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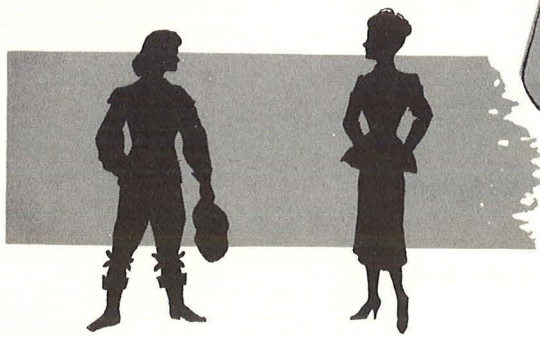
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Clothing and the Spirit of the Times

PART II — THE MODERN WORLD



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CLOTHING AND THE SPIRIT OF THE TIMES

Part II — The Modern World

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Fashion is not an arbitrary style based on the creative impulse of one designer's mind. Fashion is rooted in the hopes and fears of humanity. Political, social and economic conditions affect men's minds and emotions. In turn the minds of men interact with surrounding conditions to produce the trend of thought and feeling of a period. Thus, the spirit of the age — Zeitgeist (tsit ' gist) — evolves. Costume becomes the reflection of this spirit.

Behind all costume stands the spirit of the age. Any new fashion to be accepted must be in accord with the ideas current at that time. As people's views in art, politics, economics, religion or science vary, so does the length of hair, the size of hat, the style of suit. Zeitgeist is in operation.

Looking back through various periods of history, the spirit of the time can be sensed as reflected in the costume of the time.

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SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

The Renaissance was the transitional period between the slow-moving Medieval World and the accelerated Modern World. The passion of Renaissance man for exploring and understanding the world around him led to great geographical discoveries, brought about religious reformation and laid the foundation of modern culture. Man became absorbed with this world rather than the next. This new attitude toward life brought delight in pomp, movement and drama.

Seventeenth century man wished to live in a grand manner. His thoughts expanded into a complex, emotional scale reflected by the rounded, sweeping lines of architecture and clothing called Baroque. A more formal age emerged following the novelty and creativity of the Renaissance and the troubles of the Reformation. Though clothing styles of the early seventeenth century retained characteristics of Renaissance extravagance, details began to reflect man's desire for drama and elegance.

Early Seventeenth Century

Huge collared ruffs of the Renaissance were replaced by large flat collars of sheer linen edged with fine lace worn by both men and women. Men's breeches were full and were fastened at the knee with ribbon loops. Shoes with ribbon rosettes or soft leather boots were commonly worn by men. Garment sleeves worn by both sexes were full. Women abandoned the ungainly wide-skirted farthingale for a long, full skirt. Men wore their hair long and women's hair fell to their shoulders in ringlets or curls.

As the century advanced, religious and political wars in Europe and a civil war in England left the people in a sober mood. The hard-working middle class was well established and began to exert an influence upon clothing styles. Religious reformers frowned upon ostentation in all phases of life. Colonization of the Americas was in full force. A trend toward simpler clothing styles as befitted the spirit of the time could be seen before the close of the century.



1630



1630



1685-1689

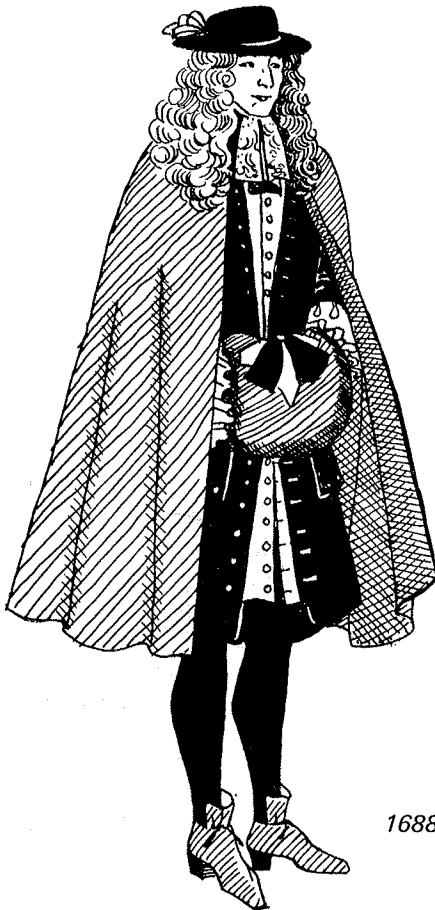
Late Seventeenth Century

Men's wide collars became cravats tied at the neckline, often of lace. Coats and vests were worn over the knee breeches. Feminine gowns became simpler in design. The gown was slit at the front or caught up to show a contrasting colored petticoat. Both sexes carried large muffs in cold weather. Men considered long flowing wigs a definite part of their costumes.

Perhaps the greatest achievement of seventeenth century man was the development of new scientific concepts, making possible our modern science and industry. He perfected the modern languages and recognized the importance of art and literature. Reason became a ruling force in all fields of endeavor. The seventeenth century was the beginning of the age of Enlightenment which continued on into the eighteenth century.

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

The Eighteenth Century began as an age of Reason. The scientific, literary and artistic achievements of the seventeenth century expanded. Newspapers and magazines became common, allowing all levels of society to become informed about the world around them. Excavations of ancient cities led to an interest in the classics. Polite society became artificial and refined.



1688

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY



1778



1780

The tone of the time was international. Americans and Europeans were politically influenced by each other. The gathering storm of the American Revolution and the formation of the United States was watched closely by all Europe. Contacts with the Far East were established.

Despite the American Revolution, England rapidly moved into an industrial age during the latter third of the century. The introduction of the steam engine, the spinning jenny and the cotton gin accelerated the new industrial environment of mankind.

Styles for English men began to evolve into outfits suitable for business and manufacturing.

In France, the political situation became chaotic. The common people were starving while the court exchanged one extravagance for another. Encouraged by the American Revolution, the French overthrew their Monarchy in hopes of setting up a republic.

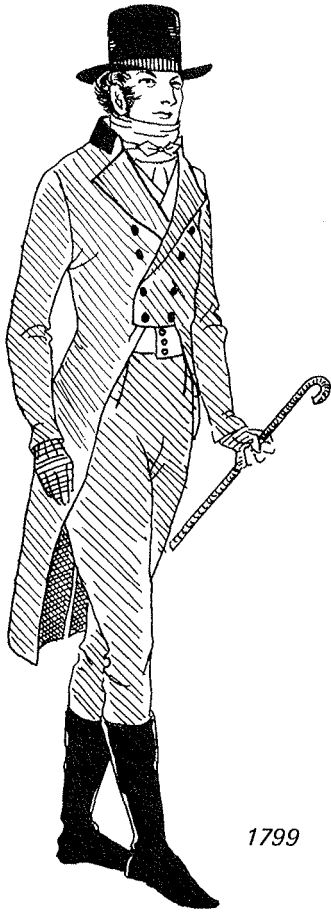
The French Revolution ended the Age of Reason with a bang. Privilege and artificiality were swept away. The aristocrat was forced to abandon his satin knee breeches and rich attire for his own safety. The men adopted the conservative costume that the business-like English men were wearing.

Women's clothing showed that an upheaval had taken place. Changes in female styles were as definite as were the changes in the French government. The simple lines of the ancient Greek costume were worn to show dislike of the former extravagant styles.



1800

Men's clothing began to assume a closer fit. Lines became simpler. The coat, vest and knee breeches began to assume modern characteristics as the century ended. Fabrics used shifted from the ornate to the conservative. Men's tailoring began to assume importance. Men still wore wigs, but in a shorter style. Women's styles moved from ornate lines and headdresses to simple classical lines by the end of the century. Colors and fabrics used changed from the heavy and ornate to paler colors and lighter weights.



1799

NINETEENTH CENTURY

Following the fall of the Monarchy in France, men's clothing changed more markedly than women's and have not regained the color and magnificence of earlier eras. Skillful tailoring, fine fabrics and fastidious grooming became important in men's wear.

The male interest in science, business and industry was largely responsible for this lasting transformation. Work had become respectable and popular, and this new man disliked the look of extravagance. Dirt and soot from the early days of factories, train travel and general growth of urban centers influenced the trend to sombre styles and fabrics for men.

As men's fashions became more conservative, the peacock plumage transferred to the women. Men began to decorate their wives and daughters instead of themselves. The prevailing idea of woman was that she be demure and passive in mind and body. The romantic idea of the helpless woman fostered the voluminous wrappings she began to wear.

Queen Victoria began to set the moral tone of the age, and women became swathed in layers of clothing. Hoop skirts were substituted for the many layers of petticoats, but they became so large that free movement was impeded. A drive for more sanitary, functional dress was begun by a few forward-looking philosophers, but it was not successful. Women abandoned the impractical hoop but adopted the just as impractical bustle and train.

Men's wear reflected the changing world, but women's costume showed no actual relation to the giant industrial and scientific strides of the nineteenth century. Two events had little impact at the time, but were to later revolutionize women's dress. The sewing machine was developed for commercial use by the 1850's and the commercial paper pattern in the 1860's.

As the century drew to a close, a few women had become wage earners, and the movement for women's suffrage was taking hold. An earnest effort was made to design practical yet modest sports clothes. A few women's suits appeared with simpler lines. Women had begun the struggle for equality, but they were not yet ready to relinquish their dependency. Female costume still reflected her restraint.

NINETEENTH CENTURY



1820

1830



1860

Women's styles in the early years followed the classical lines of the earlier century. By 1830 the new silhouette included a definite waistline, long full sleeves, full skirts with many petticoats and large hats. By mid-century the hoop skirt was substituted for the many petticoats under the full skirt. Women abandoned the hoop in the last quarter of the century and adopted the bustle and train. Men's clothing evolved over the century into styles related to the suit of today's businessmen. Men had decided to leave the vagaries of fashion to women.



1870



1885

TWENTIETH CENTURY

The sweeping industrial changes of the nineteenth century came to fruition in the twentieth. As nations industrialized, individual incomes of the population increased. Man was becoming an urban creature. At the same time changes in agricultural methods meant that fewer people could produce food for greater numbers. Population growth became rapid.

Women decided that they wished equality and freedom. Feminine emancipation became important. Women adopted careers. The long swathed skirt and extreme feminine figure was abandoned.

TWENTIETH CENTURY



1905



1911

World War II placed women in factories and professions usually considered masculine jobs. Clothing had to adapt to the new professional woman. Once the cumbersome fashions were shed, women seemed loath to resume them.

Simpler lines in feminine costume were assumed in the early years of the century, though skirts were long. During World War I, feminine hair was bobbed. The boyish figure in a short skirt became the symbol of femininity. Skirts gradually grew shorter until 1947, when a longer skirt and the cinched waist again was adopted. Men's clothes showed few style modifications from the early 1900's to the 1960's.

The twentieth century has become a time of an upward movement of emancipation for all mankind. Undeveloped nations are emerging to take their place in the modern world. The common man enjoys a standard of living that nobility of earlier centuries often could not match. Mass production makes it possible for material products to be within the reach of millions more people than ever before.

The world is again in a state of flux. Political ideologies and nations are in conflict. Scientific and technological advancements seem fantastic. Man is reaching out to the stars before he has solved the age-old problems of earth. Established customs and mores are breaking down. Religious traditions and beliefs are changing.

A spirit of constant change is felt in the age. Women's styles are so varied that no particular prevailing style can be defined. Men's clothing reflects change for the first time in many years. Conservative masculine styles and somber colors are being traded for new designs and bright shades. Costume is reflecting the changing Spirit of the Times. Once again Zeitgeist is in operation.



1927



1947