CHAPTER 11

SAILOR OR NAVAL SUITS

Materials—Blouse—Collar—Emblems and Chevrons—Neckerchief or Tie—Skirt

ALMOST invariably the small boy and girl, if given any voice in the choosing of their clothes, will select the suit that looks most like a uniform.

Women and young girls like middy costumes because they are attractive, useful and extremely comfortable for work or sports. This type of dress makes excellent school and play dresses.

Dark navy-blue flannel and bleached cotton drill are the materials used for these blouses or overshirts, as they are called. According to the regulations governing the uniforms of officers and enlisted men of the navy, the dark-blue flannel blouses are trimmed with white linen tape, while the cotton drill blouses are made with sailor collar and cuffs of dark-blue flannel, which are also trimmed with the tape.

In adapting this style for misses’ and girls’ wear, it is not necessary to be governed absolutely by the ironclad rules regarding color and material which are observed in the navy. Besides the regulation navy-blue and white, brown, gray and red and the unbleached “khaki” shades are considered quite correct for sailor dresses. Serge and cheviot are appropriate woolen materials, while linen, duck, piqué, chambray, galatea, etc., are a few of the suitable wash fabrics.

TO MAKE THE BLOUSE, baste the seams with notches matching, and try the blouse on, either by slipping over the head or lapping the fronts, as directed in the pattern instructions. If a yoke-facing is used, the underarm seams are left open to facilitate the work. The shoulder seams of the blouse are joined with the seams toward the outside; those of the yoke-facing toward the wrong side. Stitch and press the seams open.

The lower edge of the yoke is turned under a seam’s width. If the yoke has a curved lower outline, the turned-under portion at the fullest part of the curves must be slightly eased, while at the sharp points it must be slashed as shown in Ill. 89. Lay the blouse flat on the table, spread out its entire length. Place the yoke on the blouse so that the shoulder seams come exactly together and the yoke lies smoothly on the blouse. Pin the yoke to hold it in place, then baste and stitch it to the blouse.

Plaits are made in the regulation sleeve by easing from the perforations at the bottom to the corresponding perforations at cuff depth. These creases are brought over to the position marked by perforations and the plaits are stitched along the fold edge before the seam is closed.

Illustration 90 shows how the blouse may be laid out on the table for convenience in joining the sleeve. Baste the sleeve to the yoke with the usual three-eighths-of-an-inch seam and then stitch it. Turn under the armhole of the blouse three-eighths of an inch, baste it over the seam, and fell it down. Make a second stitching on the body of the blouse one-quarter of an inch from the seam. The underarm and sleeve seams have been left open until now, making the work easier to handle and also making it possible
to sew the rating badge on the sleeve properly. Close the underarm seams and the sleeve seams as notched, using flat felled seams. (Chapter 17, page 87.) A hem is turned at the bottom of the blouse and if the pattern instructions direct, an elastic is inserted to hold the blouse in place.

THE COLLAR is joined to the neck with the seam toward the inside. (Ill. 91.) The collar is marked with notches showing where it joins the blouse, and in basting it on, the edge should be stretched between the notches to fit the corresponding edge of the blouse, thus causing the collar to roll closely about the neck. The outer edges are turned under three-eighths of an inch and basted down. At the end of the slash in front, the turned-under portion tapers away to a point.

The outer facing is placed on the collar so carefully that the roll of the facing and collar will come exactly together and the ends are slipped under the fronts. (Ill. 92.) Baste along the roll. The neck edge of the facing is stretched sufficiently to make it lie smoothly when the collar is rolled back. After pinning the collar facing around the neck and down the front, roll the collar and facing over and roll the fronts back. Put your hand under the collar and smooth it outward, so that it does
not wrinkle on the collar facing.

Turn the edge of the collar facing under, even with the collar. Baste the collar and the facing together across the bottom and sides up to the seam joining the collar and blouse. From that point down, take out the pins that hold the collar facing to the blouse.

The collar facing is trimmed with three rows of linen tape, set its own width apart and stitched on both edges. If you sew the tape on the collar facing after the latter is on the blouse, the stitching will show on the front of your yoke. Across the back of the collar it makes no difference, for the facing is on top, and the stitching underneath. Baste the linen tape carefully to the collar facing and stitch it on both edges.

After it has been stitched, the collar facing can be basted in place under the front. A row of stitching as close to the edge as possible should run around the entire outer edge. The inner edge of the collar facing must be turned under three-eighths of an inch. Wherever it is necessary, it must be clipped, or eased, like the edge of the yoke. After the edge is turned under, it is basted to the blouse. Across the back of the neck it is felled to the blouse, covering the seam, but down the fronts it is stitched with two rows of machine stitching, which makes a pretty decoration on the front of the blouse.

THE SHIELD is cut in one piece and may be simply hemmed, or, if preferred, lined throughout with lawn or cambric. It is trimmed with an emblem or star.

After both blouse and shield are finished, it is practical to make a few buttonholes along the neckline of the body part, under the collar, sewing buttons in corresponding positions on the shield to prevent it from shifting around out of place. A crow's-foot may be made at the lower end of the neck opening in front (Chapter 25, page 128) and makes a neat, strong finish.

EMBLEMS AND CHEVRONS in the various groups, or sets of anchors, bars, eagles and stars, finished and ready to sew on can be bought, but they are never as satisfactory as the designs that can be stamped on the dress itself. Sometimes the figures are worked in the center of a piece of broadcloth or linen, which is cut square or oblong, or in shield shape, and attached to the sleeve with a row of catch-stitching.

The chevrons or stripes are not padded but should be made of strips of scarlet three-eighths of an inch wide, separated one-fourth inch and sewed on flat with an overlock stitch of scarlet silk on the edges.

In working the specialty marks and eagles, an easier plan than the one of cutting the figures out of pastebound and working over them, is to baste a piece of canvas or crinoline on the wrong side of the material, and work right through it, cutting the edges of the canvas away after the figure has been completed.

Light-weight twisted embroidery silk, mercerized cotton, or a linen thread may be used to advantage, for in this work smoothness is the most desirable feature, and the threads should all be placed in such a way as to lie next to one another, but not overlap.

On suits of galatea, chambray, linen or any of the other cotton materials used for children's clothes, the work may be done with cotton, either plain or mercerized. This thread is more suitable than silk for suits which need frequent washing. The sleeve emblem
may be repeated on the front of the blouse or shield, or a simpler design—a star or anchor, for instance—may be used if preferred.

The navy regulations state what material shall be used for the rating badge. Its decoration usually consists of a spread eagle above a specialty mark, and a class chevron.

For blue clothing, the eagle and specialty marks can be embroidered in white, and for white clothing they can be worked in blue silk. The position of the rating badge worn by petty officers is governed by naval uniform regulations.

The chevrons show the class of the officer, while the specialty marks indicate his position in the service.

In using these emblems on a blouse, one might select the specialty marks worn by the father or brother who is enlisted, or even an insignia indicating the trade or professional calling followed by a member of the family, such as engineer, electrician, etc.

The emblem may be placed on the shield also, and a five-pointed star should be embroidered on both corners of the collar. Excellent Butterick transfer patterns can be purchased for the emblems, stars, etc., used on sailor suits.
THE NECKERCHIEF OR TIE worn with the blouse is a square of black silk tied in a square knot, leaving ends from four to six inches long. It is folded diagonally and then rolled up, with the two overlapping corners folded into the material and held together by an elastic, as shown in Illustration 96, while the other corners are tied at the lower end of the collar in a square knot with a corner extending from each side. (Ill. 97.)

THE SKIRT. If front openings in the skirt are desired, both edges of the front gore are underfaced to the depth of a placket opening, with a straight strip of material about one and one-half inches wide. The front edge of each side gore should have an underlap to the same depth, about one inch and a half wide when finished.

Join the gores together with stitched felled seams, continuing the stitching along the opening. If the skirt is to be plaited, the plaits will give sufficient material for the underlap. (Chapter 21, page 102.)

For a back lacing, the back plait is stitched separately from the skirt and the fold edges worked with six or eight eyelets (Chapter 24, page 115) and laced with black silk lacing or silk tape. (Ill. 99.)

The upper edge of the front gore is finished with a straight belt two inches wide. A continuous belt of the same width is attached to the side and back gores of the skirt. The belts are cut single and lined, with an interlining added if it is necessary. Three buttonholes are made at each side of the front gore, two on the skirt part and one on the belt. (Ill. 98.)

The sailor blouse may be used with a boy’s suit. Instructions for making trousers will be found in Chapter 36.