the snooper band a "most extraordinary collection of political hacks, hangers-on, and passing highwaymen."[3] A related incident is that of Captain Daniel Chapin in New York, who lined up the agents on his staff and ordered them to extend their hands. "Now," he said, "everyone of you . . . with a diamond ring is fired." That took in about half of them.[4]

The number of "speaks" in New York City alone was reputed to stand at thirty-two thousand. This was the unofficial estimate of the Commissioner of Police Grover Whalen. The "speaks" were housed in New York brownstones and also in nightclubs. They were opened and closed frequently to confuse the police. The most celebrated figure in this atmosphere was Miss Texas Guinan, who in ten

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[1] Ibid., p. 67.

[2] Ibid., p. 68.

[3] Sann, op. cit., p. 203.

[4] Ibid.

months of heyday, converted a slight investment into nearly one million dollars. Needless to say, prohibition was a lucrative proposition for many of America's citizens.

Some Fads and Trends

Shortly after the war, Joseph P. Babcock, codified and simplified the rules of the Chinese game Mah Jong for the American public. It was introduced to the United States and in less than a year, the craze had become so universal that Chinese makers of sets could no longer keep up with the demand and American manufacture was in full swing.[1] A Mah Jong League of America was formed and the correct dinner party wound up with everyone engrossed in the game.

Preceding the climax of Mah Jong was the appearance of Emil Coué from France. He rapidly became the most talked of person in the country.[2] Institutes were established and hundreds heard his formula: "Day by day in every way I am getting better and better."

Sports during the decade became an obsession. Boxing matches, baseball games, college football, golf tournaments, tennis, horse racing, and other sports became almost all important. Attendance at many of these events broke records both for number of people and the amount of money collected. A most noteworthy feature about the sports of this period, was not so much the star prowess, but

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[1] Allen, op. cit., p. 78.

[2] Ibid.

"the vast publicity that surrounded them, the adulation they received, and the hugely increased amount of money taken in at sporting events."[1]

Food fads also appeared. The sudden craze for Eskimo Pie brought, in three months, the price of cocoa beans on the New York market up fifty per cent.[2]

Another new American institution caught the public eye during the summer of 1921. . . the bathing beauty. In early July, a Costume and Beauty Show was held at Washington's bathing beach on the Potomac. In early September, Atlantic City held its first Beauty Pageant.

One of the very important influences on American thought at this time were the works of Sigmund Freud. He had published his first book on psychoanalysis at the end of the nineteenth century, and had lectured to American psychologists as early as 1909. It was not until after the war that the Freudian gospel began to circulate to a marked extent among the American public. The one intellectual force which had not suffered disrepute as a result of the war was science.[3] The public was now absorbing a quantity of popularized information about biology and anthropology which gave a general impression that men and women were merely animals and that moral codes had no

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[1] Rogers, I Remember Distinctly, op. cit., p. 75.

[2] Allen, op. cit., p. 56.

[3] Ibid., p. 69.

universal validity. Presently, one would begin to hear that "science" taught new and disturbing things about sex. Sex appeared to be the central force behind all thoughts and actions. "The first requirement of mental health was to have an uninhibited sex life. If you would be well and happy, you must obey your libido."[1] Such was the teaching of Freud as it imbedded itself in the minds of the public after having been passed from one person to another without the real scientific understanding of the original teachings.

The Role and Status of Women

The story of the American woman in the nineteenth century is one of struggle for recognition, of her claim to equality with men and often to superiority over him, and consequently the partial loss of her own feminity.[2] It was in the nineteenth century that the first signs of feminine revolt became evident. Women of leisure were beginning to dominate the social scene. The increasing wealth of the upper classes and the desire of these women to "do something" contributed to the gilded age . . . an era of florid elegance and ostentatious display. The less wealthy women relieved their boredom in other ways, of which club life and religion were probably the most important. The development of club life was rapid for it proved to

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Eric John Dingwall, The American Woman (London: Gerald Duckworth & Co., Ltd., 1956), p. 65.

[3] Ibid., p. 112.

be a time consuming diversion. A movement had also begun for legal recognition of the rights of women which culminated in the Suffrage Movement. This again was a sign of the revolt of women to their status in America at the turn of the century.

From 1900 to the beginning of World War I there were four marked trends in women's life, all continuations of movements previously begun:

1. changes in domestic and social habits as a result of the influences of science, inventions, discoveries, and, as a consequence of these, a reshaping of conventions.

2. a greater invasion of women workers into industry and the professions and a breaking down of opposition to this on the part of both men and women.

3. remarkable progress in women's organizations advancing on four fronts.

    a. to increase women's rights,

    b. to provide opportunity for the expression of their rapidly multiplying interests, particularly along cultural lines,

    c. to obtain protection and advancement in the industries and professions,

    d. to further religious, ethical, philanthropic, and social reform programs.

4. a change in feeling, a new outlook on life, an unheeded recognition of value that more than anything else measured the distance women had traveled toward social equality with men.[1]

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[1] Ernest Rutherford Groves, The American Woman: The Feminine Side of a Masculine Civilization (New York: Emerson Books Inc., 1944), p. 325.

World War I greatly accelerated the social trends of concern to women. It quickened women's rights movements in all phases and aided in breaking down the barriers against their entrance in business and industry. This was the first time women of the middle and upper classes had worked outside the home at such a diversity of regular jobs.

The war broke the crust of tradition and allowed the seeds of social change--new ideas--to come to life. It disturbed the prevailing routine and brought to new importance the relationship between the sexes. Ideals and attitudes were shattered and revamped according to new standards of life and conduct. The postwar period was one of deviation from the "accepted" and found expression in many ways. Work, education, pleasure, and amusement were the subjects of discussion, experimentation, and speculation. A new era was being heralded--a liberal social order and a modern art expression.[1]

During this time, women were also becoming emancipated from routine to live their own lives; they were gaining independence from the drudgery of housekeeping. Smaller houses were being built; families were moving into apartments; women were learning to make lighter work of preparing meals and many of the usual chores were becoming simplified by machinery. All of these contributed to their having more spare time and the result was that they moved into the

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[1] Frank Alvah Parsons, The Art of Dress (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co., Inc., 1928), p. 321.

business world, enjoying the economic independence that it provided. In all, it may be said that the relative freedom that women had gained by the time the twenties were dawning, merely provided a background for the revolution in the American way of life that was to follow. The twenties were to bring to the American woman a way of life that had never before appeared on the American scene. She was to fulfill her desires for equality in a manner that more than likely, was never envisioned by her predecessors in the suffragettes.

Changing Manners and Morals

Widespread defiance of the prohibition laws was only one symptom of a pervasive change in American manners, morals, and customs during the postwar years. Great numbers of people came out of war experience feeling their ideals had been discredited, that those who talked about standards of conduct were old-fashioned and unrealistic, and "that you might as well let the bars down and get yourself a good time whenever and wherever you could."[1] The result of this manner of thinking was a rebellion against the puritan code of manners and morals; this was led by the "younger generation," who in great numbers went in for a new frankness of talk, an excited interest in sex, a tolerant acceptance of alcoholic conduct, an acceptance of the permissibility of the petting party, and a general lapse from

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[1] Rogers, I Remember Distinctly, op. cit., p. 50.

gentility to rowdiness. This change, however, was not universal for in many places the old code held firmly.

The war had taken millions of young people of both sexes out of their accustomed environment and given them a taste of freedom under circumstances in which it didn't matter who said what. As with many postwar reactions, this took a special form. It became easy to think of themselves as a generation condemned to hell because of the mistakes of their elders, and whose adminitions must therefore be suspect. By 1920, the rebellion against puritanism and stuffiness was widely visible, and it gained as the decade progressed.

For young Americans, this was a novel way of facing the future. They set out on life under the assumption that effort was futile and failure inevitable. The truths that they had been taught no longer were, in their minds, applicable to reality . . . they were false to life and therefore wouldn't work. They felt their education was worthless; that their inherited culture was bankrupt; that this was the hand of the past that had cheated them.[1]

As a result of this feeling of being cheated, the war generation was cynical rather than revolutionary. They had no interest in politics and refused to be stimulated by the social or economic problems facing the country. As John F. Carter said in the Atlantic Monthly in September of 1920, "The older generation had certainly

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[1] Morris, Postscript to Yesterday, op. cit., p. 149.

pretty well ruined this world before passing it on to us. They gave us this thing, knocked to pieces, leaky, red-hot, threatening to blow up; and then they are surprised that we don't accept it with the same attitude of pretty, decorus enthusiasm with which they received it, way back in the 'eighties."

Two generations were in conflict over this revolution. There are several factors which may be stated as being the causes.[1]

1. the cynicism about the old standards which followed the war
2. the rapid urbanization of a formerly rural society
3. a leveling of the social classes
4. an increase in wealth and leisure
5. the substitution of scientific for religious authority
6. the growing independence of women

It should be understood at this point that no one of these factors can or should be singled out as the principal factor in the change that was taking place in this country during the twenties. Each had its effect and their force when they were working together made the result almost inevitable.

Youth at this time was finding itself in an entirely new position than had its parents. The parents found that they had more money and more time. They were able to give their children the opportunities for education, leisure, and travel that they had not had. Youth was emphasized; this was the decade of the young.[2] Youth felt superior and defiant, and was convinced of its own importance. In

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[1] Jensen, op. cit., p. 157.

[2] Sullivan, op. cit., p. 385.

many instances the elders fed this egotism through imitation of music, sports, dress, manners, and attitudes.

The "younger generation" combined with "the lost generation," took many of these new ideas quite seriously. The ideas they advanced and the convictions they held, almost constituted a doctrine which one[1] of them said years later, "could roughly be summarized as follows:"

1. The idea of salvation by child--the child must develop freely without inhibitions

2. The idea of self-expression--the life purpose of each individual is to express himself

3. The idea of paganism--the body is a clean shrine to be adorned for the ritual of love

4. The idea of living for the moment--live intensely for the moment, even at the cost of future suffering

5. The idea of liberty--anything that prevents self-expression or the full enjoyment of the moment should be abolished

6. The idea of female equality--women should be the economic and moral equals of men

7. The idea of psychological adjustment--individual repressions must be removed in order to be happy in any situation

8. The idea of changing place--by expatriating himself, the artist can break the Puritan shackles, drink, live freely and be wholly creative

One of the poets of the day, Edna St. Vincent Millay, wrote a stanza which may well have been the cry of freedom for youth:

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[1] Ibid., pp. 390-392. The person referred to is Malcolm Cowley, and the statement, here condensed, is taken from his Exile's Return.

My candle burns at both ends;
It will not last the night;
But ah, my foes, and oh, my friends,
It gives a lovely light.

"The most successful caricaturist of the wide-trousered, coonskin-coated cake-eaters of the mid-twenties, and the short-skirted, long-legged flappers, was John Held, Jr."[1] Held was the artist of youth in the Jazz Age. His sketches of "flappers," "jelly beans," and "drug store cowboys," were a gallery of drawings of the youth of the day. The Held male was buried in a raccoon coat, with slicked back hair, wrinkled socks, and bell-bottomed trousers. The Held flapper had stubby feet, long legs, a brief and skanty skirt, circles of rouge on her cheeks, and the snug fitting cloche. Just as the drawings of Charles Dana Gibson became the model for women of an earlier period, so did the sketches by Held during the decade of the twenties.

Girls were smoking in public and in mixed company. While at the end of World War I there were a few women who smoked, within a few years, millions took up the habit. Annual sales in 1920 showed 47 billion cigarettes sold, while in 1930 the total was 125 billion.[2] They were drinking too, whether in the "speak," the private club, or from their dates' hip flask at a dance.

Modern dance was also the subject of attack by parents and church alike. Music was now jazz and blues, and the dancing

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[1] Rogers, I Remember Distinctly, op. cit., p. 51.

[2] Ibid., p. 54.

matched the rhythm. In Cincinnati, the Catholic Telegraph spoke out in righteous indignation, "The music is sensuous, the embracing of partners--the female only half-dressed--is absolutely indecent; and the motions--they are such as may not be described, with any respect for propriety, in a family newspaper. Suffice it to say that there are certain houses appropriate for such dances; but those houses have been closed by law."[1]

A good indication of the change taking place was the rapid and drastic change that took place in feminine attire. Girls, with their new found freedom as gained by suffrage rights, educational opportunities, and industrial positions, were rebelling against the demure attire that had been theirs for the previous decades. The hemline rose steadily, to reach an all time high in 1927.[2] The silhouette was entirely changed, shoulder lines became more inconspicuous, and necklines were lowered. The bust-line was flattened, waists became hips, and none of these features were prominent. Hair was bobbed and faces painted. Cosmetics and facial treatments began to be much more popular in the period immediately after the war. In its most modern sense, glamour (often copied from movie stars) first became popular about 1920, when interest in money and sex was becoming acute.[3] The body became the object of the greatest

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Ibid., p. 55.

[3] Dingwall, op. cit., p. 134.

interest to its owner. Everything was done to make it sleek and daintily perfumed.

CHAPTER IV

THE STEREOTYPED FLAPPER

> ". . . and the fact is, women will wear anything under the sun that is fashionable; and their wearing it will, for the time, make it seem beautiful."
>
> Francis E. Russell

The Fashion Ideal

Fashion implies a certain fluidity of the social structure of the community. Differences of social position exist but it must seem possible and desirable to bridge them. The ultimate and essential cause of fashion lies in social and sexual competition.[1] The social is the more obvious and manifest, while the sexual tends to be more indirect and unavowed.

> The paradox of fashion is that everyone is trying at the same time to be like, and to be unlike his fellow men . . . to be like them insofar as he regards them as superiors, to be unlike them (in the sense of being more "fashionable") so far as he thinks they are below him.[2]

Fashions are not accidental occurrences. They represent long evolution. They are expressive of the needs of women in relation to their social lives at a particular time. They are related to availability of materials and inspirations. New fashion trends emerge from those of the past as reinterpretations, in terms of the needs and

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[1] J. C. Flugel, The Psychology of Clothes (London: L & V Woolf at the Hogarth Press, 1930), p. 138.

[2] Ibid., p. 140.

visions of the present. "We use the language we were born with and change it to fit the circumstances of the moment."[1]

In tracing variations in dress you can discern distinct signs of the times . . . the spiritual or material aspirations of a people. The modes of dress signify certain established ideals, aesthetic, religious, or political, in the group or nation which creates or adopts them.[2] Study of periods when change is most in evidence suggests that it is an expression of a questing, exploring, and restless attitude. It symbolizes, by a break with tradition, a groping after freedom. It is in times when the ideals, sometimes called revolutionary, are in ascendant, that fashion moves in swift strides.

If new fashions are to be successful, they must be in accordance with certain ideals current at the time they are being launched. Women must be able to see in them a symbol of an ideal that is before them. However, there need not be a conscious realization of the real significance of these symbols. The fashion ideal is that "fashionable figure" that women tend to emulate in dress and action.

Each fashion change brings with it proportions of the human figure which are considered ideal. With the advent of the youthful figure during the period of the First World War, popular

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[1]Morris de Camp Crawford, "Fashion Significances; The 1920's: The Fashions and the Art Inspiration," April 4, 1949, p. 3.

[2]Katherine Rucker, "Costume as an Expression of Ideals," Lotus Magazine, Vol. II. No. 1 (January, 1920), pp. 457-460.

admiration for the mature, fully developed figure waned. The ideal silhouette became a straight rectangle. The figure was slender and flat busted, with a very long waist and small hips.[1] This figure represented the final apotheosis of the youthful ideal when youth had come into its own.

Since the turn of the century there have been several marked changes in the fashion silhouette which have been considered ideal. The mood of the '80's and '90's regarding the position and behavior of the well bred young lady lingered beyond the turn of the century in the United States. Women were placed on a pedestal. The Victorian ideal of the sheltered lady was generally accepted in the early twentieth century as representative of the most enviable status a woman could have.[2] This situation existed despite the growing revolt of certain strong minded women for feminine equality.

The twentieth century ushered in pomp and circumstance. There was a great deal of new wealth and those possessing it were quite candid about advertising the fact. The Edwardian Period, 1900-08, is characterized by the Gibson Girl, a fully matured figure.[3] She wore a straight front corset which completely merged the shape of the breasts into a sculptured sloping front, which was veiled by hanging draperies or by the cut of the garment. The skirts fitted

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[1] Eddy & Wiley, op. cit., p. 150.

[2] Rogers, Women Are Here To Stay, op. cit., p. 36.

[3] Cunnington, English Women's Clothing in the Present Century, op. cit., p. 28.

snugly over the hips by use of pleats and tucks, and flared slightly at the hem to a bell shape. The entire spirit of the Edwardian design was . . ."to combine suggestion with concealment."[1] The natural result was that the mature, rather than the youthful figure, was favored as the ideal for fashionable women.

1909-14 was the period of the hobble skirt. Emphasis was placed on the vertical line. These costumes were strikingly non-sensual and were better for younger girls. This was a time when the battle for women's suffrage became more acute and there was the threat of impending war. The silhouette became slimmer and straighter and the skirts cleared the ground. Hints of youth that began at this time were even more prevalent during the years 1915-18. The schoolboy figure began to emerge.[2] The postwar period proved to be the culmination of the emphasis on youth in fashion.

With the loss of males due to the war fatalities, the numerical balance of the sexes was upset. A movement away from the old sexual inhibitions began. Since abnormal psychological conditions will often find expression in characteristic fashions, the postwar women glorified the boyish ideal. The men who did return from the service found poor economic conditions; many didn't care to settle down to routine life. They sought and found appeal in the nonmaternal, school-boyish girl. The 1920 fashion ideal ". . . such

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Ibid., p. 118.

enchanting sexless, bosomless, hipless, thighless creatures."[1]

The fashionable aim of 1918-28 was to reduce a woman's chest to the flatness of a man's.[2] Elastic bodices were introduced to prevent the least hint of undulation. The essential quality of the fashions all through the twenties was this expression of undeveloped youth. It gradually changed from a "neutral" sex verging on the male adolescent, towards the female adolescent, and finally emerging by 1929-30 into feminine womanhood.[3]

These changes in fashion--the boyish form, the short skirts, the lowered waistlines, and the obvious use of cosmetics--were very concrete signs of a change in the American feminine ideal. Perhaps too, it was a change in men's idea of what was the feminine ideal. The flapper of the twenties wanted to allure man, but her ideal was not based on maturity, wisdom, or grace. She sought slenderness, flat breasts and hips, little-girl short skirts, and long waists. All of these indicate a worship of unripened youth. She aimed at being the casual companion of man and his irresponsible playmate, not the mature, developed hourglass type. The youth pattern was one of sex rather than love. Her statement to man was, in effect,

> You are tired and disillusioned, you do not want the cares of a family or the companionship of mature wisdom, you

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[1] Ibid., p. 153.

[2] Moore, op. cit., p. 23.

[3] Cunnington, English Women's Clothing in the Present Century, op. cit., p. 148.

> want exciting play, you want the thrills of sex without their fruition, and I will give them to you.[1]

In essence this figure was the fashion ideal of the decade of the nineteen-twenties. It was one that sacrificed the femininity of the womanly figure for the vertical lines of immaturity. Exaggeration and extremes were the keynotes that appeared throughout the period in all types of clothing. It was an ideal that was easy to attain only for the very thin figure. It was a period of prosperity and carefree abandon, and the fashions followed this path closely.

Who Was the Flapper?

The period of World War I and the following postwar decade was a time of social and moral revolution in the United States. There were changes in the attitudes of the people and in their actions. Most notable was the change in the American woman. She had gained freedom and equality; she could be on her own and liked it, and what is more, she showed it both in her dress and in her activities. These evidences of her so-called emancipation may be regarded as something of a triumphant gesture of freedom, for she now had self-confidence and had gained the admiration of many. Out of this change has evolved a figure of the American woman at this time and this figure has become a stereotype, meaning a rigid type arrived at by mental association of generalizations relating to experiences.[2] The stereotype involves

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[1] Allen, op. cit., p. 76.

[2] Bogardus, op. cit., p. 28.

the tendency to apply the impressions that one has of the group to every member of that group.[1]

As stated in the Introduction, the flapper was one of three new types of women that appeared on the American scene during the twenties. She represented the quest for pleasure. Despite the numerous references made to her, there does not seem to be any clear-cut explanation of what or who she was. The flapper as she has survived the years had become the emblem of a certain mode of dress and certain actions. She was rarely praised but remained the center of attention during her time. "The genus flapper was deplored, analyzed, and eventually condemned."[2] Yet on the same page of the same book, Margaret Story states ". . . she left her legacy of freedom which made rapid strides toward physical comfort and therefore toward health, simplicity which logically followed, and toward frankness." So the flapper was not all evil but it is was because of the radicalness of her actions that she has been remembered in a dim light.

The revolution in morals and manners may be illustrated by this description.[3]

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[1]E. S. Bogardus, "The Groupistic Error," Sociology and Social Research, Vol. 33 (January-February, 1949), pp. 218-24.

[2]Margaret Story, Individuality and Clothes (New York: Funk & Wagnalls Co., 1930), p. 38.

[3]Jensen, op. cit., p. 157.

Mother in 1900:	laws must be obeyed Hell is a reality woman was the guardian of morality who must maintain purity and innocence until marriage little knowledge of sex
Daughter in 1920:	smoking drinking bootleg liquor liked wild music and dance went joyriding with boys in autos

The new girl wanted "to be the life of the party indoors or in the open roadster. She was a flapper now and raring to go."[1] The John Held, Jr. cartoons that appeared in College Humor and Life did much to establish types and make "flapper" and "Joe College" a part of the language. See Plate A-0 for a typical Held flapper.

In The Crack-Up Fitzgerald said:

> . . . this was the generation whose girls dramatized themselves as flappers, the generation that corrupted its elders and eventually overreached itself less through lack of morals than lack of taste.

It is extremely difficult to establish a particular age range for the flapper. In most references, no age is even mentioned while a few tend to be most specific. However, it would seem that few authors limit the flapper to a particular age range. It is a ". . . general belief that the flapper is necessarily a very young person and that Flapperism is a new disease . . . . The fact is that Flapperism is confined to no particular age. . . it is the result of an attitude toward life . . . the young took it, made it their own, and ran it into

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[1] Sann, op. cit., p. 19.

PLATE A-0[1]

[1]Rogers, I Remember Distinctly, op. cit., p. 53. An illustration by John Held, Jr., taken from the cover of Life, Vol. 87, No. 2259 (February 18, 1926).

the ground."[1] Tilden goes on to say that the result of this attitude toward life was "young folks in bobbed hair, knee skirts, and other outbursts of Flapperism, including a general demeanor best summed as bad manners." In his article he describes at great length the "Flapperdame" and the "Flapperooster," making reference to both the male and female "flapper" of the time period. His descriptions are highly exaggerated versions of the flapper as she usually was written about, yet it is not hard to conceive that this figure did have its counterpart in reality. It always seems that some individuals will carry an idea to absurd lengths to be in vogue.

Tilden was not alone in his commentary about the older flappers. It was said by Annie Burnett-Smith in her account of the American woman:[2]

> It worried me, an old fashioned person, to see so many lovely and piquant faces so unnecessarily made-up.
>
> Grandmamma, disporting herself in abbreviated skirts and high-legged, coloured footwear, plus the inevitable make-up, did not always appear to me an edifying spectacle.

A very excellent description of the flapper was written by O. O. McIntyre[3] for College Humor. In this article, he speaks of the

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[1] Freeman Tilden, "Flapperdames and Flapperoosters," Ladies Home Journal, Vol. 40, No. 5 (May, 1923), p. 16.

[2] Annie Burnett-Smith, As Others See Her (New York: Houghton-Mifflin Co., 1919), p. 24.

[3] O. O. McIntyre, "Are Collegiate Flappers a Flop?", The College Years, A. C. Spectorsky, ed. (New York: Hawthorne Books, Inc., 1958), pp. 471-74.

flapper as being the typical coed of the twenties, complete with all the mannerisms and beliefs that pervaded the atmosphere of the twenties. Rather than describe these, it might be well to see some actual statements made by that author to better capture the spirit of the times about which he was writing. In speaking about Joe Doakes' daughter, Mary, coming home from four years at a finishing school, she is "snapping a Dunhill lighter, inhaling a cigarette to the ankles, and slithering a new Black Bottom step that is nothing less than a panic."

> She can gulp six jolts of gin and thread a needle to sew up a runner. Warbles of faithless lovers and downhearted frails and seems about as helpful to her folks as a carbunkle. In a few words, she knows her onions and is a red hot sketch.
>
> What a laugh for these tumultuous times when girls romp home, give papa and mamma a pecking kiss, hop into the roadster to flush out a reliable bootlegger, bring home the makings . . . .
>
> We try to frown on all their unconventional gestures. We call them--ha-ha--the "new degeneration." We laugh at their knickers. We are incensed at their cigarette smoking. Pulpiteers from their smug rostrums thunder their doom. But the world spins on.
>
> We don't understand them and frankly they don't give a hang. They offer no alibi. They are themselves.

These few statements can, more than pages of descriptive prose, illustrate what the flapper was in her day. She was new and she was different, and fortunately or unfortunately, she was the ideal of many.

The Flapper Stereotype in Terms of Dress

While the actions of the flapper have been the subject of consideration, attention must be given to her appearance. It is most often in terms of clothing that the flapper is described and presented to the reader. The assumption is made that because her clothing was so radically different from fashions of years past, so too, must her behavior be radical. In many instances, the young did their utmost to live up to this assumption. There were cases where this was true, but it should be kept in mind that not all young people of this period were taken up with these new ideas. It was because of the "newness" itself that those who did follow the trends were the object of discussion.

Lloyd Morris in Incredible New York spoke of the flapper as being "jaunty and feather footed in unfastened galoshes, flesh colored stockings rolled to below the knee and the skirt barely touching it." In the same area he includes the older woman and says that ". . . the Fifth Avenue women didn't suggest motherhood or matrimony. Peroxided or hennaed, shingled hair, plucked and penciled eyebrows, eyelids beaded, cheeks and lips piquantly rouged. Except for furs, clothes would have fit in a handbag." ". . . the flapper came in to the tune of 'I'll say she does'--and frequently she did. . . ."[1]

The use of make-up was daring and often as not, gave the wearer a feeling of being a little "frolicsome, not to say wanton. . . ."[2]

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[1]Sann, op. cit., p. 43. Selected passages taken from Incredible New York by Lloyd Morris.

[2]Dingwall, op. cit., p. 161.

The twenties was marked by growing attention to facial make-up. The face mask with its plucked brows and unnaturally colored lips resulted in a staring, expressionless Egyptian-like face.[1]

Another of the apt and humorous descriptions of the flapper was given by Oliver Jensen:

> The flapper of 1927 or thereabouts, wore her skirts at an all time high, a little above the knee, but revealed no other charms. Her cloche hat had the texture and allure of a ruptured tennis ball. Her breasts were flat and her waist almost met her hem. She leaned backward as the Gibson Girl bent forward. But she was able to breathe.[2]

The use of the flattening brassière was an important facet of the dress of the flapper. Since the styles demanded the slim and boyish look, these garments were designed to conceal the natural curves of the body. While the use of undergarments was lessening, this article (the brassière) was of extreme importance, especially to those more generously endowed. Doris Moore spoke of it as ". . . that vogue which so impressed the imagination that it will probably eclipse all others in the sartorial history of our times, though it lasted four or five years at most."[3]

The appearance of the flapper was not confined to the twenties. As early as June, 1913, a new mode was announced by a

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[1] Cunnington, English Women's Clothing in the Present Century, op. cit., p. 182.

[2] Jensen, op. cit., p. 141.

[3] Moore, op. cit., p. 23.

Danish fashion magazine as "The Revolution in Fashion: the New Botticelli Figure."[1] This involved the body being carried with the abdomen protruding slightly. It would seem logical to view this as a forerunner of the debutante slouch previously described, which was the characteristic stance of the flapper.

According to Frederick Lewis Allen in Only Yesterday, the flappers wore "this dress, short-sleeved and occasionally (in the evening) sleevelsss; some of the wilder young things rolled their stockings below their knees, revealing to the shocked eyes of virtue a fleeting glance of shin-bones and knee-cap; . . . ."

The image that may be drawn from these quotes and references, is the figure that is the stereotype of the flapper. She was the epitome of the desire for youthfulness. She had short, cropped hair and wore the cloche. Her face was painted with cosmetics and she wore extravagant jewelry. Her body was slim and flat and it was emphasized by the formless lines of her clothing. Waistlines were low and hemlines were high. The knee-rolled stockings were her pet and the shoes had heels. It matters not that the daytime dresses may have been more simplified in fabric and trimming, for the image essentially remains the same regardless of the time of day. The movies contributed to the stereotype with its portrayal of "flaming youth." The use of beaded dresses and spangles only emphasized the

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[1]Henny Harald Hansen, Costumes and Styles (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1956), p. 152.

fashion trends. The flapper remained the flapper. "If you had veiled the faces of the feminine population in 1923 and 1924, you would have had to resort to birthmarks and knock-knees for identification."[1]

> Thus the flapper of the 1920's stepped onto the stage of history, breezy, slangy and informal in manner; slim and boyish in form; covered with silk and fur that clung to her as close as onion skin; with carmined cheeks and lips, plucked eyebrows and close-fitting helmet of hair; gay, plucky and confident.[2]

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[1] Frances Anne Allen, "Fig Leaves," The American Mercury, Vol. XIII, No. 49 (January, 1928), p. 62.

[2] Preston William Slosson, A History of American Life, Vol. XII: The Great Crusade and After, 1914-1928 (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1930), p. 158.

CHAPTER V

WOMEN'S FASHIONS PRECEDING 1920

Since fashion makes its appeal to a wide range of desires and appetites, it is not solely dependent upon the art quality of the design for its success. This situation exists, although the design quality itself and the common habit of thinking we want it, is, a desirable adjuct to life. Fashion allies itself to the changing mind states of man. It keeps in view not only his elemental physical appetites, aesthetic and intellectual desires, and his spiritual longings, but also his weaknesses.[1] In order to understand and appreciate the art of the past, one must see it in relation to the composite lives of the people of that day. A true appreciation is gained, if there is an attempt to understand the influences behind such movements.

As noted previously at the turn of the century the ideal silhouette was suited to the mature form. The fashionable woman had an hourglass figure--upright shoulders, long sloping bust, small waist, and large hips. This shape was attained by the use of straight-front corsets,[2] which molded the figure to the desired form. Women were, in a sense encased in tight complicated clothing involving fitted

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[1] Dingwall, op. cit., p. 326.

[2] Portia Yvonne Trentholm, "Women's Undergarments in the Twentieth Century" (unpublished Master's thesis, College of Home Economics, Michigan State College, 1953), p. 28.

bodices, wrist length sleeves, and floor length skirts. The costumes of these years are classified as being in the Edwardian period, designating the reign of Edward VII, 1901-1911. Some of the best illustrations of these can be seen in the drawings of Charles Dana Gibson, whose "Gibson Girl" became recognized as the ideal and typical American beauty.

In the early 1900's fashion began to follow many directions.[1] There were varieties of sleeves, various bell-shaped skirts and a number of millinery designs. Shoulder breadth was emphasized by square yokes and berthas. The guimpe, a yoke often of lace, was indispensable.[2] In the early years, the "morning-glory" skirt, which fit at the hips and was full at the floor length hemline, was popular. The hair, which was worn long, was piled in a high pompadour over rolls (rats). Hats were large and trimmed with plumes, flowers, or birds.

By about 1905 changes in fashion were apparent. The silhouette began to slim and become more narrow. The Edwardian figure was becoming a modified tube. Corsets were lengthened, the bustline was raised and became more defined, and the hips were slenderized. In 1905, following the success of the Japanese in the Russo-Japanese War kimono sleeves were introduced.[3]

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[1]Paul Henry Nystrom, Economics of Fashion (New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1928), p. 298.

[2]Katherine Morris Lester, Historic Costume (Peoria, Illinois: Charles A. Bennett Co., Inc., 1942), p. 215.

[3]Nystrom, op. cit., p. 299.

The year 1908 marks the emergence of several trends that contributed to the cycles that followed. The high collar which had been prevalent all during the Edwardian Period began to give way to a lower and more open neckline. The "rainy daisy" walking skirt appeared and it must be noted that this skirt was two inches above the ground.[1] The trend to slimmer skirts was a factor in the reduction of the number and weight of the petticoats worn.

In 1909, a definite change took place; skirts became extremely narrow and the waistline climbed upward.[2] This trend bore a striking resemblance to the Empire style and was fostered by certain designers including Poiret.[3] The silhouette now was tubular with the emphasis on vertical lines which made the fashion more suitable for the younger figure.

The year 1910 marks the emancipation of American women from several aspects of dress which contributed to discomfort:[4] skirts cleared the floor and were as high as two inches above it; ankles were seen for the first time in hundreds of years; trains were completely eliminated from daytime dresses; and lastly, tight corsets gave way to a softer foundation which revealed a semblance of the

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[1] Jensen, op. cit., p. 137.

[2] Eudora Sellner, American Costumes (Worcester, Mass.: The School Arts Magazine, 1925).

[3] Moore, op. cit., p. 161.

[4] Rollin Weber Van Horn, Dress Throughout the Ages Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Van Horn & Son, Inc.).

normal feminine figure. It was in this year that flexible boning became popular; the first all elastic step-in was made as well as a ventilated corset.[1]

1910 was a year which established the straightened silhouette which utilized vertical lines rather than form-fitting curves. The trend was quite new as previous fashions had emphasized the rounded mature figure. This costume, as evolved from Edwardian dress, had long, slender, almost curveless lines. The verticality and the revival of the raised Empire waistline gave the costume a diagram of "H."[2] There was a significant approach to masculinity and clean-cutness, in that costumes became more tailored and showed simplicity. The two-piece mannish suit was accepted. The emphasis was on an upright line and there was an absence of "curves and superfluous fripperies."[3] These costumes were alert, serious, youthful, and gave the wearer an air of competence. In general, trimmings were fewer. Colors were very light, examples being cream, pearl, grey, and champagne.[4]

Efforts to soften the vertical line were made by the use of long tunics over slim skirts,[5] but it is significant that these were

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[1]Trentholm, op. cit., p. 28.

[2]C. Willett Cunnington, The Perfect Lady (New York: Chanticleer Press, Inc., 1948), p. 70.

[3]Ibid.

[4]Moore, loc. cit.

[5]Burris-Meyer, op. cit., p. 167.

mainly angular in effect. The use of curves was relegated more and more to evening dress which cultivated sex appeal more than daytime dresses.[1] It was during the prewar years (1910-1914) that fashions began to be more functional. Designs were presented and featured with specific purposes and occasions in mind. The result was the emergence of the "daytime" dress and the "evening" dress.[2] Use became the basis of the assortment of dresses--daytime, dressy, sports, evening, house dresses, wedding gowns, and others. Frequently the color, fabric, or decoration would determine the use of the dress rather than the basic design, for example, a dress of fuscia crepe would be dressier than the same garment in black.[3]

The trend toward the vertical line was most apparent in the silhouette of the skirt. The taste for slimness is shown by the four skirt styles that were available. The harem skirt was softly draped and usually gathered under at the bottom to a narrow lining.[4] This imitated the Turkish trousers. The trouser skirt was a tailored design. It was open at the side front and had matching bloomers and pantalets attached at the waistline.[5]

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[1] Cunnington, The Perfect Lady, op. cit., p. 70.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Chambers, op. cit., p. 226.

[4] Picken, op. cit., p. 307.

[5] Ibid., p. 308.

The most extreme of the slim skirts that appeared was the hobble skirt. The sides were not vertical but sloped inward toward the hem, being narrower at the hemline than at the knee.[1] Often a band was placed around the skirt hem to increase the tightness.[2] The skirt derived its name by this ankle snugness, resulting in difficulty in walking which "resembled a sack race."[3]

A variation of the hobble design was the peg-top skirt, which had deep pleats from the waist to the hips and tapered almost to a hobble silhouette.[4]

The hobble skirt made walking so difficult that several suggestions were offered by designers as possible solutions to the problem.[5] They were the bell silhouette; the divided skirt, Turkish or harem trousers; the slit hobble skirt (a hobble skirt with the seams open from the hem to the knee, under which was worn bright colored petticoats); and a skirt shortened enough to provide walking ease. The result was that the bell silhouette was rejected. The divided skirt or harem trousers were promoted but gained only short lived acceptance. The slit hobble skirt was favored for a trend lasting approximately two to three years. The shortened skirt proved

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[1]Ibid., p. 307.

[2]Cunnington, English Women's Clothing in the Present Century, op. cit., p. 96.

[3]Cunnington, The Perfect Lady, op. cit., p. 71.

[4]Picken, op. cit., p. 307.

[5]Nystrom, op. cit., p. 299.

to be the most popular choice for it was a style that was accepted and its popularity was accelerated throughout the period of World War I and the years afterward.[1]

It is these features of design, silhouette and skirt length, that provided the major features in fashion change during the next decades of fashion.

During 1912 the slim silhouette was maintained, waistlines defined, and dresses were worn almost excessively tight.[2] This necessitated a reduction in the amount and weight of underclothing worn. The "x-ray" or transparent dress came into vogue at this time, along with a revival of the robe de style, which was worn without crinolines.[3] 1912 marked the appearance of contrasting skirts and jackets along with the "Peter Thompson" suits and dresses, which consisted of a middy blouse effect and a pleated skirt.[4]

Two important changes in details were that dress collars were worn at the base of the throat, rather than high on the neck,[5] and the sleeve in daytime dresses was shortened from the wrist to the elbow. Often the sleeves had turn back cuffs and vertical buttons as trim.[6] This is significant for it involves the baring of parts of

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[1] Nystrom, op. cit., p. 299.

[2] Cunnington, English Women's Clothing in the Present Century, op. cit., p. 107.

[3] Nystrom, op. cit., p. 303.

[4] Burris-Meyer, op. cit., p. 167.

[5] Bradley, op. cit., p. 345.

[6] Burris-Meyer, op. cit., p. 167.

the anatomy which heretofore had been discreetly covered.

Skirts remained important. Hip interest was stimulated by the peg-top skirt which remained in fashion until 1914.[1] New details appeared in skirts which were now often tiered or draped to provide an interesting variation from the slim hobble effect.[2]

Moderate transition in fashion was the keynote of 1913. Necklines began to be sharply outlined as square or round, instead of the usual softly draped effect. It marks a slight decline in the extreme degrees of the hobble and the slit skirt.[3] Skirts themselves began to be slightly fuller. In evening wear, the sophisticated look with the Numudian aigrette and the fishtail train was desirable.

Influences of World War I on Fashion

World War I was a major influence on the fashions of 1914 and following years. The war itself created a material and labor shortage. The strict economy in materials was apparent in the "dignity and simplicity of style"[4] during the war years, 1914-1918. Lines became simple, colors subdued, and costume more practical. The practicality was enforced by the emergence of women into the more active life of business and labor. The importance of ready-to-

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Cunnington, English Women's Clothing in the Present Century, op. cit., p. 112.

[4] Bradley, op. cit., p. 362.

wear increased as women spent less time in the home. Fit in ready-to-wear was loose in expectation of a wide range of figure types and sizes.[1] The labor shortage made it impractical to wear clothes that required special care, thus the simplification of costume.

American designers became more important to the American fashion scene due to the war.[2] There was a larger degree of originality in designs resulting from the difficulty in obtaining Parisian models. Greater developments in the textile industry were due to the lack of imports of French and English fabrics. The war cut off the supply of German dyes, almost forcing the American companies to develop their own methods of production.[3]

General Silhouette Trends

At the onset of World War I there was confusion in the fashion picture due to the introduction of several fashions which became popular during the war years. However these fashions are important for they hint at the major changes that were predominant during the nineteen-twenties. The four introductions and their innovators were:

1. Cheruit: showing a long waisted model with a girdle at the hipline; it was a sheer black net trimmed with beads, later called the chemise dress.

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[1] Trentholm, op. cit., p. 62.

[2] Crawford, One World of Fashion, op. cit., Plate 69.

[3] Ibid.

2. Poiret: featuring a straight, hip-length overblouse (tunic style) with a bateau neckline and a narrow short skirt.

3. Chanel: beginning the use of wool jersey for tailored sport suits.

4. Paquin: introducing the barrel silhouette and the use of long sleeves on formal dresses.[1]

All four were French designers who had influence due to the establishment of the French Haute Couture.[2]

These fashions were accepted by degrees. The "barrel silhouette" was favored at the beginning of the war period as was the lampshade silhouette of Paul Poiret. The use of the slit skirts continued through 1915. The ladies felt quite "naughty." "The really naughty ones slit it to the knee."[3]

The Debutante Slouch

The important and prophetic fashion of 1914 was the chemise which was revived by Chanel in the twenties.[4] It involved the noted fashion change--no defined waistline--meaning not fitted. Garments gave the appearance of loose fit but the inner structure of the article had a fitted underlining which clung to the shape of the body. The silhouette was tubular and was further slenderized by omitting petticoats and bloomers. 1914 marked the beginning of

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[1]Burris-Meyer, op. cit., p. 167.

[2]Ibid., p. 57.

[3]Allen, "Fig Leaves," op. cit., pp. 59-66.

[4]Burris-Meyer, op. cit., p. 58.

the uncorseted figure and the appearance of the debutante slouch.[1] While the actual design of the costume at the early part of the war period (1914) changed only moderately, the debutante slouch or "boneless pose" created a totally different type of silhouette.

> Protruding stomachs were perhaps a purely natural physical reaction, for corsets had now come to be very negligible affairs as far as giving much support to the figure. The bodies, having been practically molded into a form by "lacing" now released from their confining braces lacked the muscular tone to maintain a good posture.[2]

The Role of Beauty

1914 marks the beginning of certain trends which continued throughout the twenties and extend even to the present time. Among them was the use of cosmetics by "respectable" women. This word "respectable" is the key, for heretofore the use of cosmetics had been limited to the "hussy," those in the theatre, or those at a sufficiently high level of society to risk middle class social disapproval. Although at first not widely accepted, women gradually began to follow the fad and ignore the original social implications. Cosmetics went through the stages of being rejected, partially accepted, utilized to absurd extremes, and finally reached a level of partial moderation.

With this beauty interest, the beauty parlor came into vogue and became almost a necessity for it provided "expert" advice

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Brockway, op. cit., p. 114.

and services for those women who could not or did not care to beautify themselves. The trend toward a more tubular and youthful silhouette gave rise to dieting and figure consciousness. The houses of beauty also contributed their part in this aspect of the beautification of the American woman.

General Fashion Scene

It was in 1914 that bobbed hair first appeared on the fashion scene,[1] although it was not generally accepted. This however, permitted hats to become more fitted. The cloche appeared and was worn low on the head. Popular necklines were bateau style or in a low "V." Sleeves generally were long and set-in. The extreme narrow skirt was not popular, and the length was shorter.[2] The slit skirt and the peg-top remained in vogue; often a pannier effect was utilized on the skirt.

With the shortening of skirts, more attention was given to the feet, and shoe fashions became important. Low shoes were introduced for street wear and there was a wide variety of heels. Hosiery also became a fashion item. In general, hosiery featured all extremes, from severe neutral colors and plain knits to colored hose with inserts, block prints, weave effects, and even garter insertions.[3] Stockings presented a new feature for the American woman.

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[1]Burris-Meyer, op. cit., p. 58.

[2]Moore, op. cit., p. 170.

[3]Bradley, op. cit., p. 365.

Jewelry received new emphasis with the acceptance of costume jewelry. Until the period of World War I, it had been considered bad taste to wear anything but precious stones set in gold, platinum, or silver.[1] However as jewelry became more popular, imitation metals and stones came into fashionable demand. They included dangling beads, earrings, and pendants. Buttons, buckles, and clips were also in vogue.

1915 marks the beginning of the era in which the "schoolboy figure"[2] emerged. The fashions of this and following years favored youth, and there was a relaxation of the conventional restraints both in the world of fashion and in the actions of daily life. During the decade, 1915-1925, the designs of two French couturiers made a tremendous impact on the whims of fashion. When Chanel introduced a cashmere jersey dress, which was simple in line and easy to care for, it met with immediate success.[3] The chemise dress, as it was called, consisted of a straight slip with an overblouse, and had long tight sleeves. In America it was so popular that it almost became a uniform. The girdle was almost entirely discarded. Dresses were worn shorter than they had ever

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[1] Chambers, op. cit., p. 391.

[2] Cunnington, English Women's Clothing in the Present Century, op. cit., p. 118.

[3] Chambers, op. cit., p. 111.

been before, in many cases the hem being eight inches above the ground.[1] In addition, they had lowered waistlines. It should be noted here that skirts for daytime wear have never since reached the floor.

Another French designer, Vionnet, also had an impact on the clothing market. She showed a tubular crepe de chine dress, revolutionary for it was a bias cut slip-on design, that was unlined and had no buttons or fastenings. During this decade, Lanvin continued showing the robe de style, which had a fitted bodice and a full skirt.

The chemise dress was definitely recognized and became practically a universal fashion.[2] The original style was maintained--a slip-on, hanging straight from the neck, having no fastenings, and having a low waistline. If worn at all, girdles were simple and soft, replacing the firm boned corsets. Silk underwear was replacing the usual cotton, linen, and batiste, popular from the turn of the century.[3] This change was almost necessitated by the chemise, as heavier underclothing would result in unwanted bulges. Since the straight boyish figure was in vogue, the costume slip took on straight, slenderizing lines.[4]

In general, the waistline was defined, though not fitted, to the figure. It was placed just below the normal waist position.

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[1] Allen, "Fig Leaves," op. cit., pp. 59-66.

[2] Burris-Meyer, op. cit., p. 167

[3] Ibid.

[4] Elliot, op. cit., p. 55.

Dresses had ample waist fullness. A flared skirt appeared and continued in vogue. Many had flounces suggesting the nineteenth century crinoline period of whalebones and pannier draping.[1] This flared skirt brought with it the flared petticoat.[2] Robe de style revivals continued as well as interest in shirtwaist and skirt ensembles.[3] Daytime dresses were simple in design and were ankle length.

The year 1917 is one of major importance in American history for it marks the entrance of the United States into World War I. The eve of this entrance found the American woman with a completely new look. There was a decided change in costume after this point. The war found many women serving the government and thus wearing a regulation uniform. In civilian dress, the tunic or one piece dress, the chemise dress, and the apron and handkerchief tunic were popular.[4] Scarcities of materials due to the war necessitated extreme scantiness in dress; often three yards of fabric was used for an entire garment. Simplicity of design was also an important feature.[5] Black was a predominant color, both for mourning the war dead and because it was easy to clean.[6]

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[1] Bradley, op. cit., p. 364.

[2] Elliot, op. cit., p. 89.

[3] Burris-Meyer, op. cit., p. 167.

[4] Ibid., p. 364.

[5] Ibid., p. 168.

[6] Ibid.

There was a distinct drop-off from the full skirt of the past two years, although novelty effects were achieved with modified fullness.[1] In general, the slim silhouette returned and skirts began an upward climb.[2] Belts were dropped lower on the hip, elongating the figure. Afternoon dresses often appeared sleeveless.[3]

The silhouette continued to be tubular and dresses were simple in line. Novelty fashions showed areas of fullness most often in the skirts. Two factors contributed to the slim look. Shortage of fabric due to wartime restrictions limited the yardage utilized. This resulted in straight lines in dresses. Another point was the use of heavy beading on frocks which tended to slim the silhouette as well as lower the waistline by the sheer weight of the beading.[4] Cascades of black beads were popular for decoration. Fabrics often were marquisette or embroidered net with steel beads. Other trim included braid and pleating.

Dresses tended to be loose in fit which gave the wearer freedom of movement and a youthful appearance. A healthy appearance was important.[5] Collars were soft and often ruffled. Sleeves were

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[1] Sellner, op. cit.

[2] Allen, "Fig Leaves," op. cit., pp. 59-66.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Burris-Meyer, loc. cit.

[5] Bradley, op. cit., p. 364.

either short or long, and both were snug fitting. However, "short" sleeves meant a three-quarter sleeve or one reaching just to the elbow as contrasted to one that reached the wrist. Waistlines were defined by belts but were not fitted to the body. Hemlines were often uneven, and draperies and hanging panels were seen.[1] Suits were also popular for economy, ease of care, and comfort.

Fur became popular both for indoor and outdoor wear. The shortage of coal and therefore the cooler temperatures inside of homes, brought about the demand for short fur jackets for home wear. Along with this, cocktail jackets came into popular demand. Coats with high collars were often luxuriously trimmed with fur.

During 1917 and 1918 short hair was seen but coiffures were suited to the individual and several styles were popular. Hair was worn low on the forehead with curls around the face and a roll or psyche knot at the back of the head. The boyish bob or the shingle was also worn and its popularity was increased by the availability of the Marcel Wave which enabled anyone to have wavy tresses.

In accessories, all forms of jewelry were popular. Costume jewelry was now fully acceptable and had three main elements that contributed to its popularity; it was available to everyone, had a low purchase price, and was generally of good design. Vanity cases,

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[1] Burris-Meyer, op. cit., p. 168.

[2] Bradley, op. cit., p. 168.

lipstick cases, cigarette cases, and cigarette holders were also in widespread use.[1]

In fashion 1919 is an important year for it marks the beginning of the period (1919-1929) in which youthfulness permeated the entire fashion scene. This was the most pronounced feature of this time span. The abnormal psychological conditions of the period following the war were expressed by the fashions of the time. The boyish ideal was glorified; the object was to attain the nonmaternal look. Breasts were flattened by compressors; the waist and buttocks were flattened into a cylinder; hair was cut to almost masculine proportions; and the limbs were exposed. The aim was to suggest immaturity and the most conspicuous feature was the eventual exposure of the leg from the knee down.[2]

The keynote of daytime dress in 1919 was simplicity in line while formal and evening wear maintained its gaiety and frivolity. Embroidery on dresses also came into popularity. The slim, youthful look was increased by use of the shorter skirt, vertical lines, modified peg-top skirts, one piece frocks, and dresses with a semi-fit.[3] Skirts were slim, draped, slit, and even accordian pleated. In

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[1] Burris-Meyer, op. cit., p. 284.

[2] Cunnington, English Women's Clothing in the Present Century, op. cit., pp. 146-147.

[3] Ibid., p. 150.

most cases they were eight inches from the floor.[1] Summery furs made their appearance, white fox being the most popular, both as a wrap and as a trim on another garment.[2]

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[1] Bradley, op. cit., p. 364.

[2] Burris-Meyer, op. cit., p. 285.

CHAPTER VI

COMPARATIVE FASHION STUDY
1920-1929

The following section constitutes a survey of major fashions as they appeared in two selected publications. The publications utilized were the Sears, Roebuck and Company catalogs and issues of Harper's Bazaar fashion magazine. The fashion trends as they appeared in these publications will be reviewed for the years 1920 and 1921; 1924 to 1926; and 1928 and 1929. In this way, the beginning, the middle, and the end of the decade of the twenties can be surveyed in relation to the fashions. The differences in the presentations of the two selected vehicles for fashion copy will be evident in the text and in the photostated illustrations from both. Throughout the study, the code letter "A" will denote illustrations from Sears Roebuck, and the code letter "B," those from Harper's Bazaar. Each will be numbered consecutively, beginning with "1."

1920 and 1921

Sears, Roebuck Catalogs

The general silhouette in the Sears catalogs during 1920 and 1921 featured a vertical line and dresses definitely were not fitted to the body. Early in 1920 collars were seen on nearly all the fashions illustrated, while later in the year there were fewer seen. In 1921,

they appeared with greater frequency and were more interesting to the eye. In 1920, collars were either square or round and laid flat to the dress front. Interest was obtained by the trim utilized. In 1921, while the shapes were the same, interest was by means of draped surplices, tuxedo revers, and contrasting insets. Many collars were very low on the bustline and required dickey insets for modesty.

The main characteristic of the bustline during these two years was that it was not defined or fitted to the body. The bodices of the dresses very often had bloused fronts which further de-emphasized the bust. It wasn't until late 1921 that it became evident that the drooping fullness of the bodice was being decreased although there still was no emphasis placed on this area. During both of these years, all dresses were lined and it was the linings that were fitted to the body, while the outer dress remained loose in fit.

A variety of sleeves were seen. Throughout the period, three-quarter sleeves and wrist length sleeves were predominant. If a sleeve were referred to as being "short," it extended to just above the elbow. Early in 1920, they were both fitted and loose; often they had a flounce and/or a frill at the cuff edge. There were both set-in and dolman styles. This trend continued throughout 1920, but in the latter part of the year, the use of flounces was diminishing and buttons and slits were the only trim. In 1921, the "fashionable" sleeve was the three-quarter sleeve. Lace, beads,

PLATE A-1

1920

Fashion's Newest Ideas

31D5525—Navy blue.
31D5526—Silver gray.
31D5527—Black.
EACH **$29.95**

THE STYLE OF THIS WOMEN'S DRESS of all silk TAFFETA is very attractive and follows the trend of late fashion ideas. Waist in draped bodice style, forming plaited girdle in back, has round neck piped with contrasting color silk messaline. The three-quarter length sleeves have fancy stitched cuffs. A dressy touch is added by the bouquet of silk and velvet pansies at left side. The skirt shows novel style in the graceful draped tunic, piped with contrasting color silk messaline at right side, and has stitched cuff at bottom trimmed with points of taffeta. Waist is lined with batiste and foundation skirt is of mull. Fastens at left side and has skirt SWEEP of about 55 inches. Women's sizes, 32 to 44 inches bust measure. **Give measurements.** Average shipping weight, 1¾ pounds.

31D5530—Navy blue.
31D5531—Black.
31D5532—Dark brown.
EACH **$22.50**

THIS WOMEN'S DRESS OF ALL WOOL SERGE features the plaited skirt so much in vogue this season. The roll collar ending in revers on waist front is bound with braid, and the white tricolette vestee is embroidered in contrasting colors. Full length button trimmed sleeves are slashed at wrist, and the girdle has bow with button trimmed streamers in back. The pretty patch pockets of skirt are embroidered in contrasting color artificial silk and tinsel; also button trimmed. Waist is lined with batiste. Fastens at left side and has skirt SWEEP of about 74 inches. Women's sizes, 32 to 44 inches bust measure. **Give measurements.** Average shipping wt., 2¼ pounds.

31D5525
Silk Taffeta

31D5530
Wool Serge

PLATE A-2
1920

31D5520—Sand color.
31D5521—Navy blue.
31D5522—White.
31D5523—Black.

EACH
$56.50

THE BEAUTY OF THIS DRESS cannot be fully reproduced in a picture, but we feel sure that once you see it you will agree with us that it is the handsomest dress in our line. It is made of ALL SILK GEORGETTE CREPE, and is elaborately beaded and *hand* embroidered with artificial silk in self color throughout. Can be furnished in all white, making it appropriate for a wedding gown, and in the other colors listed above. Note the very novel arrangement of the strings of beads which hang loose. Sleeves are in the new stylish elbow length and the crushed girdle is of self material. Long tunic skirt has underskirt of Georgette crepe and dress is lined with Jap silk. Fastens at left side and has skirt SWEEP of about 55 inches. Women's sizes, 32 to 44 inches bust measure. **Give measurements. Average shipping weight, 2 pounds.**

SIZES Dresses offered on this and the opposite page can be furnished in women's sizes, 32 to 44 inches bust measure, waist measure up to and including 35 inches, and front skirt length of about 39 inches, with basted hem. **When ordering give bust, chest and waist measure.**

31D5520
Silk Georgette Crepe

and hemstitching were used as cuff trim. The set-in sleeve was most prevalent.

During both of these years the location of the waistline changed very little. It was at the normal location in nearly every instance. It was always defined by either a girdle or a narrow belt, but was never fitted to the body. In 1920, the use of the sash, especially with hanging ends or panels became very evident. In some cases, this tended to pull the waistline belt slightly down below the normal waist.

The notable point in hiplines occurred late in 1920 when the wide hipline came into popularity. The skirts were not fitted but the width was attained by means of definition by folds, pockets, trimming, or seaming. Plate A-1 illustrates this clearly. A definite change occurred in 1921 when hip interest was attained by hanging panels or tunics (see Plates A-3 and A-4).

Skirts throughout both years were slim in line. In 1920, the gathered waistline was most popular. Early in 1920, the tunic and overskirt effect was common. Also some yoke-top skirts were seen. Later in the year, the peg-top look was attained by hip drapery and folds, deep pleats, flared pockets at the hipline, and the draped tunic skirt. In 1921 there was the very obvious use of the real tunic, and often it was simulated by contrasting color bands at the skirt bottom. Skirts were both gathered and pleated.

During these two years, a variety of trimmings was used.

PLATE A-3
1921

NEWEST STYLES FASHIONABLE MATERIALS

31F5095
Velveteen
$12.98

31F5100
All Wool Tricotine
$19.95

←**31F5095**—Navy blue. EACH
31F5096—Dark brown.
31F5097—Black. **$12.98**

APPEALING IN ITS SOFT, RICH FINISH IS THIS SIMPLE LONG LINE DRESS, fashioned of VELVETEEN, effectively embroidered in glistening changeable color beads. The material, suitable for everyday or dress wear, really needs no adornment, and the modest design is just sufficient to enhance its beauty. Waist fastens at the side and has batiste lining. Average skirt sweep, 58 inches. Women's sizes, 32 to 44 inches bust measure. **Give measurements.** Average shipping weight, 2¼ pounds.

31F5100—Navy blue.
31F5101 Black. EACH **$19.95**

RESEMBLING SOMEWHAT THE COAT DRESS, this Frock of ALL WOOL TRICOTINE is beautifully ornamented with rat tail embroidery, which runs down from the waist on the circular tunic—circulars are very fashionable this season and we know you will enjoy the general effect of this one. Combination satin and tricotine covered buttons adorn the vest and smart sleeves, and the narrow belt is finished at the side with a tailored bow. Skirt has lining in back under the tunic. Dress closes at side and has batiste waist lining. Average skirt sweep, 57 inches. Women's sizes, 32 to 44 inches bust measure. **Give measurements.** Average shipping weight, 2¼ pounds.

PLATE A-4
1921

31F5140—Navy blue.
31F5141
Taupe.
31F5142
Black.
EACH
$15.75

A DRESS OF ALL SILK TAFFETA that is pleasing in its every line and detail. Handsomely embroidered net tops the bib effect of the waist and adorns the sleeves. This trimming is tastefully set off with steel colored bead nail heads. Fringe, so much in favor just now, has been selected to finish the loose side panels of the skirt. The collar and folds on the wide girdle are of contrasting color Georgette Crepe. Waist lining is of batiste and dress fastens at the side. Average skirt sweep, 60 inches. Women's sizes, 32 to 44 inches bust measure. **Give measurements.** Average shipping weight, 1¾ pounds.

They included self trim, beading (see Plate A-2), lace, embroidery, buttons, silk, flowers, braid, jet beads, cording, shirring, chain stitching, and tassels. It was late in 1921 that fringe came into greater favor as seen in Plate A-4.

Colors and fabrics were in wide variety and almost any taste could be suited by the selection that was offered to meet consumer demand in the catalogs.

Harper's Bazaar

Fashions in this publication were in the same general vein as those appearing in the Sears catalogs, but there were minor differences. The silhouette, while following the trend for slenderness, tended to have more soft fullness. This was in both the fall and spring seasons of both years. In most instances, where the two publications differed, was in the exaggeration of the fashion pictured. As stated in the section on the Sears, Roebuck fashion offerings, the hip fullness was important. As may be seen in Plates B-1 and B-2, this same motif was featured in Harper's but was more obvious. The use of the tunic in 1921 was also seen in Harper's (Plate B-3) and the over-skirt theme as well (Plate B-4).

The general silhouette had a tendency to create a soft, vague outline utilizing supple line. There was more variety in the necklines, which, while following the general pattern had much more interest in the available collars seen. As in the catalogs, the bustline

PLATE B-1
1920

VERY SMART WILL BE THE FOULARD FROCK

Foulard frocks in which one will walk abroad during spring and summer will claim, among their attractions, bodices that are simple and perhaps low of waist, and skirts that have a bit of drapery or fulness at the hips. Of softest gray Chippendale print, patterned with violet, blues and greens, the frock is apt to be, as in the sketch above at the left. Georgette faces the broad drooping straw hat, and a single plume is laid upon its brim. Upon the sleeves and skirt of the second frock there are soft-plaited flounces to make it youthful, and a high upstanding organdie collar to give it a bit of dignity. For this origination a dark blue Chippendale, printed with silver gray foliage, has been chosen; and one completes the costume with a slightly tilted flower-covered chapeau

PLATE B-2
1920

Soulié has allied insertions of tucked crêpe and lace in an unusual and entirely fascinating way in the cool white crêpe Georgette afternoon frock below. The V-shaped neck, which has taken the place of the straight line in so many of the summer dresses, the close-fitting little vest of lace and long black velvet ribbons are interesting features. The parasol and the large hat of many bows are of sheer white organdie.

The afternoon dress above at the left is truly engagingly unique! Austere black satin is relieved by white panier-like panels thrust out on each side and a scalloped collar of embroidered white crêpe de Chine. Short sleeves, hardly visible beneath the all-enveloping collar, fulfil fashion's decree in favor of the bare arm. The hat is entirely black, of tulle and satin, with a fold of the tulle hanging from the brim.

Who would not wish to have fascinating little men and animals embroidered in black upon the tissues of her afternoon frock? Especially so, since this material is very new and smart. It is well to cover it a bit, however, by the Quakerish gray crêpe de Chine, which forms the greater part of the dress above at the right. The wide hat is of black crin with a small black dipped plume at each of the four corners.

PLATE B-3 1921

TOUCHES OF FUR WILL DISTINGUISH THE GOWN OF ORGANDIE

It was bound to come—the touch of fur on sheer summer fabrics, and so Miss Steinmetz introduces mole and ermine in her frocks of organdie. At the left, white Chantilly and organdie are girdled with narrow strips of tailless ermine, which also appears on the hat. For a pale beige organdie, a broad strip of mole completes the girdle and bands the organdie hat. For her third costume Miss Steinmetz combines two shades of gray organdie, and borders the wide sleeves with ermine. The quaint poke bonnet also displays the necessary touch of fur

PLATE B-4
1921

Foulards are the most satisfactory of fabrics for spring and summer and this season's designs are delightful. For a little frock built with the long waist-line, Miss Steinmetz uses a scarlet foulard figured with Chinese blue. Sleeves and a tiny yoke of blue Paulette crêpe and a wide girdle tying in front are interesting notes. Dark blue foulard figured with green makes the girlish costume, having its quaint open collar and cuffs of white organdie. White Canton crêpe is combined with white foulard dotted with blue to make a dignified gown for afternoons.

THREE COSTUMES THAT FORETELL THE POPULARITY OF FOULARD

was not emphasized in any manner and the use of bloused bodices also appeared. Sleeves were more dramatic, having wider flares, broader cuffs, and in many instances shorter lengths. The waistlines, while falling at the normal position in most cases, also tended to rest on the upper part of the hip, indicating that a drop might be in the offing of the fashion picture (see Plate B-4).

The skirt generally followed the slim line during both years but the popularity of the hip fullness oftimes tended to hide this factor. The skirt length was slightly longer than those seen in the catalogs. This was attained not only by actual longer lengths, but also by the arrangement of the skirt drapery. The skillfulness of the dressmakers enabled them to create the illusion of greater apparent length without actually dropping the hemline too much farther.

Factors of Comparison

The fashions appearing in these two publications, while similar in silhouette trends, differed in many details. In general, the Sears offerings were more simple in line and had less visual appeal. Those appearing in Harper's were the more exaggerated versions. The lines of the dresses in Harper's were supple and graceful. The accent was on the cut and the fabric utilized, whereas, in Sears, the emphasis was on line.

In both, no emphasis was placed on the bustline; it was

flat and masculine. In Harper's, there was more indication of the trends of the future. The bodices did not droop over the waistline and there was a definite indication of a lowered waistline being introduced (see left figure, Plate B-4).

Sears showed fringe and beading while these rarely appeared in Harper's except for very formal wear. The vogue of these two trimmings was not entirely new, and it was to be expected that they would not be emphasized in the latter. It may be theorized that these trimmings were used in Sears to provide the average woman with the luxury of evening trim, without the limitations of an evening dress.

Obvious differences between the two were in the actual presentations of the fashions. In Sears, the models were young and modest looking. They were sketched to show the dress, and nothing more. In Harper's, the models pictured an entire mood. They were aloof and sophisticated by comparison; they were placed in settings that connoted luxury. This is natural since the purpose of Sears is to sell clothes, whereas Harper's tends to present the mood of a way of life. There was greater use of accessories in Harper's as contrasted to an almost total lack of them in the catalogs.

1924-1926

Sears Roebuck Catalog--1924

During this year, the general silhouette remained straight and shapeless. There was less fullness in the skirt; often the skirt would be pleated but would, at the same time, maintain the straight line of the silhouette. All of the necklines extended below the collar bone. There was a variety of styles and most had contrasting trim, whether of self fabric or cording. The bodice remained rather simple and there was no attention attracted to the bust; in most cases there was an obvious absence of any darting at all for the bust.

Sleeves were either set-in or kimono style. Most often, they were slim to the elbow and flared out from there. The only sleeve fullness was seen at the cuff, whether it was at the elbow level or at the wrist. There were but few three-quarter length sleeves to be seen.

There was a drastic change in the placement and fit of the waistline (see Plates A-5 and A-6). This was a change that was to be continued throughout the rest of the decade. The waistline was dropped and definitely set at the hip-bone level. It was defined but not fitted and there was rarely a mention of fitted underlinings. Waistlines were marked by loose sashes and many had hanging tassels and bows. Often they were decorated with rosettes and buckles. The use of sashes began to wane by the end of the year.

PLATE A-5
1924

31R4017
All Silk
Canton Crepe
$9.98
Hand beaded

31R4020
Genuine "Romance"
Canton Crepe
with imported
French Design
$8.95

We have found a decided innovation in beaded designs for the stunning decoration of this dress which is fashioned from excellent quality lustrous **all silk Canton crepe,** and the effect is one which you will simply adore. Beading is of the hand wrought two-tone variety and gives a brilliant luster in a design of exclusive originality upon the skirt, the waist and duplicated upon the graceful sleeves. Dress has softly crushed sash and is daintily piped around the becoming neckline and on the sleeves.

You will find that this dress is exceptional in quality for $9.98.

WOMEN'S REGULAR SIZES—32 to 44 inches bust measure. **Give bust and waist measurements and front skirt length.** Shipping weight, 1½ pounds.

31R4017 Navy blue.
31R4018 Brown.
31R4019 Black.

$9.98

At the very last moment before this book went to press a stunning new design arrived from Paris. It is so different and will be worn so extensively by smartly dressed women this season that we held up the printing until this model was included in our book.

It is fashioned of **silk mixed Canton crepe,** woven of about half silk. The feature of this dress is the very bold printed pattern done in the newly invented woodcut, hand blocked effect. The unique design appearing entirely around the skirt and in border pattern around sleeves and neck is so artistically original that you will simply love it.

WOMEN'S REGULAR SIZES—32 to 44 inches bust measure. **Give bust and waist measurements and front skirt length.** Shipping weight, 1½ pounds.

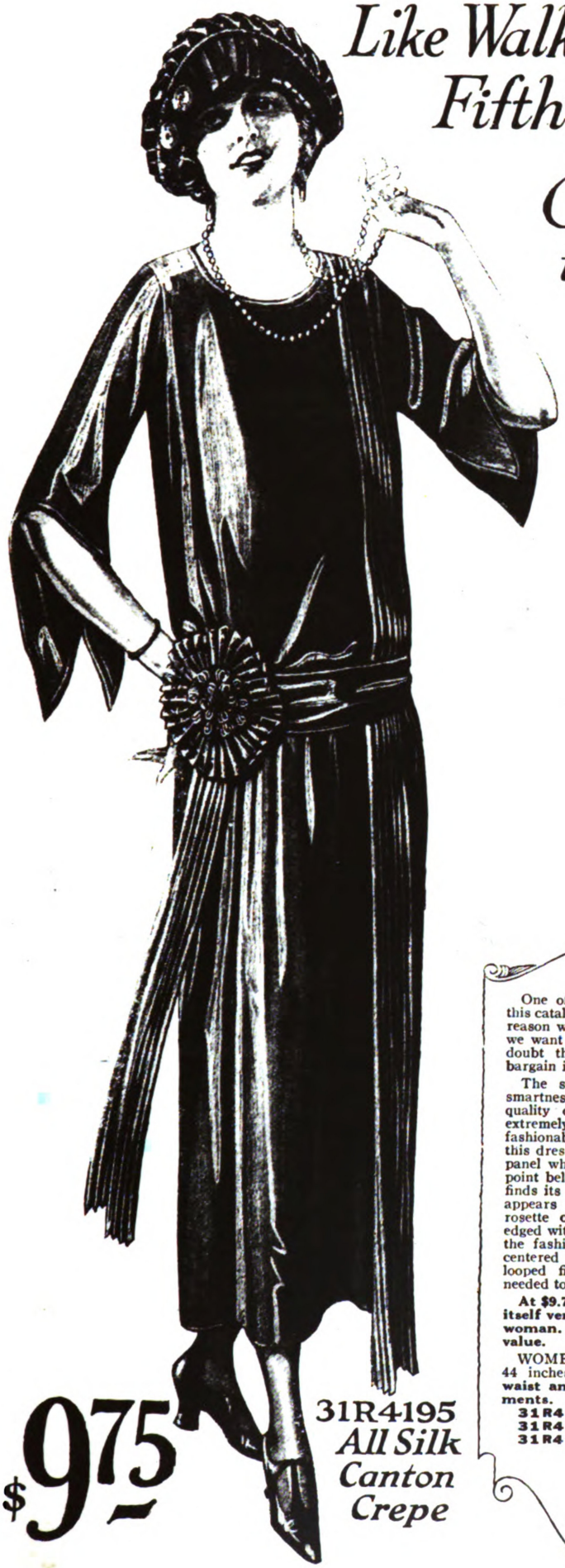
31R4020—Sand (tan) with black.
31R4021—Kingfisher blue with black.
31R4022—Gray with black

$8.95

PLATE A-6
1924

Like Walking Down Fifth Avenue!

That is the Feeling this Smart New Frock will give You



$9.75

31R4195
All Silk Canton Crepe

One of the most wonderful dresses in this catalog of New York styles. For this reason we devote an entire page to it and we want you to know that it is beyond a doubt the most remarkable silk dress bargain in America this season.

The style is marked by a dignified smartness and the fabric, a very good quality of **all silk Canton crepe,** is extremely desirable. Plaits continue in fashionable popularity, and so we find on this dress a graceful slender knife plaited panel which falls from the shoulder to a point below the hem on the left side and finds its replica in a smaller panel which appears from beneath the stunning rosette of closely plaited Canton crepe edged with silk moire taffeta which adorns the fashionably wide girdle. Rosette is centered by a bright braid ornament of looped fiber silk which lends just the needed touch of color.

At $9.75 this dress will recommend itself very strongly to the well dressed woman. It is indeed a wonderful value.

WOMEN'S REGULAR SIZES—32 to 44 inches bust measure. **Give bust, waist and front skirt length measurements.** Shipping weight, 1½ pounds.

31R4195—Black.
31R4196—Navy blue.
31R4197—Brown.

$9.75

Skirts were slim and any fullness was obtained by the use of slight gatherings or pleats. No skirt length was given but from the illustrations, it appears that they were slightly longer than previously. Interest was gained by the use of panels and insets but this too faded as the year wore on. An all-over effect was created by continuing the bodice design right into the skirt. This aided in creating a long look for the costume. A wrap-around dress also appeared which served the same purpose.

Trimmings were still varied and the use of braid, beads and embroidery were most prevalent in all of the designs seen. All types of fabrics were used, silk being very popular, in both solid colors and in woven prints.

Harper's Bazaar--1924

The keynote of the fashions of this year was a plain bodice with interest in the skirt. The silhouette was slim; most had snug fitting hips and very often they were fitted in the back. Despite this, everything was straight . . . the tunic, the jacket, the tube skirt, and even the pleated skirt. If a flared skirt was seen, it most definitely had a fitted hip area (see Plate B-5). Circular flounces or pleats were often used for flare across the lower skirt front.

Necklines were varied, whether for day or evening. The bateau was good, as was the V neck, and the close neckline with an Eton collar. The square neckline was introduced and the Directoire

PLATE B-5
1924

Three models from
WORTH

REMARKABLY SLENDER DAYTIME FROCKS FROM PARIS

In designing street frocks for the spring, Paris keeps well in mind the smartness of the extremely slender silhouette. Any tunics or draperies that are added contribute practically nothing to its width. Worth uses panels of plaited white crêpe to trim a frock of copper colored crêpe.

Black, when it now appears, is often used as a background for some bit of gay color. (Middle) A frock of black crêpe satin, a favorite spring fabric, is embroidered with bands of blue, red, green, and gold beads. The black crêpe de Chine frock at the right has a vividly embroidered yoke.

PLATE B-6
1924

Costumes imported by **FRANCES CLYNE**

A COSTUME MAY CHANGE ITS IDENTITY WITH A SCARF

(Left) ***A dress becomes a correct street costume by the simple device of attaching a scarf to it. This black crêpe marocain model from Lenief is made gorgeous with Beauvais embroidery. Black cloche and black slippers complete its perfection.***

Scarf costumes are to be a notable feature in spring fashions. ***This costume consists of a henna-colored crêpe dress and a beige silk coat with henna scarfs and ermine collar. The dress is embroidered in wool and silks in many dull shades.***

collar and the jabot were also seen. The high point of the year was the introduction of a scarf as an important part of the costume. Plate B-6 is a good illustration of this trend. A scarf or even a handkerchief may have been used to create the desired effect; the scarf this year had become an integral part of the frock.

Bodices became severely plain in relation to fit. They were loose and did not show the wearer's form. In relation to this, the waistlines dropped noticeably. It was now located at the hip-line if it was to be seen at all. As can be seen from Plates B-5 and B-6, there is no real waist. The line is at the hips and is created by either a fold of fabric or by the fabric design. Some belts were seen but were few in number. They seldom went completely around the waist. In general, it might be said, that the lower the waistline, the better it would be.

Sleeves, although they were varied, were not as important this year as they were in past seasons. They were either long and close, short and untrimmed, ballooned at the top extending to a closed cuff, or with an elbow flare. Completely sleeveless frocks also made their appearance and were coming into vogue.

Trimmings took a turn toward the novelties as buttons became popular. They were made of wood, glass, crystal, jet, pearl, and almost any material that would serve the purpose. They were also worked into embroidery designs. Ostrich, rubber bindings, cretonne appliques, beads, ribbons, self fabric, fringes, leather

appliques, and silk were used for trimming. Fur also made an appearance and became most important to the current fashions. It was used on all possible areas of trim, was of all types, and was dyed all possible colors to blend with the ensemble.

The tunic blouse came into vogue. It was a long, straight, pleated or tucked blouse, very often in white satin, printed crepe, or plain crepe. It was worn over tailored suits. The "costume complete" was an ensemble of a dress and a coat or jacket. This became so popular that scarcely a frock appeared without a matching jacket.

Factors of Comparison

During this year, the silhouette remained the same for both publications. However, in Sears, the bodices retained the slight blousing over the waist while in Harper's this was eliminated. There was a similar lack of emphasis on the bustline. In Sears there was great use of sashes at the waistline while in Harper's there were few, if any, belts.

The fashions in Sears emphasized the design of the fabric, which created an all-over design effect. In Harper's there was great emphasis placed on the skirt while the bodices remained plain. Skirts in Harper's were slightly longer than those appearing in Sears. In Sears, skirts were generally gathered at the line of the waist and were loose in fit. In Harper's, hips were snug and fitted to the body.

The use of scarves and fur for accessories and trimming appeared in Harper's to a great extent while neither were seen in Sears during the same year. Sleeveless dresses also made their appearance in Harper's and not in the catalogs.

The only suggestion of the "flapper" was in the general looseness of the costume. However the fashions of Harper's were more extreme in cut and fit and the waistline was dropped to a lower level.

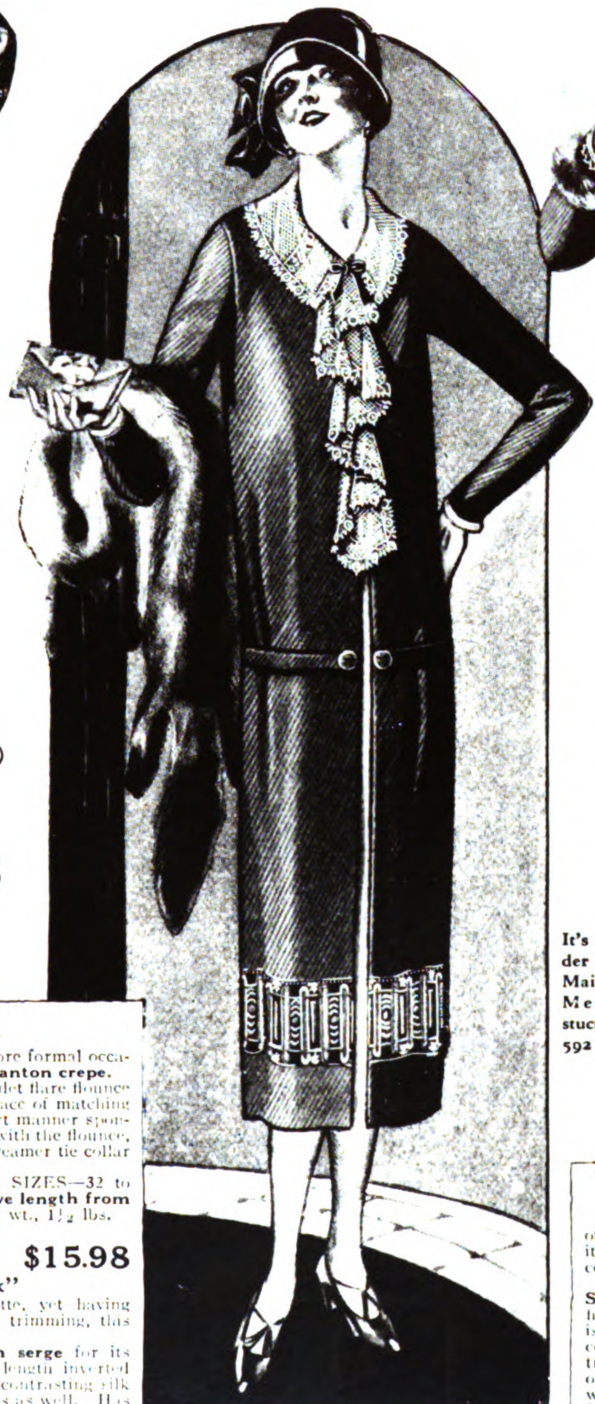
Sears Roebuck Catalog--1925

It was in the Fall and Winter, 1925 catalog that the first actual photograph of a model was used to illustrate a fashion. The fashion drawings themselves began to look more aloof and aristocratic. The cloche appeared on almost all figures and many of the figures had bobbed hair. There was great style diversity and the trends that were begun in Harper's of 1924 were now being seen in these catalogs.

The silhouette remained slender with remarkably little fullness. The predominant style was the tailored look. The coat effect was seen most often. The ensemble was present in actuality or by illusion. Often a two piece costume was cut to resemble a coat and dress. The front would be open with insets to create the illusion of a coat (see Plate A-8). Many of the dresses were one piece slip-ons and had no waistline seam at all.

Their Excellence Will Prove A Revelation

31D4090
All Silk Canton Crepe
$15.98



31D4085
Finely Woven All Wool French Serge
$10.50

Mandel Fur Trimmed

31D4095
All Wool Poiret Sheen
$11.98

It's Easy to Order Clothing by Mail. See Simple Measuring Instructions on Page 592

Graceful Godet Flare

Exquisitely lovely and designed for the more formal occasions this frock of heavy quality **all silk Canton crepe.** Note the graceful effect lent by the new godet flare flounce of silk material and Rayon (artificial silk) lace of matching color, placed on the lower front, in the smart manner sponsored by the mode of the day. In harmony with the flounce, lace is shown on the bell shape sleeves. Streamer tie collar ends in a bow and has pendant trimming.

WOMEN'S AND MISSES' REGULAR SIZES—32 to 44 inches bust measure. **State size and give length from back of neck to bottom of skirt.** Shpg. wt., 1½ lbs.

31D4090—League (rust).
31D4091—Navy blue.
31D4092—Black.

$15.98

Decidedly of "New York"

Following the approved tubular silhouette, yet having many distinctive new details of design and trimming, this model becomes a truly worthy selection.

Choosing good quality **all wool French serge** for its reputation, the dress is made with a full length inverted pleat in front, displaying an insert band of contrasting silk moyed crepe, used for finishing on the sleeves as well. Has novelty collar and jabot trim of ochre shade net trimmed with motion Irish lace. Lower part of dress is enhanced with fancy colored wide Rayon (artificial silk) braid.

WOMEN'S AND MISSES' REGULAR SIZES—32 to 44 inches bust measure. **State size and give length from back of neck to hem.** Shipping weight, 2 pounds.

31D4085—Navy blue.
31D4086—Brown.

$10.50

Showing Fur Trimming

It is most surprising to find that the price of this handsome dress is only $11.98, for it presents an appearance of being far more costly.

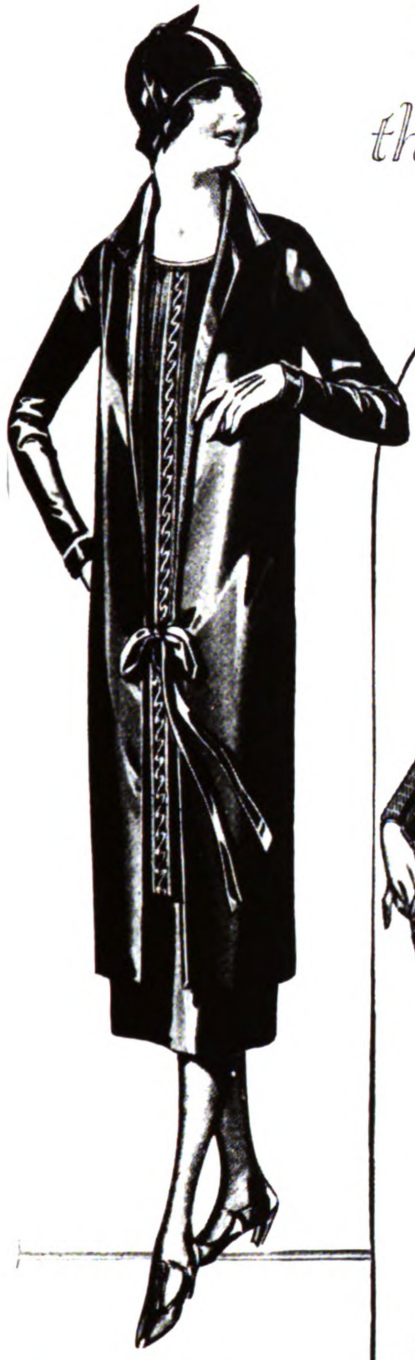
Developed in fine quality **all wool Poiret-Sheen,** a handsome new material having a fine twill weave and a lustrous finish. Dress is patterned on becoming straight lines in comfortable one-piece style and shows rich trimming of stone marten color Mandel fur on the collar and sleeves, further enhanced with tinsel and Rayon (artificial silk) braid. Piping of same braid finishes the pockets, and ornamental buttons add their touch of chic to the vestee.

WOMEN'S AND MISSES' REGULAR SIZES—32 to 44 inches bust measure. **State size and give length from back of neck to bottom of skirt.** Shpg. wt., 2 lbs.

31D4095—Navy.
31D4096—Rust.

$11.98

Fashion Favors the Ensemble Effect



31 D 4060
All Silk Satin Charmeuse Ensemble Effect
$13.95

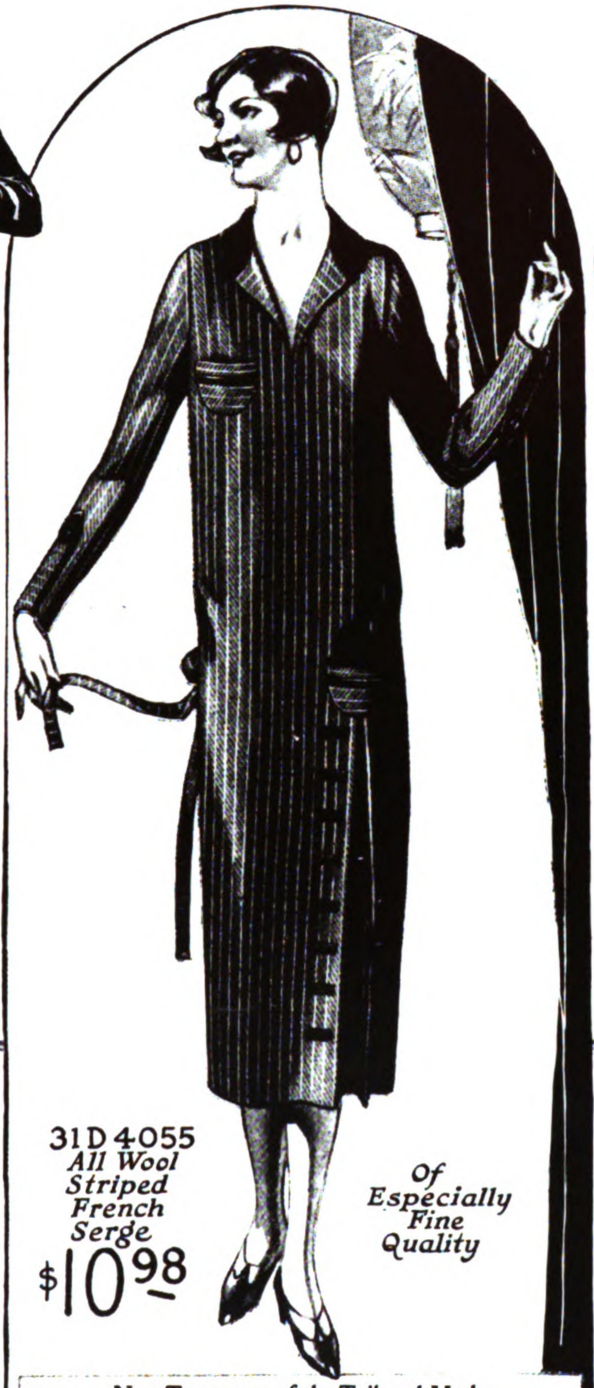
A Chic Style—United With a Rich Fabric

Decidedly of the mode, being fashioned in the latest ensemble effect, is this stunning costume dress, choosing for its fabric, shimmering fine quality **all silk satin charmeuse.** Equally becoming for indoor functions as well as for street wear, on account of having a long jacketlike outer dress and a full front intersection, which gives the appearance of a separate frock and coat.

Panel of contrasting all silk flat crepe, ows trimming of fancy Rayon (artificial) braid and narrow tucked folds. Matching shade flat crepe is used for the cuffs, facing of collar and full front facings of the which fastens with graceful sash ends. WOMEN'S AND MISSES' REGULAR SIZES—32 to 44 inches bust measure. **State size and give length from back of neck to hem.** Shipping weight, 2 pounds.

31D4060—Black with red.
31D4061—Brown with

$13.95



31D4055
All Wool Striped French Serge
$10.98

Of Especially Fine Quality

New Treatment of the Tailored Mode

All wool hairline striped French serge of an exceedingly fine quality, is strikingly used in this frock of Paris inspiration, which gains additional smartness by having contrasting color all wool flannel for effective trimming.

The flannel is featured as the inner facing of the latest style "kick" pleat at the side, as well as for the collar, piping and tailored buttonholes; the latter in combination with ornamental matching color buttons, is shown on the sides of the pleat. Dress is made with small patch pockets, the lower one more ornamental than useful for it has a kerchief tab fold of silk, in harmonizing shade with the other trimming. This dress is a matchless value at our low price.

WOMEN'S AND MISSES REGULAR SIZES—32 to 44 inches bust measure. **State size and give length from back of neck to bottom of skirt.** Shipping wt., 2 lbs. **$10.98**

31D4055—Navy with white stripes.....

31 D 4065
All Wool Crepe Ensemble Effect
$8.98

A Striking Example of the Ensemble Costume Dress

Wherever you find a group of stylishly dressed women, take note of the number who are wearing ensemble effect frocks, this being the newest mode of the prevailing season.

Typical of this pleasing style and priced alluringly low is this handsome model, for it has a full length coat effect of fine quality **all wool crepe,** while the under panel, cuffs, collar and piping are in effective contrast, being made of **silk faced duvetyn.** Further trimming is shown in the form of Rayon (artificial silk) braid, in harmonizing shade and attractive artificial silk stitch embroidery, featured below the pockets.

WOMEN'S AND MISSES, REGULAR SIZES—32 to 44 inches bust measure. **State size and give length from back of neck to hem.** Shipping weight, 2 pounds.

31D4065—Brown with tan.
31D4066—Navy with tan. **$8.98**

Necklines were varied although the deep V with insets was seen most often. Often a middy type sailor tie was used, which joined at the natural waistline with hanging ends. The "Jenny Neck" appeared, which was a deeper and wider scoop neckline. Many collars were just plain and laid flat to the body.

The bustline had not changed and received no emphasis or attention. The designers just ignored the location of that area of the anatomy in their designs.

Sleeves had more interest this season. The bishop sleeve, which had been introduced last year in Harper's was now seen in many different ways in Sears. In general, sleeves were both slim and full; open and cuffed; long and short. There were few, if any, flared sleeves. The use of the cuffed sleeve fit well with the tailored motif of so many of the costumes. Plates A-7 and A-8 illustrate several varieties of sleeves that were offered.

There was no real waistline, and when one did appear, it was placed at the hip level. If defined at all, it was done with a narrow loose belt, which very often had hanging sashes. Often the dresses had no waistline seam at all, which gave it the long "chemise" line. Also the popularity of the wrap-around and the coat effect caused the decline of the waistline seam (see plate A-8).

The hipline was not fitted. However it was often defined by pockets, embroidery, or bead trimming. The extreme right figure on Plate A-7 illustrates this. Other than this, the hips received

no attention since they were now the location of the waistline.

The skirts were definitely shorter this year; this was evident in the illustrations. They were slim and usually plain. Sometimes, just at the knee line interest was gained by a godet flare or by the use of an embroidered design on a plain background (see Plate A-7). Often there would be slashed pockets at the hip level; loose belts in the dress back; patch pockets; slashes and insets; and even inserted pleats. In most instances, the details of interest of the dresses were found in the skirts more than likely due to the fact that the bodices were so severe.

Fur finally made its appearance as a feature of trimming, as in Plate A-7. It was utilized along with the ever popular metal beading, embroidery, lace fichus, braid, bone buttons, silk, and metal.

Harper's Bazaar--1925

There was an obvious trend toward a new silhouette this year. The old tube was not entirely rejected but the new, flared idea was seen often. It was often slightly molded and clung slightly to and outlined the body. Often it fit the hips quite snugly and curved in below them (see Plate B-7). The flare may come from the shoulders, the hips, or just below the knees. It may go all around, or just be in back or in front. Frequently it was accompanied by godets, circular insets, ruffles, or even partially stitched pleats. It created an animated line which was slender while at rest and caused a graceful

PLATE B-7
1925

Another frock with much the same silhouette is of black crêpe de Chine, made with the tighter bodice, and the tiered skirt mounting up in front. The bow is embroidered in coral.

MARTIAL et ARMAND

Half of the collection of Martial et Armand shows decorated backs instead of fronts. This black velvet frock is typical.

Bianchini's ribbed silk in rich dark green, banded with beaver, is used for this coat made full in the back, and not in front.

Even sports frocks are accentuated in the back by Martial et Armand. This frock is of shiny thin leather of a bright blue.

flutter while in motion.

The neckline was moderately high and often was set off by the use of a little collar. The high scarf neckline was still seen although was not as prevalent as 1924. Sleeves were odd and interesting. Often there would be a flare between the elbow and the cuff.

Again, bodices were straight and flat with little decoration placed there for eye interest. Seaming was at a minimum. Trimming was at a minimum in that area and when used, the purpose was only to draw the eye to the skirt of the costume.

There was no waistline to speak of. If any, it was located at the hipline. There was a slight tendency to draw the eye to where the waist should be by the use of boleros, revers, gilets, fitted pockets, trimming, tucks, seams, and ornamental stitching. In general, it may be said that this was not a time for true waists.

The hipline, as mentioned previously, was a point of interest for it provided the level for the break in the design. It was at this point that the fullness of the skirt would begin; it was here that the belt, if any, would be placed; and it was here that the decoration for interest would begin, as in the buttons as seen in Plate B-7.

Skirt lengths were short, extending to a little below the knee. This aided in giving extra emphasis to the legs and feet and gave importance to the styling of shoes and hose. This skirt length was the shortest yet seen during this decade.

There was a tremendous variety of trimmings available

although the philosophy governing their use seemed to be to accentuate the design and not to detract from it by over-trimming it. Light beading was used, as were laces, fringes, flowers, self bows, batik designs, and jewelry. All were advocated for the stylish.

Factors of Comparison

The fashions in Sears this year emphasized the tailored look. There was a noticeable absence of a waistline and the costume was very severe. In Harper's, a new look appeared. It was flared and fitted. The trend toward the snug fit which began to be evident in 1924 was carried to further extremes. The hip areas of the dresses clung to the curves of the body. While the catalog dresses ignored the waist, those in Harper's called attention to it by gathers, seaming, and draping.

Harper's showed the high neckline but the V neck was predominant in Sears. Sleeve interest was important in both publications. Skirts are an important feature, for in Harper's they were very evidently shorter than before and much shorter than those illustrated in Sears.

Fur continued as a trimming in Harper's but was introduced for the first time in the catalogs. The use of other trimmings continued to the same extent.

The models in Sears were gradually becoming more aloof. The cloche appeared on the figures and some of them had

bobbed hair. The Harper's fashions illustrated were beginning to resemble the look that is most often associated with the flapper.

Sears Roebuck Catalogs--1926

The two piece outfit, by means of an overblouse, was considered chic and up-to-date. Floral silk prints were also in an important position this year. The silhouette was still extremely slim with no real fit. The interest in each ensemble was predominantly in the skirt. The bodices remained rather plain and the bustline was still completely ignored. There were still some open necklines to be seen but the appearance of the closed, high collar in the oriental style had made its appearance and was very prevalent. The narrow band tied and had loose tie-ends that hung down in front, often with tassel ends. The open V collar with lapels was also very popular and was pictured often.

Sleeves were almost all set-in, long, slim, and cuffed at the wrist. The fullness varied from the extremely slim sleeve to those that have fullness as in a man's shirt; but the close cuff was seen on almost all designs.

The waistline was still absent and was seen at the hip level. The hips were defined by a narrow belt at the line, by a tie and bow at the line, or by a flounce or pleats just below the line. Examples of these are in Plate A-10. The skirts were predominantly slim although there was a tendency to exhibit interest below the hipline.

Descriptions of Dresses Shown on Opposite Page

Attractive—Yet Inexpensive

This model makes smart use of *All Wool Crepe* as its fabric. Graceful animation is lent to the straightline silhouette of the frock by means of the pleated insert panels, which are outlined with tinsel and Rayon (artificial silk) embroidery. The bodice is also embellished with embroidery, as are the pointed tabs that finish the cuffs. Contrasting color crepe is another form of trimming, employed as facing at the neck, cuffs and pocket tabs, the latter showing ornamental metal buttons on either side.

Women's and Misses' Regular Sizes—32, 34, 36, 38, 40, 42 and 44 inches bust measure. Lengths from back of neck to hem, 44 and 47 inches only. **State size and length desired.** Shipping weight, 2 pounds.

31F3038—Cocoa Brown. **$8.98**

Preferred New Fashion

Adapted on otherwise swagger straight lines of fine quality *All Wool Repp-Sheen*, the frock is belted at the waistline showing an ornamental buckle for adjustment. Rich looking tinsel and Rayon (artificial silk) embroidered edging lend a chic finish to the shapely long sleeves, to the collar and front of the bodice; in the latter instance centered with attractive novelty buttons.

You will find this frock exceedingly useful and practical for general fall and winter service; one that will please in every way, in spite of its very low price.

Women's and Misses' Regular Sizes—32, 34, 36, 38, 40, 42 and 44 inches bust measure. Lengths from back of neck to hem, 44 and 47 inches only. **State size and length desired.** Shipping weight, 2 pounds.

31F3050—Rosewood.
31F3051—Navy Blue. **$9.95**

Adorned With Hand Embroidery

Fine quality *All Wool Poiret Sheen* is the smart fabric that fashions this flattering style frock in latest two-piece effect.

The skirt is cut with graceful circular ripple fullness at front, while the back of the model is made on popular straight lines. Quite lovely and most striking is the adornment of exquisite hand embroidery, artfully placed at one side of the blouse and as a chic final touch on the modish puff sleeves.

Women's and Misses' Regular Sizes—32, 34, 36, 38, 40, 42 and 44 inches bust measure. Lengths from back of neck to hem, 43 and 46 inches only. **State size and length desired.** Shipping weight, 2 pounds.

31F3040—Navy Blue. **$11.98**

Exceedingly Smart Model

It has a distinctive air, this attractive frock of *Hairline Plaid All Wool Serge*. Gracefully fashioned with flare cut panels at the lower sides, the frock gains a very smart effect by trimming of contrasting color all wool flannel which is in harmony with plaid pattern of the fabric. Rows of novelty bone buttons have also been used in a decorative manner, on either side of the vestee and as finishing touches on the flared panels.

Women's and Misses' Regular Sizes—32, 34, 36, 38, 40, 42 and 44 inches bust measure. Lengths from back of neck to hem, 43 and 46 inches only. **State size and length desired.** Shpg. wt., 2 lbs.

31F3055—Brown with Tan. **$10.95**

New York's Very Latest

We offer here an exquisitely styled suit of fine quality *All Silk Flat Crepe*. It is made distinctive and ultra chic by lavish adornment of hand knotted fringe, featured on the back in cape effect, on the front of the skirt and as a charming finish at the ends of the modish scarf collar. Other interesting style notes that recommend this frock to your selection are the sash tying smart puff sleeves and sash at the waistline.

Women's and Misses' Regular Sizes—32, 34, 36, 38, 40, 42 and 44 inches bust measure. Lengths from back of neck to hem, 44 and 47 inches only. **State size and length.** Shipping weight, 2 pounds.

31F3045—Green (Peter Pan.)
31F3046—Bordeaux Red.
31F3047—Navy Blue. **$15.95**

Pleasing Fabric

This frock elects *All Wool Silver-Glow Cashmere Flannel*, a delightful new fabric of soft, supple texture, pleasing appearance and sturdy durability.

It would be quite tailored in effect, were it not for the lavish adornment of rich tinsel and Rayon (artificial silk) embroidery, which is featured on the collar, front panel, the pockets and on the stylish puff sleeves. A smart finishing touch is lent by an all around belt, showing a handsome metal buckle ornament at front.

Women's and Misses' Regular Sizes—32, 34, 36, 38, 40, 42 and 44 inches bust measure. Lengths from back of neck to hem, 44 and 47 inches only. **State size and length.** Shipping weight, 2 pounds.

31F3060—Queen Blue.
31F3061—Cookie Brown.
31F3062—Rose Petal. **$9.98**

PLATE A-10
1926

This was accomplished by using a flare, tucking, inserts, godets, pleats, fringe, and other devices. Skirts were extremely short, the shortest they have been as yet in this time period for Sears.

The trimmings utilized were approximately the same as those used in the previous years. However, buttons were now more evident on the designs purely for decorative purposes. The accompanying plate illustrates this (Plate A-10).

Harper's Bazaar--1926

The silhouette seemed to be conservative but a most conspicuous new tendency gave importance to the upper part of the frock rather than the lower. Slim straightness was accentuated but freedom of movement was allowed. The tunic lines, the back blousing, and the all around blousing, and the bolero contributed to this. A notable trend was the complication of cut which was disguised as simplicity.

There was a great variety of collars. The collar was turned down at the neck base and either laid flat or crinkled. Cape collars, jabot revers, deep V décolletés, fur collars with hoods in the back, and even the Capucian hood were seen in the offerings of this year.

Sleeves also provided an area of interest for this year for Harper's. The new ones were the leg-of-mutton sleeve and the kimono. The general favorite seemed to be the long plain sleeve. There were bishop sleeves; those that closed to the elbow and had

PLATE B-8
1926

PLATE B-9
1926

circular frill; double sleeves with undercuffs; and those that puffed at the elbow or at the cuff. Some afternoon dresses were shown that were sleeveless or had just a shoulder cap. Sleeve variety may be seen in Plates B-8 and B-9.

The waistline was anchored firmly at the very top of the hip. Great importance was given to belts, sashes, and girdles to draw attention to this area. In many cases these devices even served to create the illusion of the normal waistline. One of the popular ways to achieve this was a curved line sloping up the front from a low back line. The bodice bloused slightly in back with a swathed hip and a softly full skirt. Another means was to use a tight hip band, a bloused bodice, and a pleated or shirred skirt; both of these methods created the illusion of a normal waist.

Hemlines came into focus this year as a fashion item. The uneven hemline made its first appearance. The effect was achieved in several ways: by loose panels, by fringed hemlines, by pleated flares; and by fish-tails on chiffon frocks. The overall effect was to create hemline interest in the skirts and often gave the effect of greater hem fullness than actually existed.

Trimming seemed to have played a smaller role in fashion this year (1926). The important factor was the fine working of the fabric itself: pin tucks, lingerie tucks, mass cordings; quilting with metal thread, shirring, and bias bands. Pleating of all kinds was used as was beading and fringe. Self or chiffon flowers were also seen often.

A New FASHION
Our New Style

31L2800
All Silk Georgette Crepe
$13.95

31L2805
Printed All Silk Crepe de Chine
$9.95

31L2810
All Silk Flat Crepe
$13.75

Graceful, Dressy Model

For those occasions when you need a frock of the more dressy type, you will be pleased to have this lovely model of fine quality *All Silk Georgette Crepe.*

It is fashioned in the latest New York manner; having a softly bloused bodice with a V shaped yoke of pleated, contrasting Georgette and a tie of self color, trimmed with a handsome rhinestone pin. The skirt is made with a wide tucked hip band and circular drapery panels at front, that are shirred on top. Flared cuffs with shirring at wrist, also lend smartness to the frock. Comes with Tub Silk Slip.

***Women's and Misses' sizes to fit:*—34, 36, 38, 40, 42 and 44 in. bust measure. Length, from back of neck to hem, 42 in. only with 5 in. basted hem. State size. See measuring instructions on page 28. Shpg. wt., 2 lbs.**

31L2800—Navy Blue with Flesh **$13.95**

Two-Piece Frock

Attractive two-piece frock of Printed *All Silk Crepe de Chine.*

The blouse has the new V neck line, a pleated jabot frill and chic, scalloped lower edge. It shows effective trimmings of black and white Flat Silk Crepe, and the belt fastens with a novelty buckle. The pleated skirt is attached to a Seco bodice lining. A very attractive model for street or sports wear.

Women's and Misses' sizes to fit:—34, 36, 38 and 40 in. bust measure. Length, from back of neck to hem, 40 in. only, with 5 in. basted hem. State size. See measuring instructions on page 28. Shpg. wt., 2 lbs.

31L2805—White with Black **$9.95**

New and Smart

Tucking and pleating—the two most popular style themes of the season—were used to decorative effect in the design of this *All Silk Flat Crepe* frock. Material and tailoring in this dress are of exceptionally fine quality.

Has graceful sash bow of self material at one side of the waistline, and a novelty ornamental flower cluster adorns the shoulder. Dress trimmed both front and back.

Women's and Misses' sizes to fit:—34, 36, 38, 40, 42 and 44 in. bust measure. Length, from back of neck to hem, 42 in. only with 5 in. basted hem. State size. See measuring instructions on page 28. Shpg. wt., 2 lbs.

31L2810—Rose Glow (Tan)
31L2811—Navy Blue **$13.75**

PLATE A-12
1928

Of Pretty Fabric

We offer here a very charming, inexpensive frock, becomingly fashioned of *Silk Warp Figured Crepe.*

The blouse is made with a detachable Tan Crepe vestee, trimmed at the neck with novelty buttons and buttonholes. The skirt is gracefully box pleated; the pleating held in place with rows of stitching across the top. Navy Blue Silk Warp Crepe, was used for the collar, cuffs and lower border. Belt has an ornamental buckle.

Women's and Misses' sizes to fit:—34, 36, 38, 40, 42 and 44 in. bust measure. Length, from back of neck to hem, 42 inches only with 5 inch basted hem. State size. See measuring instructions on this page. Shpg. wt., 2 lbs.

31L2828—Navy Blue Figured

$5.98

Attractive Model

Smart new style themes and a lovely fabric combine in making this frock appealing and desirable.

Adapted in lustrous *All Silk Crepe Satin*, it portrays a chic treatment of the popular two piece effect model.

The blouse is shirred at the shoulders, has a bow at the neck and shows an opening at one side, where it reveals flesh color Crepe Satin trimmed with novelty buttons. The skirt is made graceful with a circular cut, drapery panel which is finished with shirring on top. Frock has a Beco bodice lining, attached to the skirt.

Women's and Misses' sizes to fit:—34, 36, 38, 40, 42 and 44 inches bust measure. Length, from back of neck to hem, 42 in. only with 5 inch basted hem. State size. See measuring instructions on this page. Shpg. wt., 2 lbs.

31L2825—Black with Flesh

$11.95

Charming Style

This frock portrays a design of the latest mode and is smartly adapted in flower print "Chiffonette"—a good quality, durable Rayon Voile.

Contrasting color Crepe de Chine, was used for the novel shaped yoke, streamer tie, piping at the wrist and for facing the graceful cascade drapery on the skirt. Rows of shirring trim the shoulders, cuffs and top of the skirt. A lovely rhinestone ornament is shown at one side of the waistline. Blouse is made over a Rayon Crepe lining.

A becomingly styled, well made frock at a very moderate price.

Women's and Misses' sizes to fit:—34, 36, 38, 40, 42 and 44 inches bust measure. Length, from back of neck to hem, 42 in. only with 5 inch basted hem. State size. See measuring instructions on this page. Shpg. wt., 2 lbs.

31L2830—Navy Blue Fancy

$7.98

Silver and gold spangles which caused shiny and dull surfaces were also quite important.

Factors of Comparison

There were several introductions in the Sears catalogs during this year that had become rather passé in Harper's. Among these were the high neckline, the use of buttons as trimming, the shorter skirt, the overblouse, the cloche and accessories, and bobbed hair. Sears showed reduced sleeve interest while this aspect of design was emphasized in Harper's.

In the catalogs, the skirts were the focal point of interest with hips being loose in fit. The opposite was evident in Harper's where interest was placed on the bodice. In addition, skirts were anchored closely to the hipline for better fit. It was during this year that the uneven hemline appeared for the first time in Harper's. Another change noted in Harper's that did not appear in Sears, was a slight blousing of the bodice over the waistline.

1928-1929

Sears Roebuck Catalogs

The silhouette throughout these last two years of the decade remained as it had been for the previous eight years . . . straight, slim, and shapeless. There were however, some obvious changes within the designs themselves. During these last two years, especially in the early part of 1928, the V neckline was most prevalent.

As the year went on, collars came into popularity and nearly every dress was shown with one. The styles varied from a short collar to long lapels reaching to waist level with a dickey insert. 1929 saw the beginning of new interest in collar draping. There were many cape collars which gave a wide effect. The latter part of 1929 was witness to the advent of the collar and tie and a high round neck reaching to the throat base.

The general trend for sleeves during the two years was the long, wrist-length, close-fitting sleeve. The use of cuffs was popular and sometimes soft fullness was attained by wrist gathers. The bustline still received no attention and was entirely flat. However, in 1928 there was a tendency for the bodice of the dress to blouse slightly over the hip-waistline. This gave added softness to an otherwise stark looking outfit.

An important change took place at the hip level. The trend began in 1928 (see Plates A-11 and A-12). The hipline was often tucked or gathered by a belt with a rosette. Belts were utilized and were either narrow or wide and crushed or pleated. Wide tucked sashes were often decorated by buttons or buckles. There was much interest in theme carry through. The real change took place in 1929, when hips were fitted to the body. The swathed hip was seen on almost all the dresses shown (see Plates A-14 and A-15). It consisted of a yoke effect which was rounded and often gathered to a rosette or bow in front or at the side. Often a wide crushed or pleated sash was utilized.

PLATE A-13
1929

DESCRIPTIONS *for* OPPOSITE PAGE

(A) **31R5000—Red, Yellow and Blue (As large illustration)**
31R5001—Blue, Yellow and Tan (As small illustration) **$8.98**

Here is a chic frock of fine quality All Silk Flat Crepe, that blithely expresses Springtime in its colorful flower print and graceful new surplice collar of Paris inspiration. The price is very low as you would expect it to be—at Sears.

Beige All Silk Georgette Crepe edged with handsome imitation Venise lace, fashions the smart collar, vestee and cuffs. It features a skirt yoke of unusual design, trimmed with Georgette covered buttons.

Women's Sizes 34 *to* 44 *inches bust measure. State size. See measuring instructions on page* 5.

We pay the postage.

(B) **31R5005—English Red**
31R5006—Navigator Blue (Med. Blue)
31R5007—Black **$9.98**

Stressing youth, stressing line, stressing beauty—presenting in short, complete smartness; this frock of All Silk Flat Crepe is an unparalled value at this modest price.

It has a soft fichu-like collar with an inset of ecru Venise lace, a softly bloused bodice, and a skirt that flares gracefully from its curved yoke. Modernistic pins add smart accent to the collar and hip bow.

Women's Sizes—34 *to* 44 *inches bust measure. State size. See measuring instructions on page* 5.

We pay the postage.

(C) **31R5010—Marron Glace (Cocoa Tan**
31R5011—Black **$9.98**

A New York frock of singular distinction increases the smartness of its style by the suave shimmering beauty of its fabric. Fashioned of All Silk Crepe Satin and made with a bloused bodice, swathed hip line and a noteworthy flared overskirt of intricate cut. Dainty ecru French lace outlines a "V" neck, front and back. Rose beige Georgette Crepe is used for the jabot and to face the back "V". Has Rayon bodice lining.

Women's Sizes—34 *to* 44 *inches bust measure. State size. See measuring instructions on page* 5.

We pay the postage.

(D) **31R5015—Garland Green (Med. Lt. Green) with Polo Green (Med. Dark Green) Trimming** **$7.98**
31R5016—Marron Glace (Cocoa Tan) with Rose Beige Trimming
31R5017—Navy Blue with Monet Blue Trimming

The discriminating woman chooses for Springtime wear, the tailored frock of All Silk Flat Crepe. This smart model displays faultless workmanship, the distinct imprint of New York origin—and yet costs only $7.98.

A darker shade of the fabric is used to emphasize the pointed trimming on bodice and cuffs. Curved tucking and jewelled pins on the shoulder and waist bows successfully add to its charm.

Women's Sizes—34 *to* 44 *inches bust measure. State size. See measuring instructions on page* 5.

We pay the postage.

(E) **31R5020—Tan Fancy Print** **$4.98**

A practical, gracefully styled frock which will give excellent service, is modishly fashioned of good quality, durable Printed Silk Warp Crepe. Solid color Silk Warp Crepe pipes the V shaped yoke and trims the jabot. The draped girdle reveals rows of shirring from which the skirt front falls in a circular flare.

A drooping flower of self material adorns the shoulder. Dainty buttons and a buckle complete its effectiveness.

Women's Sizes—34 *to* 44 *inches bust measure. State size. See measuring instructions on page* 5.

We pay the postage.

PLATE A-14
1929

PLATE A-15
1929

LOVELIEST STYLES

FOR EVERY OCCASION

$11.98 POSTPAID

ALL SILK GEORGETTE CREPE

31R5055—Navy
31R5056—Garland Green (Soft Med. Green)

The loveliest style themes of the season are stressed in this exquisite frock: in the bodice with its soft, flowing drapery, back and front; in the dipping skirt of double circular tiers, that achieves the new irregular hem line.

The swathed hip yoke is enriched with pin tucking and a noteworthy modernistic jewelled pin.

The dress is made on a tub silk foundation, and the neck yoke is lined with Flesh color All Silk Georgette.

Women's and Misses' Sizes—34, 36, 38, 40, 42 and 44 *inches bust measure. State size.*

There were few if any, narrow belts used.

The skirts during both years, barely reached the bottom of the knee. In nearly each design illustrated, the interest was placed in the skirt. Some were circular cut; many had hipline gathers, pleats, or tucks, some had patch or slit pockets; and occasionally hanging panels were used to give an uneven hemline, as in Plate A-11. Despite the flares and pleating, the skirts were slim in silhouette. In 1929, skirts tended to be flared. They would swing out from below the fitted hip. They were often tiered with loose panels to give an uneven hemline as seen in Plate A-15. This trend was marking the beginning of the drop in hem length that was to take place the very next year in American fashions.

Trimmings were not too different than the years previous. Shirring, tucking, and pleating were dominant and some evidence of at least one is seen in each garment shown. Dickies, buckles, rosettes, buttons, braid, embroidered net, lace, flowers, braid, bows, and others were used to accentuate the garment under consideration.

Harper's Bazaar--1928

The fashions for this year were not too different from those of the year previously covered. The silhouette was generally the same . . . slim, straight, and shapeless. Sleeves were considered unimportant to the fashion picture except in evening wear. Necklines were so varied that anything could be had depending on the individual

PLATE B-10
1928

THE TWEED ENSEMBLE IS A PRIME FAVORITE

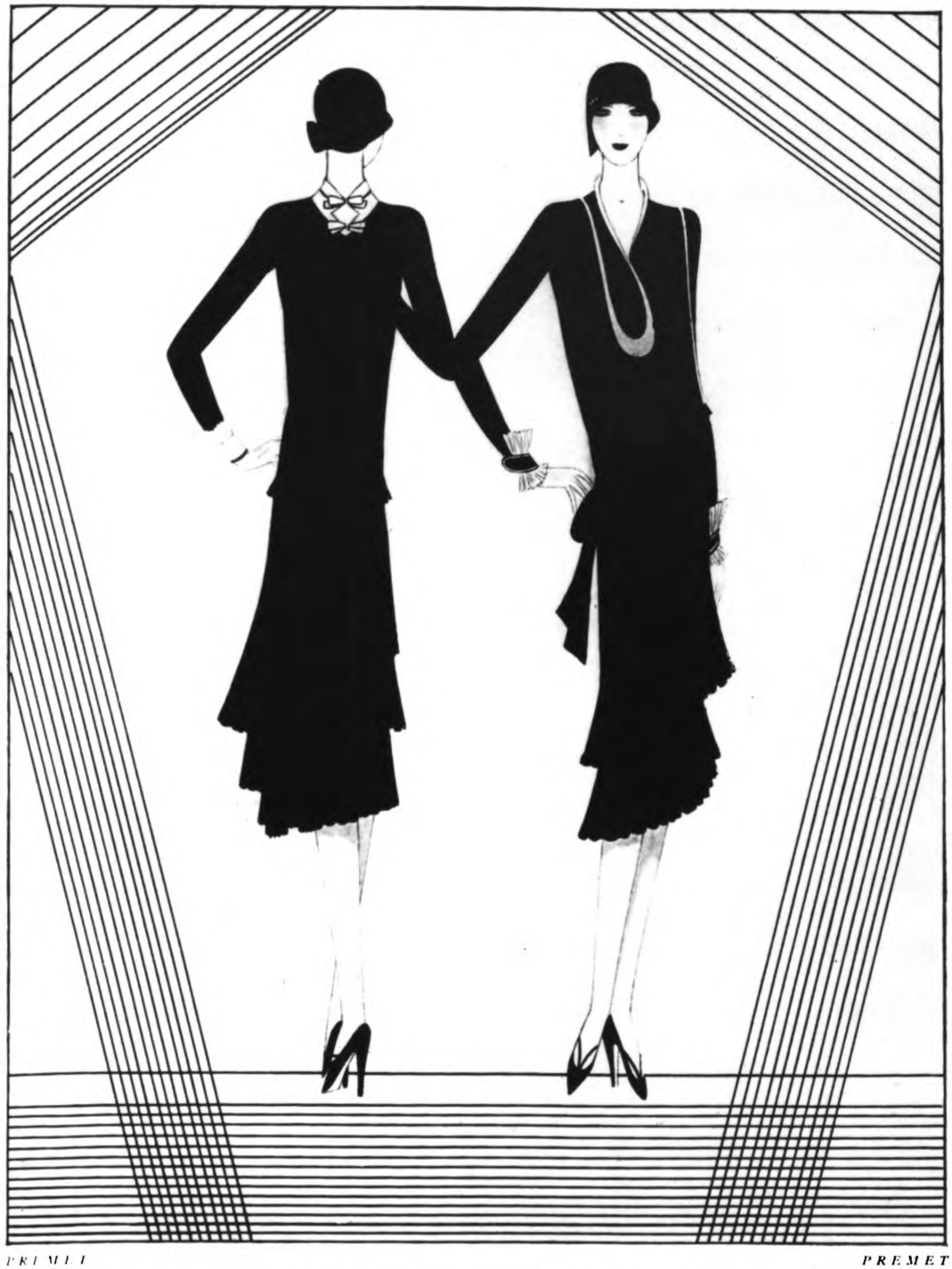
A tweed ensemble in beige and brown from Abercrombie and Fitch. The coat has a collar of ombré caracul, the knit jumper has a block pattern in rose and beige.

Imported snowflake tweed makes a dress and coat ensemble, from Bergdorf Goodman. Flat white caracul trims the collar and cuffs and faces the edges of the short, loose coat. Gray grosgrain ribbon forms the belt and pocket facings as well as pipings.

Rough diagonal tweed is used for an ensemble from Knox. The long coat has slot seams and a standing collar. A knit jumper of silk and wool in a lacy weave repeats in a broken stripe the rose and putty shades appearing in the tweed. The belt is tweed.

A sophisticated tweed ensemble of beige and reddish mixture from Bruck Weiss is complemented by a red crepella frock. The coat is lined with crepella. A hat and bag of red, beige and black hand-woven wool from Coutier are imported by Bruck Weiss.

PLATE B-11
1928



PREMET PREMET

"Exclute" is fashioned of one of the new black silk brocches, with a small dot in bright silk on a dull foundation. The bodice is fitted and all the skirt is pleated finely. The collar is white grosgrain piped in red, and it ties in the back with two flat bows.

"Mise au Point" is an afternoon gown in black crêpe de Chine, with the elaborate skirt which Premet is featuring this season. The back is trimmed with narrow pleated frills running up diagonally to the hip. The collar and cuffs are touched with white.

desire. Waistlines varied from none at all, to a normal level, however the usual placement was the top of the hip as it had been for so long. Skirts invariably involved some type of drapery or fullness for interest. Again, since the bodices were so plain, the skirt was given the responsibility of holding the eye of the viewer. Skirts for sport wear were short as they had been (see Plate B-10) but in daytime dresses and especially in cocktail and dinner wear, the hemline had gone down to several inches below the knee. Formal wear ranged from the length of the day-dress to floor length. In all, it may be assumed that this year was one of fashion transition for there were several trends that were acceptable and each seemed to be a slight variation from what had been in vogue.

Harper's Bazaar--1929

The change did come . . . hemlines went down and waistlines went up. The uneven hemline came in in full force and was seen on numerous designs (see Plates B-12 and B-13). Hanging panels and transparent hems were in use for both afternoon and for day wear. Waistlines varied but several designs featured a normal line and this indicated a trend that would follow. Hemlines also, were not all the same but the extent of the appearance of the unevenness is sufficient to have provided a basis for the assumption that further changes would occur.

The balance of the points of the fashion picture during this year are similar to 1928, in that there was no definite trend for

any one of them. There were varieties of collars, necklines, sleeves, and bodices. As can be seen from the selected plates for this year, each design is individual in relation to its design and yet they do share some of the 1929 trends.

Factors of Comparison

The year 1928 was one of change for the Sears fashions. There was collar interest and a tendency toward draping. Pleats were very prevalent and were seen on almost every design. There was a slight blousing of the bodice, a feature that had already been seen in Harper's. Skirts stressed hip interest, and in 1929 the swathed hip was most prevalent. The short skirt reached its extreme, a level that had already been seen in Harper's fashions. The uneven hemline also appeared and was shown in moderation.

1928 was a relatively unimportant one for fashion change as seen in Harper's. The styles continued in the same path as they had the previous year, and in reality, were quite parallel to those shown in Sears. The major change in Harper's occurred in 1929, when the established trends were all but shattered.

This was the year of the greatest differences. Waistlines climbed to their natural location and were fitted to the form of the wearer. The hiplines became normal and in most instances skirts were so loose that the hipline became all but unimportant. The uneven hemline was seen to a great extent and aided in lowering the

hemlines. Dresses that did not have the uneven line had hemlines that were much longer than had been seen for several years.

The greatest likeness to the flapper silhouette occurred in 1928 and 1929 in the Sears catalogs. In Harper's, it appeared as early as 1925, with extremes of dress looseness, skirt length, and general silhouette. In addition, the appearance of the models followed this trend, whereas in Sears, this did not become as apparent until the end of the decade.

In general, it may be said that the indications of the trends appeared first, and in the most extreme manner, in Harper's; they were adapted from one season to three years later in the Sears catalogs. Since the majority of the Harper's designs are designer originals, and the catalogs advertise the fact that they obtain their designs from the originals, it is natural to conclude that similar ones would appear later in the Sears catalogs.

PLATE B-12 1929

DRECOLL-BEER

Drecoll-Beer have a lovely afternoon gown of the draped type, soft and feminine, in black crêpe satin. The scarf, an important feature of the dress, is of chartreuse satin on one side, black on the other. The hem-line is uneven, as it often is for afternoon this season.

A novel silhouette, recalling the modes of 1879-80, just before the bustle became enormous, has been evolved by Premet this season. It is done in brown cravatte silk speckled with white. The closely fitted bodice buttons up the back, and the collar and cuffs are white organdie.

PR MET

PLATE B-13 1929

Drawn in color by Reynaldo Luza

REDFERN

This charming afternoon e
semble from Redfern
made in lime-green pann
velvet. The gown has a sep
arate godet panel acro
the front and a mountin
waistline. The three-quart
er coat, which is muc
longer in the back, is e
fectively trimmed wit
black monkey fur and ha
sleeves of elbow length.

CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Fashions tend to reflect the mood of the day. The political, economic, and social conditions that prevail in any area are the multiple forces whose combination stimulates the trends that fashions follow. A period of prosperity or depression is mirrored in the current vogues; so too are the attitudes and morality of the populace.

During the period under consideration in this thesis, there were numerous factors which contributed to the change that took place in this country. For years, women had been striving to attain equal rights with men under law; they achieved this by means of the Suffrage Amendment to the Constitution. World War I brought the United States into the spotlight as a world power. The war took the young people out of a sheltered and narrow atmosphere and showed them clearly and coldly that life was not all good and clean. War also took the woman out of the home and placed her in the role of breadwinner with new responsibilities and new potentialities.

The war stimulated industry, and inventions were made that both eased and speeded life. The field of travel and communications also expanded. Radio, motion pictures, and the print media became vital to the American way of life; they spread news and ideas. The automobile, which was to become accessible to the masses, enabled

an individual to travel more easily and rapidly. The country was growing smaller, not in size but in the unity of its people.

The postwar period of economic depression and that of ultimate prosperity during the twenties, was greatly influenced by all of the aforementioned factors. The process of regaining "normalcy" after the war was not carried out in the expected manner. Instead of returning to the accepted conventions, the nation as a whole embarked on a path that had never before been taken in American history. The old standards were gone. The outlook and attitudes of the people were changed. Even prohibition, which previously was thought to be nearly ideal, reversed itself entirely to become a national joke. The law-breaking was flaunted and despite opposing efforts, these activities flourished.

The bitterness of life that was seen as a result of the war, contributed to the rise of "The Lost Generation." They were epitomized and glorified by the writers and artists of the day. These people were the rebels who protested against the former moral conventions that had been embraced by the majority of Americans. They felt they had not been satisfied by them and wanted a change. . . a change to freedom without restraint of their thoughts or actions.

The twenties contributed to the fall of the old order. A revolution had occurred; manners and morals were different. Tradition was questioned and authority challenged. The values upon which much

of the American culture was established had fallen, to be replaced by a new set of ideals and attitudes.

All of these factors had a profound effect on the fashions of the period. Looking broadly at fashion, one might say that from the hoop skirts of 1850 to the hobble skirts of 1910, women remained essentially encased in the complicated designs of their fitted and confining clothing.

Although by 1910 skirts were not as large as the period of the hoops, they still performed the function of hindering movement, for they then reached the opposite extreme as seen in the hobble skirt. The problem of locomotion became more acute as women began to achieve some of the "equal rights" with men they so desired. By the year 1910, they had taken great strides to come into their own regarding their rights to pursue independent careers and to gain equality in the eyes of the law of the country.

As women in general began to leave the home and enter the world of business, they found themselves enclosed within the snug seams of their clothing. Almost immediately costume began the rapid transition from sedate, confining femininity, to worldly, comfortable, freedom and sophistication. This transition was given a solid boost by World War I which aided in the breakdown of prewar convention and gave the American woman one of her final steps toward emancipation. She found many jobs welcoming her--jobs vacated by the men serving in the armed services. With this aid, women's fashions made the break

with the armor-clad traditions of the past and clothing took on an entirely new look.

The years 1910-1919 were ones of rapid and somewhat constant fashion change. It was a decade of trial and error and is important in fashion history for it was a period of preview. A change was impending and as a result many costumes were presented by designers in an effort to gain popular acceptance. Many were rejected, but the pattern of those accepted followed one general trend: the most popular fashions, after the appearance of the hobble skirt, were those which enabled freedom of movement and ease in wear and care.

The keynote of the period preceding the nineteen-twenties, was a trend in simplicity of costume. The silhouette became an angular and gradually, a flattened tube; actual design lines were simplified, eliminating the ungainly bustles, drapings, and trains, and emphasizing vertical seaming. The fit of the garments was transformed from the shapely and form-fitting to one that was loose, bloused, and shapeless. However, the use of fitted underlining remained prevalent until the early nineteen-twenties, when linings of any kind were almost entirely eliminated. Shoulder lines became less important to the design as a whole, sleeves were loosened and gradually shortened, and, of utmost importance, hemlines were raised. These were a good indication of and stimulus to, the fashions of the twenties.

During the twenties, fashion continued in its path of simplification of dress. The tubular look became the ideal and the stress

was placed on youth and immaturity. Any resemblance to a mature, female form was attained purely by accident or by a lack of the desire to be in style. The scanty, short skirted dress of women during the twenties was, perhaps, the highest form of devotion to the new America that a woman could attempt.

At this time of youth glorification, a figure of woman came to fore, and eventually became the stereotyped image of the woman of that day. This figure was the flapper. It is difficult to establish her advent into American life. Through the years she has been associated with the twenties, even though the term was utilized as early as 1910.

Regardless of this, the flapper was the nonconformist of her era. Her body, her clothes, and her actions were always the extreme. She was the lankiest, most immature female. Her hair was shortest, her face and nails the most brilliantly painted. Her dresses were the scantiest, both in width and length; and of course, she rolled her stockings. She was associated with the Black Bottom and the Charleston; the roadster, the cigarette, the hip-flask, and the raccoon coat. She was the youth of the twenties . . . idealized and glamorized to the point where she will live on in the minds of Americans.

Despite the publicity given to the flapper, the fashions of the twenties, as seen in publications of the period, did not reach the extremes that might have been expected. This is not to say that some

girls did not dress in that manner, but only that the general fashion offerings did not illustrate the extremes.

As always, as fashion spread across the country, they will be accepted and modified according to the individuals involved. The comparative fashion study conducted with the Sears Roebuck catalogs and Harper's Bazaar magazine, illustrates this very clearly. Harper's Bazaar, since it featured fashions from the Parisian couturiers, set the trends. These clothes, while usually extreme in design, embodied the themes of the clothes for each season. The originals could only be selected and worn by those having the money to purchase them and the occasions to wear them. As the fashions were presented in the catalogs, they were in a modified state. The major trends were one season to three years late in their presentations, due both to the travel and communication factor, and also because of the fact that the extreme items would not be acceptable to the average middle-class American woman.

In spite of the fact that the stereotyped flapper was not seen in either publication, nor was any mention made of her, the elements of her characteristic dress were clearly visible. The simplification of line, the dropped waistlines, the bustline de-emphasis, the short skirts . . . all of these were part of the flapper, and all were seen in the current fashions of the twenties. The look most nearly like the flapper appeared in 1925 in Harper's and in 1928 in the Sears Roebuck catalogs.

By the end of the twenties, there were not only new styles apparent to the onlooker, but an entirely new look in the American woman. In but a short span of time, she shed her shackles with the past. No longer was she the dainty, feminine creature, swathed under mountains of hair, hats and plumes, encased in stiff collars, laced corsets, fitted gowns, and trailing skirts, who thought that paints and powder were the symbols of a jezebel. The "new" woman placed the accent on youth . . . in mode of dress and in actions. She bobbed her hair, painted her face, perfumed her body, dieted her figure, and exposed her limbs . . . all with casual nonchalance. Her clothing was simple and brief; it had its purpose, and it wasn't to confine the wearer in any manner. By 1919, this trend was firmly entrenched in the minds of a good number of American women, and the ensuing years of the twenties, with their contributions to the changing manners and morals aided in its spread.

In the process of conducting the research for this thesis, it was found that the subject and the time period was virtually untouched as a topic for clothing research. The period of the twenties encompasses such a wealth of information that numerous ideas for continued research evolved. Some suggestions for specific studies are the following:

Almost without exception, the available books of costume history do not sufficiently cover the nineteen-twenties. A survey of these fashions would be most beneficial, especially if it included representative photographs of the clothing.

Due to the acceptance of the chemise and general demeanor of the twenties during the years 1958 and 1959, an analytical study could be conducted to determine why these fashions erupted again, and how they were similar to the fashions of the twenties.

A comparative study might be made between the fashions of men and women during the twenties and further in this vein, another relating them to those of 1958 and 1959.

A more specific study might be conducted of any one of the background conditions herein discussed, as a motivator of fashion spread and adoption in the United States.

A specific study could be made of the psychological factors affecting women during the twenties, and possibly relating them to dress; social class could be explored in relation to fashion changes of the nineteen-twenties.

The possibilities of the topic are so broad that it would be almost impossible to be at a loss for ideas.

This thesis is presented to the reader with the sincere wish that he finds the content stimulating and that it arouses in him the desire to learn more about the subject. The author only regrets that the many facets of the subject could not be fully encompassed in this paper. It is with the intent of stimulating further research, that the flapper has been presented.

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