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Letter from New York

American fashions are showing a strong tendency to return to classical lines and cut. As a result the shirtwaist dress once again reigns supreme for all occasions, but in such a variety of beautiful fabrics, and with such ingenious details in the trimmings that it is impossible to grow tired of it. It is not a uniform; it is an epoch-making style, which will be talked of in years to come, just as one speaks today of the Directory and Empire dresses, or of the days of the crinoline.

The classical tendency is reflected even in the composition of the fabrics. There is a return to smoother, flatter

surfaces. The woven, printed, brocaded or embroidered designs are becoming smaller, less spaced out on the ground of the fabric, more compact in composition. This attention to minute detail, this care in the choice of design, are qualities inherent in the embroideries of St. Gall.

Manufacturers of blouses and lingerie will find new inspiration in the revived classical tendency. Shirtwaist style blouses are enjoying a new lease of the popularity that they never completely lose in this period of widespread travel and sport. The fabrics for ordinary blouses will be of the type most sought after by men's shirtmakers, in silky cottons, silks and mixed fibres. The simplicity of their cut will be enlivened by lovely embroideries, huge monograms adorned with flowers, or fine traceries of branches and foliage, small bouquets embroidered on the collar and down the front of blouses, which will be in fabrics that are plain or worked with stripes or fine checks. There will be two completely distinct types of blouse: the very tailored shirtwaist style and the more dressy blouse, for afternoon and evening wear, which will be as frivolous and feminine as anyone could wish, with puffed sleeves, large berthas of plain or embroidered organdy, flounces, frills and embroidered bows with all the charm of lingerie, in contrast to the severe shirtwaist for town and traveling. The diversity to be found in blouses reflects the new fashion: a classical, masculine tendency for the day and a very romantic, feminine tendency for the afternoon and evening. This season there will be very few all-purpose blouses and dresses suitable for wear both during the day and in the evening. More clothes will therefore have to be bought, since what can be worn during the day will no longer be suitable for the evening.

Greater use is made of St. Gall embroidery for trimming smart blouses than ever before. White and color embroidered edgings are very much in demand for straight blouses, often embroidered and scalloped at the hem and on the sleeves, and worn over skirts or tights like a loose bolero. The embroidered edgings for blouse fronts are used most charmingly on these new outfits, for lounging at home or on tropical beaches, consisting of straight, tight mid-calf pants, ending in scallops and embroideries to match the straight blouse worn loose at the waist like an abbreviated chasuble.

For making classical blouses, Switzerland offers New York manufacturers shirtings in washable silk, and a very wide range of cotton fabrics of incomparable freshness. For winter there are challises of wool, silk and wool, and crêpes of wool or mixed fibres, all as soft as silk. Fewer printed blouses are being made except for the classical paisley designs, and there will be more

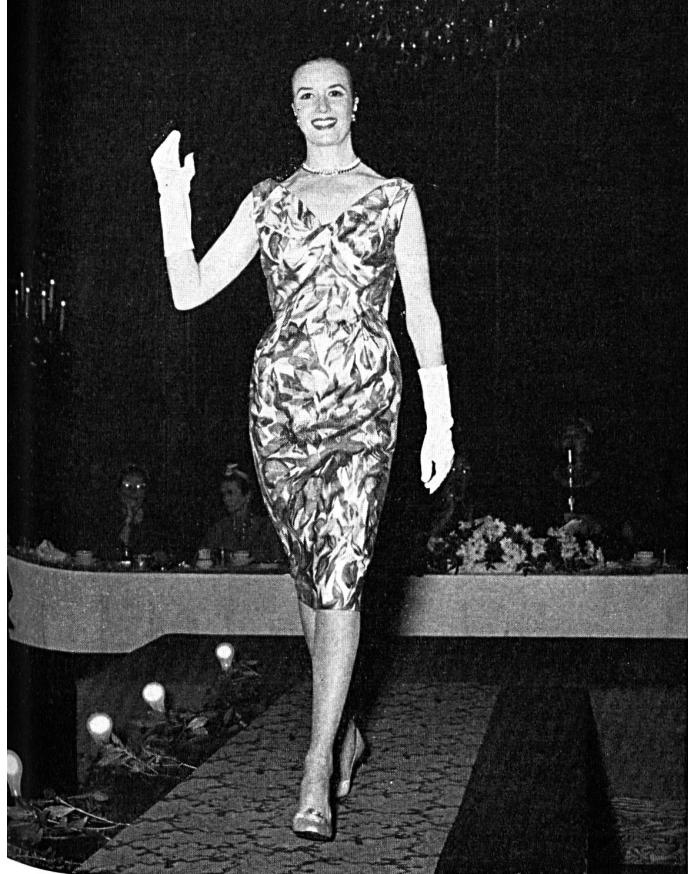


FORSTER WILLI & CO., SAINT-GALL

Embroidered organdie

Organdi brodé

Modèle Pauline Trigère, New York



Printed cotton satin
Satin de coton imprimé
Modèle Adèle Simpson, New York
Photo Fay Foto Service Inc.

embroidered effects of the same shades or in neighboring tones.

The new trends have led to a big increase in the use of embroidery on lingerie too. For example, slips to be worn under skirts that are full once again will be quite different from the stiffened crinolines of the last few seasons.

The new slips will be of two types, the straight slip that wraps around the waist like a sarong and is held in place by a "Velcro" fastener, without a side seam but with a highly decorated embroidered trimming at the hem, or made entirely of embroidery on a soft fabric. The full slip will be made of batiste or embroidered organdy, scalloped, often formed of three flounces, pleated, scalloped or embroidered, in white or colors on white. These slips will have body of their own and will provide support for the full skirts without any artifice, giving them a natural undulating softness. The romantic fashion will make the traditional broderie anglaise more popular than any of the other types for slips for teenagers and young women. Embroideries will also be used for a new garment which is about to assume great importance in smart lingerie : the bedjacket, worn over sleeveless nightgowns, and taking the place of the long dressing gown and the half-length house-coat. The bedjacket is no longer the exclusive prerogative of elderly women susceptible to chills and draughts but is worn by girls and women of all ages, an attractive complement to nightgowns and pyjamas, tights for lounging at home

and shorts ; it has become as indispensable at home as Chanel's short jacket has become for the town.

Dark afternoon and evening dresses continue to be brightened with the whiteness of triple organdy collars, embroidered or lace berthas, boat neck collars enhanced with embroidered organdy, with appliqued flowers framing and widening the line of the shoulders. Many straight, sleeveless body-hugging dresses will be worn with balloon-sleeved blouses in organdy or other very fine fabrics in open-work embroidery or broderie anglaise, giving the figure a new elegance and a very refined, very French look to these flattering evening dresses.

For summer evenings and tropical cruises, the revival of dresses reminiscent of the deep south and gracious living will favour all that is most feminine and traditional in Swiss embroidery. One dress by an American designer from the West is made entirely of plain white organdy with a long full skirt with a heavily embroidered scalloped edge. For the evening there will be long and romantic dresses in organdy, re-embroidered printed fabrics, allover embroidery, etc. For dinner and cocktails there will be short dresses inspired by the shirtwaist style, also in fine, light or embroidered fabrics, similar to those used for the long dresses for formal occasions. Naturally graduation and bridal gowns will be treated in the same romantic spirit and will use greater quantities than ever of fine pleated and embroidered fabrics, organdies and insertions of Venetian lace and cut-out embroideries.

Little girls' dresses will also follow the fashion trends and will be reminiscent of the "Gibson Girls" and colonial dresses. Certain models are called "Puritan", "Covered Wagon", etc., which shows very clearly the influence of daguerreotypes on the fashion for the model little girls of 1960.

Th. de Chambrier



Embroidered organdy
Organdi brodé
Modèle Pauline Trigère, New York
Photo Rebmann