CHAPTER XIX
TAILORED SEAMS

MANY KINDS of seams are used in the making of tailored costumes. It is necessary to keep the cloth extremely smooth at the seams and to make the stitching as even as possible. In making a garment that requires a tailored finish one should not be sparing in the use of bastings and the hot iron. He was a wise and honest tailor who declared “In the flat-iron is our fortune,” and the dressmaker who would be successful along the same lines will do well to keep in mind this well-tried maxim.

IN PLAIN SEAMS of very closely woven material that does not fray or ravel, the edges of the seams may be simply notched or pinked, and pressed open. (Fig. 251.) Plain seams of jackets, cloaks and other garments made of heavy material that will fray should be bound with satin, silk or farmers’ satin. This is cut in bias strips just a trifle wider than the depth of the seam after it is closed. Stitch the binding on the right side of the seam edge, close to the edge, then baste it flat, covering the edge. Close the seam of the garment with bastings catching through both cloth and bindings. Then stitch.

A better way, requiring more labor, however, is to stitch the seam and press it open. After pressing, the seam will have spread at the edges, especially if it is curved, and the binding can be safely applied without any chance of pulling later.

Baste the strip of binding on the right side of the edges; turn it over the raw seam edge and fell it down on the underside, keeping the turned edges of the binding even on both sides of the seam edge. (Fig. 252.) It is finished with one row of machine stitching close to the edge of the binding.

When Trimming is to be applied over seams, the plain seam is used. It should be finished completely, and pressed before the trimming is added.

JOINED SEAMS of garments that have the lining cut like the outer pattern and stitched together, are finished by turning in the raw edges of the seams of both cloth and lining toward each other and closing the edge with overhand or running stitches. Where the seam is curved, the edges must be notched every now and then to prevent the garment from pulling at such points.

AN ORDINARY TAILORED SEAM, which makes a good neat finish, is the plain seam pressed with both edges turned to one side, and a row of machine stitching run in neatly
along the one side of the seam from the right side of the garment as shown in Fig. 253. Or, if preferred, a row of stitching may be applied to each side of the seam. (Fig. 254.) In the latter case, however, the seam should be pressed open before running in the stitching.

A Broad Seam is a plain wide seam with four rows of ornamental stitching. (Fig. 255.) This seam is mostly used on tailored garments of heavy materials.

A Cord or Tuck Seam is a plain seam with both edges turned to one side, and a row of stitching run one-fourth of an inch from the seam, through the three thicknesses of the goods. This creates a raised or cord-like effect. (Fig. 256.) The undesirable thickness on the under side may be cut away at the inner edge as close to the stitching as possible.

A WELT SEAM is made by first stitching a plain seam with the one edge of the material left very narrow. Then turn back the fold and baste down close along the narrower seam edge. Stitch parallel to the line of bastings, keeping the seam flat. Fig. 257 shows this seam with the machine stitches ripped out at the top to expose the narrow seam edge underneath.

A Double-Stitched Welt Seam has an additional row of stitching set in one-fourth inch or less from the edge. (Fig. 258.)

An Open-Welt Seam is first basted as for a plain seam. The tuck is then basted down flat, with the stitches directly over the line of bastings in the seam. With one row of machine stitching the tuck-like fold and the seam are made secure. (Fig. 259.)

The raw edges on the underside of an open-welt seam may be bound with velveteen or with narrow grosgrain ribbon, which can be bought for the purpose. Baste the binding over the double seam edges, and stitch through all the thicknesses as near the edge of the binding as possible. (Fig. 260, on next page.)
A SLOT SEAM is made by basting the seam as for a plain seam. The basting stitches should be short enough to keep the seam firm while it is being pressed open. Then baste an understrip of the material a trifle narrower than the combined width of the seam edges, directly under the basted seam. (Fig. 262.) From the right side, stitch three-eighths of an inch on each side of the center. Remove the bastings. The turned edges, now free, give the slot appearance, whence the name. (Fig. 261.)

A Double-Stitched Slot Seam is produced by stitching another row each side of the center close to the turned edges. (Fig. 261.)

STRAP SEAMS are plain seams over which straps of the material are stitched for ornamental purposes. The strips for these straps may be cut lengthwise of the material from pieces that are left after cutting out the garment, but experience has taught that when silk is used it is better to cut them on the bias, and when the material is cloth the better result will be obtained if the straps are cut crosswise of the goods.

For a finished strap that is five-eighths of an inch wide, the strips are cut one and one-fourth inches wide. Join the two raw edges with loose overhand stitches as shown in Fig. 10, page 4; spread out the strap with the line of joining directly on the center, and press.

When making strap seams it is desirable to graduate the thickness at the seam as much as possible. For this reason, cut the seams either wide enough so the edges on the underside will extend beyond the edges of the strap, or, cut them narrower so the edges of the strap will extend beyond the seam edges.

Baste the straps carefully over the seams, with a line of bastings run along each edge. (Fig. 263.) When it is necessary to piece the straps for long seams, avoid having the joining seam in a prominent place on the garment.

A LAPPED or IMITATION STRAP SEAM is the most practical finish for unlined garments. The edges at the seams are lapped and the raw edges turned in with a row of stitches finishing it alike on the right and wrong sides. (Fig. 264.)
A *Raw-Edge Lapped Seam* is used in making garments of heavy, closely woven material that will not fray or ravel. The seam edges must be cut very accurately and smoothly. Baste the edges evenly, lapping them the full allowance, and stitch as near the edge of the upper lap as possible. A second row of stitching five-eighths of an inch from the first gives it a neat and tailored finish. The seam on the underside should be trimmed off evenly. (Fig. 265.)

One should be very careful in deciding on the style of seam used on a tailored garment. Tweeds, homespuns, friezes, and all other rather loosely woven woolen materials should be finished with bound seams. In linens, pongeés and erashes one should use the cord, bound or lapped seam. Broadcloth, meltons, kerseys, covert, and other heavy driving cloths can be pined, as they are so closely woven that they will not ravel. To have a good tailored look the machine-stitchings on any seam must not be too fine. The thread and needle should be of medium thickness and the stitch should correspond in size.