

WOMEN'S NEW HATS ARE MEN'S OLD LIDS

A. E. F. and Soviet Caps, Naval and Napoleonic Headgear Are Among Forerunners of the Milliner's Latest "Creations"

By Eleanor Nangle

ONE day when things were pretty slow around the garden Eve laced a few leaves together, popped them on her head, and leaned cautiously over a placid pool to get the effect. That was the first time a woman tried on a hat—the birth of the great feminine gesture. Eve's daughters have been making ever since.

And that was the first hat—a modest little beginner of one of the most complicated items of fashion. Like most of its successors, the first hat wasn't particularly practical but it was decorative, as Eve discovered.

That is the first excuse for the existence of a hat—that it be becoming. Its usefulness as a bit of head covering figures later in the reckoning, if it figures at all. Give a girl a choice between a utilitarian bonnet—one that keeps out the sun but looks like a fireman's helmet—and a whimsical little scrap of silk or straw that practically pleads for freckles but looks like a milliner's dream, and the milliner's dream wins. It always has been so and always will be, we suppose.

Hat style, like history, repeats itself. Almost every season sees the introduction of some "new" fashion that is patently old. A few years back it was the Eugenie—may its plumes rest, and stay rested, in peace. A few years before that everyone wore Napoleonic tricornes.

But this season the millinery powers that be have sat themselves down to history books and turned out hats reminiscent of almost every time and place. A few of these new old-timers are shown on this page.

Way back in the hot-cha post-war era, when curves were concealed and femininity was frumpishness, no fashion writer would have dared to use such words as "romantic" or "elegant" in describing clothes. Today those two words are being worked to death.

Purely romantic, and therefore elegant, is a hat with drooping brim, with ribbon flowers on its shallow crown and a flattering velvet bow to tie beneath the chin. It's heralded as new, but of course it isn't. It's the old tried and true model that back in 1875 was labeled as the Dolly Varden and was then and is now as coquettish as the provocative lady for whom it was named. Present-day coquettes who wear it to cocktail parties don't wear with it the panniers and fichu that Dolly affected, but the secret of its success is just the same.

Patou, whose word is law to well dressed women, introduced some novel berets this year. They were, said the fashion writers, very new and nobby. Women wore them and didn't care what inspired them, but hat historians had a lot of fun tracking them down. Priests of the Greek and Russian churches had worn similar hats for centuries; and if the tight-fitting head band beneath their stiffly flared crowns bore a silk ribbon with the name of one of his royal majesty's ships emblazoned thereon, these "new" berets, *chez Patou*, would be exact duplicates of the hats worn by British tars. It's a long jump from Greek church to cruiser deck to Paris salon—but the milliners made it.

Maybe as a challenge, an American designer came out with a hat influenced by the headgear of our own gobs. Structurally this little scrap of a hat is the exact copy of our jackie's sailor, but it is executed, for elegance, in dark suede or felt.

The hat stylists don't neglect the army, either. The cap of the A. E. F. inspired one of the most popular bonnets this fall. Women wore similar millinery during and just after the war, in a burst that was more patriotic than chic. The 1933 version has chic, and elegance too. The one pictured here has a little feather pompon beneath its peak. Glove suede is substituted for khaki, and the gray of a turtle dove's wing for the drab mustard color.

The military influence extends even farther. This year a stylist for Hollywood brought out a new bonnet with a turned-up brim that hugs the head and a conical crown that sets a new mark for hat height. Strangely enough, this hat style, worn becomingly only by the piquant young miss who can wear ANYTHING and get away with it, is laid by historians right at the door of the rough-and-tumble Russian army. An inspection of photographs reveals that this is pretty much the case; a picture of Trotsky taken in 1920 shows him wearing a cap greatly similar in line.

And, as final proof that there is no new hat under the sun, consider the latest evening turban, three green leaves laced together to fit like a skullcap. The only difference between it and Eve's is that the hat leaves we wear are artificial—which may or may not be progress.



At left above: A romantic bonnet introduced this year. At right above: A sketch of Dolly Varden, whose affectation of a Watteau hat gave the fashion its name long ago.



Above: A millinery offering of the season, peaked toque in gray suede with a carnation added for elegance. At right: The A. E. F. cap which inspired it, worn here by Maj. Gen. Adelbert Cronkhite. The lines are almost identical. (Acme photos.)



Above: One of our own jackies wearing the usual sailor, the style that inspired the chic women's sailor shown below. The upturned brim is modified a bit and glove suede substituted for the heavy white duck.



At left: Twin models of the novel beret introduced this season by Patou. Do you notice the similarity of these smart sports hat to the berets worn by the tars of the British navy, shown at the right?



Left: Leon Trotsky wearing the hat that inspired the one at the right above.