

# Popular 'Great War' coats entrenched in style



Chesterfield with the ever popular military trench coat. The set-in sleeves and notch lapels are characteristic of the Chesterfield, while the full belt, slash pockets and below-knee length are characteristic of the trench coat.

By RUSTLE SHAND

Bill Blass gives credit where credit is due. However, trench through his interpretations are, he admits he wasn't even around when the trench coat concept was born.

Actually, the double-breasted trench coat was devised by an English tailor to fit the needs of World War I soldiers fighting in the trenches of France.

The original coats were tailored of a chemically treated gabardine to repel rain. They had such trappings as storm collars and throat tabs, gun patches, and double yoked backs for protection against downpours, shoulder and sleeve straps and full belts with D-rings for attaching canteens and hand grenades.

Like their British Army counterparts, legions of American servicemen wore them overseas and they kept on wearing them when they returned to civilian life. The post-war generation grew up viewing the dashing style sported by movie idols such as Ronald Colman and David Niven.

Joe McCrea did his bit to further the fashion in the Hitchcock thriller "Foreign Correspondent," as did Robert Taylor in the remake of "Waterloo Bridge."

The trench coat has been synonymous with foreign agent intrigue ever since and has remained in the public eye as the most admired multipurpose coat. It's an all-season style for individuals with a jaunty approach to fashion.

And there's no sign of it diminishing in popularity.

The preponderance of trench styles in Blass's spring line for Malcolm Kenneth of After Six is indicative of the keen awareness which Blass has for the thrust of fashion in any given season.

"CERTAINLY, the double breasted coat, most particularly the trench style, will be the leading statement in outerwear for spring," said Blass.

Blass variations on the theme retain most elements of the classic trench coat. Others are shorn of several accoutrements to achieve a more contemporary character and greater simplicity of line. He has also added his own fillips, such as bellows pockets on some models.

In one instance he combines the characteristic set-in sleeves and notch lapels of the Chesterfield with the full belt, slash pockets and below-knee length of the trench model.

Blass also considered function as well as fashion when selecting fabrics for his lightweight coat designs for spring. Blends are often used to provide both the characteristics of natural fiber and synthetic fiber fabrics. Many are made of blends using cotton or nylon with polyester along with fine wool worsteds.

The color palette tends to the brown family, from tan to chocolate. And grays and blues are present for follow-

ers of those all-time favorite shades. Unlike Woodrow Wilson, who promised American fighting men would be out of the trenches by Christmas, 1917, Bill Blass predicts civilians from coast-to-coast will not only remain in their trenches through spring but through the remainder of the year.

And, says Blass, they'll jolly well enjoy the experience.



Blass's contemporary trench coats owe a debt to World War I. His Wilshire model, left, is treated with double shoulder flaps, D-rings, throat latch, raglan sleeves and sleeve straps. His Thornton, right, features set-in sleeves, the requisite two-way collar, shoulder and sleeve straps and bellows sleeves.

## fashion calendar

- Monday, Feb.**
- Sak's Fifth Avenue — Fashions from the Hanea Mori Collection will be modeled informally in the Regency Room from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.
  - Alfred's Restaurant — Fashions from Somerset Mall shops will be informally modeled from 12 to 2 p.m. in Alfred's Restaurant daily. Schedule for the week is as follows: Monday, Fashions from Bonwit Teller; Tuesday, Lingerie; Wednesday, Don Thomas Sporthaus; Thursday, Bonwit Teller; Friday, Ann Taylor; Saturday, Robert Furs.
- Tuesday, Feb. 5**
- Cooper's Arms — Designer fashions from Janet Varner of Rochester are modeled informally from noon to 1:30 p.m. every Tuesday through May in the Cooper's Arms restaurant, 306 Main St. in downtown Rochester.
  - Sak's Fifth Avenue — Sak's Fifth Avenue Beauty Salon shows you the latest in hair styles, cuts and care for the spring season ahead. Lunch is from noon to 1 p.m. at the Sak's Mall entrance. Call 643-9900 to There is a \$1 charge.
- Wednesday, Feb. 6**
- Lakeside Mall — Children's dental health night will be presented from 7 to 9 p.m. in the performing Arts Court of the Mall. Friday, Feb. 8
- Thursday, Feb. 7**
- Jacobson's — A formal showing of poplin, the wide ranging and versatile fabric, will begin at noon with informal modeling of spring and summer poplin fashions until 5 p.m. at the Birmingham store.
  - Sak's Fifth Avenue — Carol Larson will be at the Somerset Mall store presenting her hand made fine jewelry between 11 a.m. and 4 Also tomorrow.
- Saturday, Feb. 9**
- Jacobson's — Jacobson's of Birmingham invites you and your guests to attend the preview showing of spring/summer bridal fashions for 1980 today at 1 p.m. in the Community House in Birmingham. R.S.V.P. 644-6900, Karen Hines, Bridal Consultant.
  - Lakeside Mall — The Best of the Olympics comes to the Mall Feb. 9 through 22 in the Performing Arts Court with Olympic Gold medalist and speed skater Anne Henning. Also on the agenda are film presentations, figure skating performances and other sports demonstrations.
- Sunday, Feb. 10**
- Somerset Mall — The Sunday concert series will feature Susan Ivers Barna and Chris Birg on flute and guitar from 2 - 4 p.m. in the center court. Open to the public at no charge. The second of Sherwin Wine's lecture, "Communication - Sharing Our Thoughts and Feelings" will be held today at 2:30 p.m. in the mall auditorium. A fee of \$5 will be charged per lecture.

Bill Blass's fashion tribute to the officers of World War I are manufactured by Malcolm Kenneth, a division of After Six, Inc. They are available locally at Steve Pelix of Birmingham, Kosin's, Saks Fifth Avenue, and Hudson's.

## Where It's At

By JUDY SOLOMON

**The Milky Way**

At Sanders this Valentine's Day, it's chocolate all the way. The stores are taking orders for an edible heart-shaped box that is made out of solid milk chocolate. About eight inches in diameter, the lid of the chocolate box can be inscribed with any message you desire (up to 17 letters). Then the box is filled with your choice of delicious chocolate candies and then appropriately gift wrapped. Priced at \$30, this gem can be ordered at any Sanders retail store. Orders must be placed by Feb. 11.

**No strings**

These adorable aprons would make terrific Valentine's Day gifts for your husband, wife, lover or whatever. Created by Cher exclusively for Call It Love, each design utilizes a white poly-cotton butcher-style apron. The lady's version features a red satin torso trimmed with black lace plus a black lace garter belt complete with real black garters. The gentlemen's version has a ruffled shirt, black tuxedo lapels and a red sequin bow tie. The aprons can be personalized with a name or Valentine's message at no extra charge. Call It Love, Orchard Mall, Orchard Lake Road near Maple, West Bloomfield, 626-7400.

**Heartily**

Rialto is chock-full of goodies for Valentine's Day. A white ceramic heart-shaped container (\$8.50) features the words "If you need me just whistle." When you remove the lid, you'll find a real red whistle lying inside. (If only Bogie could be here to see it!) A pair of white ceramic hands hold a red heart-shaped picture frame (\$8.50). Lolita-style sunglasses (\$8.50) have heart-shaped plastic frames in your choice of pink, blue, red, white or lavender and a red satin picture frame comes complete with a silver soft sculpture lipstick attached to the side of the frame (\$26.50).

**Well-healed**

I bought this shoe for myself for two reasons. First I was tired of hobbling around in four inch heels and having my feet ache. Second, I thought they were the best looking pair of flat-heeled shoes I'd seen in a long time. It seems a lot of people agree with me. In fact, I have never yet worn them without at least one person stopping me to admire them and to inquire where they might purchase a pair. Made by Joan and David and called Maximus, the shoes (\$72) are available at Ann Taylor in luggage, taupe and khaki.

Ann Taylor Shoe Department, Somerset Mall, Troy, 643-4801.

## Henredon. For those who value excellence.

OUR ENTIRE HENREDON GALLERY IS ON SALE!

## Wiggs Winter Sale

ENJOY 10% SAVINGS ON FINE HENREDON WOOD PIECES, AND 20% SAVINGS ON BEAUTIFUL HENREDON UPHOLSTERY! There's no more prestigious name in furniture than Henredon! Combining the finest craftsmanship with innovative design, Henredon offers upholstered furniture in a wonderful variety of styles to enhance any interior. (Sofas, loveseats, chairs in your choice of the choicest fabrics.) Note the elegant design details on each piece. This grouping is just one of the many Henredon displays that grace our gallery. The 78" breakfront, crafted in solid ash with olive ash burr, has lighted interior, adjustable glass shelves, lined silver drawer. Chaise lounge shows in creamy velvet, accented with a shirred-edge cushion. Sale ends 3/1/80.

Wiggs

Via 2nd Master Charge  
Open Mon., Thurs., Fri. 10-9

TELEGRAPH RD., 1st Lwng. Lvl., Bldg. 1  
BLOOMFIELD HILLS • 644-7570