



PRINCELY LEGACY TO FASHION

During the 20's and 30's, no man wielded greater fashion influence than the Prince of Wales. For almost two decades he was a source of inspiration to menswear manufacturers and retailers on both sides of the Atlantic. At the peak of his influence, his power was so great that a wealthy Chicago businessman left standing orders with Scholte, the royal tailor at the time, for a duplicate of every suit ordered by the Prince.

His visit to the United States in 1923 raised the morale of British trade and aroused the interest of fashion-conscious North American men. Among the items he popularized were red ties, which were considered unmasculine until he wore them.

Brown suede shoes worn with a suit were viewed as vulgar prior to the Prince. Single-handedly he relieved a depression affecting Fair Isle, in the Shetland Islands, when he chose to appear on the golf links wearing one of the hand-knit sweaters made there. When he attended the horse races at Belmont Park Long Island, wearing a big Panama hat of the type not seen in the United States for over a decade, almost overnight the Panama hat came back into fashion.

The Single Windsor Knot

1. Cross long end over short end

2. Bring long end behind and over the top

3. Wrap long end around the back...

4. ...and across the front

5. Bring long end behind and over the top again

6. Pull long end through front loop and adjust knot

More than any other individual, he made London the men's fashion capital of the world. During the prosperous 20's, when increasingly large numbers of affluent North Americans traveled abroad, the British perspective on menswear affected North American fashion more than ever before.

It was during this period that the Prince of Wales adopted a wide spread collar for his dress shirts. The fashion caught on immediately which helped to popularize the very wide tie knot that he wore to accent the very spread collar. For that reason the knot became known as the Windsor knot. It remained in fashion until wider ties of the 50's and 60's made the bulky knot impractical...

Today, shirt collars have become narrower with a less prominent spread. The traditional Windsor knot (the double Windsor) has given way to the single Windsor. It is just as neat but a little more streamlined to accommodate today's fashion.

For a step by step guide to the single Windsor knot, see illustration at left.