

# Cotton Fabrics of the Model A Era

By Jeanie Adair  
ERA Fashion Committee



As lovely as the gorgeous evening and formal ensembles are that we see so many times in the fashion shows at our National and Regional Model A Meets, I think that those were special clothes.

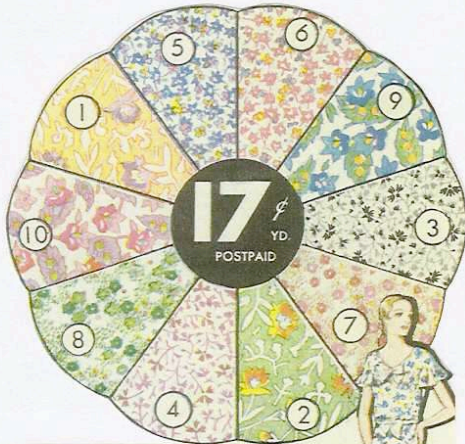
They were not what the common people wore on a routine basis, day in and day out. I can't help but believe that most women wore much simpler, plain everyday dresses. Especially when the weather was warm, what else could beat cotton!

The photo above was taken in 1929 of my mother, her older sister, her mother and father.

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## SPRINGTIME AND SUMMERTIME IS COTTON TIME!



### Printed Cotton Batiste Guaranteed Fast Color Soft Finish . . . Newest Patterns

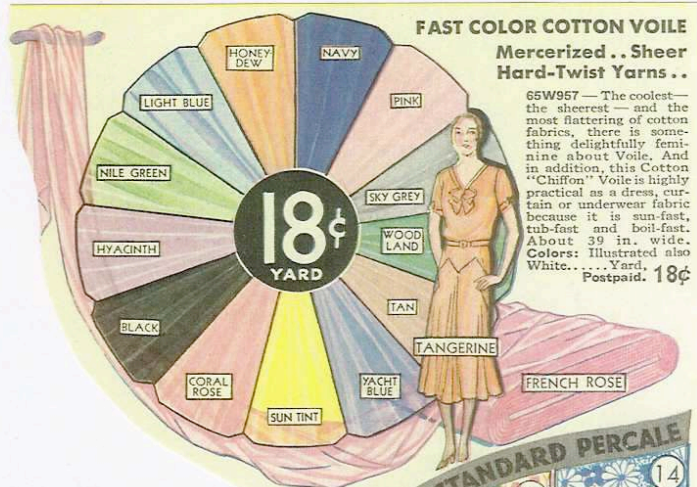
65W1807—Fashion sponsors colorful prints for Spring and Summer. So we offer this fine quality Printed Cotton Batiste in a variety of new and original designs and stunning colors. Closely woven of fine mercerized yarns. About 36 inches wide. Order by No. 65W1807; give number for pattern desired. . . . . A yard, 17¢



### 8¢ YD. A Wonderful Value! 26-in. GINGHAM

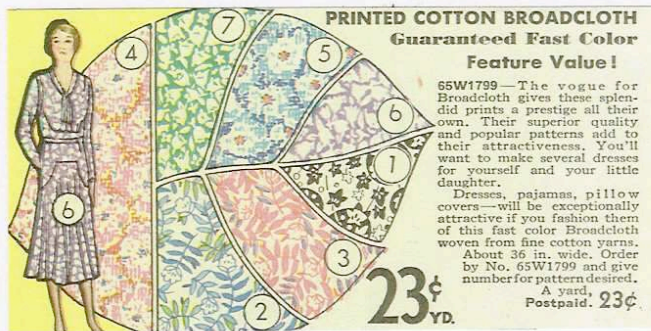
65W1810—In Plaids or Checks! In pastels or darker colors! This Gingham is highly attractive and one of those bargains that you simply can't afford to pass by. It will prove its sturdy wearing qualities conclusively to you after you've tubbed it numerous times. And it's only 8 cents a yard. Width 26 inches. Order by No. 65W1810 and give number for pattern. . . . . A yard, 8¢  
A 60-inch Tape Measure Free Upon Request.

If you have access to an era catalog from 1928 to 1931 check out the fabric section. Most of the section will be in full color! Of course the homemaker would want to know what she was ordering would look like. It only makes sense for it to be in color.



### FAST COLOR COTTON VOILE Mercerized . . . Sheer Hard-Twist Yarns . . .

65W957—The coolest—the sheerest—and the most flattering of cotton fabrics, there is something delightfully feminine about Voile. And in addition, this Cotton "Chiffon" Voile is highly practical as a dress, curtain or underwear fabric because it is sun-fast, tub-fast and boil-fast. About 39 in. wide. Colors: Illustrated also White. . . . . Yard, Postpaid, 18¢



### PRINTED COTTON BROADCLOTH Guaranteed Fast Color Feature Value!

65W1799—The vogue for Broadcloth gives these splendid prints a prestige all their own. Their superior quality and popular patterns add to their attractiveness. You'll want to make several dresses for yourself and your little daughter. Dresses, pajamas, pillow covers—will be exceptionally attractive if you fashion them of this fast color Broadcloth woven from fine cotton yarns. About 36 in. wide. Order by No. 65W1799 and give number for pattern desired. . . . . A yard, Postpaid, 23¢



### FULL STANDARD PERCALE

### LEADER VALUE! Bright New Patterns

65W1755—A good, practical all-round material. Full standard smooth-finished Printed Percale. Woven of good cotton yarns in lovely patterns. For dresses, aprons, rompers, etc. About 36 in. wide. Order by No. 65W1755 and give number for pattern. . . . . Postpaid.

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## STAFAST PRINTS GUARANTEED FAST COLOR

### "NATIONAL'S" Quality Prints

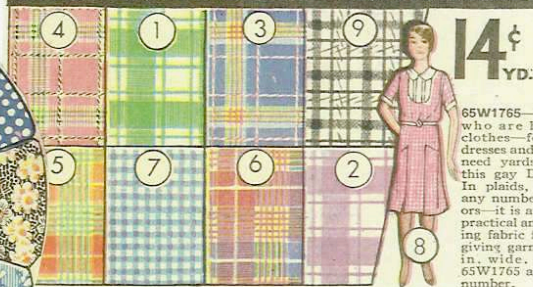
65W1795—With these "STAFAST PRINTS" in unusual designs and distinctive colorings as an inspiration, you can create charming, inexpensive frocks.

"STAFAST PRINTS" are justly famous throughout the country for their fine texture, fast color and close weave. Beauty of texture and patterns, exceptional durability and "NATIONAL'S" low price account for their popularity.

Width about 36 in. Order by No. 65W1795 and give number for pattern desired.  
Postpaid, Yard, 19¢



## YARD-WIDE DRESS GINGHAMS



**14¢** RELIABLE GRADE  
YD. PRICED LOW!

65W1765—For youngsters who are hard on their clothes—for your house dresses and aprons—you'll need yards and yards of this gay Dress Gingham. In plaids, in checks and any number of bright colors—it is at once the most practical and the best-looking fabric for any service-giving garment. About 36 in. wide. Order by No. 65W1765 and give pattern number. Postpaid.

The catalogs even show patterns as examples of what to make from a certain type of fabric. Of course they sold patterns also. So if you're into sewing, why not check out those old catalogs for inspiration to whip up a new, comfortable, cotton frock for Spring or Summer.

**NEW! LENO CHECK COTTON BATISTE**

**OPENWORK WEAVE Fast Color** **29¢** YARD

65W1801—Fashion places her stamp of approval on Cotton Prints and this new openwork Leno-Check Printed Batiste is a favorite. Woven of mercerized combed cotton in attractive fast color printed designs. About 36 in. wide. Order by No. 65W1801 and give pattern number.

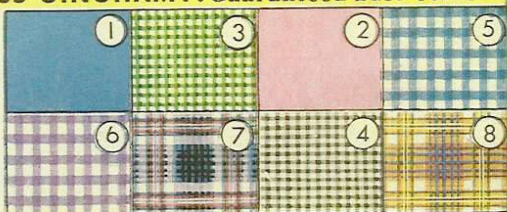
Suggestions for clothing made of cotton fabric are: Dresses, beach pajamas, pants for gardening, overalls, sports wear, shorts, blouses, skirts, jackets, aprons, lingerie, men's shirts and children's clothes.

There are many kinds of cotton fabrics: Batiste, broadcloth, chambray, cotton linene, cotton pongette, Dimity, eyelet, gingham, lawn, organdie, percale, plisse', velvet and voile. That's a lot of different textures and weaves of cotton.

## OUR BEST DRESS GINGHAM . . . Guaranteed Fast Color

65W1811—Our very best Dress Gingham is now only 18 cents a yard. It's a soft finished fabric POSTPAID firmly woven of long staple cotton yarns and its bright designs are guaranteed fast color. Comes in the lovely patterns and solid colors illustrated. About 32 in. wide. Give No. 65W1811 and number for pattern desired.

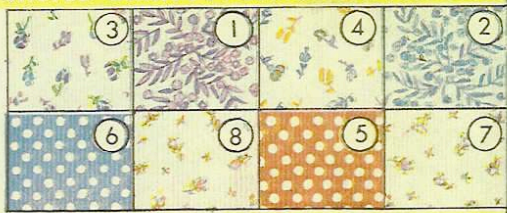
**18¢** YD.



## FINE QUALITY PRINTED DIMITY . . . Guaranteed Fast Color

65W1808—Tiny floral patterns or dots enliven this superior quality Printed Cotton Dimity. A fashion-right fabric that makes charming dresses. You'll appreciate its sheerness, serviceability and beauty. Woven of combed cotton yarns in high thread count. About 36 in. wide. Fast Colors. Order by No. 65W1808 and give number for pattern desired.

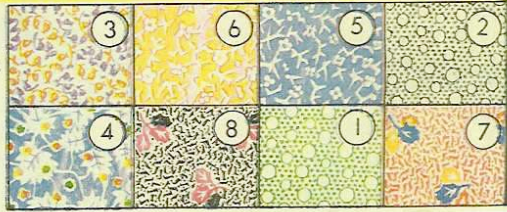
**27¢** YD.



## STYLISH PRINTED COTTON PONGETTE . . . Fast Color

65W1809—We're sure this attractive Printed Cotton Pongette will be one of the most popular of fabrics POSTPAID—not only because of its excellent quality but also because of its extraordinarily low price—only 25¢ a yard. Woven of mercerized cotton yarns in fast colors. High count. About 36 inches wide. Order by No. 65W1809 and number for pattern desired.

**25¢** YD.



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**Famous "NATIONAL" PRINTS**  
Guaranteed Fast Color

**17¢**  
YD.  
POSTPAID

**SO INEXPENSIVE!**  
You'll Choose Several Patterns  
65W1806—"NATIONAL" Prints are famous for beauty and quality the country over and justifiably so. The printed patterns—each lovelier than the other—are so new and colorful. They never fade—they'll be as fresh and lovely after dozens of tubbings as they were when new. Wear exceptionally well.  
Firmly and evenly woven of fine cotton yarns with soft pongee finish. About 36 inches wide. Order by No. 65W1806 and give number for pattern desired.  
A yard, 17¢  
Postpaid, 17¢

**FAST COLOR COTTON CHIFFON VOILE**

**25¢**  
YARD

**SEASON'S SMARTEST DESIGNS**  
**Excellent Quality**  
65W1805—The more feminine you are in 1931 the smarter you'll be. That's why this dainty Printed Cotton "Chiffon" Voile is so exactly in step with fashion. Its designs are the very newest and smartest and it's so sheer and dainty. A very superior quality material woven of extra hard twist cotton yarns in guaranteed fast colors. About 39 in. wide. Give No. 65W1805 and number for pattern. A yard, 25¢

**CRISP ORGANDIE**  
Guaranteed Fast Color

**25¢**  
YARD  
POSTPAID

65W1664—No other Summer fabric has quite the quaintness or charm of Organdie. This sheer Printed Organdie comes in exquisite colors and delicate patterns. It's a real quality fabric—a crisp-finished Organdie well woven from excellent cotton yarns and guaranteed fast color. Width about 39 inches. Order by No. 65W1664 and give number for pattern desired.  
A yard, 25¢  
Postpaid, 25¢

**32-in. "HARDICLOTH"**  
A Wonder for Wear **14¢**  
YD.  
65W1763—Hardicloth has outstanding wearing qualities and gives unusually long service. It's Postpaid the most durable cotton fabric for house dresses, aprons, children's rompers, etc. Woven in firm, close weave of strong cotton yarns in brightly colored patterns. About 32 in. wide. Give No. 65W1763 and pattern number.

**FAST COLOR "FASHION" PRINTS**

**13 1/2¢**  
YARD

**Our Famous STYLE-THRIFT FABRIC**  
65W1796—They're called "Fashion Prints" because Fashion sponsors them for all-year wear—and after you've tested them by long wear and many tubbings you'll be convinced that Fashion has good judgment. They're woven of fine Cotton yarns in charming conventional designs. They can't fade; they're guaranteed fast color. Quality, beauty and a moderate price make these prints highly desirable. About 36 in. wide. Order by No. 65W1796 and give number for pattern. Postpaid. A yard, 13 1/2¢

These are the colors listed in a 1931 National Belle Hess Spring and Summer catalog:

- Reds: Castilian, French Rose, Pink, Peach, Tangerine
- Yellows: Spun Gold, Buttercup, Maize, Light Tint
- Greens: Jade, Woodland Green, Nile Green
- Blues: Navy, Imperial Blue, Yacht Blue, Turquoise
- Neutrals: White, Cream, Tan, Hawaiian, Sky Grey, Black

**PRINTED CHARMUSHEEN**  
Guaranteed Fast Color

*Richly Lustrous*

**29¢**  
YD.

65W1802—It's smart to sew for yourself! And if you're at all clever at wielding a pair of scissors and a needle you can produce some stunning dresses of this fine Printed Charmusheen. It drapes beautifully. It's a good quality mercerized combed cotton fabric with a high luster achieved by a satin-like weave.  
Washing won't dim its attractive colors in the least and it wears well. About 36 in. wide. Order by No. 65W1802 and give number for pattern. Postpaid.

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**YARD-WIDE WOVEN CHAMBRAY**

**10¢ For All the Family!**  
YD. 65W827—One of our best sellers because of its many uses. Bargain-priced yard-wide woven Chambray of good weight. Splendid for loose dresses, men's shirts and children's garments. Order by No. 65W827 and give number for pattern desired. Postpaid.

**CRISP, FAST COLOR CHECKED LAWN**

**25¢ A FASHIONABLE COTTON Dainty and Flattering**  
YD. 65W1784—Lawn was a favorite with our grandmothers when they were young—and it still retains its popularity. Finely woven with interwoven checks and lovely printed patterns in fast colors. Sheer, stylish, serviceable. About 36 in. wide. Order by No. 65W1784 and give number for pattern desired.

**COTTON FOULARD... Fast Color!**

**23¢ Distinctive, New Designs**  
YD. 65W1789—Lovely Printed Cotton Foulard in a fascinating array of colors and new designs—designs usually found only in expensive fabrics. And it's only 23¢ a yard at "NATIONAL." Woven in porous finish of fine cotton yarns. About 36 in. wide. Order by 65W1789; give number for pattern desired.

**The PICK of THIS SEASON'S NEWEST COTTONS • LOWEST / PRICES!**

**DAINTY PRINTED LAWN... FAST COLOR**

**As Soft Finished as a 'Kerchief 29¢ YD.**  
65W1785—Another outstanding cotton success. You'll know why when you feel the soft handkerchief finish of this sheer, high count lawn. Test its washing, wearing and draping qualities. Woven of fine, highly mercerized combed cotton yarns in the season's newest patterns, fast color of course. About 36 inches wide. Order by No. 65W1785 and give number for pattern. Postpaid.

Cotton fabrics came in floral, checks, plaids, floral, geometric prints, dots, floral, stripes, solids, did I mention floral prints?

Yes, there were many different kinds of floral prints in the catalogs.

**32-INCH DRESS GINGHAMS**

**LONG WEARING GOOD LOOKING! 10¢ YD.**

65W1762—It's a Season of Cottons and Gingham in particular Gingham has a freshness about it that makes it the ideal fabric for women's and children's wear. And it's only 10 cents a yard! It has superior wearing and draping qualities. In nine color-plaid patterns. About 32 in. wide. Order by No. 65W1762 and give number for pattern desired. Postpaid.

**OUR BEST COTTON CHIFFON VOILE... Fast Color!**

**SHEER... SERVICEABLE 39¢ YARD**

**Extra Fine Yarns**  
65W1782—Lovely named "Chiffon" Voile—our best quality and in color. As sheer as silk. Woven of fine combed extra hard and cotton yarns. About 39 in. wide. Exquisite patterns. Order by 65W1782; give pattern number. Postpaid. Yd., 39¢

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## DO YOUR RESEARCH!

Familiarize yourself with the different types of cotton.

Colors of the era.

Style and size of prints.

What colors and style of pattern look good on you.

Choose a pattern.

Does the fabric drape as it should for the pattern.

Enlist fellow club members.

Make it a special ladies project through the whole process.

Shopping for fabric

Cutting

Sewing

Completing your new outfit

**GENUINE KWANTO COTTON PLISSE CREPE**

**21¢ YARD**

**WASHES EASILY . . . Requires No Ironing!**  
65W1788—A practical, good-wearing fabric that saves both time and labor. Make your new underwear of this good-looking Genuine Kwantu Plisse Cotton Crepe and all you have to do is give them a tubbing—no ironing required. Closely woven in fine crepe weave. About 30 in. wide. Order by 65W1788; give pattern number. . . . . Postpaid. A yard, 21¢

**FAST COLOR COTTON BATISTE**

**24¢ YD.** **OUR PRICE is LOWER . . . for this Better Quality**  
65W1786—Springtime and Summer are Cottontime! That means that Batiste is very much in season. When it comes in delicate fast color patterns like these—at 24¢ a yard—you can afford to be smartly dressed. Woven of mercerized combed cotton—sheer but durable. About 39 in. wide. Order by No. 65W1786 and give number for pattern.

**HEAVY DUTY CHAMBRAY**

**STURDY . . . WEAR-RESISTING 12½¢**  
**. . . for Rompers . Men's Shirts**  
65W1190—Make your youngster's rompers, school frocks and play suits of this sturdy Heavy Duty woven Chambray. Durable also for house dresses and men's shirts. Closely and firmly woven to stand hard service. About 28 in. wide. Order by 65W1190; and give number for pattern desired. . . . . Postpaid.

**Permanent RAISED DOT COTTON VOILE**

**VERY SHEER 35¢ YARD**

**Guaranteed Fast Color**  
65W1783—A style leader this season—the very newest in sheer Cotton fabrics—a very low price. This fine Cotton Voile with its charming printed design is further enhanced by applied raised dots which absolutely won't rub off. And, too, it's fast color which means you need never have any doubts about washing it. The perfect material for cool frocks and underwear, too. About 39 in. wide. Order by 65W1783; give pattern number. Postpaid. A yard, 35¢

**22¢ YARD**

**FAST COLOR BROADCLOTH . . . a Lustrous Cotton**  
65W802—Beautifully lustrous fast color Cotton Broadcloth at 22¢ a yard is most unusual! And you know what a practical fabric it is—how well it wears and launders. It's mercerized, which gives it a high luster and it's well woven from high grade cotton yarns. For dresses, men's shirts, and for any sturdy, good-looking garment. About 36 inches wide.  
**Colors:** As shown. Order by No. 65W802 and be sure to state color desired. . . . . Yard, 22¢ Postpaid.

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Today, many of our fabric and quilt shops carry the 1930's Reproduction cotton fabrics. Many of these 100% cotton reproduction fabrics (pictured on this page) are very similar to the prints of the Model A era, if not the exact copy. Why not make a spring outfit of reproduction cotton fabric!

You don't sew, you say? Well, that's no excuse! I'm sure there is someone in your club or circle of friends who does! Just think how smart you'll look and how comfortable you'll be touring in your new, cool, cotton ensemble this summer! You may even be so thrilled with it that you will want to enter in the next fashion show in the Model A Era Image category!

This article has concentrated only on cotton fabrics. The other fabrics that were available during the Model A era were linen, rayon, silk and wool. All of these are available today also.

My resource for this article is from a Spring/Summer edition of a 1931 National Belle Hess catalog as you can tell from the pattern examples. Other era catalogs will be similar, with that years patterns shown.