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Autor: [s.n.]
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The Importance of Swiss Shirtings on the British Market

Elegance is currently the keyword in fashion. This automatically calls for fine quality fabrics for which British buyers look to Switzerland. Among Swiss textiles, shirtings rank high in the popularity stakes in Britain, for they are one of the specialities developed during recent years.

Enquiries among British agents in London revealed that Swiss shirtings represent between 25 % and 85 % of their entire sales. This is reflected in the British shirt collections for Spring 1973 made up, in some cases, of up to 80 % Swiss fabrics and embroideries. The popularity of Swiss fabrics for day into evening shirts, and of embroideries for formal and dinner shirts, shows no sign of diminishing on the British market. In fact, if anything, the demand is still increasing, although price is an important factor. In spite of their labour and production problems, Swiss manufacturers manage to maintain the high quality standard for which their goods are reputed the world over. They always strive to be one step ahead of fashion, constantly producing new qualities and coming up with new design ideas, superb colours and, always, with enormous collections. This is where they score, for Swiss manufacturers are able to offer the British buyer a wide choice and exclusivity of design.

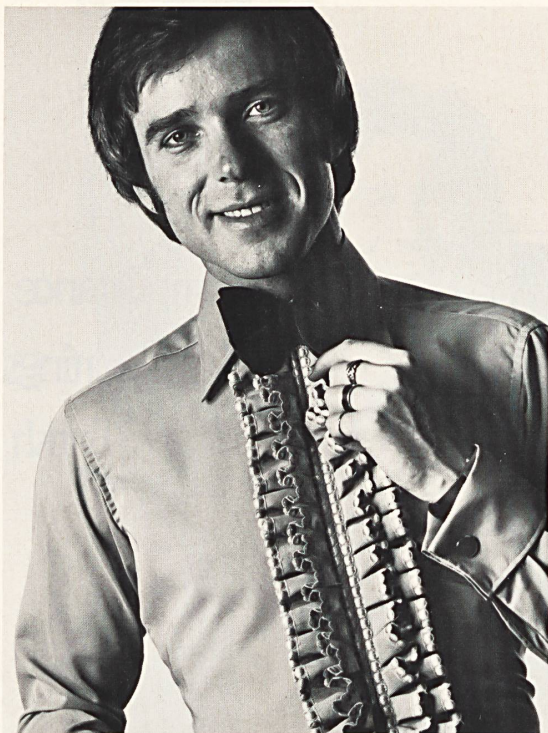


1. Torino Range in Terylene® by Stoffel Ltd., St. Gall. (Model : Chard of London).

2. „Slim-fit“ dress shirt in cotton voile with embroidered jabot frill by Forster Willi & Co. Ltd., St. Gall. (Model : Mr. Harry).

3. Classic white dress shirt with a neat frill outlining the embroidered fly front band by Forster Willi & Co. Ltd., St. Gall. (Model : Rocola).

4. Shirt with swirly line check design in vivid blue on white cotton voile by Hausammann Textiles Ltd., Winterthur. (Model : Le Roi).



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Looking around the MAB exhibition at Harrogate last September where, from a total of 240 exhibitors, 44 were shirt manufacturers, approximately three quarters of the latter showed Swiss shirts. Among the fabrics featured, to mention just a few typical examples, were striped Terylene®/cotton and Dacron®/cotton from Stoffel, 100 % cotton batiste from Hausammann, prints from Fischbacher, fancy wovens from Reichenbach, embroidered voiles and batistes from Eugster Huber, embroidered frills from Forster Willi, cotton crêpe by Wetter and printed jersey and cotton crêpe by Mettler. Swiss voiles appeared in subtle geometric or abstract prints but checks, stripes and spots remain very prominent in the collections for Spring 1973. The favourite shirt styles have either long pointed or wide-spread collars; they are no longer close fitting but show more "natural" body shape.

Mr. Harry's shirt collection, one of the best I saw, consisted of about 80 % Swiss fabrics in day shirts and 100 % Swiss in evening shirts. Printed 100 % cotton crêpe and cotton crêpon, printed voiles and batistes appeared in subtle colour combinations of which I liked the beige/brown/white and black and white shirts for grey flannel suits with deep pointed or wide-spread collar.

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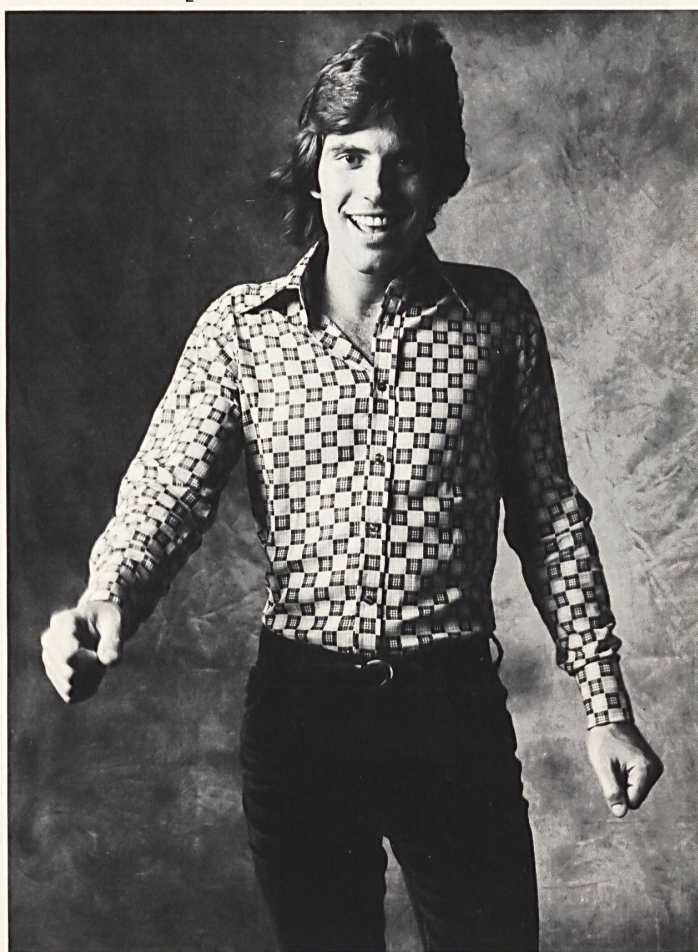
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The Mr. Harry team, General Manager B. Tyson and T. Cowley, the merchandise manager, travel to St. Gall every 6 weeks, where they select, plan and order materials to their specifications. "Our collection is now 80 % Swiss", explained Mr. Tyson, "but I hope that in 18 months' time, it will be 100 % Swiss". What better compliment could there be for Swiss fabrics and embroideries! Greta Sitek

1. Close fitting shirt in fine cotton voile with a delicate pin spot print by Hausammann Textiles Ltd., Winterthur. (Model: Ricky Paul).

2. Elegant yet casual shirt in pure cotton crêpe by Wetter & Co. Ltd., St. Gall. (Model: Mr. Harry).

3. Shirt with subtle dice check squares with white overtones in pure cotton by Reichenbach & Co. Ltd., St. Gall. (Model: Mr. Harry).



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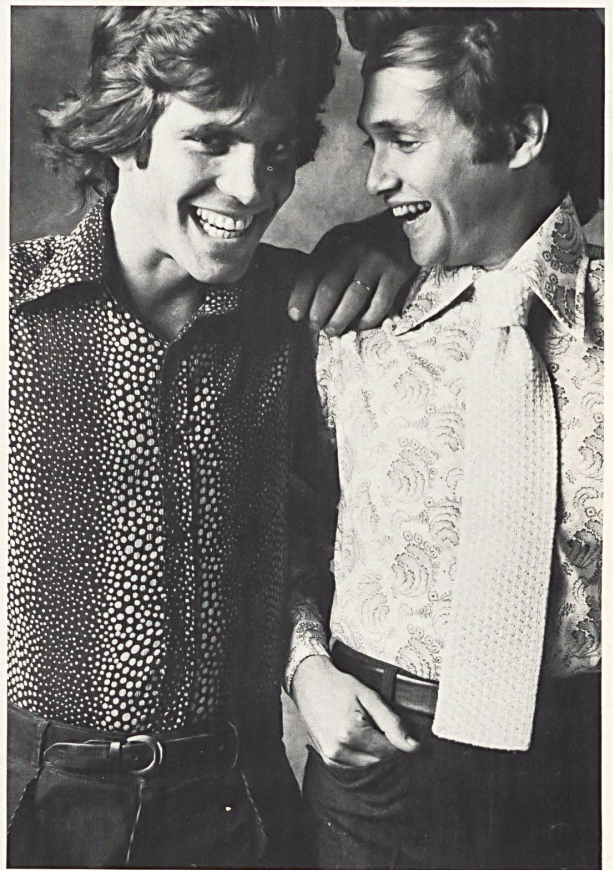
4. Top: "Slim-fit" shirt in a six-sided spot print on cotton batiste in orange on dark brown from Mettler & Co. Ltd., St. Gall. (Model: Mr. Harry). Bottom: For good looks, a shirt in single cotton jersey by Mettler & Co. Ltd., St. Gall. (Model: David Jonathan).

5. Left: Dark ground abstract spot design in pure cotton crêpon by Mettler & Co. Ltd., St. Gall. Right: Swirling light ground leaf print shirt in pure cotton by Reichenbach & Co. Ltd., St. Gall. (Models: Mr. Harry).

6. Left: Eye-catching shirt in cream, satin-striped cotton voile by Christian Fischbacher Co., St. Gall. (Model: Mr. Harry). Right: Cool, casual shirt in predominantly pink and navy pin-striped cotton by Christian Fischbacher Co., St. Gall. (Model: Le Roi).



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