



FINE CONTEMPORARY TAILORING



Applauded, craved and increasingly worn, the chalk stripe suit is the last of the water proofed's wardrobe. James Bond (both actual and fictional) wears it, as does the highest ranked military and police officers. And so it is that it has not only become a wardrobe staple, but a symbol of status and authority. It was around a century ago that the Duke of Windsor was on his world tour in the 1920s, he dressed in double breasted chalkstripes down, by wearing them with tan suede brogues. (It would be wrong if it were a Duke knows better, so it's alright.) But dressed up, with formal business accessories, the chalkstripe has a style and a presence which cannot be matched by any of the plainer fabrics.

CHALKSTRIP



It has been said that wearing a chalkstripe means making a commitment to style. It is the suit of a confident man, for while a fine chalkstripe is subtle, not strident, it still demands a certain panache of its wearer. The pattern echoes the look of the lines marked by tailors' chalk on fabric; it combines the respect and authority of the pinstripe with the flair of bolder designs. When the Duke of Windsor was on his world tour in the 1920s, he dressed in double breasted chalkstripes down, by wearing them with tan suede brogues. (It would be wrong if it were a Duke knows better, so it's alright.) But dressed up, with formal business accessories, the chalkstripe has a style and a presence which cannot be matched by any of the plainer fabrics.

GREY BIRDSEYE



The grey suit epitomises the Transatlantic era, and the energy of the post-war business world. It was in 1915 that silver grey was decided upon as the colour for the jubilee year of King George V, both sexes wore it in his honour, for events such as weddings and Royal Ascot, and so it entered the repertoire of formal dress. But it was in post-war America that grey really became a symbol of the modern businessman. Adopted as a virtual uniform on Madison Avenue, the novelist Sloan Wilson needed to look no further in order to sum up the new corporation man; his 1955 novel was simply titled, *The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit*. This classic version is in a fabric known as birdseye, or nailhead, which mixes white fibres with the grey to give it subtlety and depth.

PRINCE OF WALES CHECK



It is now universally known as Prince of Wales check (or by the French title, Prince de Galles). But technically, this is the black and white Glen Urquhart plaid, with a fine blue overcheck. Originally, this particular pattern was the estate check of the Countess of Seafield, one of a number of district checks worn as livery designs by stalkers and ghillies to identify the Scottish sporting estate on which they were employed. It took its new name from the Duke of Windsor, a great fan of check patterns - 'The louder they are, he declared, 'the better I like them' - who made this pattern acceptable for more formal wear. And although it has become a classic suiting, even today, alongside more sombre fabrics, the suit in Prince of Wales check still has something of a sharper, racier style.

